

A brief history of Southside gardens

The Bethlehem Gadfly community gardens, gardens, community, History, Bethlehem May 27, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on community gardens* 

Tip o' the hat to Mary Toulouse who kicked off this thread on **community gardens** by making a pitch for the City developing both short-term and longer term plans for the establishment of same.

Historically speaking, as this BAPL resource shows, there is more here than meets the current eye regarding gardens in South Bethlehem.

Bethlehem Area Public Library (Janine Santoro, Elizabeth Saraceno), "Digging into the Roots of South Side Gardening: Pre-World War I Immigrant Gardens and Today."

The history of gardens in Bethlehem includes:

personal gardens (pre-WWI)

Depression gardens (1930s)

Victory gardens (1940s)

Thrift gardens (WWII)

The demise of backyard gardening (1950s-1960s)

pocket gardens (today)

"Today, the Southside Garden Alliance and Penn State Master Gardeners have shared their skills at the South Side Branch of Bethlehem Area Public Library free-of-charge to provide gardening workshops of all kinds to South Side patrons, and anyone else who wants to learn more about gardening right at home to create their own 'backyard paradisos!'"

Ken Ranieri's "**Backyard Paradiso**" article in the "Southern Exposure" newsletter published by the South Bethlehem Historical Society and linked from the BAPL piece is delightful.