



Wilhelmina Ann Arnold Barnhart
MEMORIAL GARDEN

*An interpretive garden to
display plants Thankful Arnold
would have used c. 1830*



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
of Middlesex County



The
Haddam
Historical
Society

The Wilhelmina Ann Arnold Barnhart MEMORIAL GARDEN

*is part of the Thankful Arnold House Museum,
an historic house museum in Haddam, Connecticut.*

Distinguished by its gambrel roof with unusual bell-shaped profile, the house was built between 1794 and 1810. The property remained in the Arnold Family until the 1960s when it became the home of the Haddam Historical Society.

Today the house and gardens provide a glimpse of the life of the Widow Thankful Arnold in the late 1820s shortly after her husband's untimely death. While not an accurate representation of the garden Thankful and her family actually had, the plants in the central stone-edged beds, the side border along the fence and the beds behind the house are all period-appropriate. Thankful's gardens would have been a messier affair with many more vegetables. And of course the lawn would have been non-existent!

The original garden was designed and dedicated in 1973 and was given in memory of Wilhelmina Ann Arnold Barnhart by her father Isaac Arnold, the benefactor of the Thankful Arnold House. Redesigned in the late 1980s in the Colonial Revival style, the gardens were redone with granite-edged beds and gravel paths. In 2000 the Connecticut Herb Study Group conducted extensive research to select plants commonly grown in household gardens in the lower Connecticut River Valley in about 1830.

Most of the garden is now devoted to herbs used for cooking, medicine, dyeing, fragrance and other household uses, with a small bed featuring a rotating collection of vegetables common in gardens in the early 1800s plus a few old-fashioned annuals. Over 50 varieties of herbs are planted in the garden, including many of the ones Thankful Arnold would have used in about 1830.

The garden is a reminder of the enormous importance of herbs and other plants in daily life during the colonial era. Trained physicians and druggists were scarce; every prudent housewife had a cherished collection of formulas for dyes, tanning agents (for leather, not skin) and especially medicines. When the Widow Arnold's children were ill, she would treat them with a decoction of appropriate herbs:

elecampane for asthma, horehound for coughs and colds, feverfew for headache and inflammation, the list goes on.

Need an insect repellent? Head out to the garden and pluck some southernwood or pennyroyal, which have strong aromas that insects dislike. Cooking? You would want an ample selection of culinary herbs such as sage, chives and tarragon. After a winter spent eating whatever could be dried, pickled, salted or stored in the root cellar, you would also cherish any early greens such as Good King Henry that could be incorporated into spring meals. In an era before refrigeration, digestive disorders were common after eating foods that had started to go bad. There are many herbs

to help with upset stomach including fennel and chamomile. Some plants in the Arnold garden were used to make dyes for fabrics, including madder, one of the original sources of the dark red dye used in antique carpets.

In 2015, the Society undertook a garden restoration project to commemorate the museum's 50th anniversary.

Thanks to generous donors, including Arnold family members Mary Hugh Arnold Scott and Robert J. Barnhart, the beds, gravel and stone paths, arbor, fence and portions of the original stone walls were restored or rebuilt and almost 3,000 bulbs* were planted.

The peripheral borders, a mixture of native plants and hardy perennials, are not intended to be period-appropriate, nor are the hosta beds in the front and north sides of the Arnold House.

The Thankful Arnold House Museum is a member of the Connecticut Women's Heritage Trail. The garden is part of Connecticut's Historic Gardens, a consortium of distinctive historic sites and gardens throughout Connecticut. Our garden is one of a group of distinguished and nationally recognized gardens including the Florence Griswold Museum, Harkness Memorial State Park and the Hill-Stead Museum. For a complete list of Connecticut's Historic Gardens visit the website at www.cthistoricgardens.org/.



* All of the bulbs planted in the historic garden were selected from bulbs known to be in domestic cultivation prior to 1830. We had more choices for the peripheral beds bordering the yard; for those areas drought tolerance and deer-resistance were our primary concerns.

For the historic gardens we arranged several groupings of orange or yellow fritillaria imperialis (1590) underplanted with white double peasant's eye daffodils (albus

plenus odoratus 1601), yellow Tenby daffodils (narcissus obvallaris 1796), and blue Spanish bluebells (Hyacinthoides Hispanica Excelsior 1601). Additional Tenbys are scattered throughout the historic garden beds along with crocus flavus Golden Yellow (1665), blue scilla Siberica Spring Beauty (1796) and traditional snowdrops (Galanthus nivalis 1597).

Tenby daffodils, crocus flavus and scilla were planted in

the hosta bed at the front of the house on the street. About 400 mixed daffodils were planted in front of the stone wall along the road.

