

# The Garden Conservancy News



Spring 2025

Anne Spencer  
Documentary Film  
to Premiere at  
the Smithsonian

PAGE 5

A Weekend of  
Garden Events  
in Detroit

PAGE 7





Caption



# The Garden Conservancy

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The mission of the Garden Conservancy is to preserve, share, and celebrate America's gardens and diverse gardening traditions for the education and inspiration of the public.

## The Garden Conservancy

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## From the President and CEO

As vibrant colors return to our landscapes, I reflect on the inherent promise of renewal that this season brings. It is a time of growth, blossoming, and celebrating the enduring beauty of the natural world — a theme that runs throughout our upcoming events, which I am thrilled to share with you.

On May 4, the Garden Conservancy will premiere *Earth, I Thank You: The Garden and Legacy of Anne Spencer* at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. This documentary celebrates Spencer's remarkable life and the vital role her garden played as a center for creativity and civil rights activism. Join us for the screening and a panel discussion. Registration will open soon at [gardenconservancy.org/films](https://gardenconservancy.org/films). Read more about the premiere on page 5.

On June 13-15, we invite you to experience the Detroit Garden Weekend. This three-day series of events features a guided exploration of the Oudolf Garden Detroit on historic Belle Isle; exclusive access to private gardens through Open Days, and a Garden Masters Series event that visits the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Turkel House, highlighting the connection between architecture and landscape. See the article on page 7 to read more about these exciting events in Michigan.

After a successful kickoff to our National Speaking Tour in West Palm Beach, FL, in early March, we are proud to announce that acclaimed photographer Ngoc Minh Ngo will continue the tour celebrating her new book, *Roses in the Garden*, with five more appearances across the country this spring. See page 11 for details.

This year, we also mark the 100th anniversary of our founder Frank Cabot's birth. His visionary leadership, rooted in a dedication to preserving America's horticultural treasures, remains the cornerstone of our work. His gardens, Stonecrop and Les Quatre Vents (site of a sold-out Society of Fellows tour in July!) continue to inspire and educate us. Read our tribute to Cabot on page 9.

This spring offers a rich assortment of opportunities to celebrate gardens and their profound impact on culture, history, and our individual lives. We invite you to join us in embracing this season of renewal and rediscovering the power of gardens to connect, inspire, and transform.

Thank you for your support,

James Brayton Hall, *President and CEO*



This page: An unpublished poem by Anne Spencer written on a page of Dreer's Garden Book of 1931. Opposite page: *Anemone japonica* at the Anne Spencer Garden House and Museum. Cover: Peonies welcome visitors down a path at Spencer's garden in Lynchburg, VA.





Clockwise from top: The robin egg blue pergola is a focal point of the Spencer Garden and Museum. Anne Spencer in her garden in 1930. 1313 Pierce St., the site of the garden and museum.



# Premiere: Anne Spencer Documentary

## *Earth, I Thank You* to Debut at the Smithsonian

The Garden Conservancy will premiere its new documentary film, *Earth, I Thank You: The Garden and Legacy of Anne Spencer*, on May 4, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC). This premiere, a significant recognition of Spencer's enduring legacy, will take place in the museum's esteemed Oprah Winfrey Theater, followed by a panel discussion.

This premiere at the NMAAHC, a national treasure dedicated to telling the rich and complex stories of the African American experience, underscores the profound importance of Anne Spencer's contributions to American history and culture. It's a testament to the power of her life and work, and a remarkable opportunity to share her story with a wider audience.

