

## 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

### Stone Lions – Triangle Parterre Garden – c. 1922 & 1976

- 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> copy; 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Waggy
- 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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