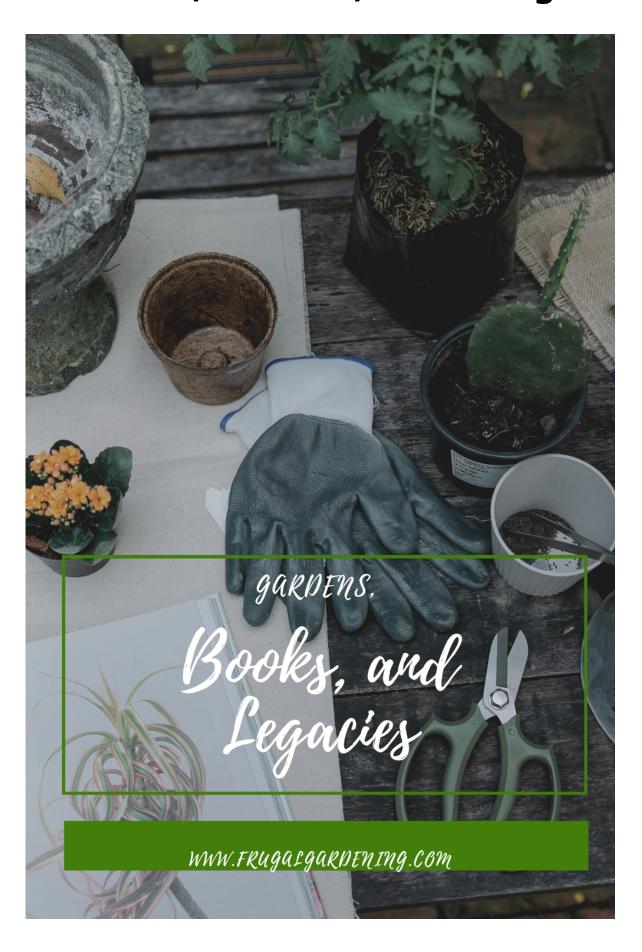
Gardens, Books, and Legacies

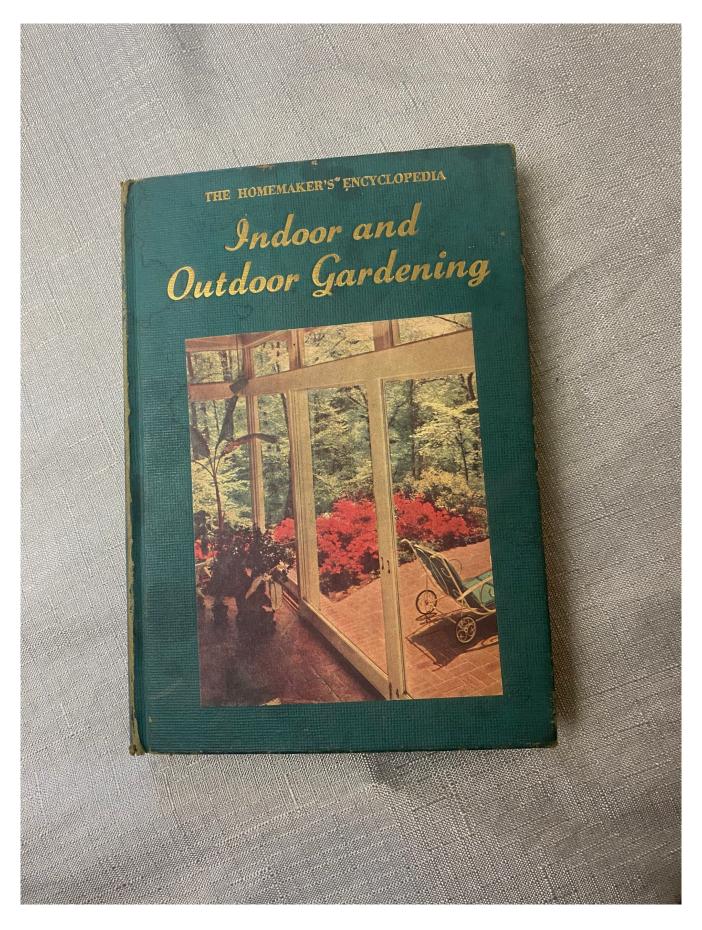


Gardening wasn't a hobby in my mother's family. Instead, it was essential to their lives. In the 1950s and 60s in rural Arkansas, the garden was their only source of fruits and vegetables. And when they wanted something different, they bartered their oversupply with their neighbors.