In the peripheral beds we planted blue and white (Hyacinthoides Hispanica White City 1601) Spanish bluebells, scilla bifolia rosea (1601), mixtures of miniature daffodils and muscari (various dates), Dutchman's Breeches (1731), trilliums (1799) and for fun, 24 Pinball Wizard alliums!



This is an interpretation of my garden, which didn't have fancy edged beds like you see here now. That style came after my time. I had a big garden with plenty of vegetables and herbs planted among them to feed our large family. The gardens are planted now with herbs used in my time for cooking, medicine, dyeing, fragrance and other household uses.

I grew a lot of root vegetables, like potatoes, turnips, onions and carrots, because they would keep through the winter. By the end of that long winter you can believe we were ready for some green vegetables. "All good" which you call #55 "Good King Henry" was a popular potherb because it was one of the first to grow. #56 Sorrel here next to it also was an early green. We would usually cook them in soups and stews.

With so many children someone always had a cough, especially in those cold winters. In the fall I would dig the roots of #50 Elecampane. It has very large roots after it grows for two years. I would slice the root, put it in a pot covered with sugar and bake it for an hour or two to make a cough syrup. I'd also combine dry #50 Elecampane root, dried leaves of #30 Hyssop and #36 Horehound that had been picked and dried in the summer with seeds from #14 Flax to make a bedtime tea for colds and coughs.

Are you familiar with #14 Flax? It has pretty blue flowers that only last for a morning and has so many uses. When mixed with water the seeds make a gel that is soothing to sore throats and upset stomachs. That is why I put it in teas for colds. The gel, mixed with breadcrumbs, is a very soothing poultice for inflammation. This poultice was applied directly on the skin and wrapped with a cloth to keep the herbs in place. We also used other herbs in poultices on bruises, swellings and burns.

A flax wheel was used to turn flax stems into linen. First the stems were soaked in water, and then pounded to separate the fibers, which were spun into thread.

The thread was then washed in #17 Soapwort. Some people call it Bouncing Bet, named after the

wash maids rubbing the clothes up and down on the scrubbing board. If you crush the leaves or roots with water they make suds that are used for cleaning. They were especially useful to remove dirt and stains in cloth before dyeing.

There are several herbs here that were used for dyeing flax, cotton and wool. #11 Woad was used for a blue before Indigo from the East Indies became available. #10 Bedstraw was used for a lovely rose color. Bedstraw gets its name because its vanilla fragrance when dried makes it a great stuffing for mattresses. And did you know you could also use bedstraw instead of rennet to make cheese? Plants have so many uses. Some other dye herbs are #31 Chamomile for yellow, #18 St. John's Wort for yellow and maroon, #15 Yarrow for yellow, #38 Comfrey for a deep clear green, #13 Madder for red, #53 Weld for green and #16 Dyer's Broom for yellow. #38 Comfrey was an herb we often used. It was used as a poultice to heal cuts or as a tea to help heal broken bones, lung problems or stomach-aches.

Another herb I liked to use was #40 Catnip. Most people in your time think that it is just for cats, but we used it to lower fevers or ease cramps. When the children had colic, catnip tea with a little molasses would help them go back to sleep. We also used #33 Valerian to help us sleep.

We used many herbs to aid digestion as well as for their flavor. Some of these are #46 Thyme, #28 Fennel, #26 Spearmint, #20 Lemon Balm, #25 Tarragon, #5 Lovage and #2 Oregano.

As you can see, there are many more plants in the garden than the ones I've described, I hope that you have enjoyed the garden from my point of view.

GARDEN HOURS

OPEN DAILY:

Daylight hours

PEAK VIEWING:

Late Spring/Early Summer

TOURS:

Available on open garden days or by appointment.

Here are some of our favorite plants from Thankful's gardens to use in modern perennial borders. At the Arnold House, we grow older varieties but there are newer cultivars of many of the plants we have listed. All of the plants noted here are perennials. As a bonus, many herbs are deer-resistant!



LAVENDER

(*Lavandula spp*)

Typically blooms in June/July with some reblooming in the fall. Blooms in shades of blue and lavender, with some white and pink. Size varies depending on variety. Drought-tolerant, requires full sun, well-drained soil. Early spring pruning to shape and cut out winter-killed branches essential. Attractive to pollinators.



WILD INDIGO

(*Baptisia australis*)

Blooms in early summer in shades of blue and purple. Some varieties are yellow or white. About 3 feet tall, a mature specimen can be 3-4 feet wide and makes a good anchor plant for the middle or rear of a border. Drought-tolerant once established, requires full sun.



