The Weeks Brick House was built in 1710 by Samuel Weeks (1670-1746), son of Leonard Weeks (1633-1707), who in 1656 established the farmstead that remained in the family for 300 years. In 1975 the property was purchased by an organization of descendants and others interested in preserving the structure. In 1977, Isadore Smith (a.k.a. Ann Leighton) (1902-1985), a noted author, garden historian, and designer, and Kitty Weeks, of the descendants group, created an authentic 18th century housewife’s garden and orchard on the site. Three beds were planted: culinary herbs, medicinal herbs, and household herbs. While household gardens in the 18th century were not so clearly delineated, these gardens were laid out to be more educational.

The diagram below shows the herbs planted in the garden beds according to the original plan in Katharine Weeks’ book, Gardening with New England Colonial Plants. On the reverse is a list and description of the herbs and their uses in colonial times.

**CULINARY HERB BED** 5’ x 18’

- Angelica, German Chamomile, Calendula, Tarragon, Hyssop, Lovage, Lemon Balm, Mint, Curly Parsley, Chives, Sage, Summer Savory, Winter Savory, Rue, German Thyme, Rosemary, Nasturtium, Egyptian Onion, Oregano, Pinks/Border Carnation, Johnny-Jump-Up

**MEDICINAL HERB BED** 6’ x 18’

- Balsam, Agrimony, Yarrow, Monkshood, Lady’s Mantle, Hollyhock, Wormwood, Ox-Eye Daisy, Feverfew, Comfrey, Camomile, Lovage, St. John’s Wort, Lavender, Tansy, Balsam/Puncturewort, Rue

**HOUSEHOLD HERB BED** 6’ x 18’

- Mountain Mint, Lavender Cotton, Sweet William, Ladies’ Bedstraw, Dames’ Violet, Herbs, Tansy, Gleditsia Plant, Lamb’s Ear, Violet, Star of Bethlehem, Jacob’s Ladder, Barage, Foxglove, Houseleek, Horseradish, Lavender, Flax

**COLONIAL-ERA HERB GARDENS**

**WWII VICTORY GARDEN BEDS**

*planted with open-pollinated heirloom vegetables*

(Two 14’ x 24’ beds, each divided into ten equal sections.)

- **Mammoth Melting Peas**
- **Wand Sugar Snap Peas**
- **Winter Squash**
- **California Wonder Peppers**
- **Tomatoes:** Brandywine, Rutgers
- **Walls Wonder**
- **Straight Eight Cucumbers**
- **Sweet Corn**
- **Abe Lincoln**
- **Marrow**
- **Early Jersey Cabbage**
- **Brussels Sprouts**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Musquee de Provence Squash**
- **Waltham Broccoli**
- **Lark Dutch Cabbage**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Summer Squash**
- **Durham Half Long Carrots**
- **Purple Top Pole Beans**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Connecticut Field Pumpkins**
- **Harr’s Yellow Wax Carrots**
- **Beautiful Beets**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Genovese Basil**
- **Scarlet Nantes Carrots**
- **Sweet Siberian Watermelon**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Scarlet Runner Beans**
- **Mixed Gourds**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Field Pumpkins**

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**Self-Guided GARDEN TOUR**

More Information here!

Weeks Brick House interpretive panel & map

**FRUIT TREE ORCHARD**

- Pear Tree
- Apple Trees

**SCALE**

10 Feet

**NORTH**

Colonial Herbs in the Weeks Brick House Gardens

The use of herbs for medicine, cooking, and household dates back thousands of years. Below is a list of herbs in our gardens, and how they were used in the Colonial-era. This does not suggest that these herbs should be used the same way now. Many are toxic and should be used only by herbalists. (Many herbs had multiple uses, indicated below by C, M, & H: culinary, medicinal, & household.)

**Bed #1: Culinary Herbs**

**Angelica** (anglica archangelica) (C, M). Tea used to sooth colds, bronchial problems, and to calm nerves; also to flavor puddings, candies, and desserts.

**German Chamomile** (matricaria chamomilla) (C, M, H). A stewing herb.

**Calendula/Pot Marigold** (calendula officinalis) (C, M, H). Petals added to salads; also used as flavoring in soups and wine.

