

The Gardens of Marjorie Merriweather Post's Hillwood: Interpretive Messages

Garden Docent Training 2019

Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens

- Hillwood's garden is meant to be shared.
 - By the time Hillwood's 2-year renovation was completed (1955-57), Post had decided it was worthy of being a public institution.
 - The gardens (and entire estate and mansion) provide a public good after her death.
- Post was intensely involved in creating Hillwood's gardens, although she was not planting with her own hands.
 - She directed the landscape architects to achieve her vision.
 - Every garden was meticulously drawn before it was planted.
 - Garden staff at Hillwood, 12-15 individuals, kept the garden in top-shape. Early Loy, head gardener, worked for Post for 35 years, and his oral history has been invaluable.
- Post had a vision for her gardens at Hillwood.
 - Garden served Post's needs while she lived here
 - Diversity of garden rooms
 - Interior (mansion) intentionally connected to the exterior (gardens)
 - Beauty and color is paramount
- Post worked with great landscape architects to achieve the design and feel she envisioned.
 - Innocenti & Webel, Perry Wheeler, Shogo Myaida (Japanese-style garden)
- Post's approach to gardens had distinct influences.
 - American country place era: her previous homes and 1905 tour of England with her father
 - Her own experience as creator of gracious homes and gardens: Boulders, Hillwood L.I., Mar-A-Lago, Tregaron.
- Post's friends and staff created several noteworthy additions to her gardens, to show their admiration and appreciation for her: Friendship Walk (1957) and flagpole (1962).
- The museum today continues to honor and execute Post's vision for her gardens today.