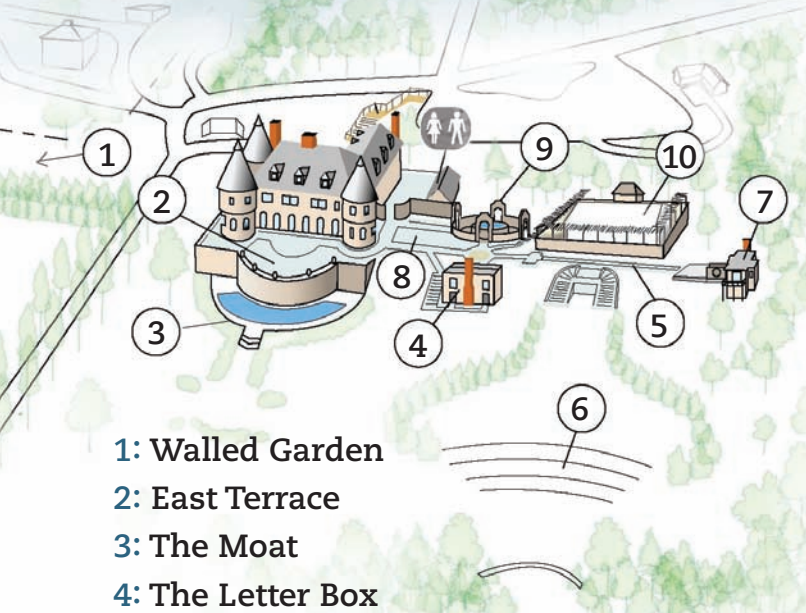


# GREY TOWERS

## Self-Guided Landscape Tour



- 1: Walled Garden
- 2: East Terrace
- 3: The Moat
- 4: The Letter Box
- 5: The Long Garden and Long Pool
- 6: Amphitheatre
- 7: The Bait Box
- 8: Marble Court
- 9: The Finger Bowl
- 10: The Swimming Pool Terrace

This self-guided landscape experience provides the visitor with an opportunity to learn about the outdoor features that are important to the interpretation and ambiance of the estate. A full guided tour and wayside exhibits provide additional details. The numbered descriptions correspond to the numbered site map.



**Please return this landscape guide for the enjoyment of other visitors.**



Created by the Grey Towers Heritage Association in cooperation with the US Forest Service, Grey Towers National Historic Site.

## The Mansion

Built in 1886 for James and Mary Pinchot, the 19,000+ square foot French chateau style mansion was designed by famed architect Richard Morris Hunt. With 44 rooms and 23 fireplaces, the home figured significantly in the success of the Pinchots' oldest son, Gifford Pinchot, who founded and served as first chief of the US Forest Service and was two-term Governor of Pennsylvania. Many of the exterior design elements and features were added by Gifford's wife, Cornelia Bryce Pinchot, after they married and moved to Grey Towers in 1914.



### 1: Walled Garden

The large stone wall to the south of the mansion was built by James to enclose his enormous rose and vegetable gardens. The two stone houses to the west are private residences for descendants of James and Mary's youngest son, Amos Pinchot. One originally housed professors of the Yale School of Forestry summer school (1901-1926), and the other served as a carriage house. Today the family continues to use half of the Walled Garden and the US Forest Service uses the other half, which includes the greenhouse and an acid rain monitoring station.

The Black Locust-lined allee was added by Cornelia Pinchot who wanted an entry way more fitting of a Governor's mansion. It changed the alignment of the original 19th Century carriageway, which is now a part of the pedestrian path from the parking lot.



### 2: East Terrace:

Facing the mansion from the East Terrace, you can imagine when the family opened the French doors of the library to allow air to flow throughout the house. The family would frequently pull furniture onto this lawn and under the awnings to enjoy the outdoors.

In the niche you will see a bust of the Marquis de Lafayette, evidence of James's pride in his French heritage.

Turn around and you will see why James chose this site for his family's home. Enjoy the view of the Delaware Valley and New Jersey's Kittatinny Mountains. The land below was treeless so the family had an unobstructed view of the town and the Delaware River.

The large trees flanking the Terrace are European Copper Beeches, Gifford Pinchot's favorite tree. Slow-growing estate trees, they remain living examples of his conservation principle of planting for the future.

### 3: The Moat

Look below the stone wall of the Terrace and you will see a half moat, added by Cornelia Pinchot as one of several water features she included in her exterior design.



