

ITALIAN LESSONS: BEATRIX FARRAND IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF AUNT EDITH WHARTON

by CeCe Haydock



Edith Wharton at Sainte-Claire du Chateau in France, ca1930. *Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University*

“I remember long sunlit wanderings on the springy turf of great Roman villas ... the liveliest hours were those spent with my nurse on the Monte Pincio ... There we played, dodging in and out among old stone benches, racing, rolling hoops, whirling through skipping ropes, or pausing out of breath ... Those hours were the jolliest; yet deeper impressions were gathered in walks with my mother on the daisy-strewn lawns of the Villa Doria-Pamphili, among the statues and stone-pines of the Villa Borghese ... What clung closest ... when I thought of the lost Rome of my infancy? It is hard to say; perhaps simply the warm scent of the box hedges on the Pincian, and the texture of weather-worn sun-gilt stone.”(1)

What a descriptive, evocative passage by one of the great American writers, Edith Wharton. Her prolific career as a fiction writer is well known. But her unusual ability both to write and to observe puts her at the forefront of Italian garden critics as well. Even today her book *Italian Villas and Their Gardens* (1904) remains a scholarly resource on the subject. As only the second book in English on the subject, her book reawakened an interest in the Italian style of garden design, which had been subjugated to the naturalistic and Victorian styles for the past century. Her deep knowledge of classics and history, as well as her childhood living in Europe and her adult travels throughout the Continent, all contributed to her expertise in Italian gardens.

Beatrix Farrand, the only female founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects, was not only Wharton’s niece but also her close friend. They were only ten years apart in age, and they shared a deep love of books, knowledge, and gardens. During Farrand’s 1895 tour of Europe with her mother, Minnie Jones, she visited the major villas in and around Rome, recommended by Wharton. Wharton had traveled extensively in Italy and possessed a deep historic background of art, gardens, and villas.

In late March of 1895, a twenty-three-year-old Beatrix Jones arrived with her mother in Rome and joined Edith and her husband, Teddy Wharton. The mother-daughter couple had just embarked on Beatrix’s six-month “Grand Tour” of Europe. This was the second important step in Farrand’s education as a landscape gardener: for the previous year, she had studied under Professor Charles Sargent of Boston’s Arnold Arboretum, where she learned botany, surveying, and horticulture.(2) Sargent, who recognized Farrand’s talent and love for plants, was an early supporter of women in landscaping, and he encouraged Farrand to visit Europe to understand further natural beauty and how nature and art could produce successful gardens.(3) With her aunt to guide her, she would further augment the training that led to her opening her professional office in 1896. She was surrounded by two of the best teachers in their respective fields.

During her European tour, Farrand visited, measured, and wrote about many examples of classical gardens design. While her written prose never rivaled her aunt’s, her unpublished “Book of Gardening, 1893-1895” includes thorough and thoughtful observation of gardens in and around Rome, Naples, Calabria, the Amalfi Coast, Florence, Milan, and the Italian Lakes. Her citation of the plant material is keen, as was her commentary on the lack of design in certain gardens. “The garden was as usual a disappointment in the landscape gardening way, but some plants were interesting & some used in rather new ways.”(4) This experience greatly sharpened her ability to see, visualize, and critique elements of gardens that worked—and did not work. She also commented on the “Englishization” of various gardens, a phrase most likely borrowed from her aunt, who loathed the naturalistic gardening style. (On Villa Doria Pamphili, Wharton unloads: “but all this ... was turned into an English park in the first half of the nineteenth century. One of the finest of Roman gardens fell a sacrifice to this senseless change.”)(5)

One Roman house and garden, Palazzo Colonna, is described at length by Farrand and exemplifies her careful examination of a house and garden. With Edith (“P.W.” or Pussy Wharton, as noted in her journal) and we presume her mother, Farrand visited the interior one Saturday, describing in detail the palazzo, including its enormous decorated salon with marble floors. The following week, they returned “after a painful society morning in the American colony”(6) to visit the gardens. Farrand specifically mentioned entering the garden from the rear on Via del Quirinale. The grand Baroque entrance staircase was a double switchback set of steps, so similar to the same steps that her aunt Edith and architects designed at The Mount, demonstrating Wharton’s absorption and adoption of classical design features. Continuing through the garden, Farrand observed a central fountain, with its radiating paths. There was room for “good open space around the fountain,” allowing an area for people to sit, rest, and listen to the sound of the water. She noted that camellia bushes were placed in “inappropriate places” in one of the terraced parterres; that some of the terraces were in dilapidated condition; and that the vegetable garden was accompanied by weeds. Other specific observations noted an indentation in a retaining wall, which might have housed a cistern or garden feature, and cited the typical Italian cypresses growing on a top terrace. Finally, she commented on the actual size of the hedging and the importance of siting in a garden, “with high box hedges on either side of it, & a beautiful view of Rome over the right side.”(7)

Farrand’s attention to human use, details, maintenance, and plant placement all boded well for a successful career as a landscape architect. Use of individual details, such as a fountain with radiating paths, was a common theme in many of her—and other designers’—classical gardens. Tall, columnar shrubs added important foliage accents to her plant palettes, and interesting walls and staircases, such as those seen at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC, provided pleasant passage on steep sites.

