

For Immediate Release

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Memphis Botanic Garden Celebrates Its 70th Year in 2023

Memphis, TN – The Memphis Botanic Garden (MBG) is celebrating its 70th year as an oasis in the heart of Memphis. This milestone marks 70 years of horticultural excellence, Memphis milestones, & community connections as the Garden revitalizes, revisits, & revels in some of their favorite initiatives from the history of the Garden.

As part of the year-long celebration, the Garden is kicking off the *Urban Home Garden Speaker Series* on June 13, which will feature three notable speakers on gardening with a purpose this summer and fall including designing plant communities, essential native trees, and creating a sanctuary & a sense of place in a kitchen garden. 2023 also welcomes *Rich Soil at the Garden* this spring, the Garden's fourth major outdoor seasonal exhibition featuring works by Kristine Mays. The Garden's capital campaign *Rooted at Park & Cherry* is in full swing and the first of four major additions, the newly revitalized arboretum and orchard in the southwest corner of the Garden, is slated to open this summer. Explore more ways to celebrate the Garden is this year at membg.org/celebrate.

Memphis Botanic Garden, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, has served the region for seven decades and continues to do so through youth educational programming reaching 40,000 school aged children each year, supporting regional plant societies & garden clubs, providing courses and lectures on a variety of topics, and hosting over 260,000 visitors annually.

A Brief History of the Garden:

In 1953, a gift of 2,500 iris rhizomes from the gardens of Mrs. Morgan Ketchum marked the beginning of planned beds and displays at the Garden (then known as the Gardens of Audubon Park). Soon after,

in 1957, an arboretum was established to honor W.C. Paul, an active member of the Memphis Men's Garden Club. The Arboretum and the Iris Garden were the two projects that served as catalysts for a section of the park to be recognized and developed as a botanic garden as one knows it today. In 1966, the name was changed from the Gardens of Audobon Park to Memphis Botanic Garden in connection with efforts to coordinate and develop new and existing garden areas and tie a network of roads and trails with the new Goldsmith Civic Garden Center, which was generously donated by the family of Jacob Goldsmith to honor Mr. Goldsmith. The Goldsmith Civic Garden Center was started in 1963, and the building, with its exhibition hall, meeting rooms, library, and administrative offices, was dedicated on March 22, 1964. Throughout the years, notable features have been added including the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Japanese Garden in 1965, the Water Garden in 1966, the Sculpture Garden in 1968, Daffodil Hill in 1973, the Herb Garden in 1986, the Sensory Garden in 1989, Hardin Hall in 1996, the Pollinator Garden in 1997, Live at the Garden in 2001, My Big Backyard in 2009, Blecken Pavillion in 2010, Radians Amphitheater in 2014, and the Urban Home Garden in 2018. A series of major campus improvements, including renovations of the Visitors Center & other integral areas was completed in 2022 as part the Nourish: Greenprint 2021 capital campaign. The full history of the Garden can be found at membg.org/history.

The Memphis Botanic Garden is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to being an exemplary center for horticulture and environmental enrichment. Serving over 40,000 school-aged children annually, and hosting 260,000 visitors each year, Memphis Botanic Garden strives to enhance lives by connecting people with nature, increasing awareness and appreciation of our environment. For more information please visit membg.org.

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