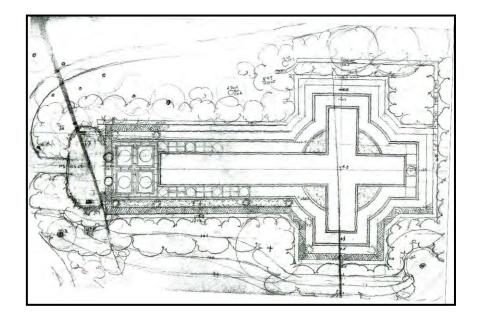
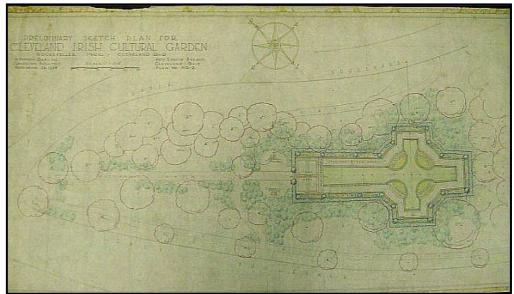
The Irish Cultural Garden: A Timeline

Before 1930: In 1896, John D. and Laura Spelman Rockefeller gifted land to the city for a park that would stretch from the lakefront to University Circle. In 1916, *Plain Dealer* reporter Leo Weidenthal covered the dedication of the Shakespeare Garden in Rockefeller Park and began to contemplate a series of gardens celebrating Cleveland's many nationality groups with the goal of "mutual understanding and wider sympathy" among the city's various ethnic groups. The Hebrew Garden, the first, was established in 1927.

1933: The Irish Civic Association—led by Common Pleas Court Judge Frank J. Merrick--deputized Mrs. Mary K. Duffy to attend Cultural Garden League meetings on behalf of the Irish community. On Sunday, May 28, 1933, 2000 people gathered to witness the planting of Killarney roses in the area reserved for the Irish Garden. In October, Irish-American tenor Morton Downey also planted a mountain ash tree on the same plot of land.

1936: In 1936, the City of Cleveland's Department of Parks and Public Properties created a division of Landscape Architecture in order to unite the gardens into a "harmonious entity." Noted landscape architect Donald Gray was hired to draft a plan for the Irish Garden. Gray designed gardens for such notable clients as the Van Sweringen brothers, developers of the Terminal Tower and of Shaker Heights, and he helped to lay out portions of the Metro Parks. Gray's plan for the Irish Garden featured a cross motif, which took on a more distinctively Celtic shape as his work on the project progressed from the early sketch phase (*left*) to the final presentation drawing (*right*) that he delivered on November 23, 1936.





1937: When the City Plan Commission threatened to change the location of the Irish plot, the Cultural Garden League protested. Gray's plan was approved by the League in 1937.

1938: On August 19, the Irish Cultural Garden Association was chartered with the State of Ohio in order to coordinate fundraising efforts. The charter was signed by ten prominent men, including Common Pleas Judge Frank J. Merrick and Monsignor John Hagan, who was then the Superintendent of Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland. However, contemporary accounts identify Mrs. Mary Kay Duffy (right) as a driving force behind the Irish Garden. Mary Kay Duffy was born Mary K. McGarry in Ballaghaderreen in County Roscommon, Ireland, in about 1882. At the age of 16, in 1899, she arrived at Ellis Island, where she told immigration officials she would be joining her uncle in Cleveland. In all five of her McGarry siblings would immigrate to Cleveland. When she first arrived in the city, she served as a maid in the household of Jeremiah Sullivan, a prominent banker. Here she met and married Martin Duffy, another Irish immigrant. An active, energetic woman, she helped her husband launch a real estate business in Collinwood in the 1920s. Dedicated to her native land, she was the National Vice President of the American Association for Recognition of the Irish Republic and presented a radio show called Echoes of Erin on the WHK radio station in Cleveland. She joined the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 1920 and organized an east-side division of the LAAOH. She was recognized as "Hibernian Woman of the Year." Enlisting her fellow Hibernians in the cause, Mary Kay Duffy promoted the goal of an Irish Cultural Garden for many years.



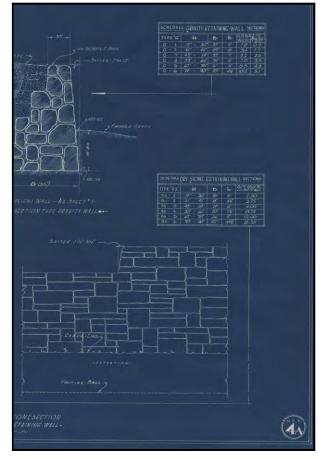
February 1939: Architect Gray submitted a comprehensive field plan for the garden on February 25, 1939. The field plan included detailed blueprints (*left*) and specification sheets (*right*) for contractors bidding to supply the stone paving and other work.

