

The Growth of Gardens

Gardens at Krislund were not developed extensively during the first 30-40 years of the camp. Most of the energy was directed to building lodging, dining facilities, the swimming pool, the chapel and other necessary buildings such as the craft building and storage sheds. The first big garden at Krislund came into being when the current office building was donated by Croda Industries. With a wide gravel path established to reach the building, gardens were developed on either side of the path. They were built and maintained by volunteers with plants being donated from persons who loved the camp.



Gardens around various signs developed in much the same way with volunteers bringing flowers from their own gardens and encouraging others to donate. For example, the original camp sign was landscaped with shrubs that eventually grew to the point of almost obscuring the sign. In addition, the sign was placed such that it was difficult to see coming down the road. It was decided to move the sign and place flowers around its base, making it more visible from both directions of the camp road. Similar gardens were placed around signs throughout the camp.



The gardens continued to be created. The garden elements at the Fellowship lodge came from primarily two sources. Keven Lloyd, from the State College Presbyterian Church who spear-headed the development of the project, made contact with the Rockview Prison forestry/nursery program and was able to purchase the holly bushes, and other plants while visitors from Ohio came with a van load of flowers from their gardens and help volunteers plant the rest of the garden.



Gardens continued to proliferate. Another big garden was added by the cabins and when the flag poles were established by the office, another garden was added. Gardens were a nice addition to camp but came with one difficulty. Often the only care from the gardens came from the one or two weekly volunteers who were occasionally helped by the alumni work weeks, Spring work days, various school and church work groups.



Tackling the Gardens

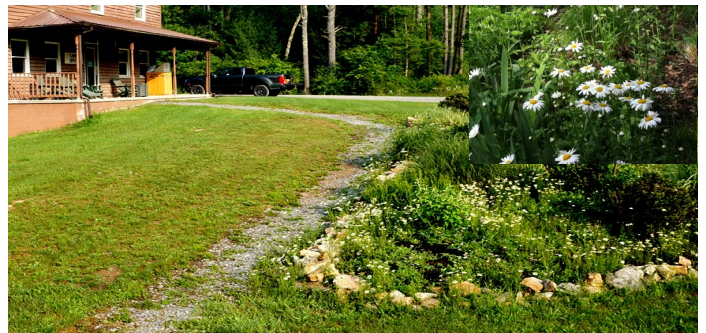
Keeping the gardens looking like someone loved them became a daunting task and remained that way until a few years ago when several women joined the Thursday volunteers. With many hands giving weekly attention to weeding, mulching, weedwacking, and planting of additional flowers, the gardens began to improve. At the peak of the garden season, there were as many as 8 locations throughout the camp where flowers and their attendant borders needed regular attention.

The group went to work tearing out some beds and moving flowers to other locations. Over time, the flower beds at Krislund became manageable and the result is evident in trim beds, each showing the loving care that they are given.

During the summer of Covid, however, when few people were available, the flowers beds suffered considerable hardship. When the volunteers returned, they realized that even with regular weekly attention, the flower beds were more than could be handled in the length of time the volunteers had available. So with some regret, they reviewed each location, discussed some solutions with Josh Boyd, the camp director, and determined that some beds needed to be eliminated.

One of the beds that was eliminated was the one by the cabins. Now that the grass has grown to cover the circular area, new plans are being developed to make that area attractive. Stay tuned.

The other main flower bed that always required many hours of care was the area in front of the office. The group cut the garden in half and at this time of year, the remaining garden is covered in daisies.



The Current Crew

Nowadays, the gardens are under control and get consistent loving care. Recent visitors to the Fellowship Lodge wrote to tell us how nice the gardens are looking. While the natural surroundings; the woods, the creek, and the rolling hills provide campers and retreat guests with places to encounter God, the areas around the buildings at camp demonstrate that Krislund is much loved and cared for. Those current volunteers who, in addition to helping with maintenance, cleaning, sorting bottle caps and cooking, garden each week include those pictured below.



(left to right) Peg McNitt, Judy Killam, Jane Butler, Sharon Manno, Tammy Caldwell, Polly Chatterton, Linda Vance and Kate Sillman