



STONINGTON
GARDEN CLUB

Gardens by the Sea

JUNE 10 & 11, 2022 • 10:00AM - 4:00PM

The origins of the Stonington Garden Club date back to the early years of the twentieth century. The first recorded account of the club was on July 6, 1926 when Mrs. Frank L. Henderson won first prize in a rose contest according to *The Stonington Chronology 1649-1976*.

In 1934, SGC disbanded for the duration of World War II. During the war years, Mrs. Frederick Pafford, an SGC member, led a group of ladies who saved seeds from their gardens to send to Great Britain. The Garden Club resumed meeting in 1946.

The Stonington Garden Club with 30 members was reorganized in 1958. The purpose of the club was “to stimulate interest in gardening, to encourage civic planting and to promote measures for the protection of wild flowers, native plants, birds and wildlife.” Mrs. Cornelia Storrow was the first president of the newly reorganized club. Projects undertaken by the club during her presidency included decorating the Stonington Library for Christmas, donating a metal star for the top of the Christmas tree, providing floral arrangements for the lobby of the Westerly Hospital, supplying a volunteer once a week to work at the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, and planning the restoration of the garden at the Denison Homestead.

The Stonington Garden Club held its first flower show, “The Victorian Age of Innocence,” in September, 1960. The venue for the show was Linden Hall, the home of Mrs. John Garrett. Mrs. Cyril V. Moore chaired the event, which included seven floral design classes. The flower show attracted 300 people to the Borough from neighboring communities and garden clubs. Ticket prices were \$1.50 for adults and \$.25 for children.

The Stonington Garden Club held a number of flower

shows in its early years. In 1961, the flower show included a house tour. That year SGC hosted 125 members of the New York Horticultural Society for a tour of Stonington gardens. In 1981, a flower show entitled “Beyond the Garden Gate” included a walking tour of 15 gardens. That year the club published a book, “Village Gardens,” with photographs and descriptions of 27 gardens. “A Tree Grows in Stonington,” held in June of 1988, combined a flower show with a walking tour of gardens.

The first “Gardens by the Sea” garden tour took place in 1993. Since that time, SGC has hosted a walking tour of gardens in the Borough every three years. The tour is well known throughout New England, New York and New Jersey and draws several thousand visitors to Stonington over two days. In recent years, Gardens by the Sea has been a walking tour of 9-10 gardens in the Borough. In addition to the gardens, the event has featured a Marketplace for vendors selling garden related items, women’s clothing and shoes and decorative items. Other special events that have been included in recent tours are a Preview Party in a Stonington garden (2014), a Celebrity Luncheon (2017) and local artists painting in the gardens (2017). The SGC uses the money raised by the Garden Tour to fund its community projects and grant program.

This year’s Gardens by the Sea will be held on June 10 and 11 from 10 am to 4 pm, rain or shine. The tour includes eight residential gardens in the Borough and the COMO Children’s Learning Garden on Cutler Street – Stonington Garden Club’s major community project. After several years of fundraising, the COMO Children’s

