

History of the Gardeners of Greater Cleveland

Four business men active in Cleveland founded the Club on November 2, 1932 as the Business Men's Garden Club of Cleveland. By the end of its first year it had 59 members and already had an active program of lectures and community service. In August 1934 it joined the Garden Clubs of America.

Its first service project was to encourage planting of trees in the tree lawn along Euclid Avenue, Cleveland's main street. This commitment to serve the community has been a staple of the Club's existence. Projects have ranged from developing gardens at the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Blossom Music Center in earlier years to its 2007-2008 Tranquility Garden at the Women's Transitional Housing facility and a similar garden at Joseph's Home for disadvantaged men in 2008-2009. It has also provided docents and volunteers at horticulture related shows and activities at institutions such as the Cleveland Botanical Garden, the City's greenhouse and Settler's Landing.

When the Cleveland public schools opened the first horticultural program in the country, Club members were active participants as they were also part of the formation of Cleveland's Washington Park Horticultural Center. The Club has long presented exhibitions and conducted flower and plant sales at the Cleveland Botanical Garden, the City's Rockefeller Greenhouse, the various Home and Garden shows and its own events. At the 2009 Cleveland Home and Garden Show it was joined by the Akron and Youngstown Clubs in manning a service booth. It is an Affiliated Club of the Botanical Garden which association over many years has been of great value to both institutions.

In 2003 the Club initiated a student Internship Program, offering financial help to local High School students interested in pursuing a horticulture-related career. One or two students each year have been helped achieve their educational goals.

In 2007 the Club changed its name to Gardeners of America of Greater Cleveland to reflect the fact that there have been women Members and Directors of the Club for many years. The Club celebrated its 75th Anniversary and diversified membership with a celebration at the Cleveland Botanical Garden attended by 90 guests including officers of the Region and National organizations.

The Club currently has a wide membership that reflects the community and its gardeners. It holds dinner meetings monthly from September through May with additional events and activities of interest to the members, always welcoming new members and friends. The Club's award winning newsletter, The Spade newsletter, is published ten times a year and is available by e-mail to members and friends.