

Gardening is personal. Each of us experiences a garden in our own way. Each of us may also express in our own words and images our appreciation of a garden's beauty, plantings, design, artfulness, and its resonance with our personal interpretation of life, as well as our interactions with nature and with each other.

Why Save and Share Gardens?

At the same time, gardening is universal. From the Garden of Eden onward, gardens have been integral to human history and culture. Plants provide us with food, fuel, shelter, and medicine. In fact, all life on Earth is made possible

by the oxygen created by plant life, including garden plants. In our increasingly urban, mobile, and virtual world, gardens offer an ever more important connection to tangible nature and life.

The following pages contain personal observations from a few of the many people with whom we have had the honor to interact over the years—by opening the gates to a beautiful garden and sharing it with the public, by helping to restore or preserve an outstanding garden, or by collaborating and strategizing ways to save a historic or community treasure for future generations to enjoy.

Common themes emerge about the Garden Conservancy's impact:

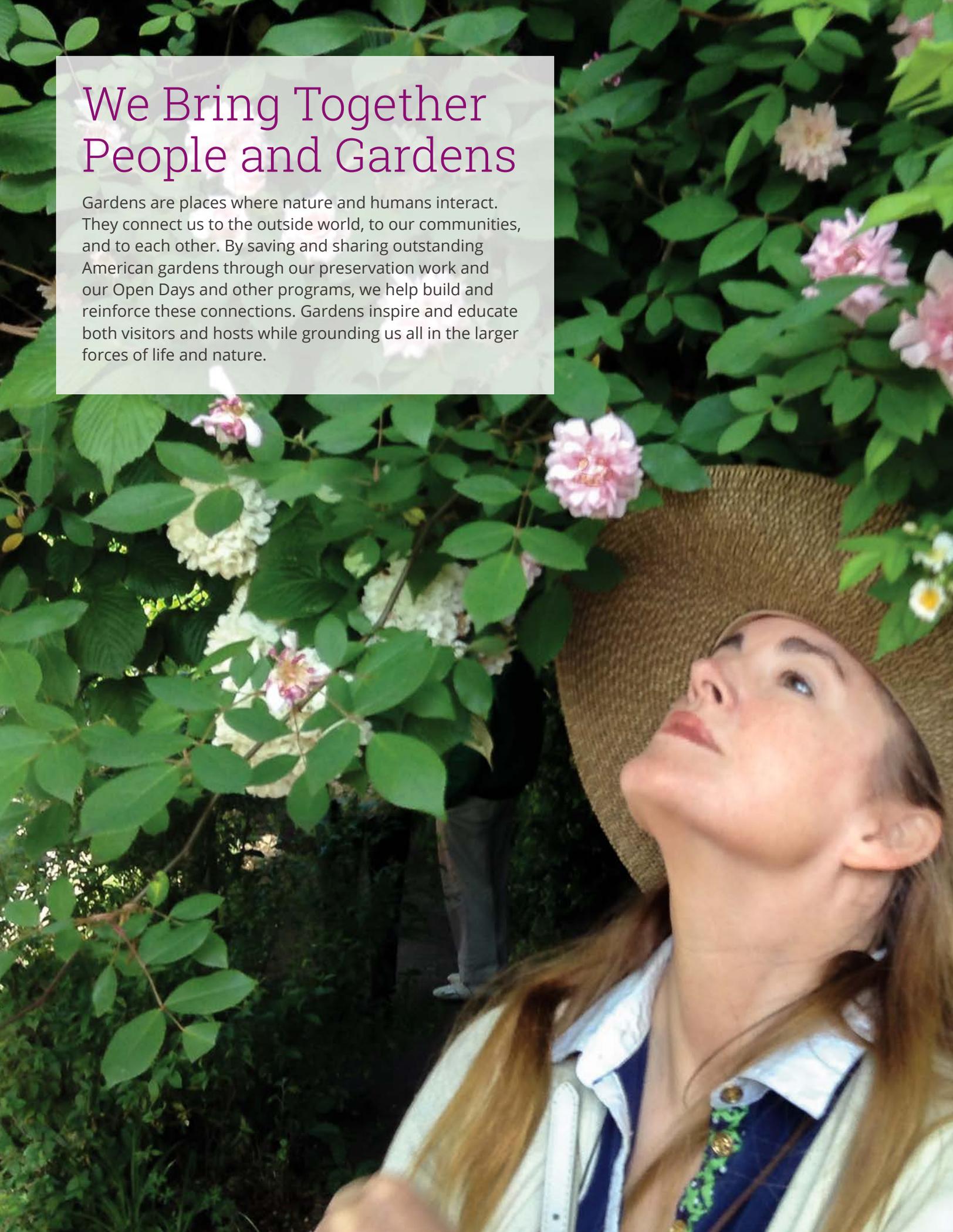
- **We Bring Together People and Gardens**
- **We Help Preserve Inspiring Artistic Visions**
- **We Bring Our Cultural Legacy to Life**
- **We Showcase Best Practices in Horticulture**
- **We Foster Vibrant Communities**

