THE WHITE HOUSE

GARDEN TOUR

2016



THE WHITE HOUSE

GARDEN TOUR

2016


OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY PETE SOUZA

The White House

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Welcome to the White House!

The President and I are so happy to welcome you to our Nation's backyard. Since First Lady Patricia Nixon opened the South Lawn for seasonal tours over 40 years ago, guests from across the country and around the world have come to visit these historic grounds.

The South Lawn is where the President departs in Marine One, where thousands of families gather to hunt and roll Easter eggs, and where the President officially greets foreign Heads of State. It also holds a special place in my heart because it's where I joined local schoolchildren to plant the White House Kitchen Garden – the first vegetable garden since First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt's Victory Garden.

Today at "The People's House," you will pass the majestic magnolia trees that were planted by President Andrew Jackson, the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden and the Rose Garden, as well as many cherry, black gum and oak trees that line these storied grounds.

The President and I hope you enjoy exploring the South Lawn, and experiencing the breathtaking gardens on display here at the White House. We wish you all the best and hope you will visit again soon.

Sincerely,

Michelle Obama

President Barack Obama waves from the Colonnade to visitors as they tour the White House grounds during the 2012 White House Fall Garden Tour.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY LAWRENCE JACKSON

Members of the public view the Kitchen Garden during the White House Fall Garden Tour on the South Grounds.

The White House Grounds are the oldest continually maintained landscape in the United States. Although located in the heart of the city, standing in the gardens one feels removed from the fast paced life of the nation's capital. Twice a year, these secluded grounds are open to the public for Spring and Fall Garden Tours.

The White House's first resident, John Adams, requested that a garden be planted before his arrival in 1800. Unfortunately, he was defeated shortly thereafter by Thomas Jefferson and never enjoyed produce from the White House Grounds. While in office, Jefferson made plans for planting trees and established winding pathways surrounded by rhododendron and other American shrubbery.

In the 1820s, John Quincy Adams formally established a White House gardening program. It is said that he liked to dig in the flower beds early in the morning, and claimed to have planted over a thousand plants during his tenure. His successor, Andrew Jackson, continued to develop the gardening program, adding an orangery in which to grow fruit during the winter. The southern Magnolia, planted next to the South Portico by Andrew Jackson, bursts into bloom every June.

The White House lawns provided only limited privacy in the 19th century. The North Grounds were open every day for tourists and individuals with appointments to walk directly up to the house. Abraham Lincoln gave several speeches from the

window over the north door, with thousands of listeners crowded below. The South Grounds were kept slightly more private, but the public were invited to attend weekly concerts there by the President's Own Marine Band. President Lincoln would often recline on a sofa in the Blue Room and listen to these concerts through the windows, according to his portrait artist.

Over the years, the White House landscape has been enhanced by a series of landscape architects to seem idealistically natural. These collaborative efforts have created a setting that gives the impression of much more of a rural landscape than the urban reality. The trees are pruned to preserve their design and new trees are encouraged to grow into specific shapes and forms. The ground itself has been molded into a series of hills that give the impression of a sprawling rural landscape, while providing security.

Two formal gardens ornament the White House landscape: the Rose Garden between the Residence and the West Wing, and the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden located between the Residence and the East Wing (also known as the East Garden). These gardens are the work of a succession of gardening experts, most recently Rachel Lambert Mellon who brought them to their present design during the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations.

First Lady Michelle Obama and kids from Tubman Elementary School in Washington, D.C., pet Bo, the Obama family dog, on the South Lawn of the White House, Sept. 14, 2011.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY SAMANTHA APPLETON



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY PETE SOUZA

The First Family ventures onto the South Lawn after a large snowstorm on Feb. 3, 2010.

One of the next great presidential gardeners after Andrew Jackson was Millard Fillmore, who oversaw a substantial redesigning of the grounds. Ulysses Grant continued this trend, allowing a substantial landscaping project that included the addition of large round fountains on both the North and South Lawns, which today are surrounded by colorful seasonal plantings.

Rutherford B. Hayes started the Easter Monday tradition of children rolling eggs on the South Lawn in 1878 after Congress cancelled the event on Capitol Hill. The slope was not as steep, but the event still proved a success and has continued into the twenty-first century, now drawing over 30,000 guests each year.

