

Gardens on Parade

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"Wherever our eyes roam we see tulips, pansies, hedge plants and trees of every known variety. Thousands upon thousands of them light the Fair grounds with a colorful brilliance unsurpassed at any other giant spectacle." (1939)

Gardens on Parade at the 1939 World's Fair was a five and a half acre pavilion, designed by architects Delano and Aldrich, hosted in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The horticultural exhibition featured elaborate floral displays from garden clubs throughout the United States. Upon viewing the flower show in 1939, Arthur Bartlet of the New York Herald wrote: "The most stupendous, most magnificent, most gorgeous exhibition of flowers, shrubs and horticultural beauties ever assembled." The Flushing Garden Club (FGC) created The Second District Garden to display at the Fair. The presentation was described by the Club President as, "...a thing of satisfying beauty and of suggestive value, and was outstanding among the gardens of the Fair." Garden societies who contributed to World's Fair set out to create a sight to behold, as well as an educational experience. Inside the Horticultural Building, gardeners offered practical advice on maintaining a variety of gardens, and prestigious colleges gave demonstrations of current research.

Garden of Today was the largest and most outstanding spectacle of the Gardens on Parade Pavilion. The display featured a large oval lawn bordered by flowering shrubs, tulips, perennials and annuals, and an apple tree on a terrace at the center. The Garden of Today was made possible by the assistance of the Flushing Garden Club. FGC member Mary N. Dixon, M.L.A., had the honor of supervising the first spring plantings of the flowers that would appear in the show, and her mother, Mrs. James (Frances) Wyllys Dixon, loaned her bird bath for the display. An unknown member of the Flushing Garden Club provided iberis, primulas, and annuals to the Garden of Today, at cost to her own garden.

Gardens on Parade extended beyond its pavilion decorating the entire fair in floral arrangements. The fair became a floral marvel adorned with crimson scarlet flowers, and plant beds in the shapes of airplanes, propellers, and wheels in yellow, orange and lavender.

Designed & Illustrated
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