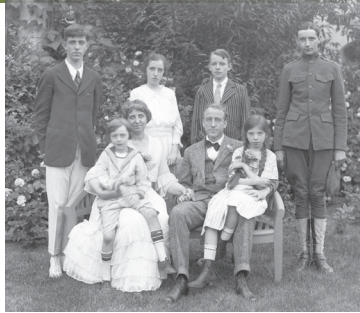


## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The origins of the Greenwood Gardens landscape hark back to the Triassic Age (some 280 million years ago), early in the reign of dinosaurs, when geologic events gave rise to a series of subterranean parallel lava flows which erosion would later reveal as the Watchung Mountains. Astride the Second Mountain of the Watchungs, Greenwood has offered inhabitants and visitors sweeping views made possible by the site's altitude some 450 feet above sea level. Fronting South Mountain to the east (part of a 2100-acre county park), Greenwood Gardens provides both a unique perspective and sense of seclusion amidst one of the country's most densely populated regions.

## THE DAY FAMILY ERA

Following a long line of individuals of European ancestry who owned the land since colonial times, the property was sold in 1906 to Joseph P. Day, New York City's most successful real estate auctioneer at the time, and his wife Pauline Martindale Pope Day. In anticipation of a wonderful life ahead for his wife and their six children, Joe Day named the property "Pleasant Days."



*The Day Family circa 1925*



*Pleasant Days designed by Renwick*

The Days, who originally lived in Gramercy Park (NYC), favored the fledgling upscale suburban community of Short Hills with all the healthful benefits of country living, yet still offering convenient access to Manhattan by rail. Disaster struck in 1911, when the original wood-frame house caught fire due to an improperly stoked furnace. Joe Day commissioned his neighbor and friend, the talented architect William Whetten Renwick, to design a grand Italianate-style 28-room mansion as well as extensive formal gardens. Renwick's role in the creation of Pleasant Days was pivotal, given that his multi-faceted talents were in perfect sync with Joe Day's interest in creating a unique environment and his ability to provide seemingly unlimited funding to do so.

In the following two decades, Joe Day would invest more than a million dollars in his dream mansion and over 1,000 acres of property immediately surrounding it. The garden's features were a stylistic

blend of Arts and Crafts and Italianate design. Pleasant Days consisted of the main mansion surrounded by the rustic stone Teahouse and Summerhouse, majestic fountains, wisteria-laden arbors, statuary modeled after his children, acres of perennials, a greenhouse, a nine-hole golf course, and a large vegetable garden.



*Day Era Garden of the Gods fountain*

The Days lived very comfortably in their new home until the 1929 stock market crash in which the family suffered significant financial losses. Pauline died not long after in 1932. Joe Day married Agnes Cole Young in 1942 and remained in the house until his death in 1944.

## THE BLANCHARD FAMILY ERA

The property subsequently languished for about five years under absentee ownership until 1949 when the mansion, several service buildings, and a good portion of the property were purchased by Peter P. Blanchard Jr., an IBM lawyer and New York businessman, and his new wife, Dr. Adelaide Childs Frick Blanchard, a pediatrician at New York Hospital, and a granddaughter of Henry Clay Frick, the American industrialist. The couple sought a rural retreat where they could ride horseback, farm, garden, and enjoy other outdoor pursuits. Owing to the mansion's deteriorating condition and their preference to live in a more modest home, the Blanchards replaced the Day mansion with a smaller structure in the Georgian Revival style, which is the house that survives today. The Blanchards also changed the name of the estate to "The Greenwoods."

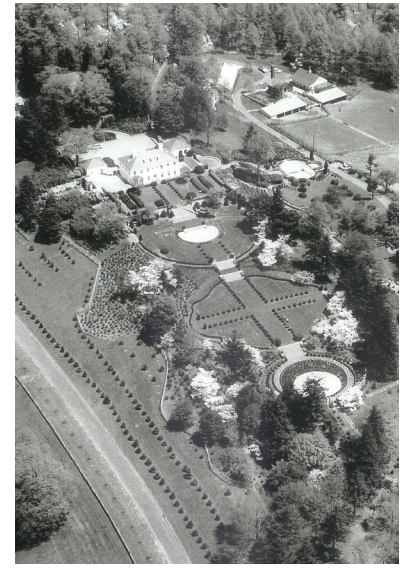


*The Blanchard Family circa 1954*

A year later, the Blanchards welcomed a son, Peter III. The family lived blissfully until Adelaide's untimely death in 1956, leaving father and son to focus wholeheartedly on creating and nurturing the garden. Taking inspiration from both the formality of Beaux-Arts gardens as well as agrarian country estates, Peter Blanchard installed long rows of boxwood along the main axial paths; laid out new allées, including the London plane allée adjacent to the main drive; planted hundreds of ornamental trees and shrubs; installed a significant amount of garden sculpture; and added

ponds, pastures, and meadows. It was his dream to conserve, protect, and share the property for generations to come.

