

## Walking Tour of the Arboretum (pronounced Ar-bor-ee-tum)

Welcome to the Webster Arboretum! We are glad you are here today and hope this guide will help you see everything that is so lovingly planted and so proudly growing here. As you look around, please realize that the Arboretum (or “The Arb” as it is commonly called) is a very successful collaboration of the Webster Arboretum Association, the Town of Webster, Webster gardening clubs, Master Gardeners, and gardening enthusiasts, most of which have donated uncountable hours of labor, a seemingly unending list of supplies, and untold amounts of money. As well, we are grateful to our members, who generously support our efforts by renewing their memberships yearly. Information of all sorts can be found at [www.WebsterArboretum.org](http://www.WebsterArboretum.org) (which is also managed by a volunteer!) Please visit there as part of your tour here!

Our tour starts at the entrance to the park. As you turn into the driveway, on your left you will see a perennial garden with paths. This garden was established and is maintained by Klemwood Garden Club. Filled with more perennials than annuals, it demonstrates how easy maintaining a beautiful garden can be. Adjacent to this bed is a time capsule that was buried in 1989 as part of the Town's sesquicentennial celebration. It is buried under a Crabapple, which is the official town tree. The container for the capsule was provided by Anthony Funeral Chapel, a longtime supporter of the Arb. Mark your calendars - it is scheduled to be opened in 2039!

North of the driveway, with a white picket fence, is a very colorful garden designed to attract and feed hummingbirds. During the summer, hummingbirds are not only attracted by the flowers but the nectar hung from the trellis. The trellis also supports a trumpet vine, which is a favorite of the hummingbirds. The garden is the work of the Millcreek Garden Club.

The garden to the right is a kidney-shaped garden located in front of the Curry Building. It features flowers in the town colors of blue, yellow, and white. Here you will see a fabulous display in the spring of narcissus and muscari (grape hyacinths.) It was created by the Village Manor Garden Club, but is now maintained by the Country Gardeners of Webster.

These gardens, all created and maintained by Webster gardening clubs, have an automatic watering system. The garden clubs held fundraisers for this project and were also supported by two grants, one from Shell Oil and the other from 7<sup>th</sup> District Federated Garden Clubs. This watering system has helped the clubs keep the gardens in bloom throughout many growing seasons. (Note: Due to construction, the system is not being used during the 2011 & 2012 seasons.)

The Curry Building was originally designed to hold 35 people, with a multi-purpose space, kitchenette and restrooms. It was named for Norm Curry, a local builder who was influential in raising funds for the building. In 2011, the building was made handicapped accessible and expanded to welcome 95 people. Along with the aforementioned amenities, the Curry Building now boasts large windows and a gas fireplace. Bricks inscribed with the names of early subscribers and supporters who helped finance the original project have been made into a decorative feature. Funding for the renovation came from the Town of Webster, the Webster Arboretum Association, Inc., and a NYS grant. Due to the beauty of the park, this building is rented *every* weekend during the fair-weather months for weddings and other celebrations a year in advance. For information to rent this building, please visit the Parks and Recreation website: [www.ci.webster.ny.us](http://www.ci.webster.ny.us) or call them at 585-872-7103.

Walking around the building to the west, you will find a brick patio (installed by the Town in 2011 as

part of the building expansion project), a Dahlia Garden, and the Harrison Herb Garden.

The stunning dahlia garden is planted and maintained yearly by the Rochester Dahlia Society. Beyond this is the Harrison Herb Garden. This garden was made possible by a memorial to Mr. Harrison by his family and a matching grant from Citibank. It was donated and dedicated in 1998. The garden is organized into pods and the plants are separated into groups based on their uses. "Herb" is a loose term; if any part of a plant can be used, it is considered an herb. There are three main uses for herbs: culinary, dyes and medicinal. The garden was designed and is maintained by Beverly Gibson, a local Master Gardener, and a group of volunteers that she organizes.

Following the walking path behind the Curry Building, you can see open grass area between the pergola and gazebo. Many, many wedding receptions and other special occasions are celebrated here, sometimes under large white tents. Just beyond the pergola is our dedicated brick walkway. Commemorating special events, memorials, and dedications, it was established in 2005 and continues to grow. We would be very happy to add a brick for you or in honor of someone you love. The donation makes a unique and lasting gift. Please visit our website for more information.

As you follow the brick walkway towards the Lions' Gazebo, you will notice tree peonies on your left. If you are lucky enough to be visiting the Arb when they are in bloom, then you will enjoy more spectacular blossoms as you walk along the path. However, don't miss the dwarf conifer collections on your right. Many have been donated by Ken Franke (1990) and George Reihle, both local conifer enthusiasts. Quirky in nature, the trees add whimsy to the park. A beautiful bird feeder resides in the section nearest to the Curry Building. In 2003, Dennis Burns designed and implemented augmentations to the dwarf conifer gardens, making a stunning setting for the gazebo. Large rocks in the beds provide architectural interest, giving a more woodland effect to the garden. Be sure to take the path less traveled to your right, around the gazebo. You will be delighted!

