

September 17, 1946

Mrs. Isabelle M. Stover,
Reef Point, Bar Harbor, Maine.

Dear Mrs. Stover:

I have already sent to Mr. A.A. Harmon, c/o Shreve, Lamb and Harmon, 11 East 44th Street, New York, the post card showing the trellis at the outdoor garden theatre here at Dumbarton Oaks, as requested in your letter of September 11th.

I have also received, and read with much pleasure and interest, the booklet describing the future of Reef Point and its gardens. I know you must be very busy making plans. Mr. Patterson stopped in to see me while he was here and we talked about the booklet, and wishing we could have one describing Dumbarton Oaks as completely,

We certainly can't complain about this summer in Washington - it has been like California weather - most unusual - but very comfortable. I'm glad your summer has been pleasant too. Its really hard to believe that we are experiencing such heavenly days at this season.

Our garden tours for fall have not been resumed as yet and will not until the chrysanthemums are in bloom - probably a month from now.

With kindest personal greetings,

Sincerely,

REEF POINT GARDENS BULLETIN

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WALK TO GARDEN



The Start and the Goal.

MORE Than Sixty Years Ago the parents of the present owner of Reef Point bought two acres on the Shore Path and built a cottage. They first intended to use the house for only two or three summer months but the family became so attached to the house and its surroundings that the seasons lengthened from two or three months to nearly half the year. At the same time the acreage was also enlarged as two acres were added to the south of the original holding, and later still two more acres were added to the north.

The years passed, and Mary Cadwalader Jones, the owner, gave house and land to her daughter and her daughter's husband as their home. Beatrix and Max Farrand grew to care for Reef Point increasingly and it became more and more truly their chosen home. A family tradition of gardening and a growing interest in all plant surroundings, caused the owners as they worked over their grounds to consider later development of the little acreage.

As Max and Beatrix Farrand thought of the various possibilities for the future of Reef Point they decided after several years of careful study and legal and horticultural consultation to plan a permanent future for the place they had greatly enjoyed. Reef Point Gardens was therefore incorporated under the general laws of the State of Maine in August, 1939, and a group of members, officers and directors elected, and arrangements made to provide an adequate endowment in the future. Although the corporation does not yet hold any property except a small bank account, it has been recognized by the Federal authorities as a philanthropic and educational institution and its purpose is many-sided.

The object at Reef Point is primarily to show what outdoor beauty can contribute to those who have the interest and perception that can be influenced by trees and flowers and open air composition. Such interest is never likely to diminish and a taste for gardening can add much to life. Intimate contact with growing things, observation of passing seasons and changes give interest and flavour to each day. Wise use of leisure is a problem for each individual to solve, but Reef Point Gardens hopes to be of use as a living example of at least one of the many solutions.

Another facet is the educational side. This is not being neglected, as the important trees are being labeled, records made of all plantations, and notes kept on individual plants. Files of notes and records will be open to students who wish to consult them. In addition to the records and files a small working library is being assembled for the future.

On the practical side a small vegetable garden contains an orchard of dwarf fruit trees, peaches, apples and cherries, as it is the aim to make the gardens

useful by example as well as precept. The kitchen garden is large enough to grow the smaller crops, and fruit and vegetables for a family of six or seven have been provided for the summer months.

As an illustration of what is possible even in a small space, flowers are grown near the house in terrace beds of moderate size. In these small areas flowers bloom from late March until November and all the plant material used is of modest cost, or grown on the place. In another part of the grounds hardy perennials are grown in a special garden, and here again the plants have been chosen for their beauty throughout the season rather than for a spectacular effect for a brief number of weeks.

As the local flora is of incomparable beauty, indigenous plants are encouraged. Carpets of bunchberries and bearberries are cared for, and native shrubs, whether seaside or woodland loving, are planted where they seem to thrive. Ground carpeting plants of many sorts are grown, and various types of soils have been used to show plants which will actually flourish in gravel or those which prefer acid or shade, and others which can endure full sunshine.

The original owners made many mistakes in their early gardening days before they learned by many a bitter lesson what nature had been trying to teach them. They found that if the normally acid soil conditions were acknowledged as an asset rather than a detriment, numberless plants would grow with astonishing enthusiasm. Rhododendrons and azaleas from many parts of the world have found a home, and surprising success has been achieved with Chinese and Asian shrubs and creepers. If the owners had been able to visit a trial ground such as Reef Point is at present they would have been kept from many an error of horticultural judgment.

The local Garden Clubs are often asked to share divisions or seedlings as a part of the usefulness of the Garden, and close collaboration is made with local schools. Classes from the High School visit the grounds with their teachers, and visitors from the horticultural department of the University of Maine are frequent and always welcome.

Reef Point Gardens is open daily to all who are interested in horticulture and in seeing trees, shrubs and perennials growing in informal plantations. It is open each and every day throughout the long growing season, and during the year 1945 over two thousand garden lovers visited the place.

When the directors of the corporation assume control of the Gardens and their endowment in the future, they will replace the present dwelling house with another building in which there will be a large room where garden clubs may meet, small flower shows be held, and lectures given on subjects allied to horticulture. The new building will also contain the working library and a few study rooms for those who wish to use them. As a further part of the educational side it is hoped to establish a few scholarships for students who wish to

make themselves familiar with the beautiful and characteristic flora of this part of the state. Bulletins will be published from time to time about the plants growing at Reef Point, such as early flowering bulbs, azaleas, rhododendrons, dwarf fruit trees, ground covers, and so on, and these will be distributed or sold to arboreta and botanic gardens in this country and abroad, and also will be available to garden club members and horticulturists in general.

A training in appreciation of natural beauty and interest in bird and plant life seems desirable as a contribution to every community and each state. It is hoped that Reef Point Gardens may serve this purpose, as it is for this object that it has been started. Its goal is to be useful to its community and state, and to all interested in outdoor beauty.

BEATRIX FARRAND



REEF POINT GARDENS

Bar Harbor, Maine

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ALBERT HALL CUNNINGHAM, *Treasurer*

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