These personal statements tell a compelling story. They explain not only what we at the Garden Conservancy do and how we approach our mission, but, much more importantly, WHY we do what we do.

In 1988, Frank and Anne Cabot visited Ruth Bancroft's dry garden in Walnut Creek, CA. Ruth expressed concern about the future of her garden. Frank later reported, "...much to my great surprise, I remember actually shivering at the beauty of it. As we drove away, I said to my wife, 'We have to find some way to help this woman.' And she said, 'Why don't you start a garden conservancy?'"

We Bring Together People and Gardens

Gardens are places where nature and humans interact. They connect us to the outside world, to our communities, and to each other. By saving and sharing outstanding American gardens through our preservation work and our Open Days and other programs, we help build and reinforce these connections. Gardens inspire and educate both visitors and hosts while grounding us all in the larger forces of life and nature.





"I live in paradise, and every day **I get to experience the ecstasy and choreography of nature. It is nonstop art, and I am happy to share it.** I've been told that my garden is one of the most popular because it's the most personal. And for me, it is a powerful place of healing, resolution, and renewal."

— Julie Newmar, quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*, 2015



"I know first-hand the thrill that comes with sharing one's own garden—**such a personal effort that represents not only my creativity and inspiration,** but just the plain hard work."

— James deGrey David



"**In the garden our senses meld into each other: smell, vision, hearing, and touch....** There are many terms that describe this elevated state—nirvana, bliss, flow, awakening—I call it visiting a garden."

— George Ball



Photo credits—Facing page: Atlanta garden-study tour. This page, clockwise from top left: Back Bay Fens, Society of Fellows garden-study tour in Boston, MA; Gardens of Alcatraz guided tour; Les Quatre Vents; Stonecrop Gardens, Cheryl Kelly; Van Vleck House & Gardens; Ruth Bancroft Garden; SC; Open Day, Pasadena, CA; Society of Fellows garden-study tour in Philadelphia.





We Bring Together People and Gardens

“When you visit a museum, you don’t get to talk to Mr. Whistler or Mr. Rembrandt about how he achieved a certain effect or where he acquired a particular pigment.

But when garden visiting, one often gets to meet the creator of a garden smack in the middle of his creation, and most often he or she is open to questions and full of advice.”

– Marco Polo Stufano



“I think you can learn something from visiting almost any garden, whether from a plant angle or a design idea.

Gardeners are plagiarists, and the best gardeners are the best plagiarists; they adapt other people’s ideas to their own setting.”

– Virginia Small,
Fine Gardening, 2005

“...the Open Days program will make possible tens of thousands of garden visits across the country this spring and summer... **What they’ve launched is an institution, and if my hunch is right, it could do more for horticultural cross-fertilization than anything to hit the American garden since, well, the bumblebee.**”

— Michael Pollan, *Vogue*, 1999



“I learned everything I know about gardening by looking at other people’s gardens and being inspired by what other people do. Also, **the nicest, nicest people come to visit and often come back, so it becomes like a family that you see once a year. Because of that, it never occurs to me not to share it.**”

— Bunny Williams

Photo credits—Facing page, from top: Afton Villa, Susie McBaine; Open Days regional representatives; Longue Vue House & Gardens educational program. This page, clockwise from top right: Society of Fellows garden-study tour, San Francisco Peninsula; Chase Garden photography class, Yvonne Meziere; Green Gables; Hendricks garden, Society of Fellows garden-study tour, Atlanta, GA.



We Help Preserve Inspiring Artistic Visions

Outstanding gardens are often the creation of gardeners—such as topiary artist Pearl Fryar, shown here—with a compelling and personal artistic vision. Our founder Frank Cabot was fond of quoting historic figures about the art of gardening. As he and Francis Bacon both pointed out, creators of gardens bring dramatic visions to life, work with nature as well as artifacts, and then share this “greatest refreshment to the spirits of man” with others.