REDLEAF ROSE

(*Rosa glauca*)

Grow this beautiful shrub for its blue-gray foliage with overtones of burgundy and mauve. The 2-inch single bright pink flowers in June are followed by dark brown rose hips. This upright, arching multi-stemmed rose can reach 6-8 feet. Full sun to part shade.



GERMANDER

(*Teucrium chamaedrys*)

Evergreen foliage and pink flowers in early summer makes this low-grower an attractive edging plant for the border. Tolerant of drought and poor soil, germander prefers full sun.

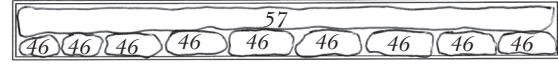
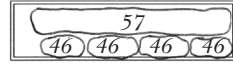


SOUTHERNWOOD

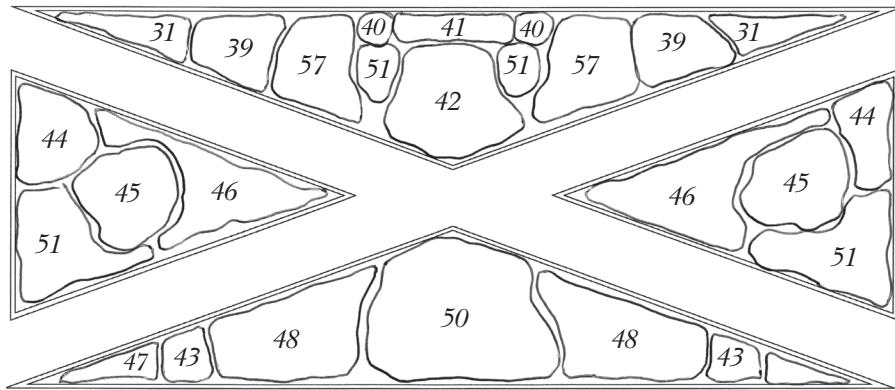
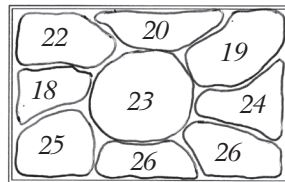
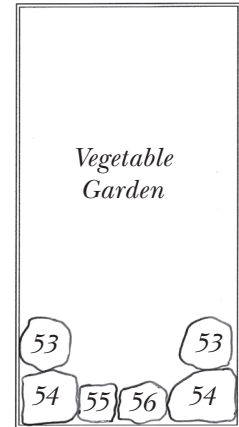
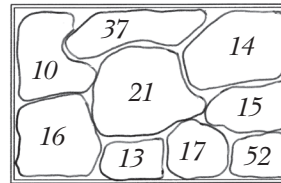
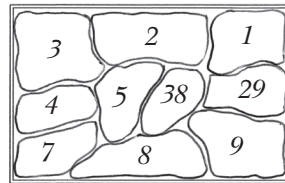
(*Artemisia abrotanum*)

Attractive silvery foliage makes this 3-4 foot perennial sub-shrub a desirable border plant. Prefers full sun and well-drained soil, drought-tolerant once established. Cut back in early spring. Non-invasive.

Wilhelmina Ann Arnold Barnhart MEMORIAL GARDEN PLAN



Sidewalk



PLANTS AND HERBS

Most of the garden is now devoted to herbs used for cooking, medicine, dyeing, fragrance and other household uses, with a small bed featuring a rotating collection of vegetables common in gardens in the early 1800s plus a few old-fashioned annuals.

