

South Route

318 W. Union St.

This garden has evolved over thirty years. Gail has enjoyed different plantings through the years but in the last ten years she has become a follower of noted native plant advocate Doug Tallamy and has tried to make her small Borough garden a haven for native plants, wildlife and pollinators. Many of the plants are specifically grown for pollinators including the Monarch butterfly. Some of these include a volunteer *Cornus florida*, Flowering Dogwood; *Asclepias incarnata*, swamp milkweed; *Asclepias tuberosa*, butterfly weed; *Eutrochium dubium* 'Little Joe' Joe Pye Weed; various asters; *Solidago rugosa*, Goldenrod; *Clethra alnifolia* 'Ruby Spice', sweet pepper bush; and *Lonicera sempervirens*, a native honeysuckle which attracts hummingbirds and provides shelter for birds. This yard, both front and back, has been made into gardens while eliminating grass. The owners also enjoy traditional plants such as a collection of David Austin Roses and various Clematis, spring bulbs and seasonal annuals. Feel free to look over the backyard fence (from the alley) as well.

324 W. Union St. and Holly Alley

Gardening is irresistible to me. I love getting my hands in the soil, placing plants in aesthetically pleasing groupings of colors and textures, and choosing plants that are ecologically valuable. Being in my garden brings me a sense of calm and perspective, whether I am weeding, planting, deadheading, or just sitting and noticing. Moving to our home in the Borough about six years ago, I envisioned the small yard as a blank slate and have been happily "painting with plants" ever since. The front garden contains only herbaceous perennials and bulbs. They are planted on 12-24" centers to cover the 20' x 30' rectangle inside the steel fence, where once there was only lawn. (My wonderful husband dug nearly all the planting holes and hauled away the excess soil.) I chose a palette of plants that would provide changing colors, heights, and textures throughout the growing season as well as food and habitat for birds, bees, and butterflies. The idea to create an "urban meadow" came from a garden-designer friend, who referred me to the book *The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden* by Roy Diblik. Important tenets of this style of garden include 1) knowing your plants; 2) knowing your garden's light, soil, and moisture requirements; and 3) positioning the plants in drifts or swaths with occasional accent plants. I sketched out the placement of plants on a piece of graph paper before making any purchases. I leave the plants to die and decay in place at the end of the growing season. Their seed heads and hollow stems provide food and homes for birds and bugs. Once a year in March I cut down the plants to about 6" above the ground and drop the cuttings on the ground between plants. There is no mulching of this garden. Soon spring bulbs emerge and help hide the meadow stubble. Perennials tend to expand their base, and some seed in, so the annual management includes some weeding in spring and occasional, selective removal of plants that grew bigger than I expected. The front garden is only two years old; we sit on the porch, enjoy the view, and watch the garden's continuing evolution.

The back garden, which can be viewed from our gravel parking pad on Holly Alley, has two zones. There is a dry, shady side, thanks to the large canopy and extensive root system of the neighbor's Blue Atlas Cedar, and there is a semi-sunny side whose clayey soil tends to hold moisture. When we moved to this property in 2015, every bit of the previous owner's backyard landscaping had to be removed to provide access for excavation and the construction of the addition at the rear of the house. With the help of friends, those plants were dug up and given away. Unfortunately, the contractors hauled away the topsoil, and their equipment compacted the remaining subsoil. We have been slowly working to improve the soil ever since. Steadily adding organic matter and loosening the compacted layers have been key. My husband makes compost from our kitchen scraps and some of our yard waste, so long as they don't contain seeds. We bring home tubs of shredded leaves from large piles collected each fall and left to rot at a nearby cemetery. Some of the leaves go into the compost, and some are used to top dress the soil around the plants. The back garden was not planned and executed like the front garden.

Here I indulge my tendency to collect plants and try new combinations. There are trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, and annuals including a few vegetables. I regularly “edit” this garden, moving plants around and making space for newcomers.

409 W. Union St.

Jim began taking away bits of lawn 2 years ago, creating a tiny flower and food garden in front of our front porch at our 1876 brick twin house. He grows tomatoes and strawberries, asparagus and kale and his prize plant is an 8-foot tall fig tree that produced 30 figs last summer. This year, Jim removed the bushes on the alley in back of the house and added in blackberry and raspberry bushes. We hope that they grow and produce a fruit snack for people going down the alley to Everhart Park. Plans for next year include removing the remaining small strip of lawn in front of the front garden and adding in more flowers and some herbs. The goal is more of an English country garden feeling, interspersed with vegetables. Jim plans to keep the usable bits of lawn--but only those--and add in native species as possible, without destroying the beloved plants already in our garden.

