

SEVEN HILLS

THE GARDENS – OWNER’S NARRATIVE

The garden is what I call an American Cottage Garden. Because we have the room not only do Americans put in the eclectic variety of plants as the English do, we add to that trees, water features, and other things that strike our fancy. And this is what I have tried to do. I started with one bed of my favorite plants, day lilies and daffodils, and it grew from there. Each year I added to the mix. With 3 garden friends I scoured bulb catalogs in the fall and we placed large orders for many varieties. In the spring we went on excursions to nurseries and collected and shared plants. I did most of the work myself, but I also called upon the help of local nurseries for suggestions with design and initial preparation and planting of larger areas. If there was an area that was hard to mow, I planted flowers. I sat on the hill above the garden in the winter and watched the curve of the land and the shadows to decide where the next bed went. I moved the fence three times to make room for the growing collection.

As every gardener knows the soil is one of the most important parts of the garden. So every year my soil has been amended with organic matter. As a result I can now pull a weed with a tap root with a tug (most of the time). I have used mostly organic methods with little herbicide and pesticide. Beds were prepared using newspaper and mulch to kill the existing vegetation. As an example the entire garden was covered with milky spore to control japanese beetles. My rule has been that most plants must want to survive in my garden with little or no help from me. So I've had a three tries rule. If a plant does not survive after I plant it three times it doesn't get another chance. As a result of course there are too many happy plants. I have already had several calls from members of the local garden club asking if they can have some of the extras. Whoever buys the farm will have no problem filling the gardens of friends and relatives.

Part of the idea of that went into planning the garden was that the trees and shrubs would take over when I was no longer able to care for the flowers. It really has reached that point. So if whoever buys the place wants to turn it into a more formal garden all they have to do is call the local garden club. They will come get a lot of the plants and what's left will be a tree filled yard.

Non gardeners might look at the size of the garden and worry about the care and expense of upkeep. Time wise it's about 8 hours a week. Mowing takes about 2 hours and the whole garden can be mowed with a riding mower (no trimming need be done).

THE FLOWERS IN THE GARDENS

Several varieties of achillea

Allium,cristophiand karataviense

Anemone blanda,nemorosa,hupehensis

Aralia Elanta variegata

Artemisia lactaflora

Aster

Astilbe

Begonia

Brunnera

Buddleja

Campanula

Caryopteris

Chionodoxa

Chrysanthemum

Clematis

Colchicum

Cornus red twig variegated

Crocsmia lucifer

Crocus

Dianthus

Digitalis

Euonymus

Filipenula

Gaura

Geranium

Gladiolus

Gypsophila

Helleborus

Hibiscus

Hostas

Irises--including Dutch, Pallida, Louisiana, Reticulata

Jasminum Nudiflorum

Juniper

Lamium white nancy

Lathyrus Latifolius

Lavander

Lily

Lotus

Mahonia

Malus (crab Apple)

Muscari many varieties

Narcissus at least 10,000 and 20 varieties

Nigilla

Nymphaea (water Lilly)

Paeonia

Papaver Orientale	Scilla
Papaver Icelandic	Sedum
Penstemon	Semmpervivum
Perovskia	Tamarac American Larch
Phlox	Thymus
Physostegia	Tradescantia
Picea	Tusca
Pinus Mugo	Tulip
Platycodon	Veronica
Prunus	Viburnium
Rosa shrub type	
Salvia	
Santolina	

THE ABORETUM

There are about 50 special trees that have been planted around the cottage. They are:

Black Walnut (6), Zumi Crab Apple (3) Red Jade Crab Apple, Candied Apple Crab Apple, Sugar Maple (4), Copper Beech, Purple Beech, Tulip Poplar(2), White flowering Red Bud, Forest Pansy Red Bud(5), Chinese Red Bud(4), American Larch, Golden Rain, Yellow Wood, Pin Oak, Willow Oak, Sergeants Weeping Hemlock, Genches White Hemlock, Dwarf Blue Spruce, Kousa Dogwood (3), Pagoda Dogwood(4), Red Buckeye, Black Gum, Smoke Tree, Cypress (2), Dwarf Spruce, Fringe Tree and one Pie Cherry. On the drive way there are Red Pine(at least 10), White Pine (at least 10), Cypress (3), Dawn Redwood, Chinese Red Bud, Flowering Crab (2), Flowering Cherry (6), Willow Oak (3), Pin Oak(2).

UNIQUE PROPERTY HISTORY- OWNERS NARRATIVE

There were notable Hogsheads in every generation, as farmers, as leaders in the community. They donated land for schools, served on school boards, and sent their children on to become teachers, doctors and other professionals. A journal of everyday life written by Newton Hogshead in the mid 1800 is at the Monroe County Historical Society.

The 85 acre tract was acquired in the 1940s by Gordon Elmore, who raised a large family of notable children over the 40 years that he lived there. When the present owners purchased the 85 acre tract, they removed the Elmore homeplace and built the current passive solar house. They also rebuilt the barn and outbuildings and have enjoyed 23 wonderful years there. Gordon farmed his 85 acres with horses. All of his children worked on the farm. Many of them as well as grandchildren and nieces and nephews remain in the neighborhood. They are all happy to tell tales of life on the farm.

The present tenant house was built for two families, with separate entrances, in 1855 by a Hogshead. Fifty years later it was owned by Cornelius Hogshead, whose only child, Ralph Hogshead, graduated from Valparaiso Medical School and practiced medicine for many years in West Virginia coal camps. Ralph Hogshead had three children, Ralph, Jr., George, and Ida May: they all graduated from medical school and practiced medicine for many years. This house has had several owners. When purchased by the current owners, the house was in good condition despite its age, and they made some major improvements by rebuilding much of the foundation, reflooring much of the house, rewiring, adding insulation, putting in a new septic system, etc.

The hay fields are currently being harvested by one of Gordon Elmore's nephews Larry Elmore. The pastures are rented by Larry Echols. He and his children farm about 4000 acres in Monroe County. Larry is the WV representative to the National Beef Board. His daughter Allison teaches agriculture classes at Virginia Tech and is president of the Monroe County Cattlemen's Association.