



1 + 3. RAIN GARDENS

Rain gardens are designed to help capture, channel, divert, and clean runoff water. The first Hermitage rain garden was built in 2011, the second in 2017. Rain gardens are planted with native plants and are designed to echo nature. These gardens were made possible by the Garden Club of Norfolk and the Harborfront Garden Club.

2. WETLANDS RESTORATION

In 2006 the Hermitage created the first Living Shoreline including over 6,000 native marsh grasses on the east side of the property. This project assists in controlling erosion and has effectively created a safe and clean habitat for many species. In May of 2011 and 2015, the Hermitage restored another 12,000 square feet on the west side of the property. This project involved the planting of native *Spartina alterniflora* and the use of coconut fiber coir logs to hold sand and imitate a natural shoreline.

3. MILLSTONE COURTYARD

Florence Sloane began her extensive millstone collection in 1931. These centuries-old pieces of stone once served as tools to grind grain into flour. The first 29 millstones collected reside

in the southeast end of the gardens. Another 47 millstones are arranged in a compass-like pattern at the west entrance of the Hermitage, fittingly named the Millstone Courtyard. Mrs. Sloane's endeavor to collect these industrial objects as things of beauty pays homage to the millstone makers: hardworking tradesmen turned accidental artists.

4. GROTTO

An archway to the northeast corner of the back lawn leads to the Walled Garden, the Children's Garden, and the Grotto. This beautiful and unique Italian fountain was purchased by Mrs. Sloane in 1920. A large live oak provides cool shade. Guests can relax on the bench built into the brick wall, and enjoy the expansive view of the gardens, house, and river.

5. EAST GARDEN

The original design of the East Garden was symmetrical, containing 25 varieties of hybrid tea roses and a unique gate. Today the design has a new circular shape that contains several heirloom and native plants and a recreation of the original gate by artist Patrick Dougherty. Overlooking the Lafayette River, its slated patios and cobblestone walkways are surrounded by brick walls and wrought iron fences.

6. OYSTER REEF BALLS

Oysters are very important to the filtration of our waters; a single oyster can clean up to 50 gallons of water per day. In 2010 and 2012 the Chesapeake Bay Foundation installed a total of 75 oyster reef balls (hollow, concrete balls) on the east and south side of the property on the Lafayette River. These reef balls provide a place for oysters to attach and grow, improving water conditions and enhancing oyster population.

7. ROSE GARDEN

Built in 2001, the Rose Garden sits in front of the museum and contains both modern and heirloom varieties. These heirloom roses (such as Red Radiance, White Killarney, and Ophelia) are the same varieties that Mrs. Sloane planted in her own rose garden during the 1920s, '30s, and '40s. A stone pathway winds around a small fountain surrounded by Knock Out roses and leads to a small pergola that hangs over Carolina jasmine and Lady Banks roses.

8. BOARDWALK

The boardwalk was completed along with the Wetlands Restoration Project in 2008 and stretches across the tidal marsh area on the east side of the property. Guests can stroll

along the boardwalk, where educational markers outline the importance that wetlands provide in sustaining a healthy, thriving ecosystem. The 180-foot boardwalk can be accessed from a path off the main drive or through entrances in the East Garden.

9. WATER TOWER + SUNKEN GARDEN

When visiting the Hermitage, guests are welcomed by the Sloanes' former Water Tower. The Sloanes constructed the private tower in 1908 because the property was outside the city service area. By 1922, the Water Tower was enclosed and transformed to house the Woodcarver's Shop. Adjacent to this unique structure is the Sunken Garden that was restored in 2012 using Mrs. Sloane's original drawings.