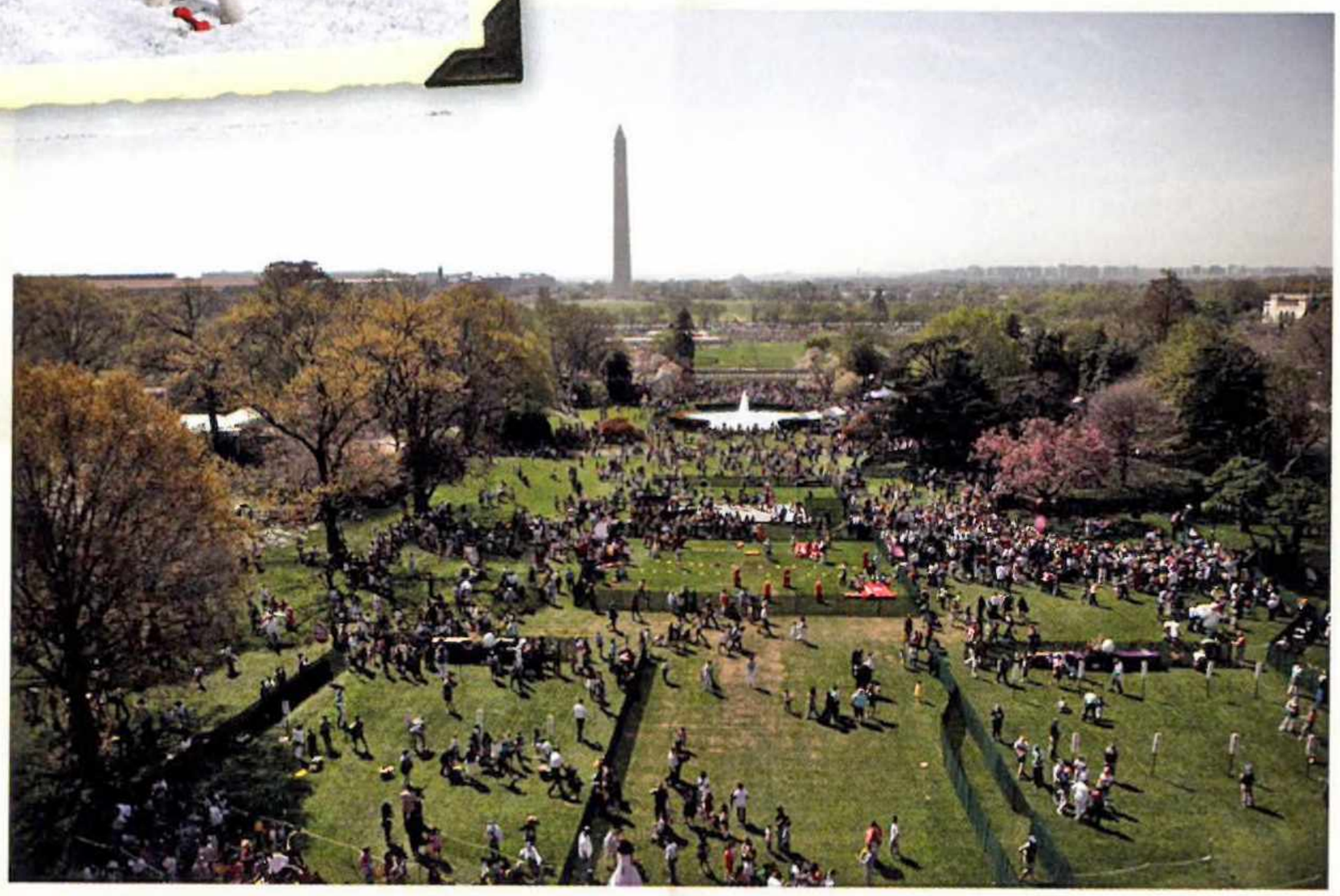
Bo, the Obama family dog, plays in the snow in the Rose Garden of the White House.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO PETE SOUZA

With the help of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Franklin Roosevelt oversaw the most recent major landscaping project on the South Lawn. Berms and trees were added on the east and west boundaries of the lawn for security, while existing trees were removed along the south fence to open up a view of the Washington Monument. This work produced today's grand sweep of the lawn.

Along the edges of the South Lawn are numerous evidences of family use and enjoyment. Off the south end of the Oval Office is a putting green,