1) Allium cepa v. proliferum	European Onion	C	30) Hyssopus officinalis	Hyssop	M
2) Origanum vulgare	Oregano	C M	31) Chamaemelum nobile	Roman Chamomile	M C
3) Allium schoenoprasum	Chives	C	32) Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove	O
4) Salvia officinalis	Common Sage	C M	33) Valeriana officinalis	Valerian	M
5) Levisticum officinale	Lovage	C M	34) Leonorus cardiaca	Motherwort	M
6) Satureja montana	Winter Savory	C	35) Viola odorata	Sweet Violet	F M O
7) Tanacetum balsamita	Costmary	F C	36) Marrubium vulgare	Horehound	M
8) Origanum majorana	Marjoram	C M	37) Salvia sclarea	Clary Sage	M
9) Althaea officinalis	Marsh Mallow	M	38) Symphytum officinale	Comfrey	M D
10) Galium verum	Lady's Bedstraw	H D	39) Geranium lancastrensis	Geranium	O
11) Isatis tinctoria	Woad	D	40) Nepeta cataria	Catnip	M
12) Rosa glauca	Redleaf Rose	O	41) Teucrium chamaedrys	Germander	M
13) Rubia tinctorum	Madder	D	42) Echinacea purpurea	Coneflower	M
14) Linum usitatissimum	Flax	M H	43) Eupatorium perforatum	Boneset	M
15) Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	M D	44) Artemisia arbotanum	Southernwood	H
16) Genista tinctoria	Dyer's Broom	D	45) Ruta graveolens	Rue	M
17) Saponaria officinalis	Soapwort	H	46) Thymus sp.	Thyme	C M
18) Hypericum perforatum	St. John's Wort	M	47) Mentha pulegium	Pennyroyal	M H
19) Tanacetum vulgare	Tansy	M H D	48) Eupatorium purpurium	Joe Pye Weed	M
20) Melissa officinalis	Lemon Balm	M C	49) Verbascum thapsus	Mullein	M
21) Baptisia australis	Wild Indigo	D	50) Inula helenium	Elecampane	M
22) Sanguisorba minor	Salad Burnet	C	51) Annuals	(ornamental)	
23) Dipsacus sylvestris	Common Teasel	H	52) Reseda luteola	Weld	D
24) Tanacetum parthenium	Feverfew	M	53) Cnicus benedictus	Blessed Thistle	M
25) Artemisia dracunculus	French Tarragon	C	54) Rheum X rhabarbarum	Rhubarb	C
26) Mentha spicata	Spearmint	C M	55) Chenopodium bonus – henricus	Good King Henry	C
27) Stachys officinalis	Betony	M	56) Rumex scutatus	Sorrel	C
28) Foeniculum vulgare	Fennel	C M	57) Lavandula spp	Lavender	M H
29) Scutellaria laterifolia	Skullcap	M	58) Dianthus spp	Pinks	O M C

USAGE KEY C Culinary D Dyeing H Household M Medicinal O Ornament F Fragrance



HYSSOP

(*Hyssopus officinalis*)

Blooms in early summer in shades of blue and violet. Typically 1-2 feet tall. Many modern cultivars. Attractive to pollinators. Prefers full sun, tolerates poor soil, drought. Trim back established plants heavily in early spring and after flowering to prevent them from becoming too spindly.



BETONY

(*Stachys officinalis*)

Blooms in early summer in shades of blue and lavender. When in bloom typically 18" to 30". Reblooms if spent flowers cut back. Newer cultivars include white and pink varieties. Attractive foliage, makes an excellent edging plant for a border. Attractive to pollinators, prefers full sun.



GERANIUM

(*Geranium lancastrensis*)

Low-growing and drought tolerant. Bright pink blooms in early summer, reddish foliage in the fall. There are many varieties of this popular border plant. Sun to part-shade.



RUE

(*Ruta graveolens*)

Woody sub-shrub 18-24" in height with blue-green foliage and yellow flowers. Prefers full sun, is drought-tolerant and attractive to pollinators. Can be clipped into a low hedge, often used in knot-gardens. Wear gloves when handling.



THYME

(*Thymus spp.*)

There are both culinary and decorative varieties of this popular herb ranging in height from 2-15" and flowering in shades of white and pink. All are attractive to pollinators. Makes a good ground cover or edge-of-border plant. Drought-tolerant, requires full sun.



JOE PYE WEED

(*Eupatorium purpurium*)

Producing pink-purple flowers in the late summer to early fall, these large plants reach 4-5' and can form 2-3' clumps. Attracts pollinators and butterflies. Some shorter newer cultivars. Grow in full sun or part shade, keep well-watered. Not deer-resistant.

OTHER RESOURCES:

For more information about herbs:

The American Herbalists Guild was founded in 1989 as a non-profit, educational organization to represent the goals and voices of herbalists specializing in the medicinal use of plants. (www.americanherbalistsguild.com)

The Connecticut Herb Association offers information and support for anyone with an interest in herbs and holistic modalities. CHA serves as a forum for issues such as therapies, research, education, workshops, growing, retailing, wild crafting, herbal supplies, as well as environmental, legal and legislative concerns. (www.ctherb.org)

The Herb Society of America promotes herbs as valuable, useful, and essential parts of our lives. They offer print and digital resources, provide windows into herbal history and lore, growing tips and techniques as well as details on many herbal uses. Their informative website includes (among many other resources) a plan and plant list for a colonial-era dooryard garden at www.neuhsa.org/dooryard.html. There is a Connecticut unit of the Herb Society of America (www.ctuhsa.org), which maintains an herb garden at Elizabeth Park in Hartford. (www.herbsociety.org)

Whole Harmony Apothecary is located a couple of miles from the Arnold House at 1572 Saybrook Road in Haddam, CT. They offer herbal teas, a tea, juice and elixir bar, classes in plant medicine and much more. (<http://www.wholeharmony4u.com/about-us>)

Books on period gardening:

Adams, Denise Wiles, **Restoring American Gardens: An Encyclopedia of Heirloom Ornamental Plants, 1640-1940**, Timber Press, 2004. An important resource for anyone trying to landscape an historic home or property. Includes lists of more than 1,000 plants.