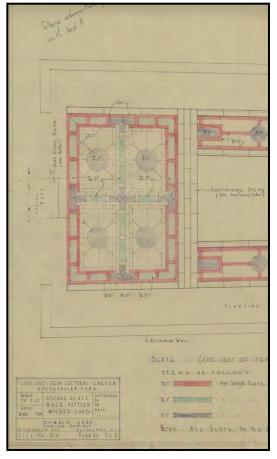
PHOTOGRAPHS:

Donald Gray's early sketch and presentation drawing for the Irish Cultural Garden are courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society.

The photograph of Mary Kay Duffy was provided by her grandson Michael Wagner.

Details of Donald Gray's field plan for the Irish Cultural Garden are also courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society.





April – October, 1939: The fundraising campaign that had been announced in January proceeded so expeditiously that groundbreaking was scheduled for April 28, 1939, with City Engineer Thomas McManamon, Mary Kay Duffy, and Monsignor Hagan officiating. McManamon helped to shepherd the construction, which was completed under the auspices of the Federal Works Progress Administration. "Forty-five leading Clevelanders of Irish descent" took responsibility for soliciting support.

October 1939: The formal dedication took place on October 29, 1939. According to contemporary newspaper accounts, the speakers included Maurice Tobin (Mayor of Boston), Harold H. Burton (Mayor of Cleveland), John J. O'Malley (Vice President, Irish Cultural Garden Association), the Hon. Frank J. Merrick (Common Pleas Judge), Mrs. Mary K. Duffy (Vice President, Irish Cultural Garden Association), Martin L. Sweeney (U.S. House of Representatives), Rev. S. J. Driscoll (Assistant Pastor, St. Thomas Aquinas Church), and Msgr. John R. Hagan (Diocesan Director of Education). The Parmadale Band played, and uniformed members of the Sons and Daughters of Eire, the Knights of Columbus, and the West Side Irish-American Club participated in a colorful, ceremonial procession.







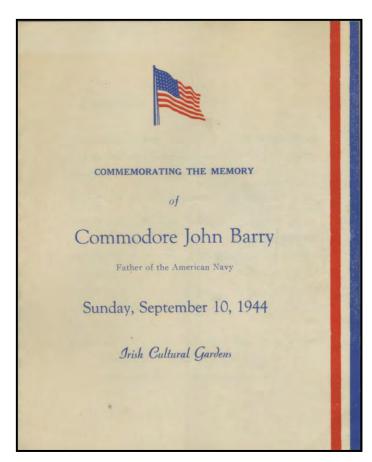


1944-1960: The Irish Cultural Garden Association sponsored an annual event held in the Irish Garden, together with a banquet in the evening. Both events honored Commodore John Barry, the Irish-born "father" of the United States Navy. The ceremonies featured speeches by naval officers and local politicians, as well as music and Irish dancing. The focus on an Irish-*American* military hero accorded with the wartime dictate by the Cultural Garden League that all of the nationalities should emphasize an American presence in their gardens.

1960s-1970s: The Irish Cultural Garden Association continued to participate in One World Day celebrations. The women most responsible for organizing the Barry Day event—Mary K. Duffy and, later, Mary Ellen Murphy—were also members of Division 10 of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. As the first generation of Garden supporters began to pass on, long-time LAAOH officer Bernadette Murphy took responsibility for the upkeep of the garden, Irish representation in the Cultural Garden Federation, and participation in annual One World Day celebrations. Judge John V. Corrigan was another stalwart supporter.

1980s-1990s: Bernadette Murphy's daughter, Irish step-dancing teacher Sheila Murphy Crawford, kept up the family tradition of involvement in the garden. She recruited parents of dancers from the Murphy Irish Arts Center to help with garden upkeep—assisted by members of the East Side Irish American Club, under the leadership of Lonnie McCauley, whose mother had been an early Garden supporter and a Hibernian.

1993-Present: Sheila Murphy Crawford became the Director of the Irish Cultural Garden and remains so today.. She has also served as Vice President of the Cultural Garden Federation for twelve years, chairing its Design and Preservation Committee.





PHOTOGRAPHS:

Photographs of Mary Kay Duffy, Thomas McManamon and Monsignor John Hagan, the construction of the Irish Garden, and dancers (including Sheila Murphy, at right) are courtesy of Cleveland State University.

