



Tyler Arboretum

HISTORY WALK

CELEBRATING TYLER ARBORETUM'S 80TH BIRTHDAY (1944-2024)

Enjoy a leisurely stroll while celebrating Tyler Arboretum's 80th Birthday this year!

This walk, from the Fragrant Garden to Lucille's Garden, features 10 stops along parts of the new Wister Trail to recount events and activities over the years that have helped shape today's arboretum. Some of the challenges that still lie ahead for our arboretum are also highlighted.

This approximately half-mile walk includes some changes in grade and walking surfaces. While most of the walk is on a paved surface, a portion of the walk between Stops 2 and 4 is on loose gravel.



- 0 Hello! And welcome to the 'Tyler at 80' Walk!
- 1 1944: Laura (Hoopes) Tyler Calls First Board of Trustees
- 2 1949: Fragrant Garden is Created
- 3 1982: Plants, Pancakes, and Pumpkins
- 4 1946: Dr. John Wister Hired to Create Tyler Arboretum
- 5 1998-2016: Having Fun at Tyler!
- 6 1954-1955: Tyler Builds Its Collections
- 7 1992-2017: Restoration and Accessibility
- 8 1996-2019: Engaging Tyler's Visitors
- 9 1970-1984: Tyler's Citizen Scientists
- 10 2019 and Beyond: Anticipating Tyler's Future

1944: LAURA (HOOPES) TYLER CALLS THE FIRST BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND CREATES TYLER ARBORETUM



Laura Anna Hoopes of Westtown was a child in the 1860s and married John J. Tyler in 1881. Following John's death in 1929, Laura Tyler was responsible for these contiguous 647 acres we now know as Tyler Arboretum.

- About half of this acreage was originally **purchased from William Penn in 1681** by Thomas and Margaret Minshall, British Quakers from Latchford, England.
- The land was owned and farmed for **263 years** by eight generations of the Minshall, Painter, and Tyler families.
- **Laura Tyler's** will put the land under the protection of a non-profit Board of Trustees.

1944 World News:

In the fourth year of World War II, Allied troops stormed the beaches of Normandy, France, while sea battles raged in the South Pacific.

1949: FRAGRANT GARDEN IS CREATED



In 1949, Superintendent Charles G. Whittaker proposed that Tyler Arboretum create a Fragrant Garden, which was called the Garden for the Blind at the time. Mr. Whittaker was inspired by an article he had read about a similar garden maintained in a small English town.

Tyler's Fragrant Garden was originally laid out in three terraces with guide rails and Braille text on each level. Each terrace featured a low stone wall and was planted with fragrant flowering plants chosen for the scent and texture of their leaves and flowers. Visitors were encouraged to touch and smell the plants as they enjoyed the garden.



Many organizations helped create the Fragrant Garden: Media Lions Club, Women's Club of Delaware County, Providence Garden Club, Hill and Hollow Garden Club, West Chester Garden Club, and Philadelphia Chapter of the Herb Society of America.

After the Fragrant Garden's dedication in 1954, Tyler Arboretum received a congratulatory letter from Ms. Helen Keller, a well-known deaf and blind American author, lecturer, and activist for disability rights.

An initiative of the Tyler History Volunteers.

1949 World News:

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) is formed in Switzerland.

1982 World News:

The United Nation's Convention on the Law of the Sea was enacted to control pollution from ocean-going ships.

1982:

PLANTS, PANCAKES, AND PUMPKINS

In 1982, three new seasonal activities drew big crowds: Tyler's first Plant Sale, Pancake Breakfast, and Pumpkin Day. These events have become much-anticipated by 'green thumb' adults and excited children over the years. The proceeds significantly help sustain and expand Tyler's day-to-day activities.

Plant Sales: Tyler is all about plants, so what better way to engage members and friends than to offer plants for sale along with planting advice from Tyler's experts. **The first plant sale featured house plants, vegetables, and exotics.** Over the years, the plant sale has become an anticipated start to the Spring planting season.