The friendship and collegial sharing of design and horticulture of Beatrix Farrand and her aunt Edith continued for the remainder of Wharton’s life, at both their residences. At The Mount, Farrand provided drawings for the entrance piers, a vegetable garden, and the long, woodsy driveway. The two women’s common belief that a female of their social status should *and* could think critically, as well as design or write creatively, contributed to a deep affection and respect between these two remarkable artists.

NOTES

1. Edith Wharton, *A Backward Glance* (New York: Touchstone, 1998), Chapter 2, “Knee-High,” 2.2.
2. Cynthia Zaitzevsky, “A Career in Bud: Beatrix Jones Farrand’s Education and Early Gardens,” *Journal of the New England Garden History Society*, 6 (Fall, 1998).
3. Judith B. Tankard, *Beatrix Farrand: Public Gardens, Private Landscapes* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2009), 18-19.
4. Beatrix Farrand, “Book of Gardening, 1893-1895,” in *The Collected Writings of Beatrix Farrand*, ed. Carmen Pearson (Hanover, NH and London: University Press of New England, 2009), 40.
5. Edith Wharton, *Italian Villas and their Gardens* (New York: The Century Co., 1904), 120.
6. Farrand, “Book of Gardening, 1893-1895,” 24.
7. Ibid.

Additional source: Hermione Lee, *Edith Wharton* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

DOROTHY WHITNEY STRAIGHT ELMHIRST (1887-1968)

By Nick Opinsky

Every day, in the gardens of the Dartington Hall Trust in Devon, England, locals, visitors, musicians and artists alike enjoy the splendor of Beatrix Farrand’s and Dorothy Whitney Straight Elmhirst’s remarkable creation. After a stroll through this spectacular place of refuge, one cannot help but feel connected to one’s self and what it means to be human.

My great-grandmother, Dorothy Whitney Elmhirst (1887-1968), was an extraordinary pioneer and visionary of her time. The youngest child of William Collins Whitney and Flora (Payne) Whitney, Dorothy grew up tremendously wealthy in a “palace of art” in New York City. From a young age, she was exposed to the political and social elite of America’s Gilded Age, as her father was one of the chief financiers of the development of the railroads and Secretary of the Navy during President Grover Cleveland’s administration.

Tragedy shaped much of Dorothy’s early life. First she lost her beloved mother at age six, then her step-mother at fourteen and her father at seventeen, making her at the time one of the wealthiest women in the U.S. This ability to be truly financially independent, coupled with an innate curiosity and empathy for those less fortunate, defined her work throughout the course of her life. While many of her peers were acutely concerned with social class and position, grand parties and homes, Dorothy was different. Whether it was campaigning for women’s suffrage or providing refuge for New York City’s immigrant and low-income populations, Dorothy’s contribution to advancing progressive causes and championing the lives of others has been consistently understated in contemporary histories.

In her first marriage, to Willard Dickerman Straight, Dorothy found a wonderful partner and friend. Born of more modest means, Willard was an extraordinary business leader, diplomat, and respected intellectual. In his short life span of thirty-eight years, Willard was the Consul General of Mukden (now Shenyang) in China; a leading figure at J.P. Morgan & Co.; and a founder of India House, a respected New York City private club and gathering place for leaders in foreign trade. As a couple, Willard and Dorothy jointly founded the *New Republic* magazine, a political publication that is still widely respected for its editorial leadership.

The Straights resided in a spectacular home called Applegreen in Old Westbury, New York. Applegreen was built on Dorothy’s father’s 630-acre estate and given as a wedding present to her brother Harry Payne Whitney and his wife, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who later founded the Whitney Museum of American Art. Upon William C. Whitney’s death in 1904, Applegreen was passed on to Dorothy. Together, Dorothy and Willard commissioned Delano & Aldrich to make alterations to the house and Beatrix Farrand to create a magnificent Chinese garden, in harmony with the natural surroundings.

On December 1st, 1918, Dorothy was once again struck by tragedy. Willard succumbed to pneumonia during the Spanish Influenza pandemic, as he was making arrangements on behalf of the U.S. delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. Already an orphan, Dorothy was widowed with three children at the age of thirty-one. “Millions of people were suffering the same kind of personal loss that I was,” she remembered. “In fact my heart-ache seemed as nothing in the light of the world’s tragedy—and I learned what is for me a great truth—that there is no real separation for those who love. In the world of spirit, if one can reach it even for a moment, we find a different sense of Time, and we know that love is eternal and everywhere.”

