

My (not so) Secret Garden

I was 5 years old when my family moved to Athens. Before we had lived in Galloway, Ohio, so I did not get to see my grandparents often. Once we moved, I spent almost every weekend in the summer with my great grandmother Marilyn in her garden. My grandmother loves a full garden of flowers. She especially loves sunflowers; she even makes snacks with their seeds. I loved going to her house on the weekends. We spent hours baking and gardening. Because she grew up in the 1930's, she thought that every little girl should learn proper housework and baking.

My most favorite memory was when she gave me a neon green spade, hand-rake and matching watering can to use. That was the beginning of summer after 5th grade. With my new tools in hand, I really wanted to grow my own little patch of sunflowers to surprise my great grandmother. I tried to be sneaky and planted a handful of sunflower seeds closer to the woods. While I took excellent care of the plants on the weekends, no flowers sprouted. I was so disappointed and felt badly for stealing some seeds that did not flower.

When I went to apologize and tell my great-grandmother what had happened, she told me that she knew I had been trying to grow a secret patch of sunflowers. She then told me that if I wanted my plants to grow I had to take care of them more than just on the weekends. She reminded me that plants are living things just like people, who need love and care around the clock. She was so excited that I was into gardening she started an aloe plant off her bigger aloe plant for me to take home and care for on my own.

Currently, I still have a part of that aloe plant growing in my apartment and I frequently use it for sunburn. My mother and I mostly plant the garden now since my great grandmother is 87 years old and my great-grandfather, Bernie, is 90 years old. While the garden has shrunk in size, it is still packed full of color and sunflowers, especially around the edges towards the woods.