

Skidmore College Memorial Garden

*“The garden provides
an intimate setting for
individuals and groups
wishing to remember
deceased classmates,
faculty, and friends of
the College”*

Florence Andresen '57



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**FOR INFORMATION ON
MAKING A GIFT TO THE
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SKIDMORE
C O L L E G E

A History of the Memorial Garden

When E. Clarence Jones installed an elaborate circular garden behind his North Broadway, Saratoga Springs estate in 1918, he couldn't have imagined that some 90 years later it would become a place memorializing generations of Skidmore alumni and friends. After passing through several owners, Skidmore College acquired the Jones's Broadview Lodge in 1967—now known as the Surrey Williamson Inn. The property's original *East View* garden has since been restored and has become the College's Memorial Garden.

The project originated in 2002 when Florence Andresen '57, Barbara Mansfield Saul '57, Elizabeth Hartz Hewitt '57, and Marge O'Meara Storrs '57 decided to restore the long-neglected garden to hold a private ceremony for deceased classmates during their forty-fifth reunion.

The 6,000-square-foot garden is divided into four quadrants boarded by engraved bricks beginning with Skidmore's founding

in 1903 and continuing through the most recent graduating class year.

Ceramic vases filled with lush annuals depict the cycle-of-life and are the work of ceramists Jill Fishon-Kovachik '81 and Skidmore faculty artist Leslie Ferst '76.

Bhumi Devi

The centerpiece of the garden, dedicated in October 2004, is a ceramic sculpture of Bhumi Devi by artist Barbara Stroock Kaufman '40.

In India, the land of Gods and Goddesses, the tradition of worshiping our planet as *Bhumi Devi* or the Earth Goddess is as old as folklore. In the Hindu scripture, the mother and the motherland are greater than the heaven. Plants, as food, sustain us by nourishing the nervous system, which is used as an instrument for realization of divine love. For two and a half million years, this cycle of light, life and love has become the essence of mother earth.¹



Barbara Stroock Kaufman works on a far larger scale than most clay sculptors. The coil-based segments of her largest creations are fired separately and then assembled. Her art is meant to be lived with and not just exhibited. Many of them function as

garden sculptures—even fountains—since they are designed to withstand the elements. Her distinctive style and far-ranging imagination have brought her great recognition.

From figurative to abstract, her commissions have appeared in gallery shows throughout New England and Canada.

Greatly influenced by the art of India, China, and especially Indonesia, Barbara spent five months in 1932 traveling around the world with her

parents, and this was her first exposure to Asian art.²

¹"Many Faces of the Earth Goddess"
<http://www.newconnexion.net/article/05-00/ManyFaces.html>

²Excerpted from **ZaZa**, by Stacey Gerrish '87
A personal testimonial to her grandmother