The 35-minute film, made possible by the Suzanne and Frederic Rheinstein Fund for Documentary Films, and with Conservancy Board Member Kate Cordsen serving as its Executive Producer, explores the remarkable life and garden of Spencer, a prominent Harlem Renaissance poet, civil rights advocate, and passionate gardener. Her garden in Lynchburg, VA, served as both her personal sanctuary and a vibrant hub for leading intellectuals, artists, and activists of the era, including Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, Thurgood Marshall, George Washington Carver, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

*Earth, I Thank You* chronicles the evolution of this nationally significant cultural landscape, from private retreat to a celebrated historic site. The film beautifully highlights the profound connection between gardens, history, and community. Spencer's home and garden are rightfully listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Following the screening, **Pamela Governale**, the Garden Conservancy's Director of Preservation and Producer of the film, will introduce a panel of speakers. **Dr. Carlyn Ferrari**, author, Spencer scholar and Assistant Professor of English at Seattle University, will moderate a discussion with:

- **Brent Leggs**, Executive Director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund and Senior Vice President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- **Kevin Young**, Andrew W. Mellon Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture
- **Shaun Spencer-Hester**, Executive Director of the Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum
- **David and Michael Udris**, filmmakers
- **James Brayton Hall**, President and CEO of the Garden Conservancy

This is an extraordinary opportunity to engage with leading experts and delve deeper into Spencer's life, the significance of her garden, and the importance of preserving such vital cultural spaces.

The premiere is free and open to the public, though advance registration is required. Visit [gardenconservancy.org/films](https://gardenconservancy.org/films) to register and view the film's trailer.

*Earth, I Thank You* is the latest gem in the Garden Conservancy's documentary program, which aims to capture the essence of gardens and their historical significance. The film uses archival materials, interviews, letters, and evocative visual storytelling to create a multi-dimensional portrait of Spencer's garden and its crucial role in her creative life during a pivotal period in

American history. It also illuminates her significant literary legacy and her dedicated work as a civil rights advocate, including her role in opening the Lynchburg, VA, chapter of the NAACP.

Spencer's garden is considered one of the most significant preserved African American gardens in the United States. It features "Edankraal," a writing studio built for her by her husband, Edward. The garden's design, blending original plants and sculptures with found objects, reflects the Spencers' unique artistry. It underwent thoughtful restorations in the 1980s and mid-2000s.

The film features compelling insights from Leggs, Young, Peggy Cornett of Monticello, and Dr. Reuben M. Rainey, among others. Spencer-Hester, Anne Spencer's granddaughter, also appears in the film, offering intimate and moving personal memories of the garden.

"She writes that this garden was half her world, and it really was half her world," Spencer-Hester poignantly shares in the film. "She couldn't vote. She was a Black woman who was very vocal here in this city. It was a place that she used to come to write, and to garden, but also to escape—to get away from the things that were going on outside of this garden gate."

Through documentary film, the Conservancy can preserve the ephemeral nature of a garden and capture the sensory experience of visiting these living works of art. Anne Spencer's garden is extraordinarily important in helping us share a broad and diverse range of American gardening stories, and to do so at NMAAHC makes this an exceptionally special occasion.







## Detroit Garden Weekend

# Enjoy a Curated Mix of Unique Programs in Michigan

Detroit's vibrant garden scene blossoms in the late spring with the **Garden Conservancy's Detroit Garden Weekend**, a three-day celebration, **June 13-15**, that invites garden lovers to immerse themselves in horticulture and landscape design. This unique event—presented in partnership with Oudolf Garden Detroit—offers an exploration of diverse gardens, from a grand public space to the grounds of a Frank Lloyd Wright masterpiece, to rare glimpses at intimate private retreats as part of the Garden Conservancy Open Days™ program. Together, these garden adventures will provide inspiration and insights for every garden enthusiast.

### Here are the individual events that comprise Detroit Garden Weekend:

#### June 13: Exploring the Oudolf Plant Palette for Year-Round Beauty and Interest

The weekend kicks off on Friday, beginning with an exclusive exploration of the Oudolf Garden Detroit on Belle Isle. Join ground crew members Meredith Simpson and Richard Thomas for a captivating session that delves into the design philosophy of renowned Dutch landscape architect Piet Oudolf. Discover the secrets behind his signature plant combinations, which create dynamic visual interest throughout the seasons.

This four-season garden, a rare public Oudolf project in the U.S. (along with iconic spaces like New York's High Line and Chicago's Lurie Garden), highlights the designer's mastery of form and texture. Oudolf thoughtfully designed the 2.5-acre space to reflect the unique character of Belle Isle, incorporating features such as a native wetlands habitat and an experimental rain garden. Fifteen perennial beds display three of his signature planting styles, blended here for the first time anywhere.