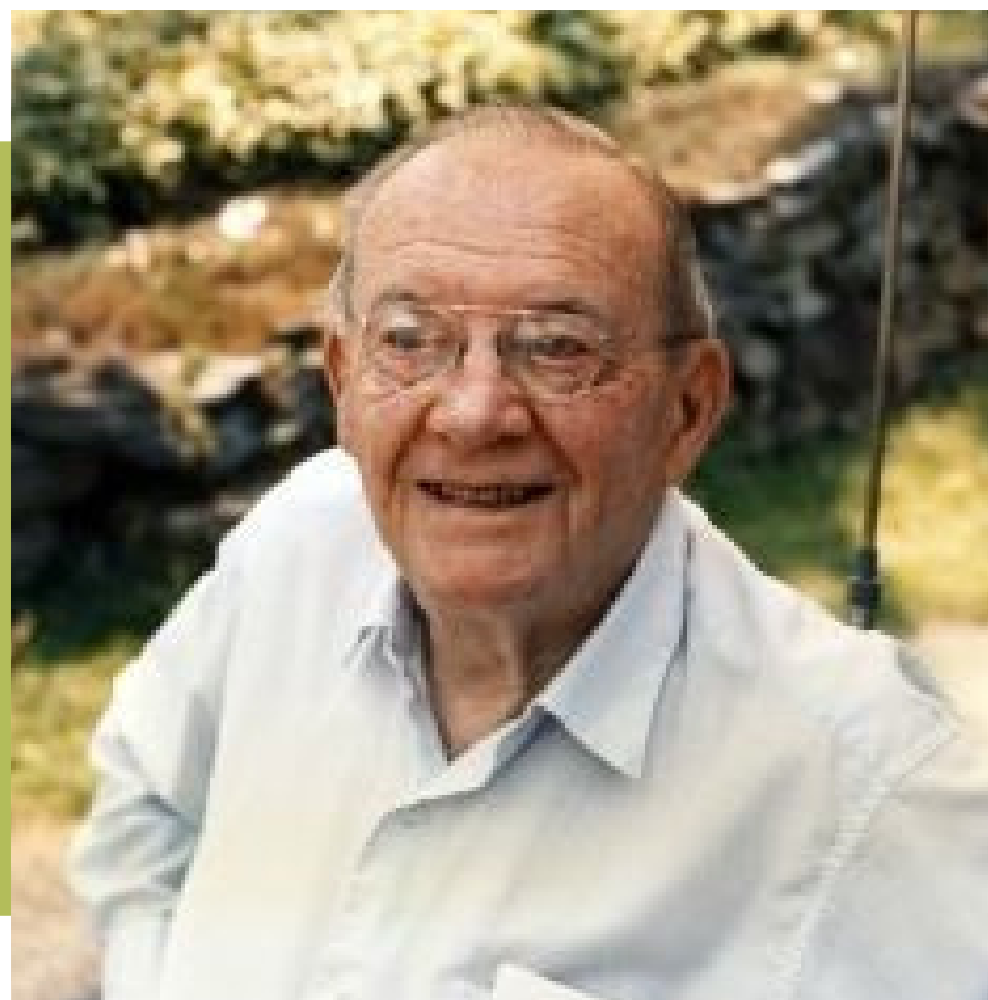


Pancake Breakfasts: What could be better than pancakes, sausage, and maple syrup, served by staff and volunteers in Tyler's historic barns? Crisp spring weather and an **all-you-can-eat breakfast** provide a great opportunity to get outside after a long winter. Educational demonstrations on maple syrup making and log-chopping are also presented.

Pumpkin Days: Tyler celebrated the autumn harvest with its first ever 'Pumpkin Day' celebration. Pumpkins of all shapes and sizes were offered for sale, sometimes with unusual guests, including the **Phillie Phanatic**, helping out with the pumpkin celebrations!



1946: DR. JOHN WISTER HIRED TO CREATE TYLER ARBORETUM



In 1946, Dr. John Casper Wister was already the director of The Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College and was hired by the Board of Trustees to become the first director of Tyler Arboretum.

- We owe a great deal to this exceptional horticulturist and landscape architect, who was a **member of more than 50 nature and horticultural societies** and well-recognized around the world for his expertise.
- His work at Tyler built on the heritage left behind by the Quaker brothers, Minshall and Jacob Painter, as he initially worked to save as many of the **Painter heritage trees** as possible.
- Dr. Wister then established diverse collections of **rhododendrons, lilacs, magnolias, hollies, Japanese cherries**, and many more. He served as the director of both the Tyler Arboretum and The Scott Arboretum until his retirement in 1968.