The years between 1918 to 1925 were decidedly formative for Dorothy. She wrote, “The hardest period of my life followed Willard’s death ... I plunged into work, and immersed myself in projects of many kinds.” She played a leading role on the organizing committee and first board of directors of the New School for Social Research in New York. However, it was at Willard Straight’s alma mater, Cornell University, that Dorothy stepped onto the path which would take her to her second husband and to Devon, England. In his will, Willard directed Dorothy to “do such a thing or things for Cornell University as she may think most fitting and useful to make the same a more human place.” The result was one of the first student union buildings in the U.S., Willard Straight Hall.

Through her activities at Cornell, Dorothy met her second husband, Leonard Knight Elmhirst, a British-born Cornell agriculture student. In Leonard Dorothy found a partner who shared her belief in the transformative power of education. Together they decided to establish an institution that would embody their philosophy of living and learning through art and land. Once they were married, Leonard began the quest to find a suitable site for their shared school. He was particularly keen on India, given that much of his worldview and philosophy had been shaped by his close friendship with Rabindranath Tagore. However, both Leonard and Dorothy agreed that England was the right place to undertake such an “experiment.”

After a comprehensive search of potential sites, Leonard came across Dartington Hall, a medieval hall and estate which had been owned by the same family, the Champenownes, for 366 years. For Leonard, it was “like love at first sight,” and the couple purchased the estate for £30,000 in 1925. After the purchase came the formidable task of refurbishing the hall and the estate to serve as a school. In 1933 Dorothy Elmhirst hired her former garden designer, Beatrix Farrand. With only three short visits to Dartington, each less than a fortnight, Farrand created highly detailed plans and instructions for how to transform the gardens to be the “English fellow” of Dumbarton Oaks. The result was Dartington’s magnificent courtyard, the only example of Beatrix Farrand’s work outside of the U.S.

The Dartington Hall School is widely viewed in Great Britain, and in some respects globally, as one of the first truly progressive educational institutions, with an enduring focus on humanism. The school attracted some of the brightest thinkers, artists and creators of its time, including Michael Chekhov, Walter Gropius, Imogen Holst, George Howe, Bernard Leech and Henry Moore. During the Second World War, the Elmhirsts welcomed Jewish and Spanish refugees to work and study on the estate. The school and the estate were also catalysts for the creation of important British institutions, including the National Health Service and the Arts Council.

When reflecting on the anniversary of Dartington’s founding forty-five years later, Dorothy said that the purpose of the Dartington experiment was “to create a centre in the countryside where a many-sided life could find expression: a place where living and learning could flourish together; where the practical life was balanced with the activities of the mind and the spirit; where there was reverence for the old and a joy in the new; where you could live with beauty always; and where human values would be respected above all others—care and respect for the individual, concern for one another, and a sense of responsibility for our neighbour.”

Dartington continues to be “not one thing, but a complex unity of activities.” The Trust is a catalyst for social change as evidenced by its social justice programs, which include providing opportunities for inner-city youth to experience the wonder of the British countryside; support programs for refugees and asylum seekers; and a partnership with an organization that provides job training and opportunities in agriculture for ex-prisoners. The arts continue to be central to the Trust’s philosophy, highlighted by the Dartington International Summer Music School and Festival, which brings together world-class musicians from all over the world in a space to learn, grow and perform together. There are also emerging spaces for artists across the estate, a wide variety of theater and musical productions throughout the year, and a literary festival that takes place every summer. Schumacher College, an internationally renowned learning community offering ecology-centered masters programs and short courses, is also central to the estate’s mission.

In a society obsessed with technology and with an increasing disconnect from nature, form and beauty, we need places like Dartington and inspirational figures like my great-grandmother, Dorothy Whitney Straight Elmhirst, more than ever. I am inspired every day by how she worked tirelessly to advocate for others, to strengthen and develop institutions, and to create a place where people can feel connected to their own humanity and life’s purpose. Dartington and other institutions were the result of her convictions, humility and ability not to see people who were different from her as “others.” To me, there is nowhere else better than a garden to remove the distinctions between ourselves and the world we inhabit. I invite you all to visit Dartington, the splendor of Devon and to see a remarkable example of harmony by Beatrix Farrand.

DARTINGTON HALL, DEVON, ENGLAND



Dartington Hall was an estate in Devon, England, that dated from the 14th century. Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst purchased it in 1925 and opened a progressive school on the grounds. In 1934 Dorothy Elmhirst hired Beatrix Farrand to connect the estate's several gardens and terraces. Farrand worked at Dartington from 1934-1939, in particular creating a magnificent courtyard and landscape. Her designs used native plants for borders, and she also planted ornamental shrubs and climbing plants. These photographs of Dartington Hall were given to Farrand by Dorothy Elmhirst. *Courtesy Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley*



2019 BEATRIX FARRAND SOCIETY PROGRAMS

Programs are held in the restored barn at
Garland Farm unless otherwise noted.