**Tarragon** (artemisia dracunculus) (C) Used to make tarragon vinegar and to flavor eggs, fish, and meat.

**Hyssop** (hyssopus officinalis) (C, M, H). A stewing herb; aids in pleurisy and bronchitis; used for sore throat and rheumatism; also used as poultice.

**Lovage** (levisticum officinale) (C, M, H). Roots were candied and made into confections; used to cure colic, jaundice, sore throats, and digestive disorders; stems used as a substitute for celery.

**Lemon Balm** (melissa officinalis) (C, M, H). Flavored meats and drinks, brewed as tea to stimulate the heart and sooth migraines; helped to prevent bee stings by preventing bees from swarming.

**Mint** (mentha spicata) (C). Used as flavoring for sauces and as a tea.

**Curly Parsley** (petroselinum crispum) and **Italian Parsley** (petroselinum filicinum) (C, M). One of the earliest known herbs, used as flavor in cooking, and medicinally to aid with liver/kidney problems and against lice.

**Chives** (allium schoenoprasum) (C, M). Used to color vinegar and to flavor soups and salads.

**Sage** (salvia officinalis) (C, M, H). Helps with snake bites, lowers blood sugar for diabetics; used as antispasmtic, and as flavoring for stuffing, meats, and vegetable dishes.

**Summer & Winter Savory** (satureia hortensis, satureia montana) (C, M). Used as flavoring in soup, meat, and stuffing.

**Rue** (ruta graveolens) (C, H, M). Photosensitive and can cause burns or rash like poison ivy if oil on skin is exposed to the sun; good for insect bites; used as flavoring for beer, vinegar, and salade.

**Common Thyme** (thymus vulgaris) (C, M, H). Used as seasoning, as antiseptic for intestinal and respiratory ailments, and as a deodorant (also Lemon Thyme and Wooly Thyme).

**Rosemary** (rosmarius officinalis) (C, M, H). Used as flavoring, as an aromatic oil, as an astrigent, and for headaches, digestive ailments, and nervous disorders.

**Nasturtium/Indian Cress** (tropaeolum majus) (C, H). The name means “nose twister” because of the smell. Leaves and flowers used in salad.

**Egyptian Onion/Walking Onion** (allium cepa) (C). Used as any onion; bulb form on top of stems.

**Oregano** (origanum vulgare) (C, M). Similar flavor to sweet marjoram. Aids in toothaches, convulsions, conjunctivitis, droopy, and as an antitode to poison; used in cooking as flavoring.

**Pinks/Border Carnation** (dianthus caryophyllus) (C, H). Used to flavor wine, ale, syrups, sauces, jams, and as a substitute to cloves.

**Johnny-Jump-Ups** (viola tricolor) (C, H). Thought to be helpful in “matters of love,” and used as flavoring.

**Salad Burnet** (poterium sanguisorba) (C). Used in salads and wine.

**Bed #2: Medicinal Herbs**

**Beebalm/Bergamot** (monarda didyma) (C, M, H). Used as tea, perfume, and to relieve stomach and bronchial problems, rheumatism, and stings.

**Agrimony** (alnus officinalis) (M, H). An anti-stringent, used as a tea to stop internal bleeding, as a healing poultice, as a sore-throat gargle, and as yellow dye.

**Yarrow** (achillea millefolium) (M, H). Used to stanch the flow of blood and to treat an upset stomach; fumes inhaled to relieve headaches. Used as an aid in toothaches and diarrhea ... and as a hair tonic.

**Monkshood/Aconitum** (aconitum napellus) (M). Toxic; used as a painkiller, and to reduce blood pressure and inflammation.

**Lady's Mantle** (alchemilla vulgaris) (M, H). Used to stop bleeding, especially for “women's problems.”

**Hollyhock** (althea rosea) (M, H). Leaves and roots boiled and mixed with honey to make syrups for sore throats and digestive problems.

**Wormwood** (artemisia absinthium) (M, H). Repels fleas; used to clean floors, de-worm children and animals, as an antitode to hemlock and toadstool poisoning, and as an antispasmodic and anti-septic.

