

The Promise of Spring Self-Guided Tour

Tour Tyler's historic gardens featuring winter blooming and fragrant plants. Discover secret places of the Arboretum. Our tour starts on the path from the Visitor Center. Follow the numbered signs! There are a total of **six** which will take 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Be sure you use your nose to guide you!

#1

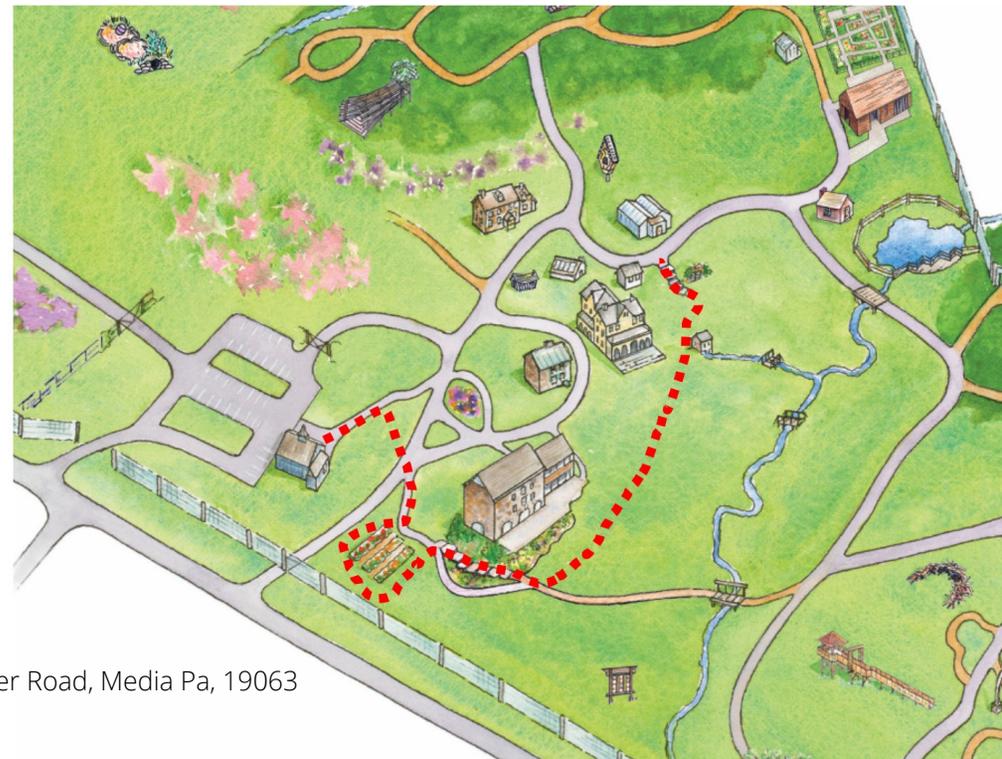
Our journey begins at the first intersection, where you will find the understated sweetbox or *Sarcococca hookeriana*. This evergreen does multiple duty in the garden, and we use it here as a groundcover for it is easy to maintain, adds winter interest, and has a sweet fragrance in spring. Look up; our **historic Barn** is in the backdrop. **Built in 1833** as part of an expanding dairy operation by the fifth generation patriarch, **Enos Painter**, the spacious Barn now houses events, classes, and meetings. Head toward the Barn and take the path on the right towards the Fragrant Garden.

#2

Planted and maintained by **The Herb Society of America - Philadelphia Unit** for more than 40 years, this terraced garden focuses on plants with fragrant foliage and/or flowers. Over 100 varieties of herbs are used in the **Fragrant Garden**, guaranteeing bloom interest from early May with bulbs, through June and July with lavenders, beebalm and basils, on into the fall with scented geraniums, oregano and salvias, to mention a few. Take the path at the top level, and make sure you gently touch the rosemary and lavender in the raised bed on your right. The fragrance of these great herbs will surely cheer you up on grey, wintery days.