“SELECTING FRUIT TREES FOR AN EDIBLE LANDSCAPE”

RENAE MORAN

Monday, June 24, 4:00 pm

Renae Moran will talk about the many varieties of fruit trees that can be grown in Maine. She will share her experiences, both good and bad, over eighteen years of testing tree fruits at the University of Maine’s Highmoor Farm. After her presentation, she will answer questions about fruit tree care and any other issues in the orchard.

“PHENOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE”

ABRAHAM MILLER-RUSHING

Monday, July 22, 4:00 pm

Abraham Miller-Rushing will discuss how the timing of phenological events, or cyclical natural phenomena, is changing in response to climate change. He will explain what those changes mean for people and ecosystems, focusing on Acadia, and the vital role that gardens have in our understanding of phenology and climate change. Miller-Rushing is the Science Coordinator for Acadia National Park, and he will discuss how you and your friends can participate and contribute your observations of phenology to important scientific research here in Acadia and globally.

Annual Lecture

“ELLEN SHIPMAN AND THE AMERICAN GARDEN”

JUDITH TANKARD

Saturday, August 3, 4:00 pm

Gates Auditorium, College of the Atlantic

No admission fee

Ellen Shipman (1869-1950), a contemporary of Beatrix Farrand, was famous for designing lush gardens as well as for training women in her thriving New York City office. During her forty-year career she designed over 600 gardens from New England to the Midwest and the South. Her gardens were renowned for their dense plantings and charming architectural features. Judith Tankard, a landscape historian and preservation consultant, will discuss Shipman’s remarkable life and some of her major commissions that have been recently restored, such as the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Longue Vue House and Gardens, and the Sarah P. Duke Gardens.

The Beatrix Farrand Society Achievement Award & Lecture

ADAM GREENSPAN

Tuesday, August 6, 4:00 pm

The Turrets, College of the Atlantic

No admission fee

Adam Greenspan is a directing partner at PWP Landscape Architecture and has been the lead designer on a wide range of projects including public parks, campuses, mixed use developments, competitions and estates. Adam’s background in studio art and sociology combined with years of horticultural practice as a certified California nurseryperson support an integrated approach to design and allow him to develop projects from many angles. Adam has focused on integrating regenerative processes and ecological function within projects firm-wide as well as deepening PWP’s emphasis on living systems and concepts within each project design. He has collaborated extensively with architects, artists, community groups

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PROGRAM PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

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ADAM GREENSPAN CONTINUED . . .

and public and private owner groups, as well as sub-consultant experts, in the process of realizing exceptional built work. He has lectured at various academic and cultural institutions including the University of California at Berkeley; the University of Arkansas; the National Building Museum in Washington, DC; Greenbuild Conference; Cities Alive Conference; Skyrise Greenery Conference in Singapore; Living Futures Conference; and ASLA National conventions. Adam has also served as a guest critic at the University of California at Berkeley, the University of California at Davis, the University of Pennsylvania, and Harvard Graduate School of Design. Adam has served on public art selection panels for the City of San Jose and the City of Santa Monica. He is the immediate past president of the Landscape Architecture Foundation, and he holds a BA, with honors, from Wesleyan University and a Masters in Landscape Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania. Adam’s recent projects include: Glenstone, a museum and 230-acre art and nature park in Potomac, MD; Salesforce Transit Center Park, a new 5.4-acre public park and botanical garden on the roof of a multimodal transit center in downtown San Francisco; Jewel Changi Airport, a 6-acre subtropical landscape garden in a state of the art glass conservatory; the Newport Beach Civic Center Park in Newport Beach, California; Constitution Gardens on the National Mall in Washington, DC; and Marina Bay Sands Integrated Resort, Singapore.

“THE FOODSCAPE REVOLUTION — MAINE EDITION”

BRIE ARTHUR

Monday, August 19, 4:00 pm

With over a decade of experience as a grower and propagator, Brie Arthur has fine-tuned the technique of foodscaping, a sustainable landscape practice that embraces beauty and bounty. Learn with her how pairing edibles in a traditional ornamental landscape increases biodiversity and adds purpose to everyday spaces. Focusing on plants that thrive in Maine, Arthur will explain how to layer hardy perennials and natives in with your favorite vegetables. She will demonstrate easy foodscaping, including how to plant a bed edge to deter browsing mammals. Her fast-paced, informative presentation will leave attendees inspired and ready to foodscape.

“ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN COASTAL COMMUNITIES”

ESPERANZA STANCIOFF

Monday, August 26, 4:00 pm

Esperanza Stancioff will explore the realities of Maine’s changing climate, discussing current research, ways our climate might change in the future, and adaptations to those changes. She will focus on coastal and marine areas of concern, telling the story through participatory research and projects, as well as highlighting citizen science programs, including “Signs of the Seasons: A New England Phenology Program.” Stancioff has worked at the University of Maine for thirty years designing and implementing applied research and educational programs for high-priority areas in marine and coastal ecosystems. She is a member of the Marine Extension Team, with University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Maine Sea Grant, and she currently serves as lead educator for both organizations in climate change adaptation.

“NATIVE PLANTS FOR NEW ENGLAND GARDENS”

MARK RICHARDSON

Monday, September 16, 4:00 pm

New England is home to thousands of native plants, and many of them are great choices for the garden. Join an informative discussion with Mark Richardson to learn about the importance of native plants in supporting ecosystems and how to choose the right ones for your particular piece of paradise. Richardson is Director of Horticulture for Tower Hill Botanic Garden in Boylston, MA. Prior to joining the staff at Tower Hill, he served as Botanic Garden Director for New England Wild Flower Society, where he oversaw Garden in the Woods and Nasami Farm native plant nursery. He has a passion for ecological horticulture and native plants, and he is co-author of *Native Plants for New England Gardens* (Globe Pequot, 2018), a handy guide to more than 100 native perennials, trees, shrubs, ferns, grasses, and vines.

PROGRAM ADMISSION:

\$20 FOR NON-MEMBERS / \$10 FOR MEMBERS /
STUDENTS ATTEND FOR FREE

DIANE KOSTIAL MCGUIRE (1933-2019), LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, SCHOLAR, MENTOR

By Judith B. Tankard



Diane McGuire, Howard Monroe, and Judith Tankard at The Eyrie, 2009

The Beatrix Farrand Society mourns the loss of the renowned landscape architect and Farrand scholar, Diane Kostial McGuire, who died on February 28, 2019, after a long illness. Diane was a founding member of the Beatrix Farrand Society in 2004 and a longtime Board member. Born in San Diego, California, Diane was a National Junior Hard Court Tennis champion in 1950, when she was a teenager. She received BA and MA degrees in Landscape Architecture from the University of California, Berkeley. Her years at Berkeley introduced her to landscape history and to Beatrix Farrand, whose archives arrived there in 1955 when McGuire was a student.

McGuire received a fellowship to study visual representations of gardens at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1965. That fellowship led to her appointment as the first director of the Radcliffe Seminars Program in Landscape Design. It was there that she served as a mentor to many students, opening their eyes to landscape design and the value of women in the field.

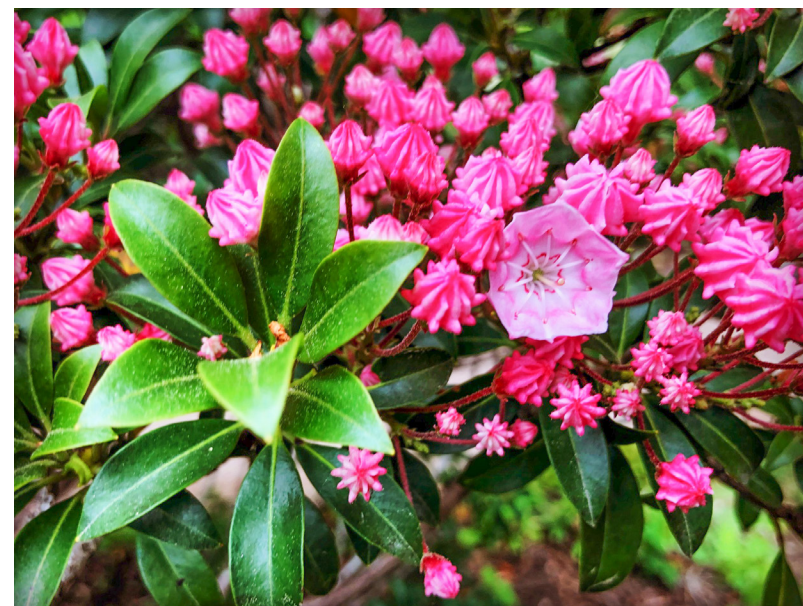
From 1965 to 1981, McGuire was Landscape Architect for Radcliffe College, and later for Wellesley College and Harvard University. In 1976, she and Barbara Watson, a recent graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, founded the award-winning firm McGuire & Watson Landscape Architects. From 1976 until 1981 McGuire served as an advisor at Dumbarton Oaks, and later she was acting director of Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture there. She also taught at the University of Arkansas from 1981 to 1984.