1946 World News:

The United Nations met for the first time at its new home in New York City.

1994 World News:

The first genetically modified food, the FLAVR SAVR tomato, is approved for human consumption.

1998-2016: HAVING FUN AT TYLER!



1998: The Stopford Family Meadow Maze was dedicated in 1998. Four large standing stones mark out the points of the compass around the maze. Today, the Meadow Maze offers the best place to see a glorious springtime display of narcissi and daffodils.



2008: Tyler's Totally Terrific Treehouses were opened to the delight of children and parents. Five treehouses and ten 'Cool Places' have provided fun spots to visit, offering different views and photo opportunities throughout the year.



2011: 'Big Bugs' invaded Tyler Arboretum bringing big crowds to the arboretum. The larger-than-life art exhibit of ants, spiders, praying mantis, and other insects was so successful that it was repeated in 2017 with 'Big Bugs 2.'



2016: Ten goats were 'hired' to stay at Tyler and participate in a summer time environmental experiment: camp out in two fenced-in areas on Tyler's grounds and munch on invasive species. Visitors loved seeing and naming the goats.

1954-1955: TYLER BUILDS ITS COLLECTIONS



Between 1954 and 1955, Tyler's North Woods was bulldozed and rototilled four times to prepare for planting a new *Rhododendron* collection. Trails were also marked out to form 16 different planting 'islands,' and many of these trails still exist today as the Native Woodland Walk.

- Most of the original plants were small, brought from Swarthmore's Scott Arboretum as rooted cuttings or seedlings. **Hundreds of *Rhododendron maximum* were grown in an on-site nursery**, along with mountain laurel, leucothoe, Japanese andromeda, enkianthus, and various azalea species and varieties.
- Over time, a new Wister *Rhododendron* Garden was created near the Minshall Trail, but **many of the original plantings can still be found in the North Woods.**
- **More than 12,000 other plants and 34,000 bulbs were planted before 1955**, sourced from horticultural centers and nurseries in the US, Canada, and Holland, as well as over 30 amateur garden groups.
- **More than half of the plants came through Dr. John Wister**, head arborist of both Tyler Arboretum and Scott Arboretum at the time.



1992 World News:

The first 'Earth Summit' was held in Brazil. Climate experts from 179 countries met to focus on the impact of human activities on the environment.

1992-2017:

RESTORATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Tyler Arboretum works hard to protect its valuable collections and improve access to its natural wonders.



1992: Lachford's Porch is Constructed



1994: Making the arboretum more accessible to all



1999: Deer Fence Protects Tyler's Collections



2017: Pink Hill Restoration



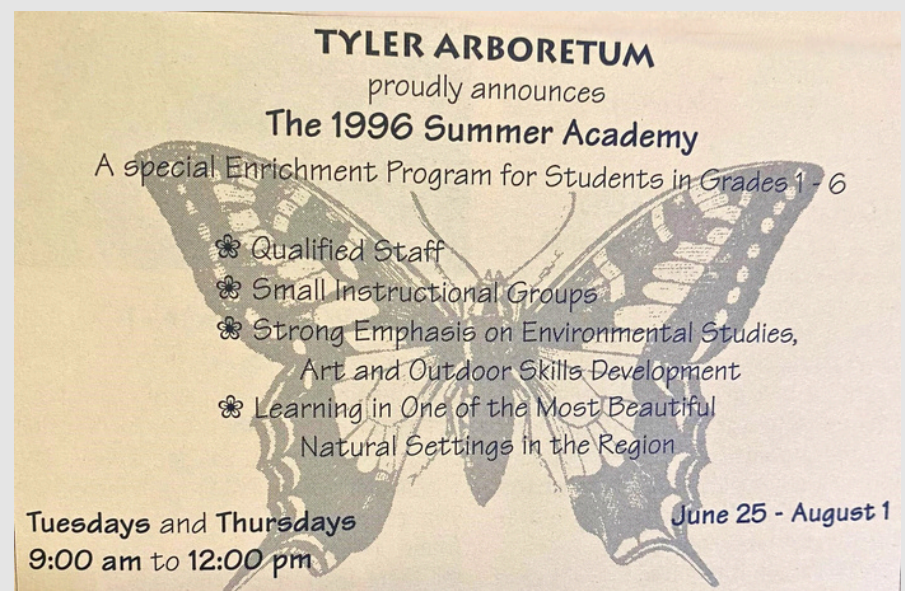
1997 World News:

The Kyoto Protocol was signed committing the world's nations to reduce human-made greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that are driving climate change and global warming.