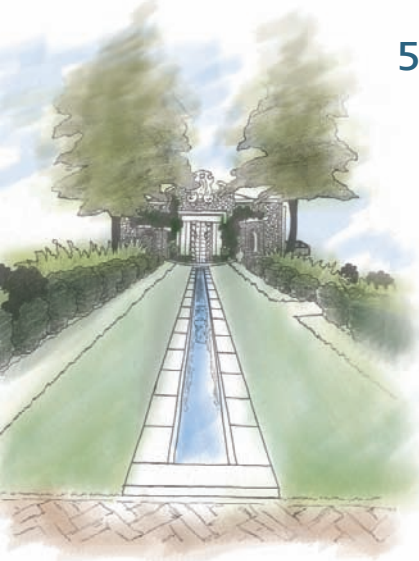


#### 4: The Letter Box

The Letter Box was built to store Governor Gifford Pinchot's papers and provide office space for his secretaries when he was in residence. Designed by architect Chester Aldrich, it has large commanding windows on the sides and

rear, allowing for natural light to enter but providing privacy from the front. The Letter Box also served as Governor Pinchot's campaign headquarters and the place where he could meet with constituents.

Today it is used as exhibit and educational space.



#### 5: The Long Garden and Long Pool

Added in 1924, the Long Garden and Long Pool further extend the East Terrace and the expanse of a sculpted landscape. The pool is narrower and deeper at the far end, creating the illusion that it is longer than its actual length of seventy-four feet.

The Long Pool was filled with lilies and grasses. The Long Garden created a natural hallway effect, drawing the eye to the building at the far end, the Bait Box. Boxwood and hemlocks originally framed the colorful plantings that are re-created in the same space today.



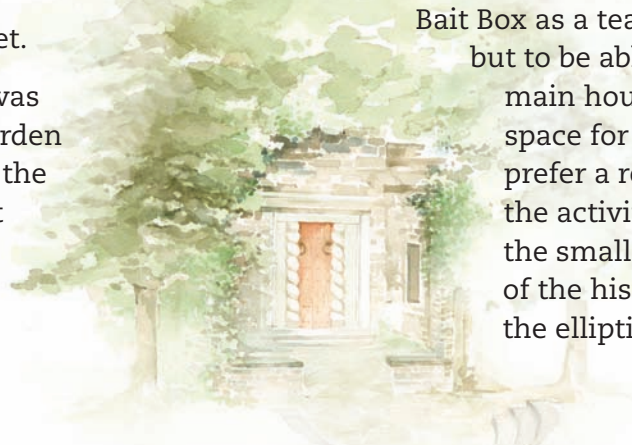
#### 6: Amphitheatre

The long, grassy slope to the east ends at a stage used by Gifford and Cornelia to entertain the community with music, animal acts and popular ice cream socials. On September 24, 1963, President John F. Kennedy dedicated Grey Towers before a crowd estimated at 10,000 in the Amphitheatre.

#### 7: The Bait Box

The Bait Box, also designed by Chester Aldrich, was constructed first as a playhouse for Gifford and Cornelia's only child, Gifford Bryce Pinchot, so he could entertain his friends and escape from the steady stream of guests at the mansion. It is named in line with the family's love of fishing. A blacksmith forge installed beneath the building provided him an opportunity to hone his iron-working skills; you see several pieces in and around the home today. Later Cornelia used the

Bait Box as a tea room, again to be in residence but to be able to escape the activity of the main house. Today it serves as meeting space for conservation groups who prefer a retreat-like setting away from the activity of the mansion. Step into the small courtyard to enjoy the view of the historic sweet cherry tree through the elliptical opening in the stone wall.

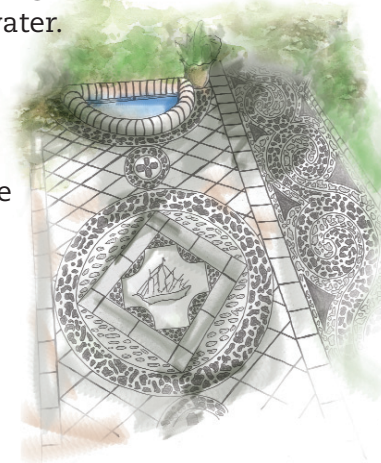


#### 8: The Finger Bowl

The most popular feature in the Grey Towers landscape, the Finger Bowl served as the Pinchots' outdoor dining room. Added in 1934, the unique water-filled table was the site of many lively discussions about politics, social issues and conservation efforts. The food was floated on the water in wooden bowls and on balsa rafts. The opening in the wisteria-covered pergola permitted moonlight to radiate across the water.

#### 9: Marble Court

Connecting the mansion to the outdoor dining room is the Marble Court. Originally paved with marble, the granite wave design and stone etching of "The Mary Pinchot," Gifford's 148' 3-masted schooner, evoke memories of the family's 9-month voyage to the South Seas. Originally planted with mountain laurel, the courtyard was a natural hallway that lead to the next "room," the Finger Bowl.



#### 10: The Swimming Pool Terrace

The large hydrangea-covered stone wall and grape arbor once housed the family swimming pool, one of the first additions to Cornelia's landscape. Water was supplied by the nearby Sawkill Creek and the terrace was planted with an extensive variety of flowers to soften the stonework. Today the tented area is used for outdoor public programs and meeting and conservation education space.

