



Wethersfield
estate & garden

2023

A Pioneering History of Conservation

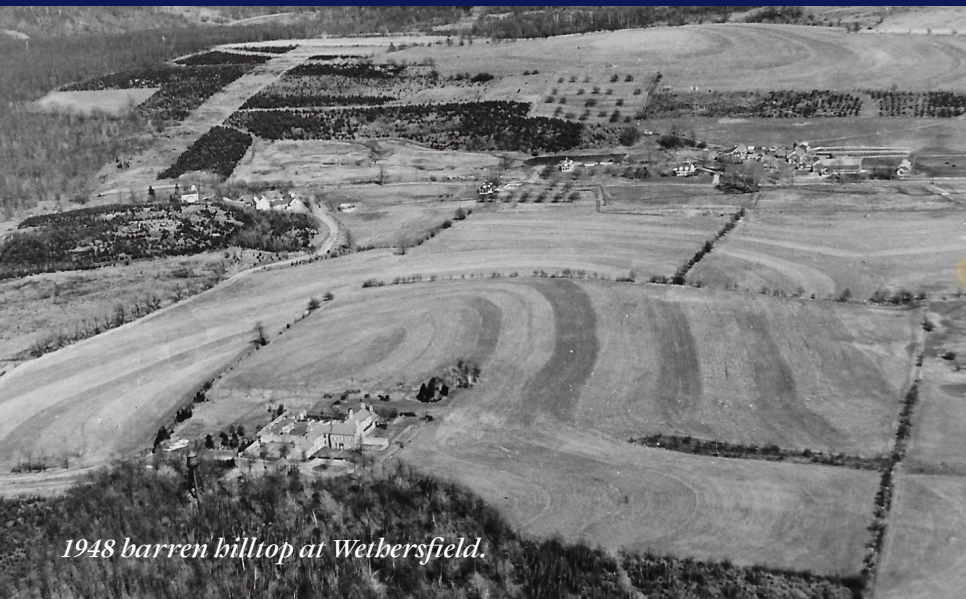


"If we dedicate ourselves to the long-term stewardship of this marvelous countryside, we will not only do a service to ourselves and each other, but to future generations."

– Chauncey Devereux Stillman

Ever since 1937, when Chauncey Devereux Stillman first acquired two abandoned dairy farms comprising 620 acres of barren Dutchess County land and transformed it into Wethersfield, the property has embodied his passion for beauty, for farm conservation and for the preservation of a natural habitat for wildlife and recreation. Today, its forests, which comprise a third of the estate, are home to bears, bobcats, coyotes, skunks, and as many as 70 species of birds. Some 55 acres of ponds collect the run-off water that irrigates the croplands, pastures, and gardens. Hiking and riding trails abound. The practice of contour farming, pioneered at Wethersfield, creates the elegant agricultural stripes that line the estate's rolling hills. As early as 1952, on a visit to Wethersfield Farm, a UN Science & Conservation delegation recognized it as a "model example of an excellent conservation farm with a tremendous variety of well-planned and properly applied conservation practices." With adherence to land protection in perpetuity, to reforestation, to fierce opposition to pesticides, herbicides, and defoliants, and to maintaining a protected wildlife refuge, Wethersfield's core legacy values remain sacrosanct.

Chauncey Stillman placed Wethersfield in land conservation, first through the American Farmland Trust. The easement was later transferred to the young Dutchess Land Conservancy (DLC), enabling 7,000 acres of continuous open space with adjoining properties also under DLC protection.



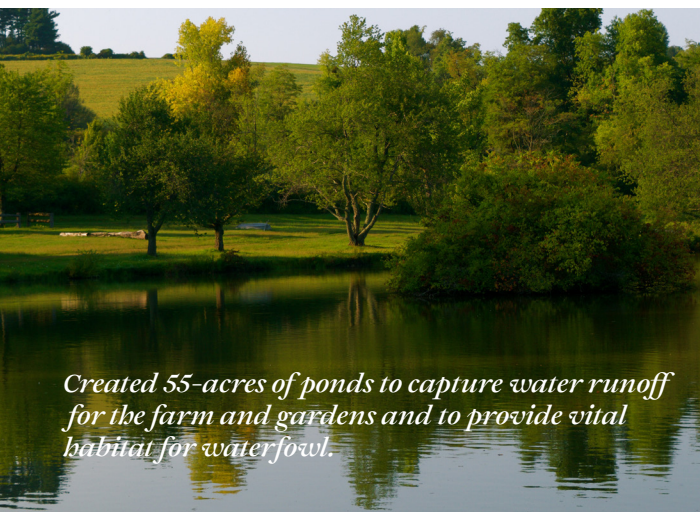
1948 barren hilltop at Wetbersfield.



*Statuary within the bosco,
along the wilderness trails.*



Implementation of contour farming for soil regeneration.