McGuire organized a scholarly symposium, “Beatrix Farrand (1872-1959): Fifty Years of American Landscape Architecture,” for Dumbarton Oaks in 1982. She was the author of *Gardens of America* (1989) and *American Garden Design* (1994), but her most significant contribution to landscape studies was her essay in *Beatrix Farrand’s American Landscapes: Her Gardens and Campuses* (1985), which brought wider recognition to Farrand and the subsequent restoration of her gardens. McGuire received several awards, including a Distinguished Alumni Award from UC Berkeley and an honorary PhD from Boston Architectural College.

For many years, Diane lived and gardened in Little Compton, Rhode Island, where she and Barbara Watson entertained scores of admirers and fledgling landscape historians, including myself. I first met Diane in 1986 when she returned to teach at the Radcliffe Seminars, and thanks to Diane I was swept away by landscape history. I also had the pleasure of traveling with her on a garden study tour in England and Scotland, which opened my eyes to the pleasures of garden visiting. Diane’s easy-going charm, and firm convictions, will certainly be missed.

PLANT PROFILE: MOUNTAIN LAUREL (KALMIA LATIFOLIA)

By Matthew Wallhead



Mountain laurel belongs to the *Ericaceae* family of plants, which also includes rhododendrons, azaleas, blueberry and cranberry. It is native to the eastern United States and can be found growing in mid-coast to southern Maine, south to Florida and west to Indiana and Louisiana. It is typically found at edges of woods or water or where light filters through tree canopies. How compact or open a particular plant’s habit forms generally depends on how much light the plant receives and soil conditions. *K. latifolia* is generally considered to be deer resistant. While it is not poisonous to deer it does contain glycosides, a taste deterrent that can discourage feeding.

Mountain laurel’s mature size is typically between five to twelve feet tall with equal spread, although dwarf and semi-dwarf cultivars exist. It has two- to five-inch alternately arranged leaves that are elliptical and clustered near the tips of shoots and have smooth edges. It generally flowers in May or June in Maine. The flowers are showy and generally last two weeks or more. Flower color is normally pink that sometimes fades to white although many variations exist. Its bark is brown-tan in color and can be lightly ridged and furrowed with gnarled and twisted trunks. *K. latifolia* prefers partial shade to full sun. While it will survive in heavy shade, growth tends to be open and blooms will be sparse. It requires cool, moist, acidic soils, much like azaleas, rhododendrons and *Pieris*. Like many related *Ericaceae* species, mountain laurel is evergreen, further adding to its attractiveness for use in gardens.

One of the interesting things about *K. latifolia* is that its flowers employ a catapult mechanism that flings its pollen considerable distances. The stamens appear to be tucked into the corners of the fused petals of the flower. Pollinators, such as bees, and mechanical disturbances, such as wildlife or raindrops, can cause the stamens to be released from their tucked position in the corners of the flowers and catapult the pollen located at the tips of the stamens distances of up to six inches. If you are curious to see this phenomenon yourself, Ned Friedman, Director of the Arnold Arboretum, suggests using a pen or pencil to carefully tap against a stamen to observe a small burst of pollen being released if your timing is right.

Several exceptional specimens of *K. latifolia* ‘Tiddlywinks’ can be found at Asticou Azalea Garden in Northeast Harbor, ME. It has showy clusters of pink flowers and glossy, dark green foliage that is attractive in woodland settings. *K. latifolia* ‘Tiddlywinks’ is hardy from zone 4 in protected locations to zone 9, prefers partial sun and prefers moist soil conditions. It is a semi-dwarf form plant, rarely reaching over three feet tall and wide when mature, making it suitable for use in hedges, woodland gardens and in floral arrangements. Richard Jaynes, a Connecticut plant breeder, is responsible for many of the available cultivars today. Some of his other notable mountain laurel cultivars include: ‘Carol’, ‘Galaxy’, ‘Peppermint’, ‘Snowdrift’ and ‘Yankee Doodle’.

BEATRIX FARRAND & GEORGE B. DORR: THE INEVITABLE CONNECTION

By Ronald H. Epp



Mount Desert Nurseries, between 1906 and 1912. Photo by Richard Rothe. *Printed here with permission of Clark Point Gallery, Southwest Harbor, ME. Original owned by Old York Road Historical Society, Jenkintown, PA.*

The relationship between Beatrix Farrand and her Bar Harbor neighbor, horticulturist George B. Dorr, is a subject too frequently given short attention in public addresses and print-based media.

The usual explanation is that the documentation record is spotty and that little evidence of collaboration or correspondence survives. In the early 1890s, following completion of Farrand's botanical studies with Arnold Arboretum Director Charles S. Sargent, physician S. Weir Mitchell recommended her to Dorr. He tasked her with the restoration of a meadow at the base of Champlain Mountain that was owned by the William Bliss family of Winter Harbor. In his memoirs, Dorr described that as Farrand's "first professional job." At that time, Farrand and Dorr served together on two committees of the Bar Harbor Village Improvement Association: Trees & Plantings, and Roads & Paths. Yet this assessment belies the value of the inferential horticultural evidence recently published by Mount Desert historians.

