



Welcome

Bellingrath

Gardens and Home

Bellingrath Gardens and Home is the creation of Walter and Bessie Bellingrath. Mr. Bellingrath was Mobile's first Coca-Cola bottler and was advised by his physician in 1917 to buy an abandoned fishing camp on the Fowl River so that the overworked businessman could "learn how to play." It was dubbed "Belle Camp" and was soon being beautified with flowers planted by Mrs. Bellingrath.

The Gardens began to develop in 1927 after the couple hired local architect George B. Rogers to convert the fishing camp into a country estate. Flagstone pathways, fountains, a formal rose garden and conservatory were all part of the original design.

In April of 1932 the Bellingraths placed an ad in the Mobile newspapers inviting its citizens out on Sunday afternoon to see the spring flowers. Over 4,700 people took them up on the invitation and Bellingrath Gardens was born. A gate house was installed and in 1934 the Gardens were open year round.




A 15-room home for the couple was completed in 1935 from designs by George Rogers. The house features antique local brick, cast iron galleries and old English flagstones to give it warmth and one of a kind styling. Its interiors today still house the period furniture, porcelain, silver and crystal collected by Mrs. Bellingrath over a span of more than 35 years.

Mrs. Bellingrath died in 1943 and her husband in 1955. As the couple had no children, a foundation was created by Mr. Bellingrath to honor his wife and oversee the gardens and home. Income also goes to three Christian colleges and two local churches and has provided hundreds of scholarships over the years.

Bellingrath Gardens and Home continues to follow Walter Bellingrath's charge to maintain this property "as a fitting and permanent memorial to my wife."



Legend

-  Restrooms
-  Drinks and Vending Machines
-  Cell Phone Audio Tour



River Pavilion

FOWL RIVER

Bellingrath Home & Terraces

Grotto

South Terrace

Mermaid Fountain

Great Lawn

Live Oak Plaza

Camellia Parterre

Delchamps/Boehm Gallery

Chapel

Rockery

Overlook

Gazebo Garden

Conservatory

Harrigan/ExxonMobil Bayou Boardwalk

Mirror Lake

Rose Garden

Bayou Observatory

Summer House

Asian-American Garden

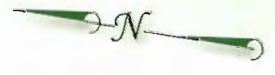
Magnolia Café & Gift Shop

Entrance Building

Garden Map Bellingrath

Gardens and Home

Pet Motel



BELLINGRATH GARDENS AND HOME

The **ENTRANCE BUILDING** provides arriving guests with admission tickets, tour information, restrooms, wheelchair/stroller rental as well as historical memorabilia about the Bellingraths, the Museum Home and the Gardens.

The **BELLINGRATH ROSE GARDEN** was constructed in 1936 in the shape of the Rotary Club emblem. The three tiered cast iron fountain was added to the garden in 2010. The Rose Garden contains more than 2,000 plants representing 75 varieties and is a test site for All-American Rose Selections roses. The new varieties are planted one year before they are available to the public. Visit www.bellingrath.org/bellingrath-rose-garden.html for a complete list of Bellingrath's Roses.

The **CONSERVATORY** was built in 1935 to house tropical flowers and plants. A coal fired boiler once occupied the small brick building behind it to provide necessary heat each winter. The Conservatory was restored in 1996.



The **GREAT LAWN** was formerly a farm that adjoined the original fishing camp and is a central feature of the Gardens reminiscent of the pastoral English landscapes. It is planted with seasonal grasses to remain a luxurious green year round. The flower bed bordering the lawn is over 400 feet long and requires an average of 4,000 plants of varying sizes to replant this border each season. Visit www.bellingrath.org/great-lawn.html for the names of the featured flowers.

The **CAMELLIA PATERRE** begins the formal gardens inspired by the Bellingrath's trip to Europe in 1927. Camellias were Walter Bellingrath's favorite flower and both Mr. & Mrs. Bellingrath have camellias named for them. Bellingrath's camellias typically bloom from late November through early March.

LIVE OAK PLAZA is located at the center of the Gardens. It adjoins the series of fountains and runnels which once carried the overflow of an artesian spring down to the river. One is centered with a terra cotta **MERMAID FOUNTAIN** purchased from an old New Orleans garden by Mrs. Bellingrath. A bronze relief depicting the Old Testament tale of **REBECCA BY THE WELL** adorns the westernmost pool.

Mr. Bellingrath installed the **MONOLITH** to tell the story of Bellingrath Gardens. The shaft of Indiana limestone holds three bronze plaques outlining the history of the Gardens, the Bellingraths and architect George B. Rogers.

The **SOUTH TERRACE** replaced Mr. Bellingrath's fishing lodge in the early 1960's. Today it is used for everything from weddings to Christmas concerts.

The **DELCHAMPS GALLERY OF BOEHM PORCELAIN** (pronounced "beam") originally designed in 1939 as an open six car garage with guest quarters above, the gallery was created in 1967 to house a collection of Boehm porcelain given to the Gardens from Mobile's Delchamps family and represents the largest public display of the works of American sculptor Edward Marshall Boehm.