Belle Isle itself provides a rich historical backdrop. The city commissioned Frederick Law Olmsted, famed for his design of Central Park, to create a grand public space in the 1880s. While some of Olmsted's vision came to

fruition, the island's landscape reflects a fascinating blend of historical influences.

#### June 14: Open Days Gardens in Wayne and Oakland Counties

Saturday offers a unique opportunity to peek behind the garden gates of private residences through the Garden Conservancy Open Days™ program. Three distinct private gardens in Oakland and Wayne Counties open their gates to the public for one day only, each with a unique story to tell:

- **Enchanting Rose Garden, Grosse Pointe Farms.** A galvanized steel cloister supports climbing roses, creating an enchanted yard. John Cabot and Carefree Beauty roses grow in beds at the drive's end. Planters behind the cloister feature varying annuals based on availability. Tomato trellises, a recent addition, facilitate daily picking for the owners.
- **Resilient Retreat, Detroit.** Witness the transformative power of nature in this urban oasis, which displays the beauty and practicality of native plants, stormwater management, and edible landscaping.
- **Thistledown, Pleasant Ridge.** Experience a formal English garden seamlessly integrated with a 1912 Craftsman bungalow. Admire the meticulously sculpted boxwoods, yews, and serene koi pond, a testament to the owners' dedication and artistic vision.
- **An Urban Refuge for Our Native Friends, Grosse Pointe Park.** This 100-year-old Arts and Crafts house and its gardens honor the legacy of Mary Chase Stratton, known for her iconic Pewabic Pottery studio, and her husband William Stratton. Explore formal gardens and flourishing wild meadows; designed to support local wildlife within an urban setting.

#### June 15: The Most Important Room of a House, The Garden

The weekend culminates on Sunday with an exploration of the interplay between architecture and landscape at the iconic Dorothy H. Turkel House in Detroit's

historic Palmer Woods. This Frank Lloyd Wright-designed residence, the only one within Detroit city limits, offers a unique perspective on how gardens can complement and enhance architectural masterpieces. Completed in 1956, this spacious, two-story home is a rare example of Usonian design. Owners Norman Silk and Dale Morgan, who meticulously restored the house in 2010, will share their insights in conversation with landscape architect Richard Hass.

Visitors can explore the 1.5-acre property, which features four distinct garden areas—meadow, woods, sculpture courtyard, and terrace—each designed to harmonize with Wright's architectural vision. A drinks reception is a perfect finale to a weekend celebrating the art of garden design.

#### Registration information:

**Exploring the Oudolf Plant Palette for Year-Round Beauty and Interest.** Friday, June 13, 4 p.m. \$30 for Garden Conservancy members, \$40 for general admission. Oudolf Garden Detroit, Belle Isle, Detroit. Visit [gardenconservancy.org/events](https://gardenconservancy.org/events) to register.

**Open Days in Wayne and Oakland Counties.** Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. \$5 per garden for Conservancy members, \$10 for general admission. Visit [gardenconservancy.org/opendays](https://gardenconservancy.org/opendays) to purchase tickets. Garden addresses will be released to ticket holders.

**Garden Masters Series: The Most Important Room of a House, The Garden.** Sunday, June 15, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. \$120 for Conservancy members, \$140 for general admission. The Turkel House, Palmer Woods, Detroit. Visit [gardenconservancy.org/events](https://gardenconservancy.org/events) for more information and tickets.







# Frank Cabot: A Centennial Celebration of a Horticultural Visionary

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the birth of our founder, Francis Higginson Cabot, on August 6, 1925, the Garden Conservancy reflects not only on his extraordinary life but also on the profound impact he had on the landscape of American horticulture. Frank Cabot was not just a visionary; he was the very seed from which our organization sprouted. His passion for gardening, deep understanding of the transformative power of gardens, and unwavering commitment to preservation formed the bedrock of our mission. This centennial year offers a special opportunity to celebrate his enduring influence on the world of gardens.

