



LAKEWOLD GARDENS

“As we become more and more city creatures, living in man-made surroundings, perhaps gardens will become even more precious to us, letting us remember that we began in a garden.”

—Eulalie Wagner 1904-1991



In keeping with Eulalie’s wishes, Lakewold Gardens Estate is fulfilling an important civic role by offering a haven of horticultural beauty and repose within our urban area. As a service to the community, Lakewold is open to the public for self-guided or docented tours and to private groups for special occasions such as weddings. Our organization also provides educational enrichment for students of

Horticulture through its internship program, which offers work experience in propagating native and exotic plants. As part of our Outreach Program to support nonprofit organizations, Lakewold is available as a venue to the performing arts community, regional schools, and garden clubs at a nominal fee, or free of charge.

Lakewold is one of the oldest estates in the Tacoma area. First purchased in 1908 by Emma Alexander, it was turned over to her son, H.F. Alexander and his wife Ruth, in 1918. It was Ruth who gave the property its original name, “Inglewood.” Major Everett Griggs bought the property in 1924, giving the estate its current name of “Lakewold”, which gives reference to a protected wooden glen. In 1938, he sold Lakewold to his nephew, Corydon Wagner and his wife Eulalie.

Working with Thomas Church, one of America’s most noted landscape architects, Eulalie shaped the gardens into an elegant balance between formal and informal design. Through her influence, Lakewold Gardens Estate became a garden of international recognition. As a testimony to Eulalie’s accomplishments, the American Horticultural Society awarded her the Catherine H. Sweeney Award in 1990, recognizing her extraordinary and dedicated efforts in the field of horticulture. Furthermore, the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic

Preservation declared Lakewold an historic site in 1999. Today, Lakewold stands as one of the few estate properties in the Tacoma area that has not been subdivided, due primarily to the vision of its principal creator, Eulalie Wagner. She has left the community a piece of our history that must be preserved for future generations.

Visitors to this historic ten-acre estate will find something around every corner. The gardens are a series of formal and informal outdoor “rooms”. Unusual to the Pacific Northwest, the formal gardens are a reflection of European landscape architecture that feature formal parterres accented by topiaries. The signature focal point to the formal gardens – the rose-covered belvedere, also known as a summerhouse and modeled after the original Tea House – overlooks the distinctive quatrefoil pool. Classic statuary as well as a medieval-inspired knot garden further highlight the formal gardens. Eulalie’s influence can be seen in the gardens’ many naturalistic displays, along with her passion for Rhododendrons.

The beauty of the gardens is complemented by a Georgian-style manor featuring a spiral staircase, a marble foyer, and a Wisteria-covered verandah that overlooks Gravelly Lake with vistas of Mount Rainier in the distance. The plant collection includes over 250 species of Rhododendrons – a hallmark of Lakewold – more than 30 varieties of Japanese Maple, and many unique trees, shrubs and groundcovers from around the world.

Lakewold Gardens Estate is one of the treasures of the Pacific Northwest. Because of the foresight of Eulalie Wagner, her family, and her friends, we are able to offer this formerly private estate for our community to enjoy. We thank them and hope you will too by giving us your support.

The Friends of Lakewold was formed in 1986 as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Its mission, as officially adopted by the Board of Directors on April 14, 1999, is “to preserve and maintain Lakewold Gardens and the Wagner House as a public estate garden.”

