

Beatrix Farrand (1872 to 1959): Celebrated Landscape Artist Honored at Dumbarton Oaks and at Green Spring Gardens

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This year marks the 100th anniversary of Beatrix Farrand's work at [Dumbarton Oaks](#) in Washington DC, and also the 80th anniversary of her garden design and installation at Green Spring Gardens in Virginia. These two very different gardens by the same renowned landscape gardener nevertheless share some of Farrand's essential design attributes.

At Dumbarton Oaks

Throughout 2022, Dumbarton Oaks is honoring Beatrix Farrand's contribution with several events as part of its celebration *A Century in the Gardens*.

(Photo credit: Dumbarton Oaks website.)



Following are quotes from the [Dumbarton Oaks website](#) to announce the garden centennial:

Our first on-site exhibition *A Century in the Gardens* celebrates the 100th anniversary of Beatrix Farrand's design of the Dumbarton Oaks landscape.

In June of 1921, Beatrix Farrand began her work designing Robert and Mildred Bliss's home in Georgetown. Writing in June 1922, about preliminary plans, Farrand recognized in the property and her clients a garden of possibilities: "The Oaks offers opportunities for development on so many different lines that it is difficult to know which to emphasize most strongly in the beginning." Farrand goes on to detail a vision that she would come to work on for the next twenty years.

The exhibit includes archival images, as well as newly commissioned photographs, a design timeline, and selections from the Rare Book Collection. The exhibit opened in the Dumbarton Oaks Orientation Gallery on **February 28, 2022**.

The website goes on to say this centennial celebration "commemorates one of the most beautiful gardens in the world." For more information about the celebration at Dumbarton Oaks, visit the [Dumbarton Oaks website](#).

At Green Spring Gardens

At Green Spring Gardens (GSG), Beatrix Farrand also worked her magic by designing and installing a garden on what was then the family estate of Michael and Belinda Straight. Farrand came to Green Spring in 1942, as she was



(Photo credit: Fairfax County Park Authority website.)

completing her work of almost 20 years at Dumbarton Oaks; she even brought with her some of the craftsmen and workers from Dumbarton Oaks. Farrand's garden at Green Spring contributed significantly (along with a Colonial Revival rehabilitation of the Historic House in the same year) to GSG's inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The following information from the [Fairfax County Park Authority website](#) provides a descriptive summary of Farrand's work at GSG:

In 1942, famed landscape designer Beatrix Farrand designed the simple garden "room" behind the site's Historic House for Green Spring's last private residents, Michael and Belinda Straight. It is a spacious lawn enclosed by a crescent of boxwood.

With signature clarity of outline, Farrand created an ideal outdoor space for the Straights to entertain their many guests of national and international renown. At Green Spring, this master of grand scale work distilled her design philosophy into a small space. Though modest in scope and scale, the garden is a pure expression of Farrand's style and technique. It was one of the last projects of her celebrated career and is her only garden design in Virginia.

Farrand designed more than 200 gardens from the 1890s to the 1950s at grand estates, public parks, botanic gardens, college campuses, and the White House. Her recognized masterpiece, the gardens of Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC, is considered the apogee of her career.

GSG Special Event April 21: **Beatrix Farrand's Legacy at Green Spring Gardens**

GSG is celebrating Beatrix Farrand's landscaping artistry with a public event on **April 21, 2022, at 4 pm** to honor the 80th anniversary of her garden design and installation:

Join landscape historian and author Judith Tankard as she talks about the incredible garden designs of America's first female landscape architect, Beatrix Farrand. Learn how her work and legacy continue to influence garden design today. Stay for refreshments and a book signing of Judith's

book *Beatrix Farrand: Garden Artist, Landscape Architect*. \$15 per person.
Code 60K.ZA30. [Register online for the event here](#) or call Green Spring
Gardens at 703-642-5173.

PBS Documentary

For those who would like to learn more about Beatrix Farrand and her legacy of
American gardens, there is also a [PBS documentary entitled *Beatrix Farrand's
American Landscapes*](#).

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