



Midway Village Heritage Gardens provide a glimpse of the Golden Age of Horticulture by incorporating 19th century garden designs, heirloom flowers, collectable exotic plants, native flora and life sustaining vegetable varieties.

The patterns, colors and shapes are not just the background on the scene, but indeed an important aspect of the cultural history of northern Illinois from 1890-1910.

Check [midwayvillage.com](http://midwayvillage.com) for details before your visit!



Midway Village Museum  
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*Rockford's*  
HISTORY MUSEUM



Katie Townsend, our Heritage Gardens Manager, brings over 35 years of expertise as a naturalist, and leads a team of 25 dedicated garden volunteers.

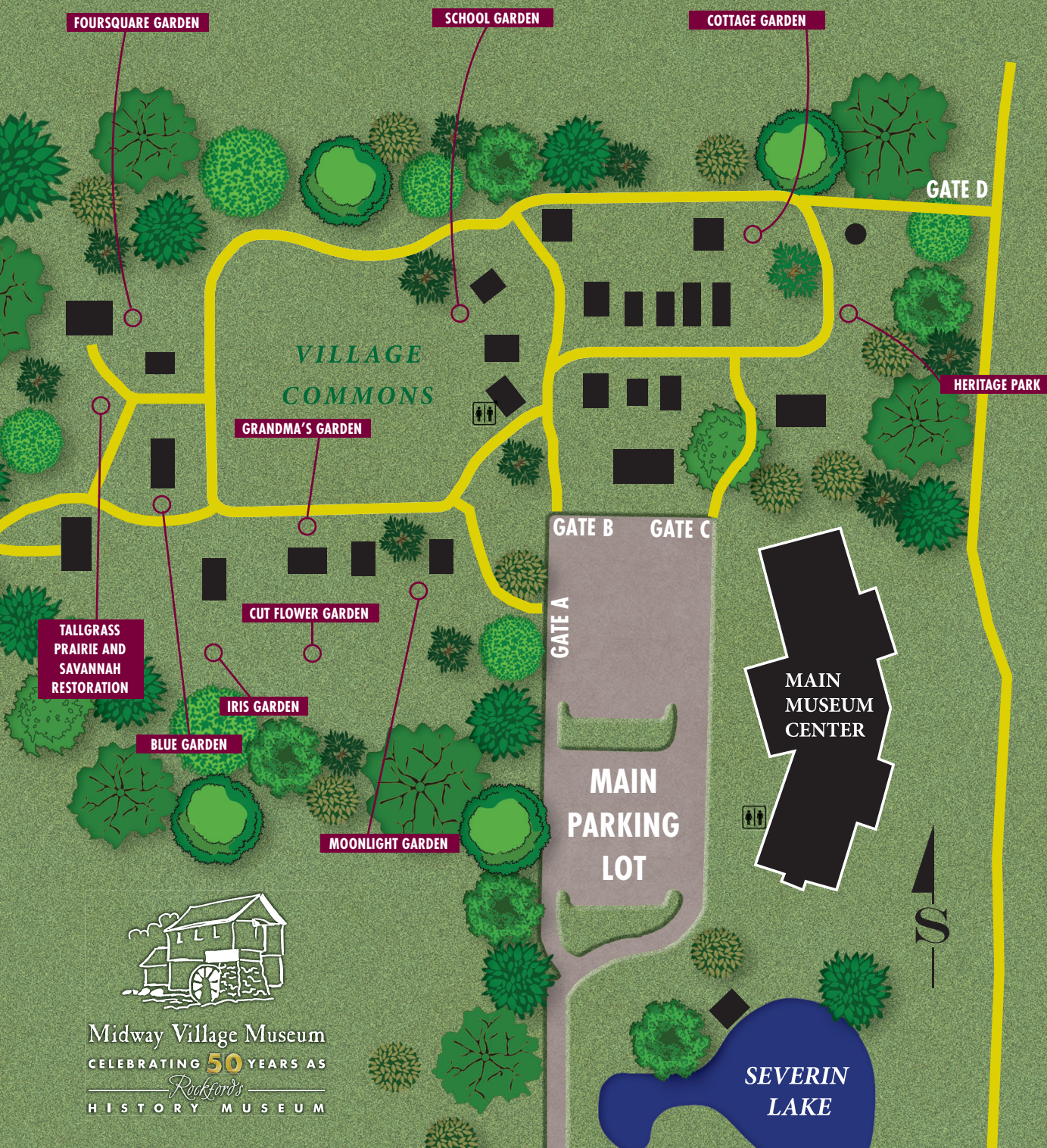


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*As you begin your Heritage Garden tour by entering from Gate C, you will experience the gardens in the order below.*

**Heritage Park** is accented by five picturesque gardens typical of a public park in the late 19th century. Two narrow and curved ribbon beds, two circular beds, and a gazebo surrounded by gardens are filled with Victorian-era plants, including annuals and blooming shrubs. The sub-tropical circle by the Print Shop office stands out with castor bean plants towering over ten feet tall.

The **Cottage Garden** adjacent to Heritage Park is an English garden design with charm that stems from its relaxed, unkempt nature and abundance of color, heights, and scents. Inside the hub of the brick walkway stands a period sundial which was a typical garden accessory.

The **School Garden** was a concept associated with O.J. Kern (superintendent of Winnebago County Schools in 1898) and his progressive desire that every school yard allow for the study of agriculture and botany. Historically the gardens were segregated with the Farmer Boys Experiment Club focusing on growing cash crops and Girls Home Culture Club specializing in flowers and herbal plants.

**Four Square Garden:** The seeds planted in the "Kitchen Garden" are Heirloom varieties typical of Turn of the Century. This Americana style is located near the house for daily access to fresh produce. Edible roots and potatoes are included in the plantings to be stored and used in winter meals.

Historic Homes: Pepper, Ralston, and Marsh houses are situated on the northeast corner of the village. These residences reflect very different garden preferences and designs, and were sometimes an indicator of economic status.

The **Blue Garden** is a challenge as only a few true-blue flowering perennials exist, as well as choosing which shades of yellow and white are suitable accent plants. These prized plantings, located on the north yard of Pepper House, reflect the influence of women such as Gertrude Jekyll, artist and landscape designer.

Ralston House is a brown home with accent shades and circle gardens that reflect a formal taste, and an expensive assortment of period irises in the **Iris Garden**. This extensive collection is recognized by the Historic Iris Preservation Society.

Situated next door, the modest Marsh House reflects old-world simplicity. This is mirrored in **Grandma's Garden**, which has a repetition of plants accented by lilies, hollyhocks, and colorful dahlias for punctuation. The **Cut Flower Garden** is composed of plants specifically grown for harvesting fresh flowers for arrangements and bouquets.

**Moonlight Garden:** This border garden with a grass strip promenade is best enjoyed in the late afternoon or evening. Aromatic plants with white flowers and silver foliage that reflect the light of the moon are the main attraction.



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