

## New arrangements for a historic garden

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One of the garden's original stone pathways leads through the back garden, past one of Margy Samuelson's bouquets, to the back door of the 1930s Tudor home. (Mike Siegel/The Seattle Times)

**Leschi-area couple honors the origins of a 1930s setting while adding textural foliage plants and flowering shrubs for bouquets.**

By [Valerie Easton](#)

*Special to The Seattle Times*

OLD SEATTLE is alive and blooming in Scott and Margy Samuelson's Leschi-area garden. They are only the second owners of their 1930s-era home, and even the wallpaper and light fixtures are original to the gracious brick Tudor overlooking Lake Washington.

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A rusty water pump is one of the many details that emphasize the age of the... (Mike Siegel/The Seattle Times)

Outside, much of the old garden remains intact, from the spreading deciduous magnolia that dominates the backyard to the handsome stone walkways and imposing outdoor fireplace. The original owner of the house was a serious gardener who left behind not only her kids' playhouse (now a garden shed) but also the mature hydrangeas, camellias, cotoneaster and rhododendrons that form the bones of the garden. The Samuelsons even added in a little more local history with a fragment of architectural arch salvaged from Seattle's old Fox Music Hall Theatre.

The property runs from the street in front to the street behind, with the entry leading in through the back garden gate. The view of the lake, the I-90 bridge, Christmas ships and hydroplanes is out front, and it's here the couple made the most changes to the garden: They fenced in an area for their two Scotties to play and added a new river-rock aggregate terrace and steps, garnished with pots holding dark-leafed, hot-pink-flowering loropetalum. But when the Samuelsons want to sit outdoors in the summer, they forego the view for the back garden, where the vast magnolia casts dappled shade and the old brick terrace and river-rock fireplace hold pride of place.





Scott and Margy Samuelson with River Tay, one of their Scotties, in front of an old playhouse, now a toolshed, brightened with pots holding fuchsias and other annual flowers. (Mike Siegel/The Seattle Times)

Margy, the gardener in the family, has kept the place's old plantings and infrastructure pretty much intact. As a florist who started Toppers at the Four Seasons hotel in Seattle many years ago, she appreciates the mature magnolia and viburnum foliage that came with the house. Her style, then and now, is naturalistic, influenced by English gardens, with an emphasis on texture. Now Margy does flower arranging for weddings, and for her own enjoyment. And since she and Scott bought the property 16 years ago, she's been adding more textural foliage plants and flowering shrubs to cut for bouquets and more bouquets.



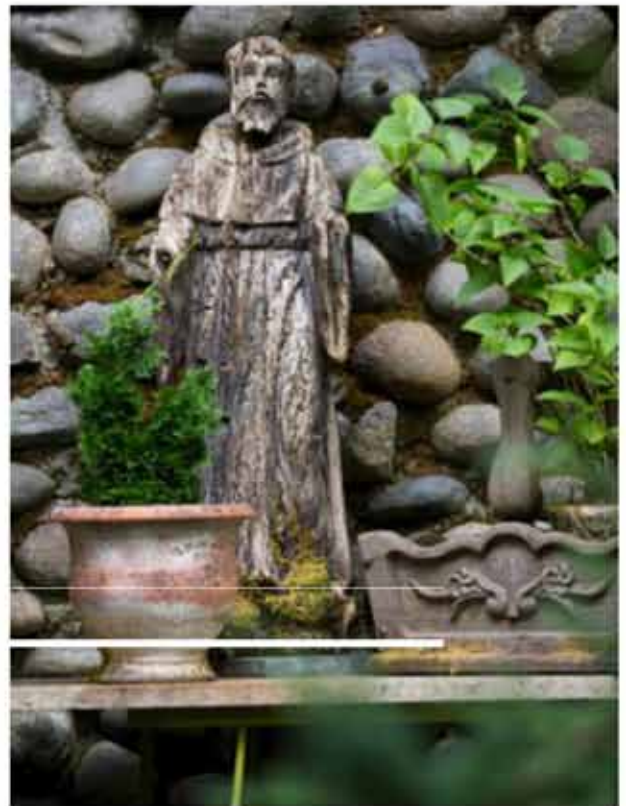


The Samuelsons' garden in the Leschi area looks out to Lake Washington. A new river-rock aggregate terrace and steps are among the few changes made to the couple's 1930s-vintage garden. (Mike Siegel/The Seattle Times)

Yet all the mossy river rocks, the old stones underfoot and the canopy of mature shrubs and trees make you feel like you've stepped back in time when you walk through the Samuelsons' garden gate. "I feel Charlotte's (the original gardener) spirit here in the garden," says Margy. "She left me great soil, good garden bones and hardly any slugs."

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*Mike Siegel is a Seattle Times staff photographer.*



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