FORMAL GARDEN / SCULPTURE TOUR

Tour Introduction
- 14 formal gardens with a background of natural areas
- For over 40 years, Robert Allerton collected more than 100 sculptures and garden ornaments from around the world for his estate
- Art and nature coexist and complement each other throughout the gardens
- Robert put great emphasis on harmony, balance, and order
- Examples of repetition and symmetry exist throughout the gardens

Recognitions for Allerton Park
- 1970 – National Natural Landmark (1000 acres along the Sangamon River)
- 2007 – Seven Wonders of Illinois
- Fall 2007 – National Register of Historic Places (500 acres, including the mansion and formal gardens)
- One of the 150 great places in Illinois – selected by the American Institute of Architects Illinois Council

Triangle Parterre Garden
- Renovated in 2019 because the overgrown trees were shading out the hedges below, eroding the triangle design
- Intricate triangle hedge pattern with ever green plantings
- Boxwood hedge
- “Parterre” is a French word that refers to an elaborate arrangement of ornamental flower beds, gravel paths, and pavement
- No formal European garden is complete without parterres
- Small garden house at the end provides shelter and a place to rest, and used to provide access to the walkway along top of peony garden wall
- Espaliered trees along southwest wall are pear trees

- Located at each end of Triangle Parterre Garden
- Limestone, Assyrian lions (Assyrian was a vast ancient empire in the Middle East)
- One pair was acquired before 1922, 2nd pair was reproduced in 1976
- These statues have flat backs and may have been up against a building at some point
- Lions symbolize the power and majesty of a king, represent the guardian/keeper of a fortress, and are known for their bravery and ferocity

Seasonal Gardens (Annual Garden, Peony Garden, Seasonal Garden hedge and Bulb Garden)
- Symbolizes the four season with a variety of plant growth
- Spring – Peonies and spring bulbs
- Summer – Annual flowers and perennial bulbs
- Fall – Chrysanthemums and grasses
- Winter – Hemlock trees
Adam or The Creation of Man – Seasonal Gardens
- Limestone copy of bronze statue created by Auguste Rodin in 1881
- Depicts Adam twisting up as he comes to life
- Modeled by a Parisian weightlifter
- Robert purchased the original bronze from Rodin’s studio after his death, and presented it to the Art Institute of Chicago where it remains today
- Robert commissioned Charles Lang to carve the limestone copy
- Present sculpture is 2nd copy; 1st was toppled in 1977 when a visitor attempted to climb it
- Some spaces remain uncut for stability (between fingers, outer edge of leg)
- Adam appears to have six fingers on his right hand

Peony Garden
- Peonies were Robert Allerton’s favorite flower
- Originally 110 varieties, four of each variety, planted in rows with a rainbow of color
- There are currently 68 varieties
- The arborvitae are sheared to maintain a wall-like screen
- Grapevines grow along the other three walls

Three Graces – Peony Garden
- Group of three female figures in carved limestone
- Based on Roman mythology, they are called Aglaea, Thalia, and Euphrosyne - personifying beauty, charm and grace
- Original was by Germain Pilon, commissioned by Catherine de Medici to honor her late husband King Henry II, now in the Louvre
- Robert commissioned Charles Lang to make two copies, one for his Aunt’s grave, one for his estate
- This statue was restored in summer 2007 using Friends of Allerton funds

Annual Garden
- Opposite the Peony Garden
- Contains flowers that bloom in summer
- Robert gave his head gardener room to experiment with new plants and ideas in this garden. Today the Park Supervisor continues that tradition by designing this garden differently every year.

