

FACT SHEET



FURNACE TOWN

Living Heritage Museum

PLANTS AT FURNACE TOWN 1800-1850

Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum, prior to 1800, was an area of native forest and swamp. When over five thousand acres were purchased for the development of the Maryland Iron Company's iron manufacturing interests, most of these acres were clear-cut for timber and for fuel (charcoal) for the furnace.

Between 1800 and 1870 the land was basically clear, although residents of Furnace Town had garden plots and there were several farms in the area. Between 1870 and 1962, the area was utilized by timber concerns with loblolly pine becoming the dominant tree.

With the acquisition of the land (now within the snow fence) by the Worcester County Historical Society in 1962, work began to selectively clear the grounds in to order better display the Nassawango Iron Furnace. Loblolly pine, pond pine, scrub or spruce pine, Virginia Pine, oak and mulberry were left to protect the understory dogwoods. Specimen hawthorn and chestnut were planted. Privet, viburnum, azalea, acuba and boxwoods were used as foundation plantings as buildings were moved onto the site. Narcissus, creeping phlox, iris and money plant were planted to beautify the grounds.

Beginning in 1986 there was a shift in the focus and purpose of plants utilized at Furnace Town. In order to more effectively interpret 19th century life, it was decided to develop 19th century Kitchen and Perennial gardens. In addition, it was decided to use plants appropriate to the early 19th century as living fence/screen on several areas of the property. Selective clearing of the trees on the grounds is done to remove diseased and dying trees to protect the health and safety of the remaining trees and of our visitors.

Currently, only plants which could have been grown on the site during its years of operation are selected, based on information in Ann Leighton's *American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century*. The purpose of landscaping at Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum is to provide yet another educational experience for its visitors while meeting the needs of the site.

Among the plants which you might encounter on a visit to Furnace Town in the Kitchen and Perennial Gardens are (please note that common names are used and that some perennials are also herbs and vice versa):

VEGETABLES: pole beans, peas, red potatoes, carrots, beets, onions, cabbage, parsnips, leaf lettuces, cucumbers, tomatoes, pumpkins, bush beans, squash, corn, peppers, walking onions, melons, spinach, cotton, peanuts, Jerusalem artichoke, okra and broom corn.



HERBS: basil, dill, parsley, garlic, Dittany of Crete, bee balm, fennel, mints, rosemary, sage, thymes, chives, tansy, lavender, chamomile, rue, lemon balm, pennyroyal and marjoram.



PERENNIALS/ANNUALS/BIENNIALS: nasturtium, Job's tears, basket of gold, pot marigold, artemisia, dianthus, rose, hibiscus, violet, Johnny-Jump-Up, columbine, sedums, hydrangea, liriopse, bleeding heart, daylily, sunflower, lily of the valley, larkspur, veronica, lupine, four o'clock, foxglove, yarrow, hollyhock, zinnia, prickly pear cactus, campanula, ragged robin, gooseberry, grape, blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, Brown Turkey fig, damson plum, Albemarle Pippin apple, Indian Blood peach and coneflower.



BULBS: narcissus, oxalis, assorted heritage jonquils, tulips, and grape hyacinth.

PLANTS USED AS LIVING FENCE AND SCREENING PURPOSES INCLUDE: privet, rose of Sharon, flowering crabapple, sweet shrub, acuba, boxwood, viburnum, forsythia, snowball, English ivy, butterfly bush, orange shrub, catalpa, cactus, azalea, daylily and iris.