

GARDEN WALK

Special garden now surrounds special house

By Mary Klemic

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What is the Hough residence in Bingham Farms has always been special to Bonnie Hough.

When she was a child growing up nearby, it was her favorite house. She and husband David bought it from the original owner and have lived in it for 14 years, raising a family.

It is still a special place, now nestled in a wonderful garden that is one of five private sites in the Franklin Village area featured in this year's Franklin Garden Walk, taking place Wednesday, June 13.

Hough's love of gardening — and consideration for the creatures who visit — can be seen throughout the grounds.

The garden is a family affair, with family members participating in the work. Bonnie Hough often goes with friends to a farmers market in Pontiac on Saturdays, leaving between 6:30 and 6 a.m.

"It's my down time," she said of gardening. "I get a lot of thinking done. I can come out and think. My son and I can do a lot of talking."

Colorful

The Houghs transformed a back yard wooden deck into a garden.

Some of the flowers and plants in this area are hostas, a corkscrew willow, sweet William (the seeds of which Bonnie brought from England), delphinium, an old-fashioned hollyhock that Bonnie learned about from a gardener at Greenfield Village, columbine, lamb's ears, and wild geranium from the garden of Bonnie's mother, who is a master gardener.

"I look for colors," Hough said. "I try to get mostly perennials and accent with annuals."

"I just go for things that are a little bit hardy and not too delicate. I want gardening to be a part of my life, not my life."

Also here stands a wooden bear. David — who is "incredible at woodworking," Bonnie said — carved the figure from an American elm that was damaged in a storm. The bear holds a fish because the couple enjoys fishing.

"The bear is probably my favorite thing in the garden," Bonnie said.

Around the garden is a widdle fence, made from weaving grapevine and sticks. Hough had seen one in Williamsburg.

Another inspiration from Colonial times is in the back yard: a knot garden, in which plants are made into geometric shapes. This was recently started, and will take about five or six years to develop.

Another area of the back yard, with a backdrop of Korean boxwood, features snapdragons, and Siberian and bearded iris, among other plants. Dramatic passion flower blooms burst along a vine on a tower on a side of the house.

Other features

The front includes Harry Lauder's walking stick and a golden chain tree. Bonnie was going to remove the tree but changed her mind when she saw chickadees had made it their home.

Some of the other flowers around the property are clematis, ligularia with heart-shaped leaves, rhododendron, spiderwort, bergenia, ferns and sweet woodruff.

David used the wood from the deck to line the walls of a little barn on the property. The barn is a good site for parties.

Nearby is a lake, crowned with a curved wooden bridge built by David. The bridge was used in a ceremony for the Girl Scout troop Bonnie led.

"It's like a whole little ecosystem here," she said of the lake.

Ducks, blue heron, kingfishers, frogs, muskrats, raccoons and possums are among the crea-

tures that can be seen. Woodpeckers enjoy peanuts from one of the bird feeders in the garden, and rattle a plastic container on the stand if the supply is gone.

Pavers are another feature. Other accents include items bought at garage sales: an old wooden chair, made into a planter, and old garden tools, made into door handles for the barn.

Hough recommends using a time-release fertilizer called osmocote (14-14-14). A lot of gardening is trial and error, she said. If something doesn't grow, she tries moving it; if it still doesn't grow, she takes it out.

"Just dig in," she advised. "It really is a lot of fun. It's a great therapy. You reap your rewards from seeing your hard work. It's really a no-fail system."

Information

The Franklin Garden Walk presented by the Franklin Branch, Woman's National Farm & Garden Association, is Wednesday, June 13. Times are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6-9 p.m.

The evening hours are new this year.

"So many people work, and the husbands want to see it," said event publicist Betty Bright, a member of the garden group.

"We give the money to scholarships, the greening of Detroit, and different groups."

Baked goods and garden crafts will be sold during daytime hours at the Franklin Village Gazebo on the Village Green, on the west side of Franklin Road between 13 and 14 Mile, behind the police station and next to the Franklin Community Church.

A salad buffet lunch will be served 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. at the church. Lunch tickets are \$8 (limit 200).

Garden walk tickets are \$8 per adult, \$10 the day of the event. They will be sold Wednesday at the gazebo.

"We have such beautiful homes," Bright said, explaining the popularity of the garden walk. "And this is the town that time forgot. Franklin is so quaint."

For more information, call



Place for reflection: Bonnie Hough pauses on a wooden bridge built by husband David that is on the family property, one of the sites on the Franklin Garden Walk.

(248) 646-5427 or (248) 646-8033.



STAFF PHOTO BY JERRY ZILYANTZ

Creative touches: A widdle fence, made from grapevine and sticks, runs around a garden close to the house. The bear was carved out of a tree that was damaged in a storm.

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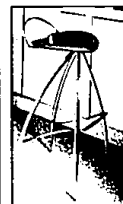
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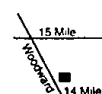


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