Newspaper clippings about fundraising for the Irish Garden and its dedication and the 1944 program book for Commodore John Barry Day are preserved in the scrapbooks of the Cultural Garden Federation, which are housed at the Western Reserve Historical Society.

The Renovation of the Irish Cultural Garden

2007: Businessman Edward Crawford, CEO of Park-Ohio Holdings Corp, drove by the Irish Cultural Garden and was shocked by its disrepair, compared with his memories of the garden while growing up in the 1950s in Cleveland Heights. He formed the Irish Garden Club with the mission of restoring it.

2008-09: Ed Crawford commissioned local landscape architect Jim McKnight to develop a plan for the renovation of the Irish Garden. Landscape designer Charlene Crowley, who had been a longtime garden volunteer as a Murphy Irish Arts Center parent, oversaw the replanting. She relied on Donald Gray's original plant list as a guide. The garden's irrigation system had to be restored and the sandstone curbing refinished. Granite monuments commemorating Irish poets and writers were the first statuary to be added to the garden in forty years.

2009: On October 3, 2009, the Irish Cultural Garden was rededicated, with Sheila Crawford Murphy and Ed Crawford presiding over the ribbon cutting.

Personal reflection on the Irish Cultural Garden by Charlene Crowley

"I first became involved in the Irish Garden through the Murphy Irish Arts Center. There was a signup sheet posted for volunteers to come down to the garden and help with the spring clean-up. Landscape being my chosen profession – it seemed a natural fit for a volunteer effort on my part.

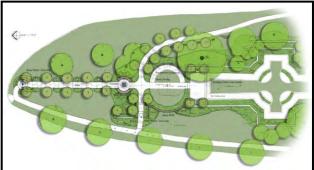
I couldn't believe that I grew up in this city and had never seen the garden. It is a stunning work of ingenious twentieth century landscape architecture. Masterful, complex, authentic stonework; kerbing cuts and drainage inlets found only in the finest gardens built in the era. A layout <u>so</u> Irish and enchanting that it finds a home deep inside you before you know it has arrived. It is a classic landscape design, one that draws you into the sunken garden and then provides a place to wander or sit and reflect on its beauty. Seeing it for the first time in the early 1990's the stonework had weathered the decades in remarkably good condition however, the hedges and trees had overgrown their original placement and function in the garden. The flowering shrubs were almost extinct and the perennial borders long vanished...but I could envision what it might have looked like, when first planted.

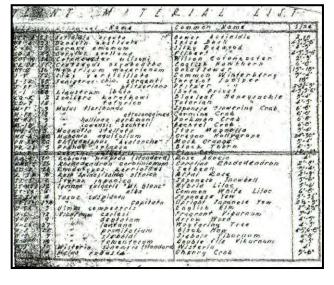
Then in 1996 I found the plans filed away in City Hall, dusty, the paper crackling with age: and the complexity of the original planting plans revealed themselves. A true landscape work of art, it was the perfect combination of beautiful hardscapes overflowing with colorful plants. I'm exceedingly grateful to Ed Crawford for spearheading the effort and for all the donors and organizations that now see what the first Irish Cultural Garden Association envisioned, a beautiful garden tribute to the generations that came before us--the 'Greenest of the Gardens,' on a boulevard of gardens, which celebrates the diversity and promise of Cleveland and of America."

2010: From the start, Ed Crawford had envisioned water as a focal element for the renovated garden. In the landscape plan developed by McKnight and Associates, the fountain was designated for the northern section of the site that had been left undeveloped in architect Donald Gray's original plan. On October 30, 2010 a replica of the fountain currently located at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin was installed and dedicated at the Irish Cultural Garden. The Lennon Fountain was named in loving memory of manufacture and philanthropist Fred A. Lennon (1905-1998).

2011: Additional plantings and improvements were unveiled at a ceremony on October 8, 1911.











PHOTOGRAPHS:

Photographs of the rededication ceremony, the Lennon Fountain and the Irish Garden courtesy of Char Crowley and Ed Crawford.

Plan for garden renovation courtesy of Jim McKnight.

Donald Gray's original plant list courtesy of the Cleveland City Council Archives.

This display was researched and compiled by Margaret Lynch for the Irish American Archives Society, with the assistance of Maureen Kilbane Greicius and with the support of the Michael Talty and Helen Talty Charitable Trust. Special thanks to Charlene Crowley, Sheila Murphy Crawford and the staff of the Western Reserve Historical Society Library