His inspiration for establishing the Garden Conservancy stemmed from a profound realization that America's most extraordinary private gardens were vanishing artifacts. His visit to Ruth Bancroft's remarkable dry garden in Walnut Creek, CA, served as a catalyst for the organization's founding.

Cabot understood gardens are more than mere collections of plants; they are living museums, reflecting the creativity, passion, and dedication of their creators and gardeners. He believed these gardens deserved to be cherished and preserved. He envisioned an organization that would not only rescue these gardens (some from neglect) but also foster a deeper appreciation for the art of horticulture and the importance of stewardship.

Two gardens he created with his wife, Anne—Stonecrop in Cold Spring, NY, and Les Quatre Vents in La Malbaie, Quebec—stand as enduring monuments to his horticultural genius. Stonecrop, with its diverse collection of plants and its emphasis on experimentation, embodies Cabot's belief in the power of horticultural exploration. Les Quatre Vents, a sprawling landscape of breathtaking beauty, highlights his mastery of design and his ability to integrate diverse horticultural elements into a harmonious whole. These gardens, born from Cabot's

passion and vision, continue to inspire and educate visitors from around the globe. As we celebrate the centennial of his birth, these gardens serve as living memorials to his vision.

His book on Les Quatre Vents, *The Greater Perfection*, received the Council of Botanical and Horticultural Libraries' 2003 Literature Award, and was described as "one of the best books ever written about the making of a garden by its creator" by the Oxford Companion to the Garden. Among the many recognitions he received was the Garden Club of America's 2006 Achievement Award for "the greatest horticultural accomplishment in America in the last half-century."

His hands-on approach, sense of humor, infectious enthusiasm, and unwavering dedication to getting the job done were reasons for his success. He assembled a team of experts, cultivated a network of supporters, and tirelessly advocated for the preservation and visitation of gardens across the country.

The Garden Conservancy has saved countless gardens from disappearance, ensuring that these horticultural masterpieces continue to thrive. From the gardens of Alcatraz to the Longue Vue House and Gardens in New Orleans, the Garden Conservancy has worked to protect these invaluable cultural resources, making them accessible to the public, and inspiring a new generation of gardeners. Today, we see the fruits of Cabot's labor in every garden the Garden Conservancy has helped to preserve.

Cabot's legacy extends beyond the gardens he created and the organization he founded. He instilled in his followers a deep appreciation for the art of gardening and a commitment to preservation. He believed gardens are not just places of beauty; they are also places of learning, inspiration, and reflection.

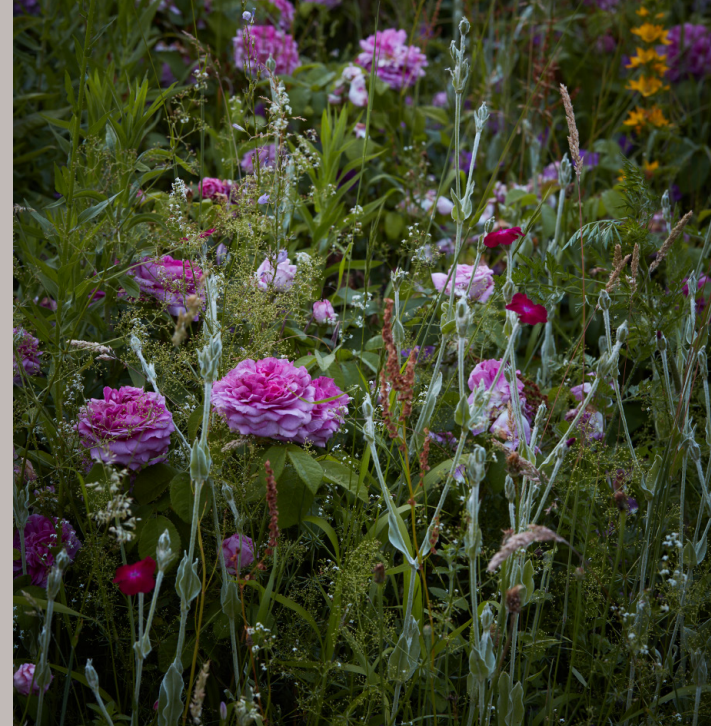
As we celebrate his life and his extraordinary contributions during this centennial year, we at the Garden Conservancy reaffirm our commitment to Frank Cabot's vision. We will continue to preserve and share America's most exceptional gardens, ensuring that they remain vibrant and inspiring spaces for generations to come. The observance of what would have been his 100th birthday is a reminder of the enduring power of his vision and the importance of carrying it forward.