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY LAWRENCE JACKSON

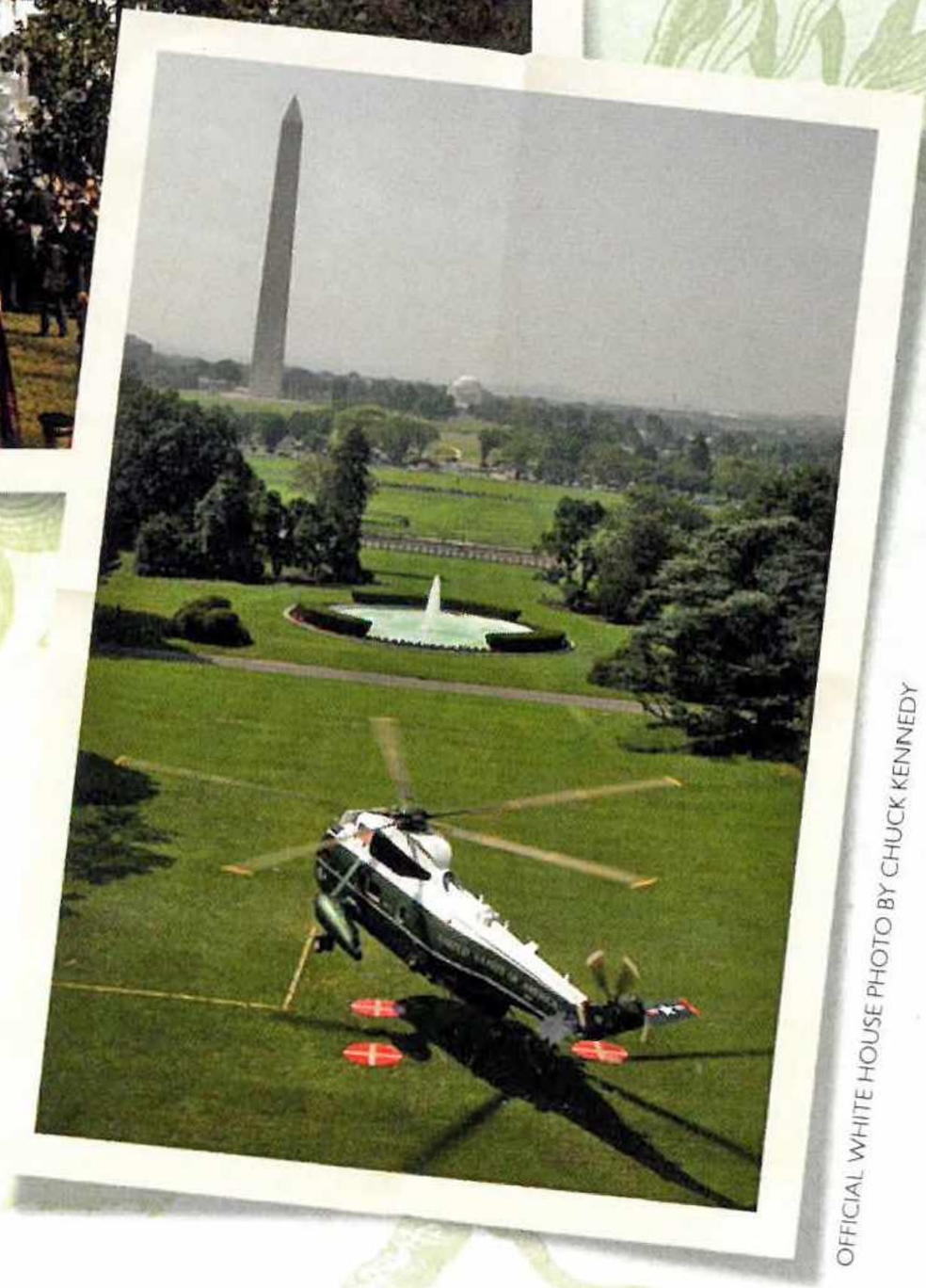
People attending the annual Easter Egg Roll on the South Lawn of the White House, April 5, 2010.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY SAMANTHA APPLETON

President Obama welcomes President Hu Jintao of China during an Arrival Ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, Jan. 19, 2011.

private pool and even a playground. The Children's Garden, created by Lady Bird Johnson, features a fish pond with paving stones containing castings from the past forty years of the handprints and footprints of grandchildren who were alive when their grandfathers were president. Adjacent to the Children's garden is the tennis/basketball court. At the southwest corner of the lawn is the White House Kitchen Garden, planted by Mrs. Obama in March of 2009.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY CHUCK KENNEDY

Marine One lifts off from the South Lawn of White House, July 16, 2010.

