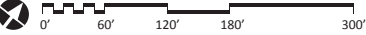
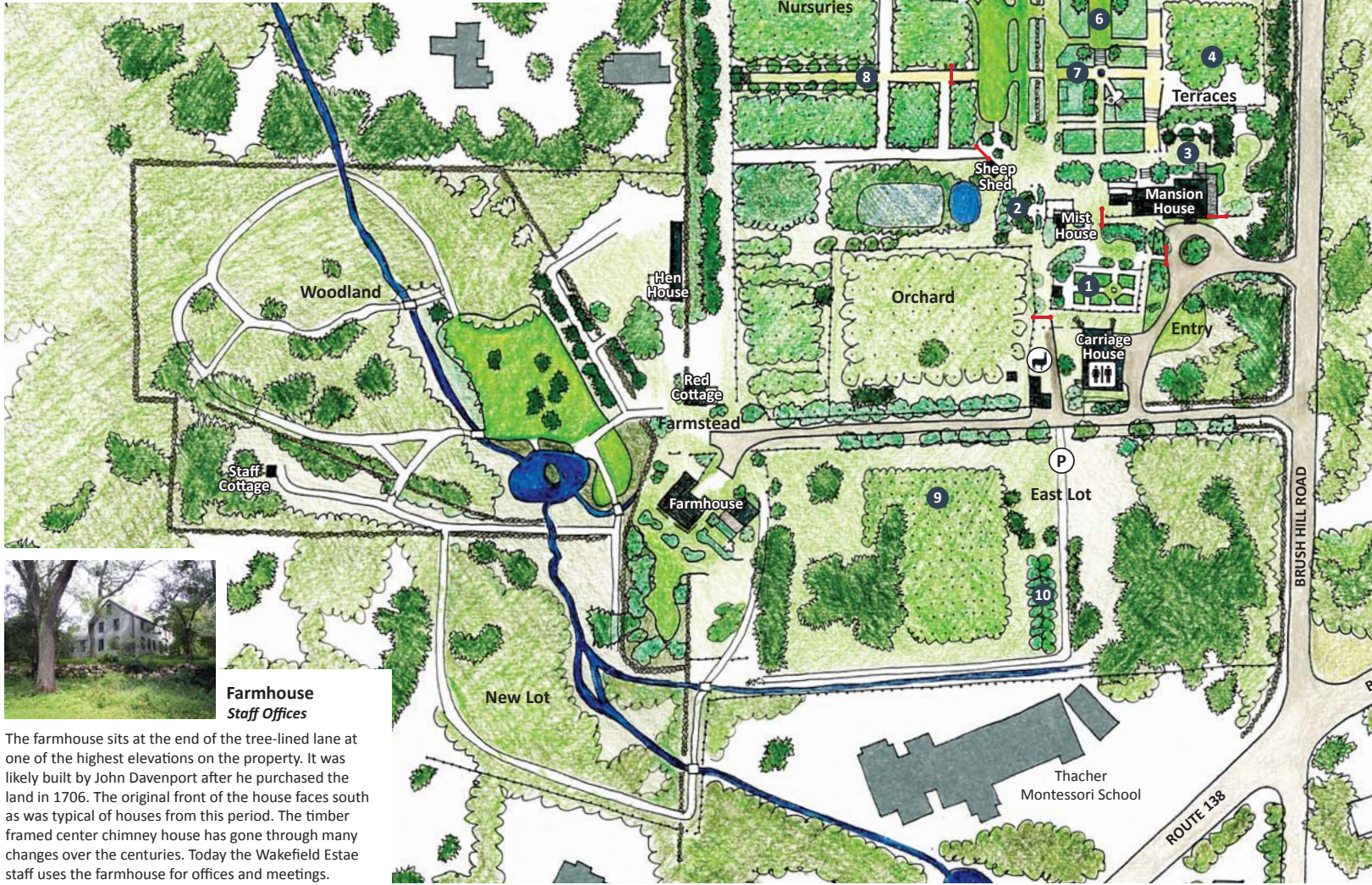




Mansion House
The mansion house was built by Boston merchant Isaac Davenport in about 1794. Over the years, a series of additions have enlarged the house to the west.



WAKEFIELD ESTATE Landscape Highlights Legend:

- 1 Front Garden
- 2 Witches' Garden with Dragon Gate
- 3 Piazza Terrace
- 4 Dog Wood
- 5 Site of the Original Summer House
- 6 Kalmia Garden
- 7 Fountain Terrace
- 8 Rose Allée
- 9 Black Walnut Grove
- 10 Norway Allée
- Llama and Sheep Viewing
- Garden Entry Gate



Carriage House
The carriage house was designed for Isaac Davenport Hayward in about 1864 by W.P.P. Longfellow & Morris Dorr, Architects.
 Restrooms



Farmhouse Staff Offices

The farmhouse sits at the end of the tree-lined lane at one of the highest elevations on the property. It was likely built by John Davenport after he purchased the land in 1706. The original front of the house faces south as was typical of houses from this period. The timber framed center chimney house has gone through many changes over the centuries. Today the Wakefield Estae staff uses the farmhouse for offices and meetings.

Guide to the WAKEFIELD ESTATE

A Landscape for Learning



www.wakefieldtrust.org

Mission Statement

Through fostering the connections between people, land and history, the Mary M. B. Wakefield Charitable Trust aims to create a living and accessible landscape that carries on the legacy of Polly Wakefield and her vision for an engaged and knowledgeable citizenry.