Opposite page: Frank Cabot in Palm Beach, FL in 2005.  
Photo: Jeffrey Langlois

Above: Anne Cabot, Angela Lansbury, Frank Cabot, and Ruth Bancroft at Bancroft's garden in Walnut Creek, CA.







## National Speaking Tour

# Photographer Ngoc Minh Ngo Continues Tour with Five More Appearances

Following a successful launch of the 2025 National Speaking Tour at the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, FL, on March 5, the Garden Conservancy is pleased to announce that celebrated photographer Ngoc Minh Ngo's tour will continue with five additional appearances.

The tour celebrates the release of Ngo's highly anticipated book, *Roses in the Garden: Stories of Treasured Collections* (Rizzoli, Spring 2025).

This year's collaboration with Ngo, a leading photographer of gardens, landscapes, interiors, and botanical arrangements, is truly exceptional. *Roses in the Garden* takes readers on a journey to eleven gardens worldwide, showcasing the diverse ways roses are used and the rich symbolism they embody.

A Vietnamese refugee who grew up in California, Ngo captivated the West Palm Beach audience with her personal story, intertwined with her passion for roses and photography. She shared insights into some of the world's most breathtaking rose gardens, spanning continents and cultures, from England and France to Italy, Spain, Morocco, Japan, and the United States. Attendees enjoyed an engaging illustrated conversation between Ngo and James Brayton Hall, President and CEO of the Garden Conservancy. Their discussion explored the incredible diversity and beauty of the rose, as well as the horticultural artistry it inspires. The event, part of the Daniels Family Garden Lecture, was a fitting and inspiring start to Ngo's national tour.

**Opposite page: clockwise from left: *Roses in Sakura* Kusabue-no-oka, Sakura, Japan; *Roseaie de Berty*, Tauriers, France; and *Hortus Conclusus*, Mallorca, Spain. Photos by Ngoc Minh Ngo**

The tour continues with upcoming lectures at esteemed venues across the country:

**Ebell of Los Angeles | May 6**  
Los Angeles, CA

**Filoli Historic House & Garden | May 7**  
Woodside, CA

**New York School of Interior Design | May 20**  
New York, NY

**Chicago Botanic Garden | June 16**  
Chicago, IL

**Missouri Botanical Garden | June 18**  
St. Louis, MO

Tickets for each event are \$45 for Garden Conservancy members and \$55 for general admission. Registration is available at [gardenconservancy.org/programs](https://gardenconservancy.org/programs). Additional tour details will be announced throughout the year.

The Garden Conservancy National Speaking Tour brings influential figures in the gardening world to audiences nationwide. Since 2018, these tours have showcased the expertise of scholars, authors, and specialists in design, history, research, and preservation.



*The Garden Conservancy's educational programs are generously supported in part by the Coleman and Susan Burke Distinguished Lecture Fund, Courtnay and Terrence Daniels, the Lenhardt Education Fund, and Susan and William McKinley. Additional support is provided by the Celia Hegyi Matching Challenge Grant, Ritchie Battle, the Antonia Breck Fund, Camille Butrus, Michelle and Perry Griffith, Rise S. Johnson, the Krehbiel Family Foundation, Sleepy Cat Farm Foundation, and John S. Troy, FASLA.*



# McKee Botanical Garden is Awarded the Jean and John Greene Prize for Excellence in the Field of American Gardening



Photo: J. Patrick Rice

In December, McKee Botanical Garden in Vero Beach, FL, was awarded the esteemed Jean and John Greene Prize for Excellence in the Field of American Gardening by the Garden Conservancy. This prestigious award, accompanied by a \$45,000 grant, supports the development of a comprehensive, five-year strategic business plan to ensure the garden's continued growth and long-term financial sustainability.