*Created 55-acres of ponds to capture water runoff
for the farm and gardens and to provide vital
habitat for waterfowl.*



*Approximately 480 acres of forested land to create habitat
for wildlife and for recreational use.*

Conservation Timeline Over Nearly a Century

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| <p>1937 Stillman purchases first parcels of land, two abandoned farms, barren land, and an orchard after riding the lands with the Millbrook Hunt.</p> <p>1938 Working with NYS Conservation Department, Wethersfield begins reforestation efforts.</p> <p>1940 Construction on the house is completed. Stillman hires Owen Boyd, a Dust Bowl farmer, to manage the estate and apply his conservation lessons learned.</p> <p>1946 Chauncey Stillman joins the Board at the New York Botanical Garden. He served in this capacity through 1969.</p> <p>1949 In the ten years since first planting, the estate integrated strip cropping, contour farming, cover crops, organic fertilizers, windbreak plantings, crop rotations, sustainable logging, runoff ponds and wildlife borders.</p> <p>1950 Mr. Stillman petitions the US Senate to pass the legislation designed to protect the Bald and Golden Eagle.</p> <p>1951 Mr. Stillman works with the head of the National Wildlife Federation to construct wood duck nesting boxes on Wethersfield ponds.</p> <p>1952 United Nations sends a delegation from its 1952 Scientific Conference on Conservation to tour Wethersfield Farm, chosen as a model example of an “excellent conservation farm... [with] a tremendous variety of well-planned and properly applied conservation practices.”</p> | <p>1954 New York State Conservation Council hosts Conservation workshop at Wethersfield Farm.</p> <p>1955 343 Acres of forested land begin receiving management under the Forest Practices Act.</p> <p>1956 Wethersfield becomes the first tree farm in Dutchess County to join the American Tree Farm System, certifying that it “protects the land from fire, insects, disease and destructive grazing, and carries on a planned program of regular harvests while providing for future growth.”</p> <p>1957 US Department of Agriculture sends Director of Conservation for the National Council of Boy Scouts of America along with honored Scouts from across the country to tour the tree farm.</p> <p>1959 Stillman takes down all Elm trees on the estate affected by Dutch Elm disease, a deadly tree disease born by bark-beetles, in order to contain the pest’s spread.</p> <p>1963 Chauncey Stillman writes to the New York State Commissioner of conservation, the Director of Division of Lands and Forests, and the Superintendent of the Bureau of Forest Pest Control, successfully urging them to halt spraying of DDT over Stissing Mountain and 7,200 acres of forested land in Dutchess County.</p> <p>1964 Chauncey Stillman is named president of the Audubon Society, at a time when the Society was a major advocate for heeding the lessons of Rachel Carson’s <i>Silent Spring</i>.</p> <p>1969 Chauncey Stillman bans the use of all hard pesticides on the estate— years before the EPA.</p> | <p>1970–80 Stillman turns his focus to wildlife, gradually reintroducing missing species to the estate. He bred swans and ducks for release. He stocked ponds. Added many birdhouses. Expanded habitat for wood ducks, owls and geese. Reintroduced hares to the grounds. Prohibited the hunting of hawks and hares. He even had four skunks delivered, as he felt they were a vital part of nature and wanted to grow their population on the estate.</p> <p>1978 Stillman bans the use of defoliants and herbicides in a letter to staff and future stewards.</p> <p>1980’s By the end of his life, Mr. Stillman developed over 20 miles of trails through the estate, for the enjoyment of those on foot, horseback, cross-country skis, or carriage driving.</p> <p>1994 The Chauncey Stillman Chair in Wildlife Education is established at the Bronx Zoo. Chauncey Stillman was a Trustee of the Bronx Zoo for 30 years, up until his death. The Chauncey Stillman Chair has represented many wildlife and zoological education associations in international forums and represents to the world the highest quality leadership in wildlife conservation education, receiving the presidency of the International Zoo Educators Association in 2000.</p> <p>2023 Today Wethersfield retains 1,000 of it’s original 1,200 acres. The property remains in land conservation in perpetuity for animal habitat and community pleasure.</p> |
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The Formal Gardens of Wethersfield

Chauncey Stillman considered his gardens a utopia, fully worth his dedication to their creation, perfection, evolution, and preservation. In wartime, he began with a victory garden, then added the British Arts & Crafts gardens that surround the Main House. Next came his collaboration with Evelyn Poehler, who created an Italian Renaissance-style garden that overlooks the vast countryside and its astonishing vistas. Wethersfield Garden has long been recognized as being amongst this country's finest classical gardens, as noted by Henry Hope Reed, Jr., the celebrated preservationist of architectural classicism and the first curator of Central Park.

Master or novice, as any gardener knows, the work of maintaining a garden is never done. To that end, Wethersfield has engaged in identifying how best to preserve this historic American creation and the country elegance it lends to our agrarian landscape. With the Garden Conservancy's support, Wethersfield recently commissioned Heritage Landscapes to prepare a sweeping Cultural Landscape Report, not only to document its history but to reaffirm its historic and cultural significance and identify the stresses the garden currently faces, including those on its most unique and distinctive features. This includes the Inner Garden's pleached Beech tunnel and the four weeping conical Beech trees that have anchored the garden's main room. Sadly, the trees have succumbed to untreatable blight. Restoration efforts are underway.