When you step back onto the main pathway, you will see a pond in front of you. Steve Schantz created it during the winter of 1998 to commemorate his company's fiftieth anniversary as a Webster builder. To do so, he widened the natural course of a creek. The EPA allowed the creek to be widened with the condition that there would be no mowing within a 25-foot riparian strip. The strip has been partially planted with grasses, shrubs and flowers. Students and faculty from Webster's High Schools donated over \$5,000 for plants in this area. Additional monies came from a 7<sup>th</sup> District grant.

In 2010, Mr. John Polchowski donated this dolphin fountain to the Webster Arboretum. Thanks to funding provided by the Webster Arboretum Association, it was installed the same year. Their playfulness provides enjoyment to all ages.

As you continue heading north, you will come upon a bench and a water fountain. If you take a moment to sit and refresh yourself, you will notice that you are surrounded by lilacs. Dick Fennicchia, a hybridizer of lilacs and a Webster resident, gave the Lilac Knoll and Azalea Garden to the Arboretum in memory of his wife. He worked for the Monroe County Parks Department and maintained Highland Park for many years. His work was renowned and important to Rochester, the Flower City. Indeed, there is an entire knoll of gorgeous azaleas and rhododendrons dedicated in his honor at Highland Park. Mr. Fennicchia is the hybridizer of the famous "Rochester Lilac," a fragrant white known for extra petals. We have a variation of this plant, with a fragrant multi-layered blossom.

After your brief rest, continue on the east-branch of the path. You will wind your way through the Japanese Maple grove. The Maples, with their colorful cut leaves, are breathtaking in the fall. You

will also notice more tree peonies and several cucumber magnolia (or blue magnolias) trees. The trees have distinctive large leaves that provide dense shade. They are indigenous to the south and are a protected species in Canada. We are proud to have several specimens at the Webster Arb!

Turn right to cross the covered bridge. This structure was built and installed by the Town's Parks employees. If you remain on the path, you will walk by a number of oak trees. These are experimental specimens, developed by a local grower with the intent to cultivate new varieties. You be the judge of the success of this project! An arched bridge will lead you to the children's playground located in Kent Park. Other amenities offered in this park include a veteran's memorial and four softball fields to the north, a public restroom to the east, and two soccer fields to the south.

If you turn away from the bridge and walk on the grass along the brush, you will arrive at a large area that is the remains of an old apple orchard. The remaining apple trees and the one pear tree continue to bear fruit today. Notice – but DO NOT TOUCH - an excellent example of a Poison Ivy vine traveling the trunk and branches of one of the apple trees. Head toward the Seneca Trail, which will lead you on an adventure into the woods. (If you would like to enjoy the hike through the woods at a different time, skip the next two paragraphs and walk through the orchard until you reach the small gazebo.)

The Arboretum has acres of woods buffering the north boundary. The trails criss-cross east and west, from the soccer fields to the Webster Golf Course (our neighbor to the west.) The southern-most section of trails has been widened to 15 feet and mowed for easy access and comfortable walking. Along the trails, you will enjoy dappled sun light and a babbling creek, as well as catch glimpses of the remains of an old homestead. Although most is natural growth, some areas have been planted with native trees and shrubbery. In 2001, a faculty-student group donated \$1,500 for trail improvement and new gardens.

Along the west property line, you will see the most recent development within the Arboretum: Late in 2011, the area was cleared of woodland by the Monroe County Water Authority. They have installed a major underground pipeline to move water from Lake Ontario through Webster to towns to our south, namely Penfield and Fairport. More information about the project can be found at their website: (<http://www.mcwa.com/Projects/EastSideWaterSupplyProject.aspx>) Members of the Webster Arboretum Association are actively planning trails and plantings to create an inviting new area within the park. Indeed, in 2013, two trees were planted to establish “The Hall of Giants” - one is a Sequoia and the other other is a Coffee Tree. Right now both *might* reach the bottom of your chin, but come back in 50 years and WOW!

The wooded trails will eventually lead you back into the old apple orchard. A small gazebo is nestled within the clearing. It is a gift from the Marra family and welcomes visitors to sit quietly and enjoy the flora and fauna, and most abundantly, the peace. Adjacent, and part of this respite, is our Healing Garden. A gift from Webster resident, Karen Schneider, this garden honors her mother's work with and extensive knowledge of the medicinal qualities of plants.

When you are ready, continue walking south. On the near-by knoll is a Daylily Display Garden. It was established and is maintained by the Finger Lakes Daylily Society, which has national certification by the American Hemerocallis Society. Currently, the club boasts of over 250 different cultivars of Day Lilies in this one garden. Each year, a section of plants, after an appropriate amount of time in the garden, are divided and offered for sale in May. The society uses a percentage of their proceeds and volunteer labor to maintain this garden. This site also incorporates Fox Tail Lily and Alum, which herald the Day Lily blossoms spectacularly.

