

## BACKGROUND OF THE BGC CIVIC GARDENS

The club initiated the gardens and agreed to maintain them. The city service department agreed to work with us in that endeavor, particularly with the delivery of the mulch in the spring and watering the large street pots, throughout the summer.

**Wright Iris Garden** – The iris in this garden were a gift from Mrs. Sue Wright, a longtime Bellbrook Garden Club member. The iris were given in memory of her husband, Horace Wright, nephew of Orville and Wilbur Wright. One variety of iris, the “The Wright Flyer”, was named in honor of the Wright Brothers’ historical first flight.

The Wrights met and married in 1924 and spent 30 years cultivating iris on their Spahr Rd. farm. Sue was a teacher in the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek School District for many years. Horace was a hybridizer of Iris. He specialized in rebloomers, blooming in both spring and fall.

Dedicated in 1996, the Wright Iris Garden is circular in design and bordered by local creek stone. A large rock from the Bumgardner House, constructed in 1842, is the garden’s focal point. Peonies from the garden of Horace’s parents, Ivonette and Lorin Wright, and some of their favorite daylilies are included in the garden.

**Celebration Gardens** – The Butler-Klyce areas were dedicated in 2006 to honor longtime Bellbrook residents Harry and Jean Butler and Genevieve Klyce. The Smith Rock Garden was added later in memory of longtime club member Toshiko Smith. It is primarily a shade garden using perennials from their gardens, plus native flowering bushes. Native stone from the area has been used for accent.

Harry Butler was a well-known area horticulturist. He combined this interest with a distinguished career in radio in the Dayton area. Jean, his wife, was a talented watercolorist and naturalist. Both were Life Members of the Bellbrook Garden Club with over 50 years of membership. Toshiko Smith, another longtime club member, specialized in plants from her native Japan and a talented quilter.

**Dunham Memorial Garden** – This garden at Winter’s Library was dedicated in 1999 as a memorial to Jeanette Dunham. This area is centered by a paver patio and includes daylilies from Jeanette’s Garden. Donations of plants from club members completed the original garden. The patio and several plantings were provided by the City of Bellbrook to add to the enjoyment of library visitors. The original bench was replaced in 2019 as part of a city beautification effort.

A longtime Bellbrook resident and Bellbrook Garden Club member, Jeanette served on the Greene County Library Board. The garden was made possible by a gift from her family to the Bellbrook Garden Club.

**Street Planters** – The planters in the center of town replaced planted curb bump outs which eventually were with hard surfaces. The club chose the planters and agreed to plant and maintain them. The city purchased the planters and waters them.