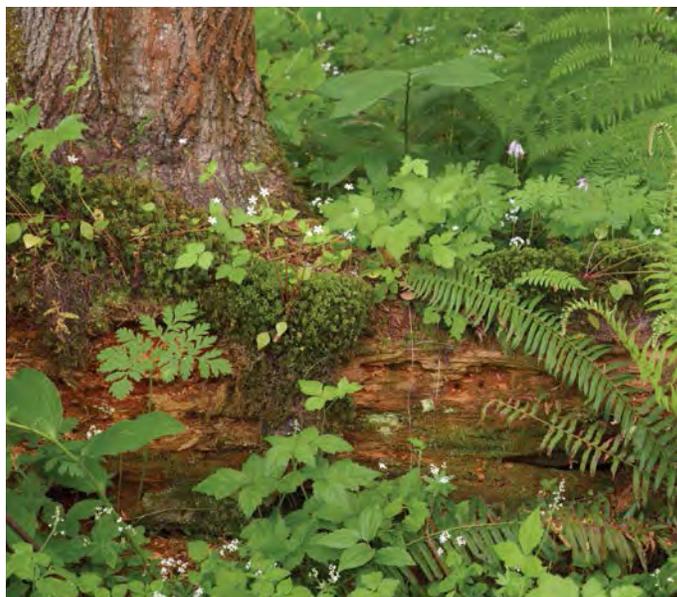
“Strategies I continually see in art, and have employed in my garden, are **repetition in form; variation in form; contrast of straight lines and curves; relationship of solids and voids; flat, perspective, and ambiguous space; and emphasis of edges.**”

— Tom Armstrong, *A Singular Vision*



“The purpose of a garden is **to create beauty in natural surroundings.**”

— Ione Chase



“Just viewing gardens is therapeutic. **That connection with creativity and beauty is something we all need.**”

— Antonia F. Adezio

Photo credits—Facing page: Pearl Fryar Topiary Garden, Dustin Shores. This page, clockwise from top right: Hollister House Garden, George Schoellkopf; Ruth Bancroft Garden; Marion Brenner; Chase Garden, Marion Brenner; The Fells Historic Estate and Gardens; Van Vleck House & Garden, David Daehnke.



We Help Preserve Inspiring Artistic Visions

"I have tried to make my garden the sort of congenial environment where the educated, civilized hand of man and the wild, untamed force of nature can successfully work together to create **that sublime magic we call art.**"

— George Schoellkopf



"Great gardens created by the inspired men and women who are true artist-gardeners deserve to be perpetuated beyond their lifetimes. Indeed, they deserve a similar level of custodial care as the treasures found in museums but, because of the transitory nature of gardens, **a kind of care that continually renews the visions of their creators with fresh inspiration.**"

— Elizabeth Barlow Rogers



“I do not paint in the way that I garden or garden as I would employ the brush, although the process is often the same. Both are arts of the wrist, the broadest, largest sort of signature, if you will, highly idiosyncratic, the result of much doing, much stumbling, and highly intuited turns and twists before everything fits and adheres to the scale of one’s intention.”

— Robert Dash,
Notes From Madoo

“It wasn’t important for me to create a garden. **I wanted to create a feeling, so that when you walk through here you feel different than when you came.”**

— Pearl Fryar, *A Man Named Pearl*



“If we are all our own jailers and prisoners of our traits, then **I am grateful for my introduction to the spade and the trowel, the seed and the spray can. They have given me a lasting interest in creativity.”**

— Elliott Michener, Alcatraz inmate number AZ-578 (1941-50)

Photo credits—Facing page, clockwise from top: Greenwood Gardens, Ken Druse; Peckerwood Garden; Gaiety Hollow, Laurie Matthews; Humes Japanese Stroll Garden, Chelsea Pomales. This page, clockwise from top: Hortulus Farm Garden & Nursery; Pearl Fryar Topiary Garden; LongHouse Reserve; Abkhazi Garden, Judith Tankard; Hooverness.



We Bring Our Cultural Legacy to Life

From the days of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and John Bartram's farm and nursery in Philadelphia, gardens have been a significant part of America's cultural life. They tell stories about who we were and help inform us of who we are today. They reflect the time and era. Some remind us of their role as a source of inspiration and solace for writers and artists. Others chronicle important parts of our history. The gardens in our tours and preservation programs bear witness to the richness of our culture and inspire continued growth in the future.

“If we can’t understand the past, what hope do we have for the future?”