McKee joins an elite group of recipients, following Wethersfield Estate and Garden in Amenia, NY, and Lotusland in Montecito, CA. The prize was established by John Kaul Greene, a former Garden Conservancy board member and a lifelong advocate for exceptional gardens.

Founded in 1932, McKee Botanical Garden was once a thriving tropical oasis featuring innovative greenhouse technology. After a period of decline, the garden was saved from development and has since undergone significant restoration.

Rochelle Wolberg, Executive Director of McKee Botanical Garden, expressed gratitude for the award, stating, "The Garden Conservancy's recognition of McKee's preservation efforts helped McKee to secure National Historic Landmark status and recognition and funding from state, national and international agencies."

The prize has been made possible by a transformational estate gift of nearly \$3 million to the Garden Conservancy from John Kaul Greene, who passed away in 2019, after expressing his intention to create an award to recognize

excellence in American gardening. He is survived by his wife, Jean, who shared with him an appreciation for the ways gardens enrich our lives, an appreciation that deepened during the four years the couple lived in Europe. The Greenes enjoyed gardening at their Lake Forest, IL, home and were longtime supporters of the Chicago Botanic Garden, where John served on the board of trustees for more than half a century.

This award underscores the importance of preserving America's gardens for future generations, a mission that aligns perfectly with The Garden Conservancy's commitment to protecting and celebrating exceptional gardens across the country.

## JEAN AND JOHN GREENE PRIZE AWARD COMMITTEE

**Robert M. Balentine**  
Atlanta, GA

**Shelley Belling**  
Newport Beach, CA

**J. Barclay Collins II**  
New York, NY

**Dorothy H. Gardner**  
Chicago, IL

**Kona A. Gray, FASLA, PLA**  
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**Missy Bailey Fisher**  
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**Diane E. Parish**  
Sausalito, CA

**Barbara Paul Robinson**  
Washington, CT

**Suzanne M. Tucker**  
San Francisco, CA



## Remembering Eric "T" Fleisher

The Garden Conservancy mourns the loss of Eric "T" Fleisher, a pioneer in sustainable horticulture and a valued friend. T's dedication to organic practices, evident in his transformative work at Battery Park City, resonated deeply with our mission and we are grateful that he shared his expertise and passion with us.

T and his wife, Andrea Filippone, have opened their remarkable Jardin du Buis in Pottersville, NJ, for the Open Days program since 2009.

A leader in calling for the restoration and protection of natural resources, T's expertise in soil health was an inspiration to all who visited their garden. Along with Andrea, T founded F2 Environmental Design, where they shared their passion for ecological stewardship.

We extend our deepest condolences to Andrea and their family. T's contributions to horticulture and his unwavering commitment to environmental responsibility will be deeply missed.



## Balentines Honored with Prestigious Garden Club of America Medal

Garden Conservancy Board Chairman Robert Balentine and his wife, Betty, have been honored with the prestigious Cynthia Pratt Laughlin Medal by the Garden Club of America. This esteemed award recognizes their extraordinary contributions to the preservation of the natural world, with a particular focus on the Blue Ridge Mountains. Through the Southern Highlands Reserve in Lake Toxaway, NC, Robert and Betty have worked tirelessly to protect and restore the region's unique ecosystems. The Reserve, which showcases native plants and serves as a hub for research, education, and conservation, exemplifies their commitment to the environment.

The Cynthia Pratt Laughlin Medal is one of the highest honors bestowed by the Garden Club of America, presented annually to individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to environmental protection and the improvement of quality of life. Past recipients include environmental icons such as Wendell Berry, the Pollinator Partnership, and former Nature Conservancy President Patrick Noonan.

Southern Highlands Reserve, located in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is a nationally recognized native plant arboretum and research center. This stunning

120-acre reserve is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of rare and endangered plant species in the high-elevation forests of the region. Through their efforts, the Balentines have made an indelible impact on conservation, education, and research, while also raising awareness about the fragility of the spruce-fir forest ecosystem—one of the most endangered in the United States.

