



PLANTING FIELDS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 18, 2022

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 200TH BIRTHDAY OF FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED, PLANTING FIELDS FOUNDATION
REOPENS ITS NEWLY RESTORED HEATHER GARDEN DESIGNED BY OLMSTED BROTHERS
APRIL 26, 2022 5:30-7:30 PM**



The Heather Garden at Planting Fields circa 1927

Oyster Bay, New York – March 18, 2022 –To mark the bicentenary of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, Planting Fields Foundation will open its newly restored Heather Garden, launching a yearlong celebration of the legacy of the Olmsted Brothers at Planting Fields.

“This project and others commemorating Olmsted during his bicentennial underline the importance of our singular site in the context of that visionary designer’s legacy,” said Gina Wouters, executive director of Planting Fields Foundation. “To begin our celebrations, we have lovingly revitalized our Heather Garden and installed new interpretive signage throughout our 409-acre site, so that visitors can enjoy every aspect of their experience here and understand our landscape and its importance.”

The Heather Garden at Planting Fields is one of the first of several heather gardens designed by the Olmsted Brothers, and the only one still in existence on Long Island. Planting Fields’s founder William R. Coe loved the textures and colors of the heaths and heathers of his native England. He and the Olmsted Brothers collaborated to create this small refuge within the larger garden plan.

A century after it was created, the Heather Garden has gone through a much-needed restoration in the spirit of its original design. The plant palette includes heath and heather as well as flowering trees and shrubs that were in the original Olmsted plans. Because heaths (*erica* species and cultivars) and heathers (*calluna vulgaris* cultivars) are not native to Long Island, the original garden did not flourish. As part of the restoration, careful plant choices, soil amendment, new drainage and other measures have been put in place to help ensure a thriving and sustainable future for this historic Olmsted design.

The Heather Garden provides color, texture, and interest in every season. Heaths generally flower from mid-winter to early spring, while heathers take over the bloom sequence beginning in mid-summer. The Heather Garden at Planting Fields offers a secluded and contemplative place within the overall plan of the gardens, attracting butterflies, birds, bees and other beneficial wildlife.

Planting Fields Foundation collaborated with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to restore the Heather Garden to its Olmsted period character.

Speaking Program:

Governor Kathy Hochul (invited)

Erik Kulleseid, Commissioner, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Daniel Mackay, Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

Hal Davidson, Chairman, Planting Fields Foundation

Gina J. Wouters, Executive Director, Planting Fields Foundation

Special Guests include noted Olmsted scholars Arleyn Levee and Witold Rybczynski

About Planting Fields Foundation

Created beginning in 1913 by insurance magnate William Robertson Coe and his wife, Mai Rogers Coe, heiress and daughter of Standard Oil partner Henry Huttleston Rogers, Planting Fields is an estate on Long Island's Gold Coast that is a historical testament to American art, architecture, landscape, and horticulture. Located in Oyster Bay, New York and originally landscaped by the Olmsted Brothers Firm, the grounds feature 409 acres of greenhouses, rolling lawns, formal gardens, woodland paths, and outstanding plant collections. Designed as an integrated composition of the built and natural world, the original historic estate buildings and landscape remain intact including Coe Hall, a 65-room Tudor Revival mansion designed by Walker & Gillette. The interior of the house is a showcase of artistry and craftsmanship with a distinctly American aesthetic that features original ironwork commissions by Samuel Yellin and murals painted by artists Robert Winthrop Chanler and Everett Shinn. Planting Fields is included in the National Register of Historic Places. Founded in 1952 by W. R. Coe, Planting Fields Foundation is a not-for-profit public educational foundation chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. With regular exhibitions, conservation and educational programs, Planting Fields Foundation strives to preserve and make relevant to all audiences the heritage of Planting Fields. For more information visit www.plantingfields.org.

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