Wethersfield is indebted to the Garden Conservancy for its support and to you, our valued donors, as it addresses these challenges in preservation and rehabilitation. Your continued support is more vital than ever.

“For nearly a century, Wethersfield’s beautifully-designed gardens, which feature examples of both the arts and crafts style and grand classical formalism evocative of gardens of the Italian villas of the 17th century, have been among the most important of American gardens of the 20th century. Today, Wethersfield remains central to the region’s collective identity. Through its thoughtfully styled gardens, its history of pioneering land conservation, its singular vistas, and its pristine forests, Wethersfield connects those who walk its hallowed ground to beauty, to nature, and to one another like no other in Dutchess County.”

— James Brayton Hall
President & CEO,
The Garden Conservancy



Victory Garden outside Wetbersfield House 1944.



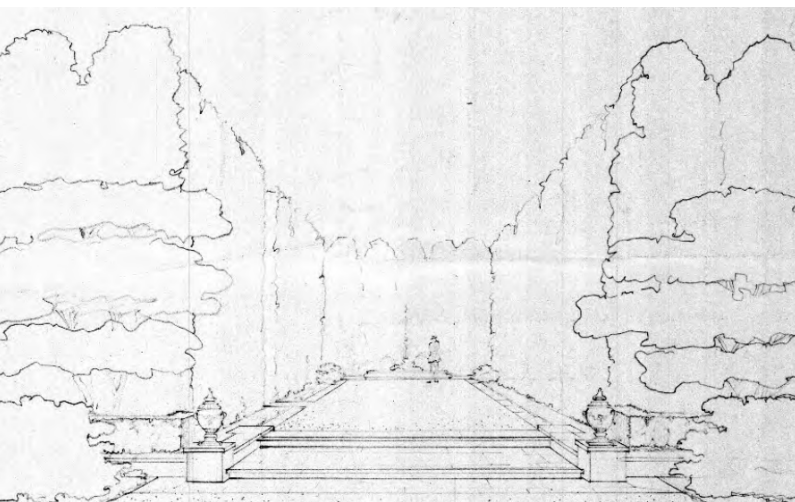
Wetbersfield Garden Entrance with Belvedere in the background, 1960's.



Weeping concial Beech trees anchor the Main Room.



Wetbersfield Belvedere Circa 1980's.



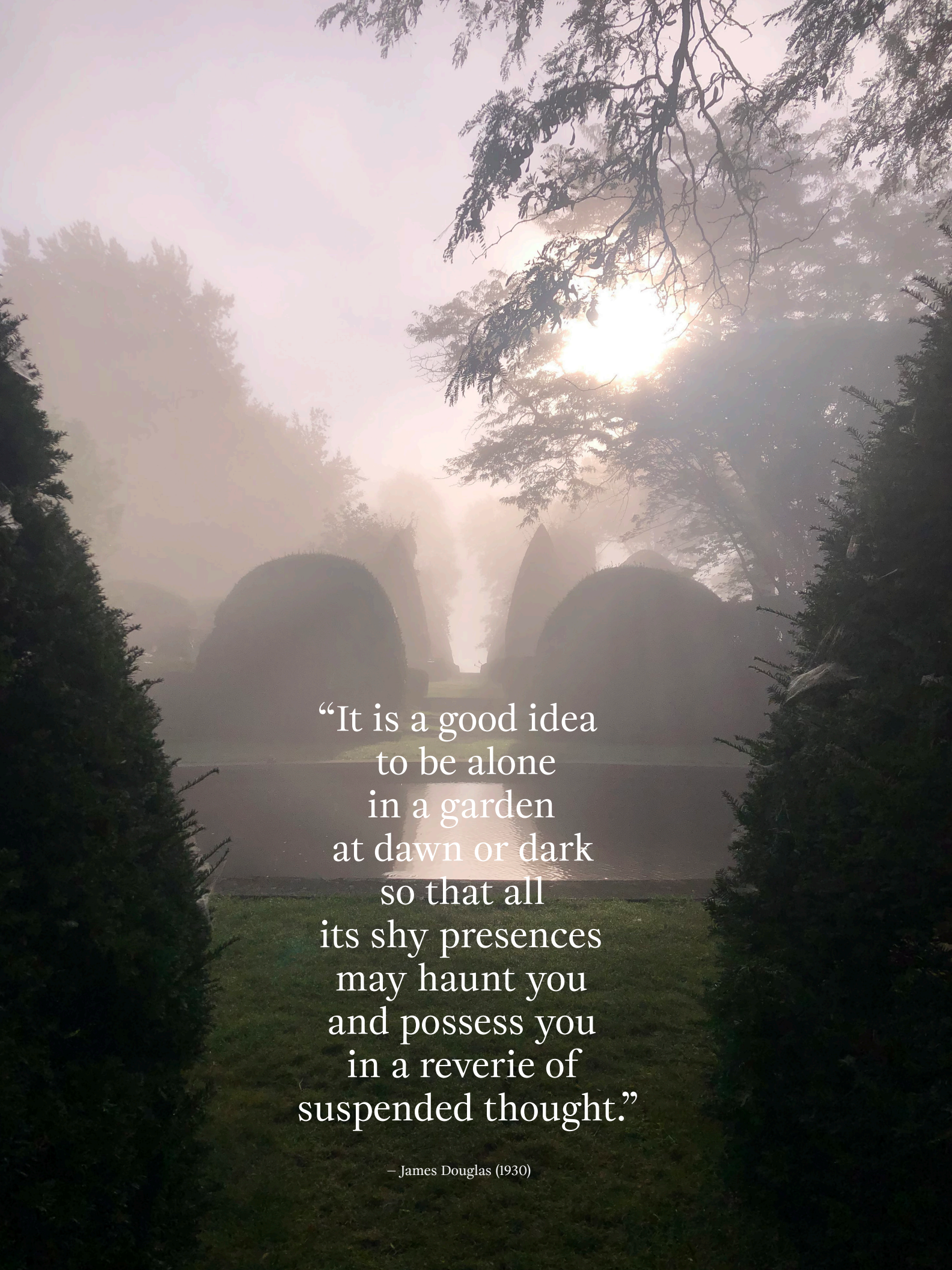
Evelyn Poebler's sketch: North Alley of American Arborvitae.