Betty's lifelong dedication to the natural world extends beyond her work with the Reserve. She has also served on the board of the Peachtree Garden Club and the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, and advocates for the publication of important works on the natural world through her role with the Cherokee Garden Library.

Robert's passion for nature runs deep, inspired by years of hiking and camping in the North Carolina mountains and enriched by his family's long-standing horticultural legacy. His father was an avid gardener, and his mother was a respected member of Peachtree Garden Club and a GCA horticulture judge.

The Balentines' dedication to environmental preservation is an inspiring example of how private



citizens can make a lasting impact on the planet. Their work at Southern Highlands Reserve, along with the broader partnerships they've forged, demonstrates the power of collaboration in addressing critical issues like climate change and ecosystem preservation.



## Remembering Dick Button

With deep admiration and affection, we remember Dick Button (1929-2025), international figure skating champion, sports broadcaster and, at his home in New York, a dedicated gardener who welcomed visitors year after year as part of the Garden Conservancy Open Days program.

At their Ice Pond Farm in North Salem, Dick Button and Dennis Grimaldi hosted numerous Open Days, beginning with the very first Garden Conservancy Open Day in 1995. Their garden greeted visitors with meadow and pond views, a kitchen garden, fountains, a bocce court with an allée of crabapples, and a circle garden, reflecting Dick's love of figure skating.

Dick studied architecture, landscape design, and decorative arts at the Attingham Trust in the United Kingdom. An enthusiast of horticulture and a longtime member of the Garden Conservancy Society of Fellows, he shared insights with us on the principles of discipline and creativity in figure skating that informed his garden design.

We're grateful for his involvement in the Garden Conservancy community, for his generosity, and his friendship.



# Meet the Garden Conservancy's Newest Board Members

## KREIS BEALL

Beall, co-founder of Blackberry Farm, is a multi-talented entrepreneur and artist. This Tennessee native's experiences as a hotel proprietor, chef, photographer, interior designer, and traveler reflect her passion for the art of living, love of beauty, and the ability to transform dreams into elegant realities.



Beall curates thoughtful environments and experiences. Her hospitality is legendary, often saying, "the answer is yes... what's the question?" Her family's credo: "Good, better, best" guides her intuitive approach and disciplined execution.

Building on years of design work, Beall founded Blackberry Design. Her projects, from rustic to refined, earned recognition for their approachable style, balancing classic style with modern comfort.

Today, as Director of Design Emeritus for Blackberry Farm Design, she leads a team committed to livable luxury, creating Blackberry Farm's award-winning interiors and select private commissions.

A passionate gardener since 1988, Beall has built three gardens, including the current Blackberry Farm Garden. Her non-profit work includes serving on the boards of the East Tennessee Historical Society, Knoxville Museum of Art, and Great Smoky Mountain Heritage Center. With her husband, Michael White, she is creating a garden at their Maine cottage. They share a love of cooking, hiking, reading, and travel.

## SUSAN DUNLEVY

Dunlevy is a dedicated supporter of the arts, focusing particularly on contemporary and modern art. She serves as a trustee of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and contributes to the National Gallery of Art's collection. Her passion

for the arts extends to supporting impactful exhibitions at institutions like the Southampton Parrish Art Museum.

Dunlevy's commitment to education is deeply rooted. She has served as a trustee at the San Francisco Education Fund and actively supports various educational initiatives, including KIPP charter schools. She also played a significant role in improving classroom learning during her tenure as a trustee at Katherine Delmar Burke School and San Francisco Town School.

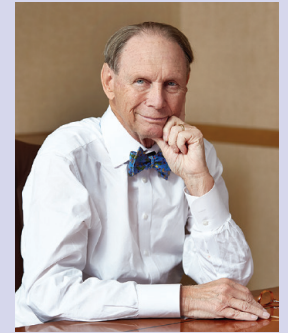
Beyond the arts and education, Dunlevy is an avid gardener, finding joy in cultivating her own gardens and actively taking part in local horticultural societies like the Southampton Rose Society. Dunlevy is a member of the Flower Guild at Bethesda By the Sea Church in Palm Beach, FL, a volunteer group responsible for all flower arrangements for church services. She is also a Fellow at the Garden Conservancy and has led successful garden tours.