Faun – Annual Garden – installed in early 1930’s
- Marble carving of an elf-like man (notice the pointed ears)
- Copy of a bronze original in a Naples museum
- From Roman mythology, the faun – body of man; horns, ears, and feet of a goat
- Represents the rural deity of the woods and herds
- An animal skin sits around his neck and a wine sack rests on his knee
- His expression suggests he is at a celebration
- His arm & head were broken off (vandalism) in 1958, only the head was recovered and replaced
Bulb Garden
- Originally created as a summer perennial bulb garden
- After falling into disrepair, the Bulb Garden was renovated and dedicated in 2017
- It blooms from late winter to late fall

Chinese Maze Garden
- Amur Privet hedge
- Slightly deceiving, not actually a maze
- Designed in the form of the Chinese symbol for long life, this garden was inspired by the pattern on Robert’s favorite pair of silk pajamas
- Wrought iron gates were designed by John Borie
- Goldfish are white marble fountains purchased in 1930 from a Peking art dealer who said they had once been in the garden of a prince
- Sea creatures were popular in American gardens in the 20’s & 30’s

Hosta Garden/Shade Garden
- Allerton Park’s newest garden, planted in 2006
- Allerton employees prepared the site, but the Illinois Prairie Hosta Society donated all plants and labor to install the garden

Chinese Musicians – installed in 1920
- 3 ft. tall limestone figures
- Robert purchased originals in England, possibly explaining their Anglo-Saxon facial features
- Charles Lang was later commissioned to carve two more
- At one time the musicians were installed in both the Rose Terrace (just outside the Brick Walled Garden) then the Lost Garden on the south side of the park
- In 1975, they were reproduced by stonecutter in Indiana due to damage by squirrels and vandals and in 1977, they were installed in the Avenue of the Chinese Musicians
- Each musician plays a different instrument

Sunken Garden
- Previously this area was a landfill and compost area for the estate
- Construction began in 1915, then it was redesigned in 1925 and 1932
- This garden is intentionally devoid of ornamental plantings
- With the acoustics provided by high walls, a conversational volume can be heard from one end of the garden by a person on the other

Japanese Guardian Fish – Sunken Garden – 1931
- 16 gilded bronze and gold-leaf stylized goldfish
- Reduced versions of original roof ornaments at the Palace of Nagoya, Japan
- Known as shachi, these mythological fish were thought to protect against fires
- Geometric lines of the pillars are representative of Balinese architecture
- They were originally made in Tokyo, but many are reproductions due to theft
Spring Garden – west side of Mansion pond
- Heavily wooded - filled with spring bulbs, wildflowers, and native trees
- A “naturalized” garden

The Cherub – Top of Lattice Gazebo – 1922
- Child/Angel playing a flute
- It is a copy of the original in Bath, England
- Next to Gazebo is Robert’s pet cemetery
- Rumor says the Gazebo is the site of Robert’s house while the mansion was being built

Allerton House – 1900
- Designed by John Borie, architect and friend of Robert Allerton
- Robert & John traveled to England in the winter 1897-98 to find a suitable design for the house
- Ham House, home of Earl of Dysart, located in Richmond, Surrey, England was their model
- Gargoyles and ornamental urns adorn the exterior
- House is made of imported Dutch brick
- The 40-room mansion was first occupied in 1900
- Today serves as Conference & Retreat Center as well as event and wedding venue

The Little Shepherdess and Her Dog – pathway between Mansion and main parking lot – 1940
- Limestone, 40” tall
- Commissioned to Monticello gravestone carver, Lew Wagy
- Replica of an eight inch German porcelain figurine from Robert’s house

Pan or Green Man – Above Sunroom, Library Terrace – 1900
- Limestone carving
- Pan is the Greek God of fields and forests
- Usually portrayed with horns, playing pipes or a flute
- His placement is appropriate – looking out toward the natural areas and near the former music room of the house
- Sad story of Pan – he was so ugly when born, his mother ran screaming from him
- Pan was lonely, so would scream into the forest, causing fear and excitement
- It is said “panic” comes from the disturbance Pan would cause

Terminal Busts – Library Terrace – before 1902
- Marble statues, 6 ½ feet tall
- Also called “Caryatids”
- Were once used as pillars to mark a boundary or used for decoration
- Purchased by Robert in an antique shop in Rome
- Copies of Renaissance models that were on display at the Pope’s Villa
Sphinxes – Solarium Terrace – c. 1900
- Limestone statues, 4 feet long
- Head & torso of a woman, body of a lion
- Sphinxes are a guardian statue, typically placed facing away from a building, confronting approaching visitors
- Robert had them turned so he could look upon their faces from the Solarium, indicating the gardens and nature is what is being entered and protected

Reflecting Pond & Koi Pond
- The Reflecting Pond is fed from a natural spring near the Boardwalk
- The Koi Pond was originally Robert’s swimming pool. It was renovated in 2019 to improve filtration.
- Visitors may stop by the front desk of the Mansion during warm months for a bag of fish food.

