The Stowe Center is a founding member of CT Historic Gardens – a collaborative of 15 historic sites and gardens dotted around the state. Each delightful site offers opportunities to explore a variety of garden styles and time periods during bloom seasons of spring, summer and fall. The annual CT Historic Gardens Day in late June brings additional programming at each site for those interested in a day’s worth of visits. Explore cthistoricgardens.org for more information.

The Harriet Beecher Stowe Center produces many programs that are archived in our Multimedia Gallery on the website and can be watched or listened to from anywhere anytime. One program was designed for the Stowe Gardens and is a “Soundscape” of music and words that tell a unique story of race history in the USA. Hartford-based DJ Q-Boogie is a sound artist who mixed a remarkable and emotional story with music. Find a bench, step, or place under a tree and listen in the landscape; we hope you will be moved and inspired.
THE HARRIET BEECHER STOWE CENTER

GARDEN VOLUNTEERS
Leora Berns, Cathy Conlin, Judith Lohman

SPONSORS
The Harriet Beecher Stowe Center’s programming, buildings, and grounds are generously supported in part by the William C. Allen Mortenson Foundation; Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; Department of Economic and Community Development, State Historic Preservation Office; Department of Economic & Community Development, CT Office of the Arts; Department of Economic and Community Development, State Historic Preservation Office; Foundation; Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; Department of Economic and Community Development, State Historic Preservation Office; Foundation; Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; and a steady supply of fresh herbs and vegetables for Stowe’s recipes.

THE KITCHEN GARDEN

THE BLUE COTTAGE GARDEN

Monochromatic gardens became popular in the late 1870s. The most common were yellow or pink. The hardest to create, and thus the most desirable, was a blue garden, as blue flowers were the rarest. Everything from pale blue-gray to deep violet was considered “blue.”

THE WILDFLOWER GARDEN

Stowe loved wildflowers. She planted them, picked them, and painted them. Well into her 80s, Stowe enjoyed walking through fields gathering bouquets of them. Her love of wildflowers translated into a relaxed approach to her gardens, and she often referred to them as her “jungles.”

CURB APPEAL

Like other Victorians, Stowe connected gardening to morality. In Uncle Tom’s Cabin, Stowe described Uncle Tom as a man who kept a good garden with his home “covered by a large scarlet bignonia and a native multiflora rose...” and a front yard filled with “marigolds, petunias, [and] four-o’clocks.” She created an image of virtuous domesticity to help readers empathize with her enslaved hero.

THE HIGH VICTORIAN GARDEN

Elephant ears and castor bean plants typify the exotic plants Victorians preferred. Exotic plants that required continuous maintenance was a sign of wealth and sophistication.

HERITAGE ROSES

The hedges on either side of the drive contain a variety of fragrant heritage roses that bloom in early June. In 2010, the Stowe Center was awarded the Garden Club of America’s Jane Righter Rose Medal for this collection.

THE PINK & RED GARDEN

Fads of the early 20th century included “grandmother gardens,” plots filled with climbing roses, phlox, peony, hibiscus, iris, hollyhocks, and dahlias, that gardeners imagined had populated the gardens of colonial New England.

EARLY 20TH CENTURY LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Katharine Seymour Day, Stowe’s granddaughter and Stowe Center founder, planted lush gardens during her residency here. The sapling Common Pawpaw tree propagated in 2019, rhododendrons, and mountain laurel are remnants of this early 20th-century landscape design.

THE WILDFLOWER GARDEN

GARDENS AT THE HARRIET BEECHER STOWE CENTER

THE WILDFLOWER GARDEN

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