– Patti McGee, quoted in *Traditional Home*, September 2006



“When we realize the extraordinary effort that was required to create that beauty, aesthetic appreciation becomes visceral. Suddenly, **we appreciate the true meaning of the gardens: the human drama they represent. They are transformed from simple, lovely artifacts of the past to part of a dynamic process** that changed the lives of the gardeners, who invested not only their energies but also their spirits.”

– Russell A. Beatty, *Gardens of Alcatraz*



“Important gardens are an essential part of our irreplaceable heritage—as much a part of the historic preservation landscape as buildings, birth sites, and battlefields.”

– Richard Moe, National Trust for Historic Preservation

Photo credits—Facing page, small photos, left to right: Alcatraz rose garden and Officers’ Row 1961, both by Joseph H. Simpson; Officers’ Row 1869, Eadweard Muybridge, Bancroft Library. This page, clockwise from top: Swan House, Atlanta, Fellows garden-study tour; Casa del Herrero, Santa Barbara, Fellows garden-study tour; Green Gables; Dumbarton Oaks; Bellefield, Richard Cheek, courtesy of Beatrix Farrand Garden Association.



We Bring Our Cultural Legacy to Life

“Not just buildings but the spaces between those buildings should command our respect and shape policy toward development and preservation. Saving the garden has helped open up a fresh public conversation about urbanism and street life.”

— Michael Kimmelman, *New York Times*, 2015



“It is the story of a garden used as a sacred retreat by the African-American poet during difficult times; it is **the improbable story of the garden’s rescue, from the remnants of a once-loved sanctuary to its eventual reblooming.**”

— Barbara Mahany, *Chicago Tribune*, 2012



“Hurricane Katrina had presented... the opportunity to not only restore the garden to its pre-hurricane appearance, but to recapture the original Shipman design intent.”

— Bonnie Goldblum



“There are few gardens that can be left alone. A few years of neglect and only the skeleton of a garden is left.”

— Russell Page, *The Education of a Gardener*



“Gardens are said to reflect the spirit of a nation, the tenor of its time.”

— Frank Cabot

Photo credits—Facing page, clockwise from top: Longue Vue House & Gardens; Russell Page garden, Frick Collection; Anne Spencer Garden, 2010 view, Jane Baber White; 1937 view, Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum. This page, clockwise from top left: Elizabeth Lawrence, The Charlotte Observer Collection at the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room; Elizabeth Lawrence Garden gate, 2011; Humes Japanese Stroll Garden, Chelsea Pomaes; Preservation Weekend tour, Chicago Botanic Garden's Lenhardt Library; Olana.

We Showcase Best Practices in Horticulture

The gardens we help save and share tell many stories—among them, their creator's personal artistic vision; examples of gardening best practices; the stories of a particular point in history; a geographic place and its specific climate. Gardens of plant collectors celebrate botanical diversity. Each garden itself offers a rich educational experience. So do our many other programs in the lecture hall as well as in the garden. Our book talks, symposia, workshops, Open Days, and garden-study tours present our members and the public with a source of contemporary ideas in gardening, design, preservation, and sustainability.





“It takes an appreciation of balance, color, and different kinds of plant materials with strong architectural components—all of which must be coordinated with the changing seasons to create a symphony of color, beauty, and tranquility.”

— Ben Lenhardt, quoted in *Traditional Home*, April 2013

“Gardeners who are artists and plantsmen in their own right, who understand the creator’s philosophy as well as the site and its plants, are not afraid to experiment to keep the garden fresh and interesting. The framework of the garden remains, but it develops in new directions.”

— Bill Noble



“Gardens, unlike the design assignments, don’t stay put! Plants grow larger—faster than anticipated, changing with weather and seasons—or they expire!”

— Jack Lenor Larsen, quoted in preface, *Jack Lenor Larsen’s LongHouse* by Molly Chappellet



Photo credits—Facing page, Preservation Weekend 2012, Chicago Botanic Garden. This page, clockwise from top: John Bryan presents Ellen Biddle Shipman garden design, Amy Graham; Arbor Day school group, LongHouse Reserve; master craftsman Peter Wechsler; Dundee Butcher educational presentation; Preservation Weekend 2007 tour of Rocky Hills.



We Showcase Best Practices in Horticulture

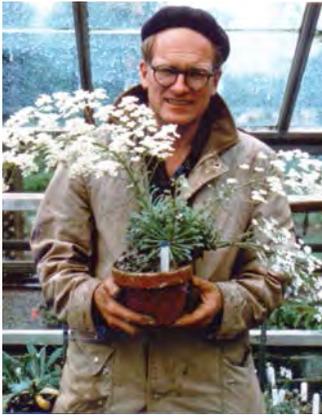
“Just as fall is a time for letting go... it is also a time for lessening up rigid color rules... Nature combines cobalt skies, red and yellow leaves and purple asters; the gardener does well to take inspiration from these stunning scenes.”