Before the turn of the century, the Dorr estate, Oldfarm, was considered to be one of the finest gardens on the coast of Maine. Consider the proximity of Oldfarm to Reef Point, a mere fifteen-minute walk south on Main Street for the budding Beatrix Farrand. The largest Bar Harbor estate, Oldfarm's expansive acres included residences, gardens, nurseries, woods—all abutting the Frenchman Bay shoreline. The gardens were newly established by 1883 when Farrand's parents acquired Reef Point, which attracted many guests including Farrand's aunt Edith. She would marry Dorr's Harvard classmate, Teddy Wharton. Both Dorr and Farrand provided input into garden design at the Wharton family home, The Mount, in Lenox, Massachusetts.

By 1893, the adult Beatrix Farrand wrote at length in her journal—with exacting detail and a critical eye—the evidence for judging the Oldfarm fall colors as "a perfect composition." Farrand was attuned to "the garden in relation to the house," the title of a *Garden & Forest* article she would write three years later. She also implied that the Oldfarm topography elevated the prospect of the three Porcupine Islands adjacent to the neighboring Pointe d'Acadie, the estate of George W. Vanderbilt. This view was emphatically repeated much later by Dorr. With shared common interests in landscape, plant diversity, and the opportunities to impose their own sensibilities on Mount Desert Island plant sanctuaries, the friendship between Farrand and Dorr was sustained over their lifetimes. Here he developed "three hardy garden walks" into downtown Bar Harbor, ensuring that the culturally enhanced natural parkscape would be handed down to future generations in a non-degraded state.

The Dorr family had deliberately chosen Oldfarm's hundred-acre site as a vehicle for Frederick Law Olmsted's principles of landscape design. By 1896 twenty acres would become the Mount Desert Nurseries, which Farrand used to meet her clients' expectations. The Oldfarm gardens anticipated her published delineation of "The Garden as a Picture." Oldfarm, one of Farrand's favorite places, was a "watering place" of ideas, where the Dorr had incorporated lessons learned at their family residences outside Boston and through years of travel to gardens on the European continent.

The evidence that Oldfarm influenced Farrand is bolstered by her 1917 *Scribner's Magazine* essay detailing her esteem for Acadia National Park's founder. The article left incomplete how Dorr's passion for park building related to her own ambitions. The best evidence of Dorr's unattributed application of Farrand's support for "plant sanctuaries" is found in the landscape between Dorr and Champlain Mountains: the Sieur de Monts Spring site. Here he developed "three hardy garden walks" into downtown Bar Harbor, ensuring that the culturally enhanced natural parkscape would be handed down to future generations in a non-degraded state.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY HONORS BEATRIX FARRAND

Princeton University recently announced that a courtyard in the heart of the campus will be named for Beatrix Farrand, who helped shape the distinctive look of Princeton's grounds, according to a press release. The Beatrix Farrand Courtyard is located among Henry, Foulke, Laughlin, and 1901 halls.

Farrand was Princeton University's landscape architect from 1912-1943. She helped design the landscaping for the dormitory courtyard that will bear her name, as well as for Princeton's Graduate College, Prospect Gardens, Blair Walk, Hamilton and Holder courtyards, and other areas of campus. She also established a nursery for growing plants that is still in use.

In a February 12 article in the *Daily Princetonian*, Daniel Casey, the university's Coordinating Architect, said that Farrand's influence on Princeton continues today. "She designed the landscapes between buildings, and that in some ways is what makes campus so memorable," he said. "Her landscapes were notable for being very simple and appropriate for campus life." He added that Farrand understood the importance of keeping space open for recreational activities. He also stated, "We use a lot of native plants, which is something that she advocated. She was in tune with sustainability a long time ago."

NEW FILM ON BEATRIX FARRAND WILL SHOW IN BAR HARBOR ON AUGUST 8

"Beatrix Farrand's American Landscapes" is a new documentary film produced by Insignia Films and directed by Stephen Ives. The film follows award-winning public garden designer Lynden B. Miller as she explores the remarkable life and career of Beatrix Farrand. Miller journeys to iconic Farrand gardens, engaging designers, scholars, and horticulturists in a spirited dialogue about the meaning and importance of this ground-breaking early 20th-century woman. Miller's experience as a prominent New York City public garden designer informs this wide-ranging biography of Farrand's life and times.

"Beatrix Farrand's American Landscapes" will be shown at the 1932 Criterion Theatre in Bar Harbor on August 8 at 7:00 pm.

The film's world premiere was held at The Humanities Institute of the New York Botanical Garden in March. There will be a showing on June 1-2 at the Beatrix Farrand Garden at the Bellefield Estate in Hyde Park, New York, as part of a symposium on the future of Farrand's public landscapes. Presenters at the symposium include representatives from Acadia National Park and the Friends of Acadia.