**Turtlehead** (clethra glabra) (M). A tonic and cathartic.

**Ox-Eye Daisy** (chrysanthemum leucanthemum) (M, H). Dried plants boiled with honey to relieve asthma attacks; used as a tonic for whooping cough and as a lotion for bruises.

**Feverfew** (chrysanthemum parthenium) (M, H). Used for coughs, toothaches, headaches, and to help deliver afterbirth.

**Solomon Seal** (polygonatum biflorum) (M). Used as tonic, astrigent, and mucilage, and for local inflammation.

**Comfrey** (symphytum officinalis) (M). Used for poultices to heal wounds and broken bones, and as a tea.

**Catmint** (nepeta cataria) (C, M, H). Used as tea to alleviate coughs, reduce fever, and as a remedy for colic.

**Lungwort** (pulmonaria officinalis) (M). Tea made from leaves used to treat lung diseases.

**Valerian** (valeriana officinalis) (M, H). A tranquillizing herb used for coughs, hysteria, bruising, and for migraines.

**St. John's Wort** (hypericum perforatum) (M). Used as an astrigent, for bladder ailments, to dispel tumors, and as yellow and red dye.

**Lavender** (lavandula officinalis) (M). Used to add scent to soaps and bath water, as a remedy against fainting, to relieve pain, and to repel moquitoes.

**Tansey** (tanacetum vulgare) (C, M, H). Used as treatment for roundworms and as an aid to digestion; used as mosquito, fly, and ant repellent; used to wrap bodies and flavor dishes sparingly.

**Betony/Woundwort** (stachys officinalis) (M). Useful for hysteria, palpitations, head and face pain, neuralgia, and all nervous affections.

**Rupturewort** (hernaria glabra) (M). Useful for ulcers, dropsey, ruptures, closing wounds, bladder complaints, or killing worms in children.

**Bed #3: Household Herbs**

**Mountain Blue** (centaurea montana) (M, H). Used for wounds and as decoration.

**Lavender Cotton** (santolina chamaecyparissus) (M, H). Used for yellow or gold dyes; dried for sachets; used to repel moths, and as an eyewash.

**Sweet William** (dianthus barbatus) (H). Prized for its attractive flowers and used as a nosegay.

**Teasel** (dipsacus sylvestris) (H). Used to raise the nap on woolen cloth.

**Ladies Bedstraw** (galium verum) (C, H). Used to stuff mattresses, and as a yellow dye to color cheese and hair.

**Daisies/Violet/Sweet Rocket** (hesperis matronalis) (M, H). Used as an air freshener; distilled water from the flowers induces sweat.

**Honesty/Money Plant** (lunaria annus) (H). Connected to witchcraft in Medieval and Elizabethan times; used as a decorative plant in winter.

**Obedient Plant** (physostegia virginiana) (H). Used to attract bees.

**Lamb's Ear** (stachys lanata) (M, H). Leaves used to cover wounds; used as decorative plants in winter.

**Violet** (viola odorata) (C, M, H). Used to prevent headaches, induce sleep, as a poultice, and as a perfume ingredient.

**Star of Bethlehem** (ornithogalum umbellatum) (C, M, H). The bulbs are edible like onions; tincture used medicinally.

**Jacob's Ladder** (polemonium caeruleum) (M, H). Similar to Valerian, but not as strong. Used for small wounds.

**BORAGE** (borage officinalis) (C, M, H). Used to give feeling of well being. Edible flowers used to treat fevers, bronchitis, diarrhea, and as a diuretic.

**Foxglove** (digitalis purpurea) (M, H). Used to treat epilepsy, dropsey, swollen glands, and as cough medicine.

**Houseleek/Hens-and-Chicks** (sempervivens tectorum) (M, H). Used for shingles, cuts, corns, and headaches, and to relieve pain from burns and stings.

**Horse Radish** (Armoracia rusticana) (C, M, H). Used as a condiment for meat, as a circulatory stimulant, and as a yellow dye.

**Flax** (linum perenne) (M, H). Used to make a coarse fabric; seed oil used as laxative and sometimes to feed livestock.