The **CHAPEL** was designed for religious services for the Bellingraths and their guests. The leaded glass windows feature seasonal flowers. Today, the Chapel is often used for intimate wedding ceremonies.

The **BELLINGRATH MUSEUM HOME** was built in 1935 as the Bellingrath's permanent residence. The 15-room home was built using bricks dating to 1853 and ironwork from the 1870's salvaged from historic structures in Mobile. It is completely furnished with the antiques collected by Mrs. Bellingrath. The Home opened to the public in 1956. Guided tours are available daily. (Tickets may be purchased at the Home entrance or in the Entrance Building. The Home is not accessible to wheelchairs/strollers). Outside the Home is the **EAST TERRACE** that offers excellent river views and a fish pond, and the **NORTH TERRACE** which is a series of terraces with more views of the river. It was a favorite spot for tea for Mrs. Bellingrath.

The **RIVER FRONT PAVILION** along the Fowl River replaced the original boat house and deck that had been the center of summer activities for the Bellingraths and their guests. It offers an excellent view of the river as well as the stone **GROTTO** which was completed in 1931. Here water splashed down from the pools above while steps lead back up to the South Terrace.

The **DWIGHT HARRIGAN EXXONMOBIL BAYOU BOARDWALK** offers a winding trip across an authentic southern bayou allowing guests a close-up view of fish, turtles, water fowl and other wildlife as well as the natural vegetation needed to support this ecosystem. Interpretive panels along the boardwalk give visitors additional information about the ecology, history, animals and plants of the Fowl River watershed. The bayou offers a startling contrast to the orderliness of the Gardens. Guests may also overlook the view of the bayou from the **BAYOU OBSERVATORY**.

MIRROR LAKE was once a runoff pond for a 19th century sawmill on the property. The Bellingraths had it dredged and built the Mirror Lake Dam to create a tranquil lake to reflect their azaleas and other flowers. Surrounding the lake is the **SUMMER HOUSE** offering quiet shelter to visitors. The **BUBBLING BROOK** is a natural spring that area settlers once used for bathing. The **LION OVERLOOK** is centered with a life-size feline created in the mid-19th century as a garden ornament for a home on Mobile's Government Street and the **RUSTIC BRIDGE** offers a view of the surroundings as well as fish and turtles.

The **ROCKERY** is a hillside rock garden that replaced a washed out hillside. It was the creation of Mrs. Bellingrath who personally supervised the installation of its winding stairs, waterfall and pools.

Along the exit path you will encounter the **MIRROR LAKE OVERLOOKS**. The overlooks offer guests views back over the lake and offer excellent vantage points for photography.

In the mid 1960's the former Bird Sanctuary in the Gardens was transformed into the **ASIAN AMERICAN GARDEN**. It features elements found in both Chinese and Japanese gardens while still hosting up to 200 varieties of birds. (Some areas here are not accessible to wheelchairs/strollers).

The **MAGNOLIA CAFE** is open daily for lunch from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for your dining pleasure. Dinner is available nightly during Magic Christmas in Lights from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The **GIFT SHOP** offers a selection of gifts and souvenirs to help commemorate your visit. All items within the Gift Shop may be shipped for your convenience via UPS.

PRINTING SPONSORED BY



*A Bellingrath
Tradition*

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Daily 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Dec 25th.
Magic Christmas in Lights 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Day after Thanksgiving thru New Years Eve.

HELP LINE / FIRST AID: Trained Personnel on Duty. Call 251.725.5154*1.

LOST AND FOUND: Located in the Gift Shop.

HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE: Accessible walkways and ramps are provided throughout the Gardens. The Bellingrath Home and some areas of the Asian American Garden are not accessible.

RAINCHECKS: Guests are urged to consider the weather before purchasing tickets. We do not offer rainchecks.

SMOKING: All buildings on Bellingrath property are smoke free.

RE-ENTRY TO THE GARDENS:

Guests may re-enter with a current ticket stub, receipt or hand stamp.

DRESS CODE: Shirts and shoes are required at all times while visiting the Gardens.

PET MOTEL: Pets are not permitted in the Gardens. Guests traveling with their pets may use the pet motel free of charge. Locks are available in the entrance building.

PHOTOGRAPHY: There is no photography within the Bellingrath Home. All photographs, renderings or movies taken are for personal use only. Professional portraits may be taken with a photography fee and reservations. Call 251.973.2217.

CELL PHONE AUDIO TOUR: Learn more by dialing 251.725.5154. Each tour stop is designated with a sign. There is no additional fee for the audio tour but regular charges such as cell phone usage, roaming and text messaging may apply.

COMMENTS: We welcome your comments; fill out a comment card in the Magnolia Cafe or leave your comment on the Cell Phone Audio Tour Feedback Line. Call 251.725.5154*0.

Bellingrath
Gardens and Home

12401 Bellingrath Gardens Road • Theodore, Alabama 36582
800.247.8420 / 251.973.2217 • www.bellingrath.org • bellingrath@bellingrath.org