

QUAKERS & NATURAL HISTORY HISTORIC BOTANIC SITES

COLONIAL QUAKERS HAD AN AVID INTEREST IN BOTANY AND NATURAL HISTORY. THREE OF THEIR PROPERTIES REMAIN TODAY AS SOME OF THE AREAS BEST KNOWN HISTORIC BOTANIC SITES.

Bartram's Garden

In 1728, Quaker John Bartram purchased a farm on the west bank of the Schuylkill and began collecting plants. Bartram became the country's first great botanist and naturalist, traveling throughout the East to collect plants and natural history specimens. Bartram and his son William identified and introduced into cultivation over 200 of our native plants. Later, Bartram's garden became the country's first commercial nursery, supplying plants to Independence Hall, Mount Vernon, Monticello, and E. I. duPont's Nemours.

Longwood Gardens

In 1700, the Peirce family purchased the property and established a working farm not long after. Brothers Joshua and Samuel began planting an arboretum on the farm in 1798. The brothers actively pursued their interest in natural history and by 1850 their arboretum was among the finest collection of trees in the nation. The farm was purchased in 1906 by Pierre S. duPont so he could preserve the trees, and since then has become world renowned.

Tyler Arboretum

The land that now contains the arboretum was purchased in 1681 by Quaker Thomas Minshall. The property remained in the Minshall/Painter/Tyler family until it was bequeathed to the public in 1944. The arboretum began as the private collection of Quaker brothers, Minshall and Jacob Painter. They planted more than 1000 varieties of trees and shrubs between 1830 and 1875. Many of these trees still stand, including Pennsylvania's largest Cedar of Lebanon, Bald Cypress, and Giant Sequoia.



Minshall Painter

Jacob Painter