Primitive Men – Avenue of the Formal Gardens – 1921
- Life-size statues portray men pushing large rocks up as they emerge from the ground
- Robert’s friend, Glyn Warren Philpot sculpted small versions first with Robert’s butler, Ted Page, posing for them
- Greatly impressed, Robert commissioned Charles Lang to carve these life-size stone statues for the garden the following year

Sea Maidens – Entrance to Brick Walled Garden – 1930
- Bronze female figures, 6 ft. tall
- Robert & John Gregg found the inspiration for these statues while traveling in Hamburg, Germany
- Originals by Richard Kuohl were atop a kiosk as an advertisement for a passenger ship company
- Robert commissioned Kuohl to make two statues for the Farms
- Kuohl proposed a man and a woman, but Robert thought the male lacked the grace and charm of the female, so asked two females be made
- Upon Robert’s suggestion, the longboat in her hand was replaced by a bowl and seaweed garland was added

Brick Walled Garden – 1902
- Oldest garden on the property
- Used for many years as a vegetable garden
- Originally a reflecting pool in the center
- Now used as perennial garden
- Eight fruit baskets sit atop columns along the brick wall, symbolizing prosperity
- Espalier dwarf apple trees along the walls take careful training and pruning
- The accessible path was extended along the interior wall in 2019, made possible by a donor
Girl with a Scarf – Brick Walled Garden – installed in 1942

- Made by Lili Auer in 1941, exhibited in the Art Institute in Chicago
- Last piece added to the estate, purchased by Robert
- Made of a cement silica mixture that was troweled over an iron and wire mesh frame, similar to paper-maché process – this sculpture’s medium makes it unique on the property

Square Parterre Garden

- Amur Privet hedge, which is invasive in the natural areas, so it is being replaced with boxwood during renovations
- “Parterre” is a French word that refers to an elaborate arrangement of ornamental flower beds, gravel paths, and pavement. No formal European garden is complete without parterres
- Stone urns in the center are 17th century Italian Baroque
- Greenhouse was used by Robert’s garden staff
- Adjoining building (now Visitor Center and Café) was a potting shed

FU DOG GARDEN

Fu Dogs

- 22 blue, ceramic sculptures are Chinese Lion-Dogs, in pairs of male and female
- Mythological creatures, commonly placed in Asian cemeteries to ward off evil spirits
- Robert acquired them before 1922 in pairs – each one is unique, variations in the manes, horns, noses, eyes, and teeth
- There are 18 originals and 4 reproductions (due to vandalism, winter freeze, and storm damage)
- The two granite Fu Dogs are of Korean origin (atop the columns, entrance to the vine walk)

Siamese Buddhas – House of the Golden Buddhas – 1931

- Each of the two identical sculpture is carved from a single piece of teak wood, which had to cure for two years before carving
- Statues were originally gilded in gold
- Produced by students of the Royal School of Bangkok, Thailand
- Parasols above their heads were traditionally part of crown prince’s regalia
- Arms folded upward, palms facing out symbolize calming the waters – dispelling fear, giving protection
- Bump on head symbolizes “bump of wisdom at top of head”

Hari-Hara - House of the Golden Buddhas – installed 1934

- Limestone, 6 ½ feet tall
- Commissioned to Charles Lang
- Original was 7th century figure in the Musee Albert Sarraut in Cambodia
- Hari-Hara is composite of two Hindu Gods, Vishnu/Hari (creator & maintainer of life) and Shiva/Hara (destroyer, decaying process of nature)
- Arms were left mutilated just as in original
- Stone was left between the legs to give additional strength to the statue
BUILDINGS