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This guide was created by Maggie Redfern as part of a report entitled *Maryfield: A Preservation Plan for the Mary M.B. Wakefield Estate*. The report is the final product of the 2011-12 year independent studio at the Landscape Institute of the Boston Architectural College.
(Version 3 – June 1, 2014)



Welcome to the Wakefield Estate

The Wakefield Estate is the culmination of three centuries of use by eight generations of a single family. It was settled in 1706 as a rural farmstead, then grew into a gentleman's estate, and finally evolved into a year-round property for horticultural experimentation. The preservation planning put in place by Mary (Polly) M.B. Wakefield (1914-2004) established a Trust to carry on her legacy and her vision for a citizenry engaged and knowledgeable about the environment surrounding it.

Polly's family moved to the property in 1931 after her father, Henry Binney, inherited the mansion and 15 acres from his cousin. After high school, Polly attended the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women. Polly inherited the estate from her parents before marrying widower and father of four daughters, Kennard Wakefield.

In the 1940s, Polly began taking courses in horticulture and plant propagation at the Arnold Arboretum. She particularly liked rare plants and it was during her first Arboretum propagating class in 1954 that her fascination with kousa dogwoods (*Cornus kousa*) began. During her lifetime, Polly planted hundreds of seeds and many of those seeds grew to become mature trees which she planted out in her landscape. Evidence of its earlier agricultural use in the 18th and 19th centuries was somewhat obscured by changes as the farm evolved through the years.

Although trained as a landscape designer, Polly's approach to design was that of a well educated amateur horticulturalist. Her individual style was experimental, whimsical and not overly formal. As she wrote in her "Garden Notes" prepared for visitors, "This is not a 'Show Place'; it never will be."

Polly's vision for the 23-acre property was to "Let us organize to re-establish the contact between the land and the people." It was her hope that landscape, building and collections would provide enjoyment and learning opportunities for the public. Today you are welcome to explore the Wakefield Estate using this pocket guide. Several garden highlights are described with brief notes on their creation.



Landscape Highlights

"As things are today, it would be impossible to properly prepare for visitors. We love to have our friends come as long as they are willing to enjoy the gardens just as they happen to be on that particular day. . . with weeds, without final coats of paint, with unclipped hedges, and with important plants awaiting their turn for skilled men to come and transplant them. Please understand these limitations." These words written by Polly over 30 years ago continue to be true. Be enchanted by what you discover.

The **1 Front Garden** is the only formal garden to pre-date Polly's tenure. The garden is enclosed by hedges and has an intimate feel. A parterre laid out in brick and planted with pink and white blooming redbuds surrounds a circular stone bird bath encircled by a path lined with benches and small-leaf boxwood hedges. A family anecdote notes that Polly's mother, Alberta Binney, had the square summer house built of timber felled by the Hurricane of 1938. The 100 year-old tulip tree, the property's tallest tree, is a magnificent specimen that provides a canopy over the garden.

The **2 Witches' Garden with Dragon Gate** was created by Polly in the 1970s after she became interested in dwarf conifers. Propagation classes at the Arnold Arboretum sparked an interest in propagating her own collection. She planted her collection "as a trial center where candidates congregate" and adorned the garden with a rustic wooden dragon head gate which she most likely designed. This curious and unusual feature is comprised of a number of white pine witches' brooms. Nine Japanese maples and a Korean pine which Polly grew from seed, provide the background for this feature.



Before Polly's time, the **3 Piazza Terrace** "afforded an uninterrupted view across the meadows and woodlands, salt marshes and the Neponset River to the distant countryside beyond." Two lacebark pines and a paperbark maple stand in this grass terrace edged by a boxwood hedge. It originally included 5 trees chosen for their interesting bark.



The **4 Dog Wood** is an orchard planting of kousa dogwoods on the terraces. Polly described the origin of the planting: "The Dog Wood now replaces the original Cherry Orchard on the Terraces. I wanted to find a permanent place for the young dogwoods I had raised from seed collected at the Arnold Arboretum and raised on the windowsill of the Old Farmhouse when we lived there." The creamy white flowers of the kousa dogwood bloom in June and the colorful fruits emerge in September. Polly selected and patented several kousa dogwood cultivars from descendants of the specimens growing at the Arnold Arboretum.

The axis of the Garden Path originated with the old granite steps and terminates at an oil jug flanked by two benches and backed by an evergreen planting of American arborvitae marking the **5 Site of the Original Summer House**.

This outdoor room known as the **6 Kalmia Garden** is composed of 4 corners marked with dawn redwoods, side walls of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), a sloping grass floor and a female ginkgo tree focal point. The sloping grass lawn is also known as the Rolling Green because no dog could resist rolling on it. Not only did Polly's vision for her garden tolerate dogs, it playfully accommodated them.



The **7 Fountain Terrace** path leads through a long planting of dogwoods and terminates at the **8 Rose Allée** which has become too shady for roses to grow.

The **Orchard** presents the pleasing image of a productive landscape, with orchard planting of apple trees and a large fenced in area for three grazing sheep and a llama to protect them from coyotes. Although the farm animals are recently introduced, they reestablish the pasture area.

Past the farmstead, trails wind through the 5-acre **Woodland** on the western side of the Wakefield Estate. This area provides a contrast to the more formal gardens and cultivated land. The process of secondary succession is well established on this former tillage land. A small brook winds through the woodlands and grassy pasture with cedars.