— Lauren Springer, *The Undaunted Garden*



“Staking is an art in itself—coaxing the stalks and stems into a gentle attitude of uprightness, propping with twigs and twines while still allowing a certain amount of their natural tendency to arch or lean.”

— Page Dickey,
Embroidered Ground



“Last fall I attended Alexis Datta’s talk about Sissinghurst, presented in New York City by the Garden Conservancy. We chatted about whether Americans ever volunteer at this magnificent garden. Her reply was, well, not really, but why not? ... **Your lecture was the catalyst for an amazing adventure.**”

— Ann Perkowski



“The garden-study tours provide an **unprecedented access to gardens that range from high to low to the kooky plant collector. I use many of the concepts that I see on the Fellows trips, synthesizing ideas and taking pieces from every garden I visit.**”

— Janet Mavec



Photo credits—Facing page, clockwise from top: garden-study tour at Peckerwood Garden; garden talk at Peggy and Jack Crowe’s garden; Page Dickey at Hollister House Garden Study Weekend plant show & tell, Gerald Incandella; Girl Scout troop at Open Day. This page, clockwise from top left: Frank Cabot, c. 1972, by Anne Cabot; Fellows garden-study tour, Houston; Shelburne Farms restoration, by Birgit Deeds; members tour at White Flower Farm; Elizabeth Lawrence Garden children’s program.

We Foster Vibrant Communities

Gardens provide beauty and inspiration in many ways. They also help build communities. They provide welcome open space, a respite from crowded cities and developments, a space in which communities can gather to partake in many different types of programs. Volunteer programs at many gardens connect people with shared interests. Music and art programs attract others. And educational programs of all sorts help connect people and nature, people and gardens—and people with people.



“There is a saying that **gardening is a way of showing that you believe in tomorrow.**”

— Sofia Blanchard



“I think Ruth knew she had made something powerful and did not want to keep it all to herself. But its greatness lies in the fact that it is more than a garden—as incredible a garden as it is. It is a nexus; a place that connects people and ideas. There is an adage that goes like this: **many things grow in a garden that were never sown there.**”

— Charlotte Blome

“...You provided not only a retreat from the mundane environment of the school, but a deep appreciation for the beauty in nature and art... **you introduced our children to a different philosophy and way of life through the arts...** a real eye-opener for our youth.”

— Middle school teacher, Garden City, NY



Photo credits—Facing page: Preservation Weekend 2010, Mt. Cuba Center. This page: clockwise from top: Western Hills Nursery volunteers; Sunday Salon workshop, Longue Vue House & Gardens; Cultivating Communities Program, Longue Vue House & Gardens; Open Day, Charleston, SC; Bloedel Reserve; Anne Spencer Garden, Jane Baber White.



We Foster Vibrant Communities

“Philanthropic organizations are meant to take risks and act where the market and government will not, and private individuals cannot or do not. **At the Garden Conservancy we do just that – we fill the void, and work to save outstanding gardens.**”

– Jenny Young du Pont



“Through the eyes (and sometimes photos) of my guests—watching the route they choose through the garden, and the spots they stop at along the way—this place that is so familiar to me becomes at once so delightfully unfamiliar. **I get a chance at a fresh look, thanks to them.”**

– Margaret Roach



“Gardeners are generous by nature and **they realize the private spaces they create reach their fullest potential when shared with others.**”

— Stephen Orr

“Volunteering for the Gardens of Alcatraz is rewarding beyond my expectations. Originally a place for me to gain gardening experience, the joy of restoring these gardens has led to a real desire to see them thrive. **Along with the friendships developed there, gardening has become a personal project that I miss when I can't attend.**”

— Zann Cannon Goff,
Pacific Horticulture, December 2012



“A garden is more than just a physical place. It's a representation of community and a living, breathing thing. **The best gardens can even change your life.**”

— Craig Bergmann



Photo credits—Facing page, clockwise from top: The Gardens at 900; educational programs, Humes Japanese Stroll Garden (2 photos); wreathmaking workshop, Chase Garden. This page, clockwise from top: LongHouse Reserve; Pasadena Open Day, Joseph Marek; plant sale, Chase Garden; volunteers, Gardens of Alcatraz; Open Day, Steinhardt Garden; volunteers installing greenhouse, Gardens of Alcatraz, Bharat Rhawal.