1996-2019: ENGAGING TYLER'S VISITORS

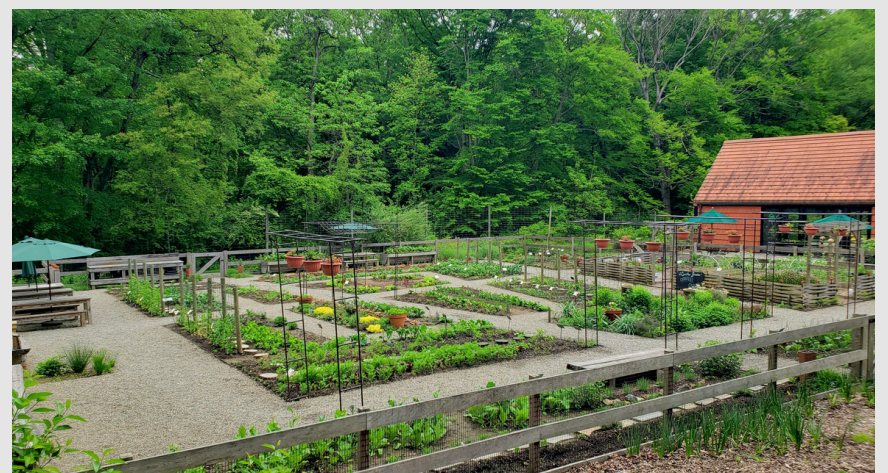
Welcoming families to learn and experience the natural world has been a priority at Tyler for many years. Staff and volunteers have helped generations of visitors experience Tyler Arboretum through summer camp, the Pollinator Preserve, and Lucille's Garden.

1996: 'The 1996 Summer Academy' opens with a 5-week morning program two days a week. Within just a few years, The Academy became an all-day, every day Tyler Summer Camp. After a pandemic break, the laughter and chatter of summer campers is being heard again this year as hundreds of children have a fun-filled, educational and nurturing experience at Tyler Arboretum.



2004: The Butterfly House opens as a one-year exhibit for visitors to learn about butterflies and the plants they depend upon. It was so popular that it still exists today with the netting removed and the space renamed as 'The Pollinator Preserve.' Now with 'free range' butterflies, we have more opportunities to learn about a diverse array of insects and native plants.

2019: Lucille's Garden opens where you can appreciate the beauty of homegrown produce, flowers, and herbs. More than 10,000 pounds of food has already been donated to The Media Food Bank! The garden is surrounded by the children's play area, rain garden, and dry garden. Come to learn, volunteer, or to soak up the joy in this space.





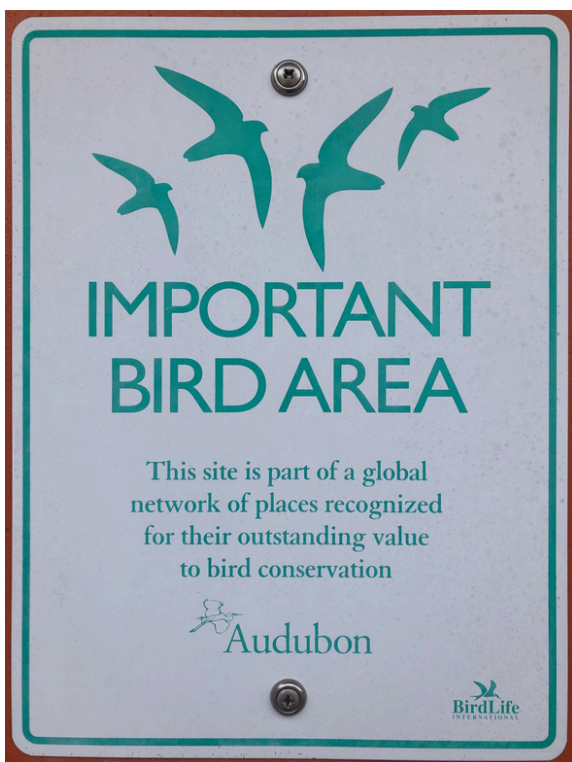
1970 World News:

'Earth Day' was held for the first time, drawing attention to the need to protect America's environment.