Marine One

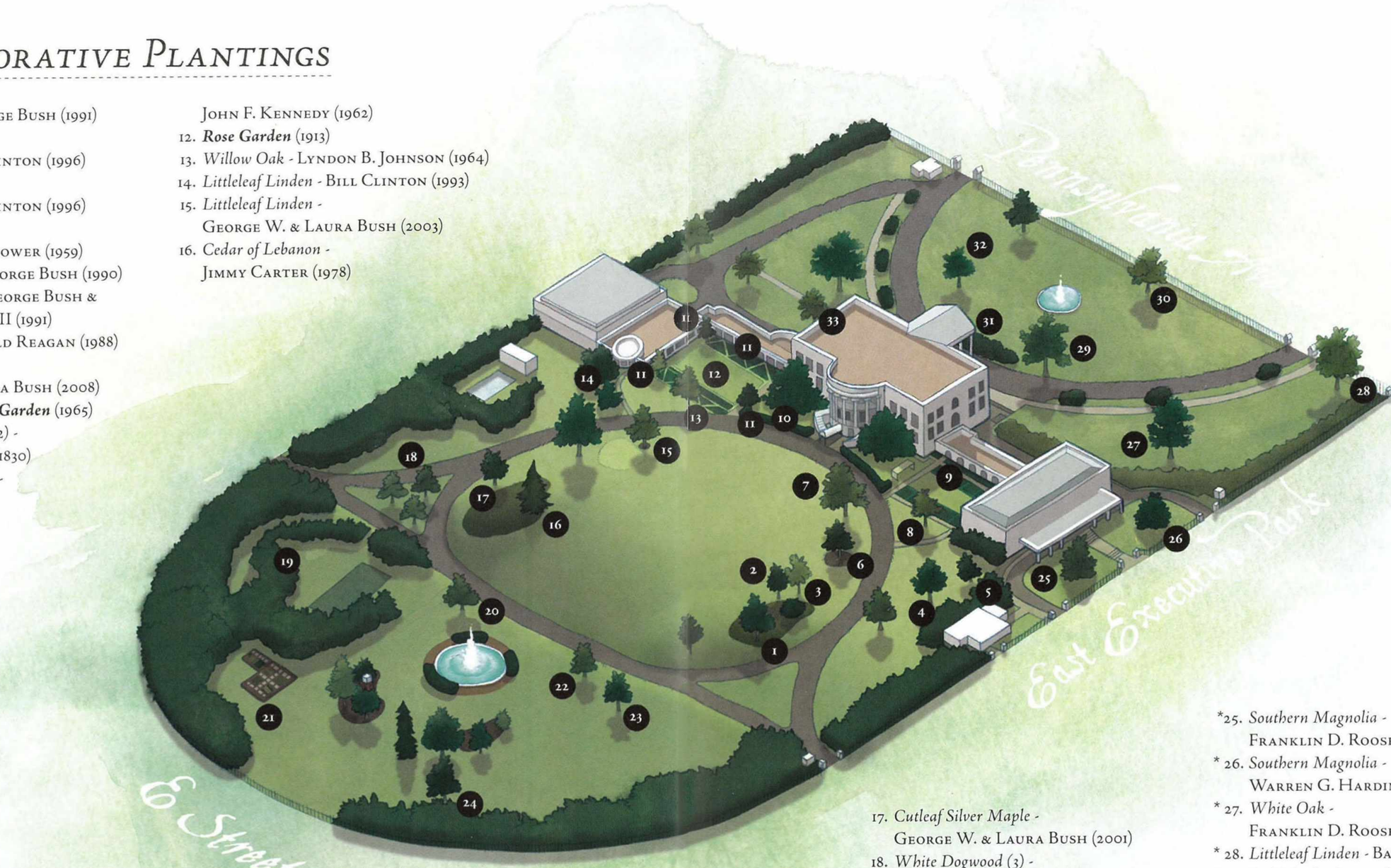
In 1957, Dwight Eisenhower became the first President to use a helicopter as a means of official transport. His military aides evaluated and approved the South Lawn as a landing site and Marine One has regularly flown in and out of the White House's backyard ever since.

Presidential Trees

Since the 1870s, most presidents have planted a commemorative tree while they were in office. Their variations in species and generation represent the historical flow of the President's House. The White House gardens are constantly growing and adapting, just like the seat of government they encompass.

Commemorative Plantings

1. *Purple Beech* - George Bush (1991)
2. *White Dogwood* -
   Bill & Hillary Clinton (1996)
3. *White Dogwood* -
   Bill & Hillary Clinton (1996)
4. *Northern Red Oak* -
   Dwight D. Eisenhower (1959)
5. *Eastern Redbud* - George Bush (1990)
6. *Littleleaf Linden* - George Bush &
   Queen Elizabeth II (1991)
7. *Willow Oak* - Ronald Reagan (1988)
8. *Silver Linden* -
   George W. & Laura Bush (2008)
9. ***Jacqueline Kennedy Garden*** (1965)
10. *Southern Magnolia (2)* -
    Andrew Jackson (1830)
11. *Saucer Magnolia (4)* -
    John F. Kennedy (1962)
12. ***Rose Garden*** (1913)
13. *Willow Oak* - Lyndon B. Johnson (1964)
14. *Littleleaf Linden* - Bill Clinton (1993)
15. *Littleleaf Linden* -
    George W. & Laura Bush (2003)
16. *Cedar of Lebanon* -
    Jimmy Carter (1978)



