



Before



The Entire project included:

- Removal of neglected and overgrown plantings
- Design and installation of architecturally appropriate plantings
- Design and installation of garden lighting
- Design and installation of an irrigation system
- Estimated construction cost: \$25,000

**Pitcairn Estate
Bryn Athyn, PA**

1995 Bucks County Designer
Showhouse Main Terrace Garden

After

In 1995, KMS Principal, Carl Kelemen was invited to participate in this designer showhouse, which kicked off a fund raising campaign to restore Cairnwood, the original Bryn Athyn home and estate of John Pitcairn (founder of Pittsburgh Plate Glass) as a conference center. Carl was selected to design the 20 foot wide, 100 foot long “main terrace garden”, which is located off the main terrace and is accessed through large French doors from the Grand Ballroom.



Originally designed by Fredrick Law Olmsted’s firm, Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot, he felt that the French eclectic style mansion demanded a formal back terrace.

The harlequin pattern of grass and white clamshells leads the eye both toward the home and out toward the famous Bryn Athyn Cathedral (off the photo to the left), which lies across a great expanse of lawn. It also tricks the viewer into ignoring the odd proportions of the garden and makes it look larger than it is, while providing a dramatic view from the “Gentleman’s bedroom” (view in photo above) on the second floor.

Special problems/challenges: The house was open to the public from mid-September to mid-October, limiting dramatically the selection and availability of plant materials appropriate to the setting. The design had to look permanent, but be temporary, since the Designer Showhouse contract called for removal of the improvements at the end of the exhibition.

1996 AIA Honor Award winner for Landscape Design

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