North Alley today.

Timeline of Garden Development

- | | | |
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| <p>1937 Chauncey D. Stillman visits the area to ride with the Millbrook Hunt and decides to purchase land shortly thereafter.</p> <p>1939 Architectural Firm LaFarge & Knox complete the design of the Main Residence for Mr. Stillman.</p> <p>1940 Construction of the Wethersfield House is largely complete.</p> <p>1940-41 Mr. Stillman hires landscape architect Bryan J Lynch to design and plant the first of Wethersfield's gardens, beginning with the Inner Garden in the style of the British Arts & Crafts gardens.</p> <p>1941 Amur maples are planted to form the initial setting of the Pleached Tunnel.</p> <p>1944 Historical photos reveal the Inner Garden. Mr. Lynch designs a circular lawn, with terraced northern wall. Trained espalier fruit trees line the brick walls. The Grasshopper House is in view, as is a Grape Arbor along the western wall.</p> <p>Later in the year, due to the ongoing war, the main lawn of the Inner Garden is transformed into a productive Victory Garden for the community.</p> <p>Southeast circular Lawn framed by stone walls and steps form the original Pine Terrace, along with small Linden trees planted above to form Walk on the upper right.</p> <p>1946 Stillman named a Director of the board of New York Botanical Garden. He remained on the board until 1967.</p> <p>1947 Stillman begins working with New York City and Sharon, CT based Landscape Architect Evelyn Poehler to extend and enrich the designed landscape.</p> <p>1952 Knot Garden, Detail Planting Plan – Evelyn Poehler.</p> <p>1953 Water Plants – Pine Terrace, Evelyn Poehler. Drawing shows plantings, walls, and steps around rectangular pool.</p> <p>1954-56 The Cutting Garden is designed and constructed to the east of the House.</p> <p>1955 Poehler designs the oval pool, establishing the major axis for expansion.</p> <p>1956 Poehler designs the North Alley. The design plan centers the pool at the intersection of a proposed primary east-west axis of the garden.</p> | <p>1956 The secondary north-south axis formed by the pool extends through the North Alley.</p> <p>Poehler's 1956 design of the North Alley features a wide, sloped turf path edged with bluestone and American arborvitae hedges to be 20 feet in height and four feet in width, with 20 feet of open space between the foliage.</p> <p>1958 Poehler proposes the first concept for the East Gardens in the classical style of Italian Renaissance gardens. Drawing includes Poehler's original and fanciful names for areas of the garden. Further north of the bosco, Poehler labels the high point at the eventual location of the Belvedere, and notes indicate her considering reforesting the area beyond.</p> <p>Drawing shows North Alley to terminating ellipse; proposed steps to Allée and hedge framing entrance from Pool Area; outline of Cutting Garden and existing cornfield to the east.</p> <p>East garden general construction and grading drawings done. East garden elevation from swimming pool level drawing shows new ramped steps, existing yew hedges and ivy, added lilac and magnolia, statuary, and grading on centerline of grass path.</p> <p>East Garden Forecourt – North-South Axis Section Through Centerline Drawing shows beechwood "bosco," sycamore, magnolia, and lilac; yew hedges and Rhododendron carolinianum (Carolina azalea); stone walls, statuary Wall – "East Garden," Evelyn Poehler drawing shows wall and balustrade; inset niche with Cupid sculpture; steps leading north from Vestibule; path of Cupid Walk in pink 'clay' and path of Peacock Walk in wood chips.</p> <p>Poehler and Stillman revised their January composite plan to depict the ultimate form of the classically inspired East Garden. The revised plan replaces the axial narrow, paved path with a rectangular lawn, framed by an alternating pattern of plant beds and slag paths. Weeping beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Pendula') are shown at the four corners of the rectangular chamber. The form of the wall supporting the Upper Terrace is depicted, including the curved central niche and fountain.</p> | <p>1959 The shale and bluestone retaining wall of the Upper Terrace is constructed.</p> <p>1960-78 Garden Extension and Enrichment Continue</p> <p>1960 Poehler finalized planting plans and structural designs for the Lower Terrace, Upper Terrace, and the walls, steps, and Cobble Court at the east entry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poehler designed the Naiad Fountain for the ellipse of the North Alley. - Poehler designs the ogee stone basin of the Naiad Fountain. - Obelisk for Overlook - North Ellipse – Naiad Pool & Fountain – Site, Plumbing, & Electrical Work - East Garden, Grading & Carriage Drives - East Garden – Cobble Court details with cobble stones repurposed from NYC streets <p>Stillman commissions Poehler to gradually form what will become the Wilderness Walk (bosco) and implements further sculptural and artistic elements from ancient Greek and Roman mythology.</p> <p>1965 Architect W. Dean Brown, Poehler, and Stillman collaborate to design the Belvedere and its major axis.</p> <p>Early 1970's European Beech trees replace former pleached Amur maple tunnel due to blight.</p> <p>1976 George Frederick Poehler, husband of Evelyn Poehler, designs the Palladian Arch as the final major addition to the landscape.</p> <p>2022 Pleached Beech Tree Tunnel failed by the Ambrosia beetle blight. Wethersfield rebuilt the hoop and replanted with American Hornbeams.</p> <p>2023 The cultural landscape of the Wethersfield Garden exhibits the characteristics of a historic designed landscape, in close collaboration with Chauncey Stillman. The gardens of this important cultural property today exhibit evidence of retention, age, weathering, and alteration of historic character and contributing features, thus compromising integrity, and reducing overall legibility to a degree. Recognizing the actions of age and climate change stressors, projecting future resilience and sustainability of the gardens requires insightful planning and phased actions. Still, the garden largely remains faithful to original design.</p> |
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A misty garden scene at dawn or dusk. The sun is low in the sky, partially obscured by tree branches, creating a soft, golden glow. In the background, several large, dark, domed structures, possibly covered in ivy, are visible through the mist. A body of water in the middle ground reflects the light from the sun. The foreground is a grassy area, and the scene is framed by dark, silhouetted trees on the left and right sides.