Following the death of Peter P. Blanchard, Jr. in 2000, his son Peter III, along with his wife, Sofia, set out to fulfill the elder Blanchard's wishes, launching the present non-profit organization, Greenwood Gardens, to serve as a resource for the public's enjoyment. Private tours were conducted up until 2013, when the garden opened to the public for free-roam visitation following an extensive first phase renovation. In 2020, the second phase of renovation was completed with a redesign of the Main Axis, including the Reflecting Pool Terrace and the Garden of the Gods. A 50-space parking lot was added, along with a rain garden to catch run-off and a ticket kiosk inside the main gates. Extensive landscaping changes were also made throughout the garden and the addition of teak benches created new seating options for visitors.



*1960s aerial view of "The Greenwoods"*





*Reflecting Pool Terrace current day*

Sadly, in August 2022, our Co-founder Peter P. Blanchard III passed away. Up until his death, Peter actively served as leader of the Board of Trustees, staff advisor, and Visitor Services team member. A passionate advocate for the principles of conservation and preservation, his legacy lives on.



*Sofia A. and Peter P. Blanchard III*

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 @GreenwoodShortHills  
 @GreenwoodGardensNJ

Use [#greenwoodgardens](#) for a chance to be featured.

## GARDEN ETIQUETTE

### TO ENSURE A SAFE AND PLEASANT VISIT:

- **Due to the uneven paths and stairways, strollers are not permitted in the garden.** For your convenience, we offer stroller parking on the East Terrace.
- Keep cell phones in silent mode so all visitors can enjoy our quiet oasis. Please refrain from playing music.
- The only animals permitted in the garden other than Greenwood's own collection are certified service animals.
- At all times, clothing and shoes must be worn. No sunbathing.
- Garden photography is permitted as long as it does not interfere with the on-site experience of visitors, such as blocking pathways and views. The use of drones, tripods, screens, and props is not permitted.
- **Formal posed photography and special location photography is not permitted.** This includes weddings, engagements, pregnancies, birthdays, proms, graduations, family portraits, and other similar events, whether by professional, semi-pro, or amateur photographers. Greenwood reserves the right to determine what constitutes a formal posed photography session and will curtail sessions that do not fit our guidelines noted above.
- Food and non-alcoholic beverages may be enjoyed in Adelaide's only. Personal water bottles are permitted in the garden. Please note: Adelaide's is an outdoor covered pavilion where you can enjoy the food and beverages you bring with you. Snacks and hot/cold drinks are also available for purchase in the Welcome Center.
- Do not enter ponds or water features, climb or touch statuary, enter areas that are roped off, or obstruct pathways.
- Refrain from picking flowers or berries, entering or disturbing plant beds and borders, and climbing trees.
- Refrain from smoking, vaping, making fires, and playing active sports.
- Please do not picnic in the gardens or bring blankets and chairs into the garden for lounging.
- Bicycles and scooters are not permitted anywhere on the property.
- For your safety and the safety of the animals in Greenwood's collection, do not feed, chase, or provoke domestic animals and/or wildlife. Please enjoy the animals from a safe distance.
- Remove all personal trash when you depart.

## GET INVOLVED

Greenwood Gardens is made up of a warm and engaging community of people who care about nature, beauty, history and the arts. We hope your visit inspires you to become a member and/or volunteer. Join our e-mail list and connect with us on social media. For quick links to get involved, scan the QR code.



### JOIN AS A MEMBER

Enjoy all the benefits of Membership including free admission; access to special programs, workshops, and events; reciprocal entry at over 380 gardens; and more, according to Membership level. [You can apply today's admission ticket toward Membership. Please see the Visitor Services Site Manager to do so.](#)

### BECOME A VOLUNTEER

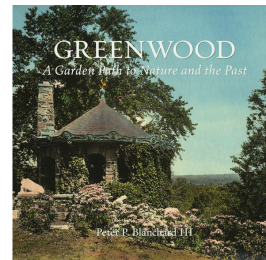
Our award-winning volunteers are highly valued members of the Greenwood family who serve as greeters, docents, tour guides, Green Team gardeners, and more!

### SUBSCRIBE TO OUR E-MAIL LIST

Our regular e-mails provide organizational updates, beautiful seasonal photos, gardening insights, historical vignettes, and program notices. Stay connected by visiting [greenwoodgardens.org](http://greenwoodgardens.org) and subscribing on the homepage.

## TAKE OUR TREE TOUR

If you are interested in our new **Tree Tour**, please take a brochure which is located outside the Welcome Center.



*Greenwood: A Garden Path to Nature and the Past* by the late Peter P. Blanchard III, Co-founder and Chairman  
In this highly personal account, Peter P. Blanchard III provides an overview of the estate's history and his childhood memories of Greenwood Gardens. Purchase your copy at the Welcome Center.



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# HISTORICAL OVERVIEW



*Connecting people with nature and the arts in a historic garden oasis.*