17. *Cutleaf Silver Maple* -
    George W. & Laura Bush (2001)
18. *White Dogwood (3)* -
    Hillary Rodham Clinton (1994)
19. ***Children's Garden*** -
    Lady Bird Johnson (1969)
20. *Japanese Maple* -
    Frances Folsom Cleveland (1893)
21. ***White House Kitchen Garden*** (2009)
22. *Japanese Maple* - Rosalynn Carter (1978)
23. *Willow Oak* -
    Bill & Hillary Clinton (1993)
24. *White Oak* - Herbert Hoover (1931)

*25. *Southern Magnolia* -
    Franklin D. Roosevelt (1942)
* 26. *Southern Magnolia* -
    Warren G. Harding (1922, replaced 1947)
* 27. *White Oak* -
    Franklin D. Roosevelt (1935)
* 28. *Littleleaf Linden* - Barack Obama (2009)
* 29. *Red Maple* - Jimmy Carter (1977)
* 30. *Yulan Magnolia* -
    Nancy Reagan (1982)
* 31. *English & American Boxwood* -
    Harry S. Truman (1952)
* 32. *Jefferson Elm* -
    George W. & Laura Bush (2006)
* 33. *Fern Leaf Beech* -
    Lady Bird Johnson (1968)

* *Not Available For Viewing*

The White House Kitchen Garden

On March 20, 2009, the First Lady and two dozen local students broke ground on the White House Kitchen Garden on the South Lawn of the White House. In its raised beds the four-season herb, fruit and vegetable garden features over fifty varieties of seeds including many heirloom seeds. In its first nine months, the Kitchen Garden yielded over a thousand pounds of produce. The food that is grown and harvested in the Kitchen Garden has many uses including providing food for the First Family and official Presidential functions such as State dinners. A third of the garden's harvest is donated to Miriam's Kitchen, a local charitable organization that provides services to address the causes and consequences of homelessness.

A particular bed in the garden is named for the third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson. The plants in this area are from seeds that have been passed down from those Jefferson planted at his home Monticello. Recent seeds from his garden that have been planted in the Kitchen Garden are lettuce, Brussels sprouts, beets, kale, and artichokes.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY SAMANTHA APPLETON

Children from Bancroft Elementary School help First Lady Michelle Obama plant the White House Vegetable Garden April 9, 2009.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY SAMANTHA APPLETON





OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY CHUCK KENNEDY

History of the Gardens and Grounds:

1800 John Adams, as the first President to occupy the White House, orders a vegetable garden. The garden was never created, because he left office in March 1801 only four months after moving into the White House.

1825 John Quincy Adams develops the first flower garden (southeast of the East Terrace). In 1827, he wrote of two acres covered with at least one thousand "forest and fruit-trees, shrubs, hedges, esculent [edible] vegetables, kitchen and medicinal herbs, hot-house plants, flowers, and weeds."

1835 Andrew Jackson creates the White House orangery (hothouse for citrus fruit trees, roses, and camellias) in an east side structure never attached to the East Terrace. He also adds more trees to the grounds, possibly including the "Jackson magnolia" to the west of the South Portico. The orangery was demolished in 1857 for the expansion of the Treasury Department.

1878 Between this year and 1880 many trees are planted under Rutherford B. Hayes, who begins the tradition of commemorative trees.

1902 The conservatory is removed during the Theodore Roosevelt renovation of the White House, exposing again the Jeffersonian West Terrace to which is attached a new office building (later called the "West Wing"). Edith Roosevelt plants a "colonial garden" beside the terrace. A tennis court is constructed south of the West Wing.

1913 Ellen Wilson replaces the colonial garden on the west with a formal rose garden and a new East Garden is created.

1961 John F. Kennedy has the Rose Garden redesigned to serve presidential functions and places management of the White House Grounds under the National Park Service.

1964 Lady Bird Johnson has the East Garden redesigned and named in honor of Jacqueline Kennedy.

1969 Lady Bird Johnson adds the Children's Garden, an intimate area adjoining the tennis court on the South Grounds.

1972 Garden Tours start.

1975 Gerald Ford has an outdoor pool and cabana built just south of the West Wing.

2009 First Lady Michelle Obama plants White House Kitchen Garden on the west side of the lower South Lawn.

This publication was made possible through the generosity of the White House Historical Association, a private, non-profit educational organization.



Printed on Recycled Paper