“It is a good idea
to be alone
in a garden
at dawn or dark
so that all
its shy presences
may haunt you
and possess you
in a reverie of
suspended thought.”

— James Douglas (1930)

Wethersfield House

In 1938, Mr. Stillman commissioned architect L. Bancel Lafarge to design his simple, classical, Georgian colonial house, fashioned in red brick and accented with a brownstone Greek Revival porch. As a trained architect (MA, Columbia University), Mr. Stillman was an exacting, aesthetic partner in the design of the house, as he was in all aspects of Wethersfield. Wethersfield House echoes Mr. Stillman's personality, his life, and his interests throughout.



The parched and finished pine paneling in the Living Room was recycled from a Vermont courthouse. Its simplicity speaks to the rather restrained design of the house.



The Library fireplace features limewood carvings attributed to Grinling Gibbons. Gibbons was an Anglo-Dutch carver and sculptor whose works can be found in Windsor Castle, St. Paul's Cathedral and Petworth House. This piece was repurposed from the grand, former Hamilton Palace in Scotland to fit the scale of the room.



Designed by architect George Frederick Poebler, the Gloriette was added in the 1970's and was originally conceived as an Orangerie. The frescoes in the room are by the renowned Italian painter, Pietro Annigoni of Florence. He also painted the famous portrait of the garter robed, young Queen Elizabeth, along with portraits of Prince Philip and Princess Margaret. Annigoni painted portraits of Mr. Stillman's two daughters, Theo and Lily as well.

Wethersfield Carriage House Museum

The Carriage House was the first building completed on the Wethersfield Estate, in 1938, initially as a stable for fox-hunting. It later evolved to include Mr. Stillman's passion for the Four-in-Hand carriage driving sport. Today, the carriage house comprises twenty one extraordinary antique carriages, including family sleighs, a paneled harness room, replete with trophies and ribbons earned by Mr. Stillman at competitions worldwide. Mr. Stillman's driving breed of choice was the Hackney Horse, known for its elegant, high step. Today, you will still find miles of trails and roads throughout Wethersfield, created for driving and riding.

His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Her Royal Highness Princess Anne and her husband Captain Mark Phillips toured publicly in Mr. Stillman's carriages, as did other nobility, world leaders, and of course, family and friends at home.

Wethersfield has hosted the country's most prestigious Four-in-Hand clubs for meets and competitions. Today, Sem Groenewoud, World Champion driver, oversees the care of the Carriage House and shares tours with the community during the Summer Season.



Cultural Arts at Wethersfield

Young Concert Artists (YCA) and Nathan Lee



In May, Wethersfield hosted an intimate recital with pianist Mr. Lee, represented by Young Concert Artists (YCA). Nathan performed a program of Romantic period classical music on Mr. Stillman's Steinway in the living room of Wethersfield House.