As you continue walking south, you will happen across the Azalea Garden, noted previously. In 2012, we rejuvenated the soil and developed a new layout for the beds. Fifteen new bushes were added in the spring of 2013. From here, if you look towards the pond, you will see the Manning Bridge on your left. This bridge was funded by the Webster Arboretum to honor Bob and Carroll Manning. Both long-time supporters of this park, Bob maintained the rose beds for many years and Carroll continues to be a tireless advocate for the Webster Arboretum. The bridge overlooks a spillway and makes an enchanting place for wedding and other commemorative photographs. (If you wish to have your picture taken here, please consider offering a \$25 sitting fee to the Arboretum Association help maintain the beauty of this setting. More information can be found at [www.WebsterArboretum.org](http://www.WebsterArboretum.org).)

Back on the path (on the west side of the pond, heading south) notice that the berms defining the east and west edges of the park create borders upon which mature trees have grown or have been planted. They provide wind protection to the other plant material. Being this close to the Lake Ontario, there is almost always a cooling breeze.

You might also notice a collection of Paperbark Maples, donated by Howard (Bob) Ecker, to your left, near the edge of the pond. Interestingly, the trees in this area were planted about a foot too deep and some are now struggling to live. (To answer your question, digging away the dirt and exposing the trunk at this point will create gullies that will collect water. Frying pan-to-fire solution!) Happily, you will see the same kind of trees planted appropriately around the corner, along the south edge of the pond. The paperbark maples have a reddish-brown exfoliating bark and green cut leaves, giving them four-season appeal. Indeed, they make a stunning statement in the fall.

On your right, do not miss the Antique Rose Garden. It was created in 1999 and underwritten by Sue and Steve Dunn. It was designed and maintained for many years by Burgess Elliot, who still acts as a valued consultant for their care. It is currently being renovated. These roses are noted for their old-fashioned beauty and fragrance. To be an “old” rose garden, the class of rose had to be in existence before 1867, which was the introduction of the first hybrid tea rose, “La France.” Some of these roses have been in commerce since 1550.

Just beyond the Antique Rose Garden is the Rotary Garden. This quiet grove of trees and shrubs has a meandering path that weaves through dappled shade. The garden planted on the central berm contains yellow, blue and white blossoms and/or leaves – the colors of the Rotary Club. The grove was dedicated in 1999 to deceased members of the Webster Rotary Club and an engraved stone was placed in their honor. As you walk the path, make note of the black marble bench positioned between two decorative trees. The bench was given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Reiflin, original owners and farmers of the acreage. Further along, you will notice a spring garden being installed. Based on the fund raising efforts of Harley School students, Trillium will be the first plants installed.

Upon leaving the Rotary Garden, you might not even notice crossing the grass-covered culvert through which flows the creek. The south side was stone-faced in the summer and fall of 1998. Many of the red stones were purchased from a demolished church. Called Medina Stone, these stones are beautifully unique and were mined in Medina, NY.

If you take a moment to walk along the pond's edge, you might catch a glimpse of snapping turtles as large as trash lids, blue heron, a pair of ducks, a family of geese, pollywogs/bullfrogs, fish, and/or a host of other pond life.

When you are ready to head back to the parking lot, venture onto the grass along the creek and you will

encounter a magical spot: All who enter become children once again! Tucked beyond a serpentine hedge of Winterberry, an arborvitae maze lies waiting for you to explore. A Schuyler Hook design, it beckons for all to find their way to the center... and back out again! It was added to the grounds in the spring of 1999.

Over the years, features have come and gone. For example, a gardening program for children was offered for several summers. The students planted and maintained a pizza garden, filled with tomatoes, peppers, basil, and oregano and then used the produce to make sauce and pizzas. This garden (and program) has since been discontinued. As well, a Crabapple grove was removed in the spring of 2012 to make way for the parking lot expansion. This became necessary when the Curry Building was enlarged. And, along the creek's edge, there was once a Butterfly Garden. In the past, it included a butterfly house. On any given summer day, you could watch many species of butterflies come and go. The location is perfect for a butterfly garden because there is nearby natural vegetation for shelter and the mud from the creek is a great source of water and nutrients for the butterflies. However, the rapid accumulation of brush along side and within the creek necessitates periodic clear-cutting.

Our tour concludes at the Gardener's shed, built by Nate Hanson, who works for the town but loves when his busy days include time here. It contains the tools by which much of the ground's maintenance is accomplished. Power tools and earth-moving equipment are only used for large jobs, all the rest is maintained by hand tools and mild weed-control agents. As well, the Town mows the grass on a weekly schedule.

Thank you for visiting our "Unique Garden of Natural Beauty." During your time here, you were sure to have noticed that there are many memorial trees and benches (noted by plaques), and the aforementioned inscribed bricks at the Arboretum. If you are interested in having a commemorative tree or bush planted, becoming a member, making a donation, or volunteering, please visit our website at [www.WebsterArboretum.org](http://www.WebsterArboretum.org). Webster is very proud of this growing endeavor and the Webster Arboretum Association would be very pleased to welcome YOU as our newest member. Any further questions can be answered through our website. Enjoy the rest of your day!