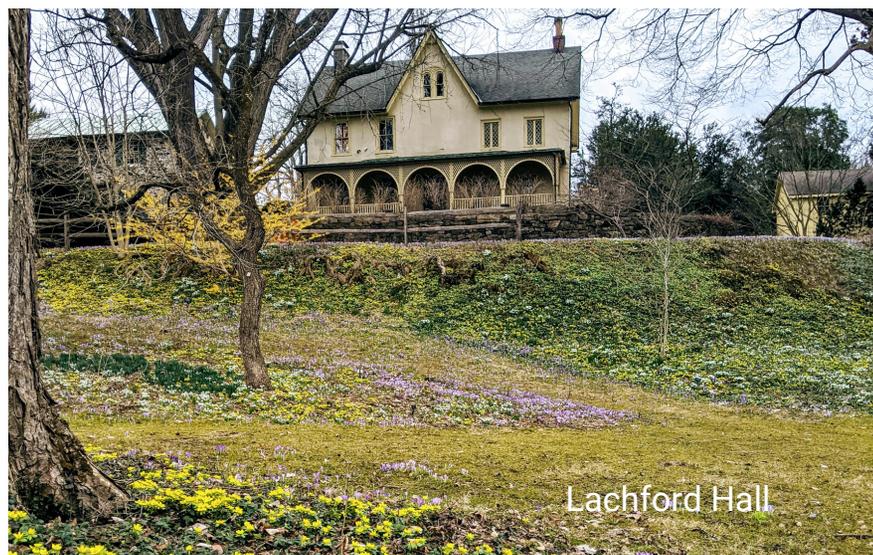
#3

Proceed to the end of the bed and turn left to reach this stop. Here you will find some wonderful fragrant blooming shrubs and small trees, mainly the *Viburnum × bodnantense* 'Dawn' and three witch hazels 'Primavera,' 'Pallida' and 'Heinrich Bruns.' The fragrance is strongest from the viburnum blooms with 'Primavera' with 'Pallida' close behind. Take a sniff, and you be the judge. **Tyler is home to 100 witch hazels** (*Hamamelis*), one of our collections of interest.



#4

Return to the paved path and proceed down the **Barn steps**, but before you do, stop at #4. Is this a fancy kind of holly? Actually, this is a holly olive (*Osmanthus heterophyllus* 'Goshiki') grown for its interesting leaves and fragrant flowers. The Latin name comes from the Greek words "osme," which means fragrant and "anthos," meaning flower. Down the steps you go and before turning left at the bottom, look up! You will notice conically shaped trees at the very top of the hill. They are mature Japanese umbrella pines (*Sciadopitys verticillata*) that are very rare in the garden and even more so due to their age. How old do you think they are if they were planted in 1934? Next, you will walk past the Barn and pass by the **Cedar of Lebanon** trunk. With great sadness, we had to say goodbye to this tree that stood at this spot for over 180 years. Our plan is to create a garden in this area soon, which will include the remnants of this wonderful tree. Be sure to visit our website for updates.



Lachford Hall

#5

Our next stop is in front of a thicket! No, not a random thicket, but a deliberately planted member of our historic collections that, like the Cedar of Lebanon, **was planted over 180 years ago**. This sweet-smelling, yellow-flowered shrub is the leatherleaf mahonia (*Mahonia bealei*). The height of bloom time is during February and into March, followed by bluish-grey berries if the flowers are pollinated. Look up the hill, and you will see our founders' home, **Lachford Hall**. Next to the cream-colored historic building is another historic tree, the ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*). According to the PA Big Trees' records, it stands 88 ft. tall and 84 ft. wide and is the second-largest in Pennsylvania. Even though our tree is the same height as the champion in Lancaster, the other has a spread of 108 ft. – most impressive. Try measuring out 84 ft. with your steps. Most adults' feet are 1' in length. You'll need a buddy to stand at the beginning!

#6

The final stop is by the Spring House looking up the hill. Sugar maples, a Yulan magnolia, and witch hazels provide shelter for our naturalized bulbs that thrive on this slope. Winter aconites, snowdrops, crocus, miniature daffodils, and spring beauty explode in great numbers attracting early pollinators such as mason bees, hoverflies and emerging queen bumblebees looking for food. Sit at the bench and pay attention to the insects that gather at the flowers. Listen to the birds as they call to each other. Listen to the sound of water bubbling up from the spring house. Take in the sweet smell of the Promise of Spring.

For more Promise of Spring