Nathan also visited Dutchess Day School, where he led two student assemblies, sharing his experience as a young professional musician building a career in the performing arts.

This educational program was a collaboration between Wethersfield Estate & Garden and Young Concert Artists, and was made possible through the Annalise Soros Educational Residency Fund for Young Artists.

The Knights

On the night of July 15th, musicians from The Knights lifted a packed house up "On Wings of Song." The program interwove favorites by Vivaldi, Villa-Lobos, and Ravel, with contemporary pieces. The performance may have reached its most transfixing heights with Ravel's "Introduction and Allegro," during which harpist Megan Conley, and the rest of the ensemble, transported guests into a dream world where, suddenly, all could fly.

The next day, The Knights returned to perform a program arranged for young families led by cellist Caitlin Sullivan. Several of the front rows were cleared to make room for the children to sit (or stand) very close to The Knights, as she allowed them to imagine themselves in flight. Handel once said, "I should be sorry if I only entertained them. I wish to make them better." It is safe to say The Knights' performance did just that.



Art in Residency and on the Grounds

The sweeping vistas of Wethersfield Estate have attracted artists longing to capture the iconic views on canvas. In recent years, Wethersfield has been proud to host residencies and en plein air days for landscape painting.



BalletCollective at Wethersfield

In further service of our mission to support the cultural arts, dancers from BalletCollective, a non-profit arts collective, have taken residency at Wethersfield during their summer program in Millbrook. While here, dancers from BalletCollective, held a community meet and greet meant to give aspiring young dancers the chance to talk with rising stars as well as seasoned professionals of the New York City Ballet. Questions from audience members included how dancers cope with disappointment when they aren't cast in a role, what ballet steps are the most difficult, and more.



Family Programming at Wethersfield

Pollinator Ramble



On opening day, June 2nd, Wethersfield hosted the Pollinator Ramble. Threatened briefly by thunderstorms, the evening gathering of families from around the community quickly turned sunny and brilliant. Twenty volunteers took their cues (and pollinator puppets) from the puppet makers and founders of the great Processional Arts Workshop, Alex Kahn and Sophia Michahelles. For an hour, bees, birds, beetles, and other pollinating bugs fluttered through Wethersfield's formal gardens and woodland walks while children and parents wandered the grounds with checklists in hand, trying to spot each one. The evening event ended with a dramatic encircling of the reflection pool, where the pollinators gathered in a final tour de force before buzzing off into the distance to the delight of all in attendance.

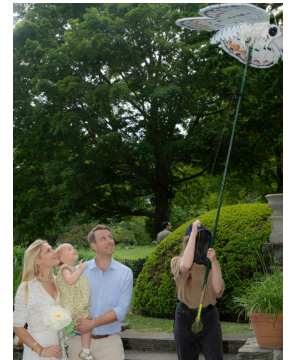
Adventurers Club

For the second year in a row Wethersfield ran its weekly Adventures Club summer program for children ages 4-12. This summer it was led by lifelong certified educator Diane Ritters. Children planted seeds, inspected water lilies, painted, explored the animals and insects on the property, toured the farm, harvested blueberries and so much more.



"Please do the Young Adventurers Club again next summer and consider extending! It was truly the highlight of our summer and so magical. Our son still talks about it. Thank you."

– Parent of a Young Adventurer



Equestrian Sport at Wethersfield



Mr. Stillman first discovered the area when riding with the Millbrook Hunt. Besotted with the countryside, he was inspired to purchase two adjacent farms on the finest hilltop, where he built Wethersfield over the decades. For nearly a century, Wethersfield remains a most serene and beautiful country estate in Dutchess County. Whether hunting with the Millbrook Hunt at Wethersfield, competing in equestrian events in the spring and fall, or riding or driving through the 1,000 acres of countryside, Wethersfield remains the premiere equestrian destination in the Hudson Valley.

Equestrian Day Passes & Memberships

When not participating in a formal meet or competitive event held at Wethersfield, equestrians who wish to traverse Wethersfield's grounds by horse are required to purchase either a Day Pass or an annual Equestrian Membership for each rider. Your support helps us maintain trails jumps and open spaces for your riding pleasure.



Mr. Stillman takes five grandchildren on a carriage ride through Wethersfield.



Water jump at the Spring Conditioning Ride. credit: Connecticut Photo.



Field Jump at the Spring Conditioning Ride. credit: Connecticut Photo.



Guests from the Carriage Association of America's 50th Anniversary celebration, tour the grounds at Wethersfield, 2022. credit: Jill Towner.