Dunlevy is also a former trustee of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and a dedicated supporter of numerous cultural institutions.



## CHARLES "CHUCK" ROYCE

Royce is a Senior Advisor at Royce Investment Partners after retiring from president and CEO of the firm, which he founded in 1972. He received his bachelor's degree from Brown University in 1961 and a master's degree in business administration from Columbia in 1963.



Royce is a fellow emeritus of the Brown Corporation, served three terms as a trustee, has held many leadership positions, and continues to serve on the University's Investment Committee. He has a keen appreciation for the great houses and gardens of the world. He dates his relationship with the Garden Conservancy to his close friendship with Tom and Daisy Wenzel. It was through Tom that Royce met the Garden Conservancy founders, Frank Cabot and Tom Armstrong.

Royce and his wife, Deborah, a longtime trustee of the Garden Conservancy, have enjoyed many Fellows trips over the years, most especially the trip to Les Quatres Vents and the Cabot property in Quebec. Royce was pleased to welcome the Garden Conservancy to Rhode Island this past summer and host a dinner event in their restored barn on their Avondale Farm property, along with a viewing of the garden. He has also hosted the Garden Conservancy's annual cocktail parties at the Knickerbocker Club in New York. Chuck serves on the boards of the Bruce Museum, The Frick Collection, the United Theatre in Westerly, RI, the Compass Rose Society, Berkeley Divinity School, and the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach.



### ELISE (LISA) TRULASKE

Originally from Grosse Pointe Farms, MI, Trulaske lives in St. Louis, MO, with her husband, Steve, two dachshunds, and a chocolate lab. They are visited often by their five children! She is an active member of the Garden Club of St. Louis. Lisa and Steve are stewards of their Russell Page designed garden at their home in St. Louis and have enjoyed working with Doug Hoerr on the expansion and redesign of the outer gardens. Lisa and Steve enjoy spending time at their home in Palm Beach, where they are passionate about the gardens designed by Jorge Sanchez.

Trulaske serves on the Board of the Missouri Botanical Garden in her second term, the St. Louis Art Museum (Collections Committee), and the National Poetry Series, which works to ensure the publication of five books of poetry every year.



### CHRISTABEL VARTANIAN

Vartanian was born in southern Florida. She attended Rollins College in Winter Park, FL, and after college she married her husband, Paul, who owned a family jewelry business in New York City. They raised their two children in Far Hills, NJ, and spent summers on Fishers Island, NY. Her love of gardening started in the tropics, but she now enjoys the change of seasons and continues to learn and create gardens. The Garden Conservancy's trips, seminars, and Open Days were a wonderful way to become more knowledgeable about the importance of preservation and the sustainability of our land.

Vartanian is past president of the Board of Trustees of the Far Hills Country Day School. She served as trustee and member of the Executive committee of The Newark Museum and the New Jersey Council of the Humanities. Vartanian also served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Rollins College, and as a member of the Presidential Search Committee. Vartanian currently serves on the Boards of the Fishers Island Conservancy and the Lighthouse Works, an artist's retreat on Fishers Island.

She served as the Chief of Protocol for the State of New Jersey under Governor Christine Todd Whitman, organizing countless events for the Governor, and traveling with her on many international trips.

Vartanian serves as a member of the Kelly Foundation, which grants scholarships to individual students and supports many educational institutions and special projects in Florida.

Vartanian and her husband collect art and recently produced an award-winning book about revered Florida artist A.E. Backus titled *Tropical Light, The Art of A.E. Backus*, which was published by Vendome Press. The book captures the rapidly disappearing, beautiful landscapes of "Old Florida."



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2024 Society of Fellows Tour of Menorca and Majorca.

Photo: Lisa Remby





# The Garden Conservancy

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