Gate House – 1903
- Designed by John Borie (as was the mansion)
- Living quarters for Robert’s head gardener
- Now used as overflow lodging for Retreat Center guests
- Entry drive next to Gate House has two columns, each topped by ornamental pineapples, symbols of hospitality
- Across the lawn are two more columns, marking pathway to Fu Dog Garden
- The new accessible drive to the front door of the Mansion was made possible by a donor, ribbon cutting in fall 2018

House in the Woods – main road, west of 4-H Camp – 1917
- Constructed of hollow tile and gray stucco instead of wood
- Built to house the head gardener and his family
- Repurposed the mansion’s original front door when mansion was remodeled in 1916
- Now used as overflow lodging for Retreat Center guests

Evergreen Lodge – south of main parking lot – late 1960s
- Built by the University of Illinois to meet the increased need for overnight accommodations at Allerton

ENTRANCES

The Charioteers of Delphi – North Entrance – 1924
- Commissioned to Charles Lang
- Life-sized pair of carved Bedford limestone figures
- Original Charioteers of Delphi date from 470 B.C., located in the Delphi Museum in Greece
- Originally, each had one arm (to hold the reigns of a chariot). Robert disliked the asymmetry, so had them cut off

Diana and Ephebe – South Entrance – Installed in 1925
- Originally placed in the Square Parterre Garden
- Diana - Goddess of the Hunt
- Ephebe - her young, male companion. Ephebe is a Greek word referring to an athletic man, 18-20 years old.
- Both statues have hunting dogs at their feet
- These sculptures are reproductions of Italian originals
- Gifts from Charles & Frances Pike of Lake Forest, IL
- Robert nicknamed the sculptures “Charlie & Frances” in their honor
SCULPTURE ON THE TRAILS

Death of the Last Centaur – Yellow/Brown Trail installed 1914
- A centaur is half man, half horse
- This statue represents Chiron, the only immortal centaur
- He taught ethics, music and medicine, and played the harp
- He was wise, kind, and friends with the gods
- Hercules accidentally wounded Chiron with a poison arrow
- Prometheus, founder of the human race, ended Chiron’s suffering by removing his immortality
- He was sent to the heavens as the constellation, Sagittarius
- Antoine Bourdelle created this 12 ft. tall statue with gold dust embedded in bronze.
- Represents the last moments of Chiron’s life
- Hemlocks surrounding the statue are symbols of death

Bear and Man of the Stone Age – Orange Trail – installed 2016
- By French sculpture Emmanuel Fremiet (1824-1910) in 1885
- This statue (along with Gorilla Carrying Off A Stone Age Woman) came to the Urbana campus by mistake with the purchase of the contents of Lorado Taft’s studio in 1937 They were eventually donated to the University
- The tragic scene captures a moment of raw jungle justice in which all participants die helplessly

Gorilla Carrying Off A Stone Age Woman – Orange Trail – installed 2016
- By French sculpture Emmanuel Fremiet (1824-1910) in 1887
- This statue (along with Bear and Man of the Stone Age) came to the Urbana campus by mistake with the purchase of the contents of Lorado Taft’s studio in 1937
- They were eventually donated to the University
- The hapless woman, attired only in a furry loincloth (very like the gorilla’s own coat), her hair adorned with a large gorilla jawbone with teeth intact, a decorative amulet and another ornament primitively carved with a face, feebly tries to push her vengeful abductor away

Sun Singer – installed 1932
- Created by Carl Milles
- Bronze - 16 ft. tall - weighs 1,600 lbs.
- Robert and John saw a version of the Sun Singer in Sweden in 1930, and commissioned a smaller version for the estate
- This was lost in translation and the 16 ft. version showed up!
- Depicts Apollo, Greek God of the sun, music, poetry, and civilization as a nude youth, greeting the morning sky
- Note: Pegasus (Greek mythological horse) is depicted on his helmet, and a tortoise under his right foot references the first lyre (musical instrument) made by Hermes and given to Apollo
- There are 9 Muses around the base of the statue