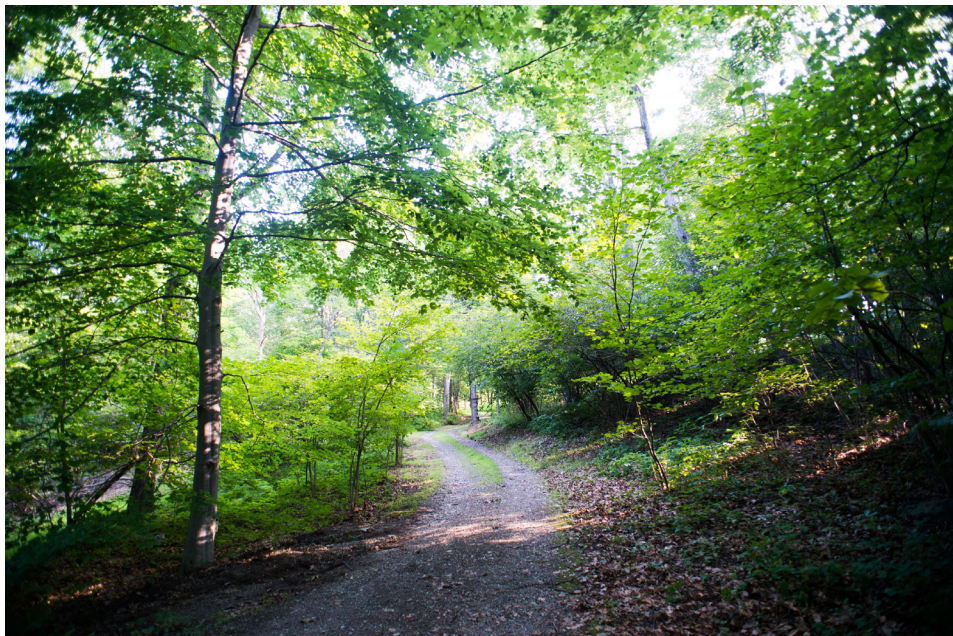


A pair of riders on the trails at Wethersfield. credit: Connecticut Photo.



The Magical Trails of Wethersfield

The Wethersfield trails are open to the public nearly year-round, with the exception of hunting season in Dutchess County. During the winter months, trails are groomed for cross-country skiing, and between spring-fall, Wethersfield staff, in partnership with the Millbrook Hunt and Elk Ravine Farm, maintain the trails for both hiking and equestrian use.





Wethersfield Garden Luncheon

The annual Friends of Wethersfield Garden Luncheon has become the most celebrated charity event in Dutchess County, selling out every year. Barbara Tober, this year's honoree, received the Spirit of Wethersfield Award from last year's recipient, Marion de Vogel, for Barbara's tireless devotion to preserving the beauty and accessibility of Wethersfield. Co-chairs included tastemakers Elizabeth Mayhew, Christopher Spitzmiller and Anthony Bellomo, who designed glorious Schumacher tablescapes that looked out on the sprawling countryside surrounding guests. Tim Mayhew proved the most savvy of auctioneers again this year.

Nancy Hathaway, Wethersfield's Board Chair, greeted donors and spoke of the wonderful renaissance underway at Wethersfield today. Wethersfield lauded the Garden Conservancy's support, including the sweeping Cultural Landscape Study that documents the garden's history and its present stresses to guide our preservation efforts. Special thanks to our sponsors: Bank of Millbrook, George T. Whalen Real Estate, Nargi Landscaping, Schumacher and Yellow Frame Farm.



Marion de Vogel embraces Barbara Tober



From left: Olga Sweet, Barbara Tober & Tara Shafer



*Oliver Kennan
& Brooke Kennan*



*Bernadette Murray
& Nancy Hathaway*



*Robert Ruffino, Joseph Singer
& Mish Tworowski*



*Elizabeth Mayhew, Kalliopi Karella Rena,
Barbara Tober & Bernadene Murray*



*Suzanne Clary
& Peter Pennoyer*



*Alease Fisher Tallman
& James Brayton Hall*



*David Stack &
Katleen Vuillet Augustine*



*John McKay, Deanna Mulligan
& John Lombardo*



*Mary Marshall Pierce
& George Whalen IV*



*Richard Rappaport
& Vicki Salnikoff*



*Anthony Bellomo,
Christopher Spitzmiller, Anna Hall
& James Hall*



*Eric Rewilak, Feli Thorne
& David Thierenger*



*Dorsey Waxier
& Richard Armstrong*



*Natasha Blodgett
& Charlie Merison*



*Lacey Schwartz Delgado
& Hilarie Burton Morgan*



*Meghan Klopp, Karen Klopp, Gloria Callen, Willem de Vogel,
Marion de Voge, Deban Flexner, & Nancy Hathaway*



*Fernanda Kellogg
& Kirk Henckels*



*Carolynne Roehm
& Cece Cord*



*Gayle Bontecou
& Becky Thornion*



*Ashley Laracey, Chris Mann
& Charlie Maybew*



*Mary McDonald,
Ashley Whitaker
& Alease Fisher Tallman*



*David Stack, Penny Gorman,
Sarah Stack & Charlie Maybew*



*Troy Schumacher
& Claire Mann*



*Peter Lyden & Kimberly
Driessen Greitzer*



*Keltner de valle,
Meghan Klopp &
Carolina Gunnarsson Kim*



*Christopher Montfort,
Elizabeth Montfort, Jacqueline
Montfort & Alexander Montfort*



