

THE BLITHEWOLD STORY

In 1896, coal baron, Augustus Van Wickle and his wife Bessie purchased the property for a summer retreat away from their home in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. The beauty and location of the site made it the perfect place to pursue the family's love of the sea and Bessie's passion for horticulture. With her eye for design and plant knowledge, Bessie oversaw the placement of almost every tree, garden, and structure on the grounds.



Bessie Van Wickle McKee

Her elder daughter, Marjorie, inherited her mother's love of gardening and grew thousands of plants for her gardens including seedlings from Blithewold's Giant Sequoia. She corresponded with some of the most renowned botanists of the day. Blithewold's voluminous archives contain journals, letters, and thousands of photographs that paint a detailed picture of life on the estate during the last century.

Marjorie Lyon had the foresight to understand what an invaluable legacy she was leaving when upon her death in 1976, she bequeathed Blithewold to the public for their enjoyment, education, and inspiration. That legacy has continued to inspire the thousands who visit Blithewold each year.

"And everywhere nature's bounteous gifts have served under man's skillful guidance to create an estate in which new beauties are constantly revealed and the perfect accord between architecture and grounds is ever apparent."

—Bessie Van Wickle McKee, ca. 1910

INFORMATION

THE MANSION

The 1908 English-style house contains the original furnishings, and the extensive archives provide a wealth of material for changing exhibits.

THE GARDENS

Gardens located throughout the 33 acre property include roses, annuals, perennials, wildflowers and plants for rock gardens.

THE ARBORETUM

Rare woody plants from around the world and native specimen trees grow side-by-side in a park-like setting.

EVENTS & PROGRAMS

A variety of fun-for-the-whole-family events and educational programs take place all year long

MEMORABLE OCCASIONS

Spaces are available for weddings, corporate events, and private parties.

HOURS

Mansion & Gardens: April through mid-October
Mansion open Tuesday through Sunday, 10am to 4pm and most Monday holidays. The mansion occasionally closes at 3pm for Special Events.
Gardens & Grounds: year-round daily 10am to 5pm
Visitor s Center Gift Shop open 10am to 5pm

ADMISSION

Adults: \$12 Seniors \$11
Military & Students: \$9
Family (2 adults and 2 youths) \$24
Under 17 yrs. and Members: Free
Reduced fees for groups with advance reservations
Prices subject to change

LOCATION

101 Ferry Road, Rt. 114, Bristol, Rhode Island 02809
Mid-way between Newport and Providence on the RIPTA (401-781-9400) bus route

WWW.BLITHEWOLD.ORG
401-253-2707 FAX: 401-253-0412

60 minutes from Boston.
30 minutes from Newport and Providence



BLITHEWOLD

MANSION, GARDENS & ARBORETUM

Operated and managed by Blithewold, Inc. under lease from PreserveRI



BLITHEWOLD
MANSION, GARDENS & ARBORETUM



INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHY: DEBORAH HYNES

DESIGNED BY: SUSAN HARTLEY / PETER HALL

WELCOME TO BLITHEWOLD

In a tranquil seaside setting on Narragansett Bay, you are invited to come explore one of the finest garden estates in New England, Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum. In the 45-room English style manor house, discover a rich social history chronicling the lives of one family over a span of more than 100 years. The breathtaking views from the house draw you outside to enjoy the sea breezes, colorful flower gardens, and magnificent trees and shrubs in a landscape inspired by the family's love of plants, trees, and this special place by the Bay.

Plan to spend some time in the picturesque town of Bristol, steeped in history and old-world charm. Visit another of the town's ten museums, browse the eclectic shops, and enjoy the fine restaurants



THE MANSION

The 1908 English style house contains original furnishings and extensive archives provide a wealth of material for changing exhibits including *Christmas at Blithewold*.



THE GARDENS

More than 10 garden settings include roses, annuals, perennials, wildflowers, and rock garden plants.



THE ARBORETUM

Rare native and exotic specimen trees grow side-by-side in a park-like setting.



THE BLITHEWOLD EXPERIENCE

Gain inspiration from the variety of gardens in this bayside setting. Meandering paths take you from the Rose Garden to the North Garden, from the Enclosed Garden to the wooded Bosquet, and from the Water Garden to the Display Gardens.

Learn about more than 500 different kinds of woody plants and hundreds of perennials and annuals. Changing house exhibits highlight the extensive archival collections.

Entertain your family with a walk on nearly a mile of paths throughout the property and along the shore, listen to the sounds in the bamboo grove, find tadpoles and frogs in the Water Garden, and race to the water's edge on the 10-acre Great Lawn.