Adams, Denise Wiles, **American Home Landscapes**, Timber Press, 2013. Comprehensive, fully illustrated guide to recreating nearly 400 years of historical landscape design and adapting them to modern needs.

Favretti, Joy and Rudy, **For Every House a Garden: A Guide for Reproducing Period Gardens**, University Press of New England, 1990. Noted landscape historian and architect Rudy Favretti has created master plans for such national landmarks as Jefferson's Monticello and Washington's Mount Vernon as well as hundreds of historic homes.

Favretti, Joy and Rudy, **Landscapes and Gardens for Historic Buildings: A Handbook for Reproducing and Creating Authentic Landscape Settings** [American Association for State and Local History], AltaMira Press, 1995.

Grieve, Mrs. M., **A Modern Herbal**, Dorset Press, 1992. (First published in 1931 by Jonathan Cape Ltd., revised edition 1973.) A classic.

Leighton, Ann, **Early American Gardens "For Meate or Medicine,"** The University of Massachusetts Press, 1970. Seventeenth-century American gardens.

Leighton, Ann, **American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century "For Use or Delight,"** The University of Massachusetts Press, 1976.

Leighton, Ann, **American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century**, The University of Massachusetts Press, 1987. This is the final of three authoritative volumes of garden history by Ann Leighton. "Quoting letters, books, and other materials of each era, Leighton gives the reader a vivid picture, complete with plant lists and bibliographies." Garden Club of America Bulletin

Sutherland, James and Stuart, David, **Plants From the Past: Old Flowers for New Gardens**, Viking, 1988. Detailed descriptions of plants, includes ideas on how to re-create a small garden of a particular era, with suggestions for period designs and information on how the plants were used in different centuries.

Weeks, Katharine C., **Gardening with New England Colonial Plants, Their History, Uses & Culture**, 1993. (Available through The New England Unit of the Herb Society of America). An excellent primer for anyone interested in early American gardens.

Area period gardens:

The Thankful Arnold House is a member of Connecticut's Historic Gardens, a group of 15 historical sites and gardens in Connecticut. All are open to the public. Check out their website at www.cthistoricgardens.org for more information.

Hancock Shaker Village in Hancock, MA. Farming was at the heart of all Shaker communities and their farms were models of efficiency and innovation. Hancock Shaker Village is still a working farm today, with vegetables, herbs and livestock. The herb garden contains a hundred or more of the plants listed in the Shakers' 1873 "Druggist's Handbook of Pure Botanical Preparations." (www.hancockshakervillage.org)

Sturbridge Village, the largest outdoor history museum in the Northeast, depicts a rural New England town of the 1830s. The herb garden contains over 400 plants. The village is interpreted to a similar time period as the Arnold House. See osv.org/gardening/heirloom-gardens for more information on the gardens at Sturbridge. (www.osv.org)

Strawbery Banke Museum in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Strawberry Banke preserves nearly four centuries of original gardens and was recognized by Garden Design Magazine as one of four sites in the world teaching about change over time in the landscape. The Historic Landscapes Department accurately preserves both garden design elements and period-appropriate plant selections. (www.strawberybanke.org)

Sources for plants:

Balleks' Garden Center in East Haddam, CT, a well-known area nursery, offers an excellent selection of herbs. Our source for most annuals and replacement perennial herbs. (www.balleksgardencenter.com)

Gilberties Herbs and Garden Center in Westport, CT is the largest herb plant grower on the east coast with greenhouses and a gift shop surrounded by theme gardens. (www.gilbertiesherbs.com)

Strictly Medicinal in Oregon. Has many hard-to-find seeds and some plants. Plants arrive in excellent condition. Catalog and website exceptionally informative. (www.strictlymedicalseeds.com)

R. J. Vickers Herbery in Chester, CT offers herb plants in addition to dried herbs and garden-themed gifts. (www.rjvickersherbery.com)

Well-Sweep Herb Farm in New Jersey. Fabulous catalog/website offers 1,911 varieties including many of the hard-to-find plants that we frequently need to replace. Plants arrive in excellent condition. (www.wellsweep.com)



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