1970-1984: TYLER'S CITIZEN SCIENTISTS

Since the time of Minshall and Jacob Painter in the mid-1800s, 'Citizen Scientists,' volunteers who collect data and report scientific results, have been an integral part of Tyler Arboretum's work.

1970 - Blue Bird Surveys: Tyler Arboretum was the first place in Delaware County to set up blue bird nesting boxes. Each year, Tyler volunteers record how many boxes are occupied and the number of eggs and fledglings. Statistics are relayed to the DelCo Bluebird Society and the PA Bluebird Society.



1984 - Important Bird Area: The Audubon Society named Tyler Arboretum, Ridley Creek State Park, and surrounding land an 'Important Bird Area,' a region critical as a migratory staging area, a winter roost site, or a prime breeding spot. Have you joined one of our Weekly Bird Walks or an Early Morning or Late Night Owl Prowl? Look for this plaque at the entrance to Tyler's Visitor Center!

1984 - American Chestnut Orchard: In 1984, Tyler Arboretum planted its first American chestnut trees in an orchard on the other side of Painter Road. Since then, Tyler volunteers have supported work started by the American Chestnut Foundation to restore the American chestnut to its native range on the East Coast.



2019 AND BEYOND: ANTICIPATING TYLER'S FUTURE

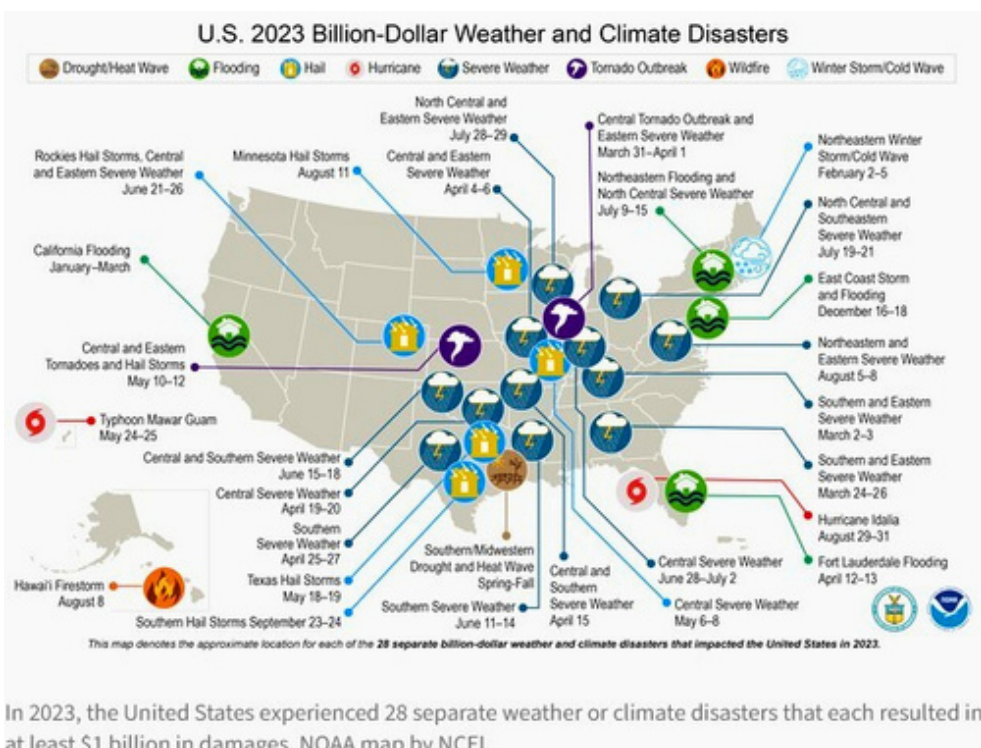
Tyler Arboretum's challenge today is to anticipate how climate change will affect plants, pollinators, invasive insects, rain and wind storms, and much more over the next 80 years and beyond.



2019: Spotted Lanternfly



2023: Emerald Ash Borer



2022: Stormwater Management



WE NEED YOU!  **Members and Volunteers**