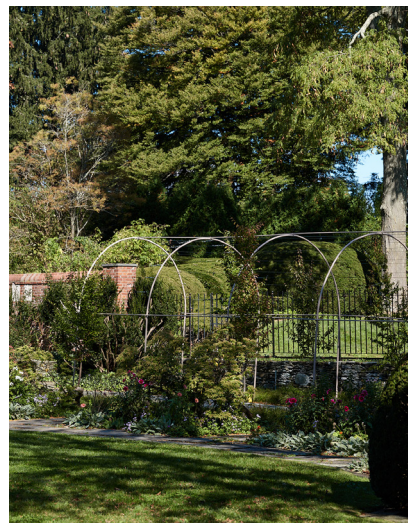
Barbara Toher & Tara Shafer



Tim Maybew

Your Donations at Work

Your donations help address preservation efforts for the care and renewal of aging features, as well as blights adversely affecting the landscape.



Visitors familiar with Wethersfield Garden will recall the magnificence of the Pleached European Beech Tunnel, which by 2022 had become a landscape architecture feature unique amongst all American gardens. Sadly, in 2022, the Beech Tunnel succumbed to a type of ambrosia beetle. The Beech Tunnel was the second iteration of this feature. The original tunnel was planted in 1941 with Amur maple trees. When the maples trees failed in 1973, Mr. Stillman turned to the European Beech trees. In 2022, the American Hornbeam Tunnel was planted. The Hornbeam is a native tree more resistant to disease.



Two of the four columnar Weeping Beeches which have anchored Wethersfield's East Garden for decades have died, also ravaged by the ambrosia beetle. We expect the remaining healthy columnar beech trees to eventually succumb. In choosing our replacement tree, we intend to replicate the weeping beeches' aesthetic role in the garden, while taking into account the long-term sustainability of the new trees.



The iconic Belvedere temple needs major repairs to address a leaking roof and subsequent water damage to the ceiling.

Community Partnerships

Building and maintaining partnerships with a diverse range of organizations in our community is an important part of the work we do at Wethersfield. This year, we were honored to again partner with:

- ✿ The Garden Conservancy
- ✿ Dutchess Land Conservancy
- ✿ Garden Club of America
- ✿ The Millbrook Garden Club
- ✿ The Millbrook School
- ✿ Stanford Community Nursery School
- ✿ Waterman Bird Club

We were thrilled to welcome new organizations including:

- ✿ Cultural Landscape Foundation
- ✿ Dutchess Day School
- ✿ Millbrook Early Childhood Education Center
- ✿ Maplebrook School
- ✿ Perfect Earth Project
- ✿ The Stanford Community Garden

Wethersfield's horticulture staff led tours for more than a dozen separate Garden Clubs throughout the Tri-State area.

We look forward to expanding our connections within the community in 2024.



Wethersfield recently surveyed donors for their input on perceptions of Wethersfield in recent years and to solicit feedback on how we can do more for our shared community. The response was overwhelmingly positive. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

Key highlights include:

Wethersfield is most admired and supported because of:

- ✿ The overall beauty of the estate
- ✿ Conservation, including both land preservation and wildlife habitat
- ✿ The formal gardens
- ✿ Cultural Activities
- ✿ Hiking, riding and cross-country skiing activities across the trails

The following represents Wethersfield's highest attributes, in order:

- ✿ Natural beauty
- ✿ Worth saving and preserving for future generations
- ✿ Elegant
- ✿ Serene
- ✿ Historic Property
- ✿ Open to the Community
- ✿ Gracious

78% or respondents cite that their personal impression and appreciation of Wethersfield has “grown” in the last few years.

Nearly all respondents felt their donations have an impact, are appreciated by the organization, and are well invested.

88% feel Wethersfield is doing an “Excellent” or “Very Good” job for the community.

With Profound Thanks to Our Generous Donors

Listings include gifts received between November 2022 and October 2023.

Conservators \$25,000+

The Budnik Family
Elizabeth and John Budnik
Nancy Hathaway
Little Rest Fund
Jacqueline and Oakleigh Thorne
Barbara Tober

Stewards of Wethersfield \$10,000 – \$24,999

Anonymous
Sarah Buttrick and Hugo Cassirer
Judy and Russell Carson
Anne and Farnham Collins
Marion and Willem de Vogel
Meghan and Adam Klopp
Karen and John Klopp
Jill and Peter Kraus
Claire and Christopher Mann
Elizabeth and Timothy Mayhew
Jacqueline Montfort
Kelly A. Morgan
Deanna and Stephen Mulligan
Candace Platt
Kalliope and Michael Rena
Robbianne Mackin and Eric Roberts
Christopher Spitzmiller and Anthony Bellomo
Alexander Stillman
Kathleen Vuillet Augustine
Robert Wilder Jr.

Gatekeepers \$5,000 – \$9,999

Anonymous
Cece Cord
Jacqueline and David Dase
John Lansing Johnson Teal
Lily Johnson White
Brooke and Oliver Kennan
Carolina Gunnarsson Kim and Soo Kim
Laureen and Ragnar Knutsen
Ronald L. Linclau
Holly Kelly and Andrew Lipsky
Caroline and Guy Merison
Robert Model
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