See <https://www.beatrixfarrandgardenhydepark.org/beatrix-farrand-symposium/>

THE INFLUENCE OF FIVE PEOPLE’S PLANTS,
GARDENS AND IDEAS ON BEATRIX FARRAND
by Lois Berg Stack



Beatrix Farrand (1872-1959) was greatly influenced by the five people represented in the 2019 herbarium exhibition. The exhibition explores their personal gardens, the ideas that inspired their gardens, and the plants they grew.

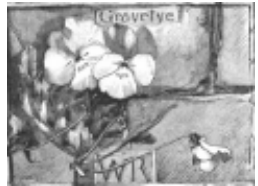
George Dorr (1853-1944) and Beatrix Farrand (1872-1959) had much in common. Both of their families had homes on Mount Desert Island, which they continued to live in as adults. Farrand visited Oldfarm, Dorr’s family home, in her early 20s, and she later purchased plants from Dorr’s Mount Desert Nurseries for her design installations on the island. Both were influenced by Charles Sprague Sargent, advised Edith Wharton on her landscape at The Mount, and collaborated with J. D. Rockefeller Jr. on his carriage roads. Both worked hard on behalf of Acadia National Park.

They shared a love of the local native flora. The 2019 herbarium exhibition includes 17 native plants that Dorr mentioned in his description of the flora of Mount Desert Island, that were also in Farrand’s Reef Point gardens.



Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932) is one of history’s most famous and influential garden writers. Like Farrand, she experimented with plants in her own gardens. Both women loved roses. Farrand and her mother visited Jekyll’s gardens at Munstead Wood in 1895, although it is not clear that they met Jekyll. Later, Farrand honored Jekyll by purchasing and preserving her archives.

Farrand grew ‘Munstead Strain’ lavender and ‘Munstead Strain’ primrose at Reef Point. Both plants were introduced through Jekyll’s efforts at Munstead Wood.



William Robinson (1838-1935) and Beatrix Farrand became friends during Farrand’s several visits to Gravetye Manor.

Farrand adopted gardening ideas that he promoted: planting a mix of native and exotic plants, planting thickly to cover the soil, and naturalizing drifts of perennials. Both Farrand and Robinson preferred single-flowered plants such as clematis and rose.



Charles Sprague Sargent (1841-1927) introduced Farrand to the world of plant study, using the Arnold Arboretum as a classroom.

He introduced a very large number of trees and shrubs to American gardeners through his own travels and research, and the work of people he hired at the arboretum during his 50+ year career. The azaleas and rhododendrons at the arboretum and at his home, Holm Lea, certainly provided inspiration to Farrand, who also relied on these shrubs at Reef Point and in her designs.



Edith Wharton (1862-1937) was Farrand’s aunt. They were close in age and shared an interest in design. Wharton introduced Farrand to European gardens during their travels, and she was also an early client of Farrand, who designed two areas of Wharton’s landscape at The Mount.

THE GARDENS OF FIVE PEOPLE WHO INFLUENCED BEATRIX FARRAND
THE BEATRIX FARRAND SOCIETY’S 2019 HERBARIUM EXHIBITION



Beatrix Farrand grew this tulip, ‘Louis XIV’, in her cutting garden. It is part of the 2019 herbarium exhibition at Garland Farm, which displays plants grown in the gardens of five people who influenced Farrand. *University & Jepson Herbaria, University of California, Berkeley, voucher UC1066500*

VISIT BEATRIX FARRAND’S
GARLAND FARM
OPEN DAYS
THURSDAYS
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
JUNE 27 - SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

The Reef Point Gardens Herbarium was part of Beatrix Farrand’s vision of Reef Point Gardens as a place where students could study gardening and plants. Plant specimens were collected and preserved in 1949-1954. The herbarium remained at Reef Point Gardens until Farrand donated it to the University of California, Berkeley.

The Beatrix Farrand Society and UC Berkeley’s Herbarium collaborated to produce a set of high-quality digitized images of the Reef Point Gardens Herbarium, making possible the annual herbarium exhibitions at Garland Farm.



For information about the Beatrix Farrand Society’s summer events, online copies of newsletters and other information related to Beatrix Farrand and Garland Farm, visit:
www.beatrixfarrandsociety.org

THE BEATRIX FARRAND SOCIETY
P.O. Box 111
Mount Desert, ME 04660

<<ADDRESS PLACE HOLDERS>>



THE BEATRIX FARRAND SOCIETY

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The Beatrix Farrand Society (founded 2003) is located at Garland Farm, on Mount Desert Island in Maine. Garland Farm was the landscape architect and gardener Beatrix Farrand's last home and garden. It is the mission of the society to foster the art and science of horticulture and landscape design, with emphasis on the life and work of Beatrix Farrand.