111 S. Brandywine St.

This garden showcases perennial flowers and edible plants. As you walk along the alley from the street to the fence some of the plants you will see, in order are: blueberries, serviceberry, bee balm, geranium, raised beds with annual vegetables, chives, quince, azalea, rhododendron, fig, bronze fennel, horseradish, bachelor's buttons and irises.

224 W. Barnard St.

Built circa 1850, this little gem of a single house boasts a charming front garden planted with a variety of flowers surrounded by an iron fence authentic to the period. This front yard garden, somewhat on the shady side, uses its space well. In the front row: comfrey (with delicate blue flowers leading to attractive seed fronds), spiderwort. Behind the gravel path: iris, various hostas, hydrangea in the middle, lily of the valley, Japanese fern. Pots include chrysanthemums. On the right side against the fence: the purple-leaved heuchera, petunia, salvia, and on the left side are colorful caladiums. The sidewalk too is utilized, with daylilies, petunias, and the less common low-growing succulent portulaca (pink flower, orange middle). A comfortable front porch allows the owner to enjoy the view. A distinctive feature of this house is its Japanese style decorative rain chain on the front porch. The Japanese word for this interesting feature, a series of small vessels linked by chain, is kusari-toi. Such downspouts are in common use in Japan.

119 W. Miner St.

This large sunny garden contains a rich variety of perennials and self-seeding plants. The large selection of plantings includes some less common specimens. *Alium*, now in its seed phase, is dotted around. At the left back the tall plant preparing to flower is Joe Pye weed (*eupatorium*). The reddish leaf with pink flowers is penstemon. Various *euphorbias*, *salvias* (with a range of flower hues) and grasses add accents. Asters, *artemisia* and thistles are not yet blooming. *Sedum* is recognizable with its succulent leaf, and a *yucca* is nearing the flower stage. The slender foot-high stems with purplish flowers are *verbena*. Scattered throughout are a number of epimedium plants. The tall large-leaved plant about to bloom in yellow is likely *rudbeckia maxima*; the bright purple flower clumped like small bottle brushes is *liatris*. With many other specimens to challenge your identification skills, this garden makes a striking statement and is a good exemplar of the principle, dear to some gardeners, that where flowers are closely set enough, weeds cannot get a foothold.

North Route

721 N. Franklin St.

Michele moved into this home in October 2019. The entire property had only 2 Japanese trees (since removed) and lawn covered in turf grass. The previous owners don't appear to have used fertilizers or chemicals, and the soil was healthy with a profusion of wild violets interspersed with turf grass, clover and the usual weeds. Over the last 18 months, more than 1500sf of lawn has been converted to native plant gardens - all sides of the driveway, 3 sides of the house, a large area along the street in front, and a similar area in the back, fenced yard for beneficial trees and pollinator plants. Over 275 native species have been planted, including white oaks, native hydrangeas, persimmon tree, serviceberry trees, edible viburnums (nannyberry) and numerous other shrubs, grasses and herbaceous plants to increase biodiversity. The goal is no invasive, non-native ornamentals and 99% natives so we are providing hosts, habitat and food for our insects and birds in an effort to restore these declining populations. The front yard roadside was most recently planted, where mature shrubs and trees will create a dense buffer for wildlife and privacy in the coming years.

700 N. Franklin St.

For Barclay Friends Assisted Living Facility, located at 700 N Franklin Street in West Chester, gardening is an important way that staff works to cultivate positive experiences for the residents in their care. Using resources from their many on-site vegetable and flower gardens, the staff at Barclay Friends routinely facilitates cooking tutorials, flower-arranging classes, and horticulture lessons for their facility members. This summer, in collaboration with the West Chester Green Team, Barclay Friends has generously expanded their garden offerings to reach the broader West Chester community. Eight brand new raised beds were added to Sydney's Garden, which has allowed eight West Chester families to grow alongside Barclay Friends staff. Community gardening work is underway, and gardeners are eager to harvest bounties of peppers, tomatoes, summer squash, and more to share with family and neighbors. To learn more about how Barclay Friends uses gardening to further their Quaker values, visit their website: <https://bf.kendal.org/community-life/overview/>.

Marshall St. and Franklin St.

The original iron fence surrounding the fountain was copied and re-built to protect the public and to surround the fountain, using the original iron acorns as finials. The area around the fountain includes new benches (available for purchase and dedication) set within the landscaping. The new plantings are intended to remain low, as to not block views to the fountain and to provide seasonal color. The fountain garden includes native flowering trees, low maintenance shrubs, perennials, groundcovers and bulbs. The plantings include; Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), *Viburnum carlessii* (Koreanspice Viburnum), *Itea virginica* 'Little Henry', Daylillies, Native Geranium, *Stachys*, *Sedum*, *Liriope*, *Iris siberica* 'Ceasar's Brother', *Allium* 'Globemaster' and 'Thalia' Daffodils. The iron bollards at the curb discourage wayward vehicles and the brick landing is surrounding by iron garden fencing with the same plants that are repeated in the fountain area.

501 S. Maryland Ave.

West Chester Transition Team's Living Landscapes Committee created a publicly accessible native pollinator garden located in the 500 block of South Maryland Ave in West Chester Borough to showcase this technique and educate the public on the benefits. Accessible from the sidewalk, the new 200 square foot native pollinator garden will provide nectar for butterflies and hummingbirds and food for caterpillars. Native plants have evolved to act as hosts to our native insects and therefore provide a highly valuable resource that cannot be provided by non-natives. Before planting the area with a mix of native grasses and perennials, the turfgrass had to be removed first. To do this, the committee chose to use the technique commonly known as smothering or tarping, also called solarization or occultation. Thick black plastic sheeting was laid down on the area in mid-March and stayed in place for five weeks. Next the plastic was removed, and the area was exposed to sunlight and precipitation for two weeks. Finally, the plastic was re-laid over the area for a final one-two week period to kill any remaining weeds and grass.

When the tarp was removed, the dead material was raked up, which also helped prepare the surface for planting. The plants used for this bed were purchased from an online nursery that provides small 4"-plugs consisting of over 13 different native species assembled in a pre-assembled "pollinator garden." Two pollinator garden trays, totaling 100 plugs of 14 different native species, were purchased in February. The goal for this site was to plant the area densely for maximum first-season growth and success.

323 W. Biddle St.

We were so frustrated with the unsightly look of the "hell strip" between our sidewalk and the parked cars. Weeds would creep from there into the sidewalk bricks constantly, which was time-consuming to keep under control. Last fall we decided to just rip out the entire strip along our long property line. Instead we filled it with free wood chips and added drought-tolerant, pollinator-friendly plants. From bulbs in the spring to bee balm for the summer and asters in the fall - it will provide blooms for most of the growing season. Flagstones were added as stepping stones for passengers stepping out of the cars. I hope it will bring joy to the neighbors, passers-by as well as our bees and butterflies.

Additional garden

750 S. Church St. Behind Merion Science Center and Planetarium, also accessible via Rosedale Ave. behind Killinger Hall

Native Plant Outdoor Classroom & Organic Annual Garden:

Dedicated on April 21st, 2009 the North Campus learning garden was designed to engage students, faculty and guests in appreciating the native plant and wildlife of Chester County. Plantings such as red chokeberry, Joe Pye weed, hyssop, berry bushes, and many others draw in songbirds (and squirrels) to the feeder watch site. Art classes use the area for inspiration and environmental studies students are often there as well.

The outdoor classroom was expanded to include a vegetable and herb garden managed by faculty, staff, student interns, and volunteers. The beds are planted annually with seeds and seedlings provided by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society City Harvest program thanks to Dr. Ashlie Delshad. Amendments include compost from the garden compost system, and organic mushroom spent soil.

There are two permaculture (permanent agriculture) plots. One is a small native plant woodland with edible plants such as the Serviceberry tree (*Amelanchier canadensis*) and wild ramps (*Allium tricoccum*). The other is planted with fruit trees and sun chokes that are perennial. The herb spiral is in this plot.

<https://www.wcupa.edu/campusGardens/>

Link to documentation about creation of outdoor classroom with plant list

https://www.wcupa.edu/Sustainability/documents/create_outdoor_classroom_WCUPA.pdf