As the decades passed, my grandmother's life changed dramatically. In the 1990s, the rural farming community had a grocery store, but my grandmother used it sparingly. She loved buying things like snack cakes and out-of-season fruits, but her heart still lived in the growing and cooking of food she grew.

Gardens and Books

Before the internet, my grandmother was an adventurous gardener, so she had all kinds of magazines, pamphlets, and books around her home. And they called to my bibliophile soul, y'all.



I remember spending hours upon hours looking through the books with her. Sometimes, she would plan a garden, so we would make charts and draw out maps on graphing paper.

She taught me how to use the index and cross-reference between 2 sources to check facts.

Even more important than these skills, she taught me that garden work was not all weeding, feeding, and harvesting.

It is a place where we can provide for ourselves. Food, creativity, beauty, and community intersect in the garden, and she knew it.

Gardens and Legacies

My grandmother took a lot of pride in her garden.

When I was in high school, my grandmother grew a peach tree from the pit of a fruit she bought at the grocery store.

I remember seeing the seedling pop up, then she kept it in a pot and brought it inside that first winter. The day she planted it, she had never seemed so happy. And I remember seeing the first flower and tasting that first peach.

It was delicious, but it was so much more than that. It was the culmination of 4 years of meticulous care. Instead of keeping it to herself, she cut it up and served as many of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandkids as she could.

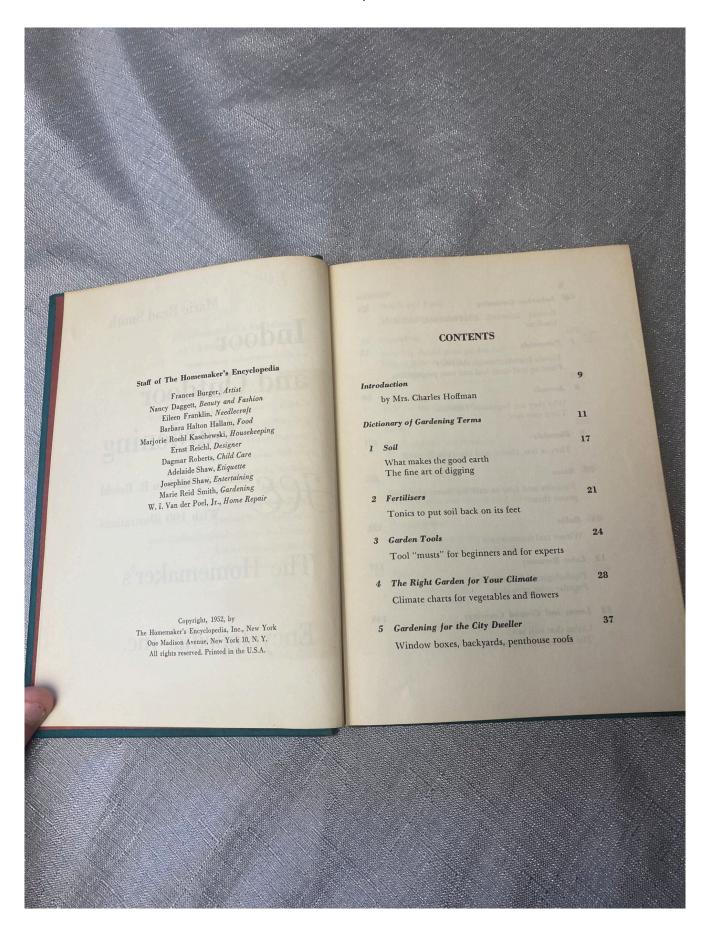
It wasn't about the peach anyway. It was about sharing in the loving family she cared for just as meticulously as that peach tree she nurtured.

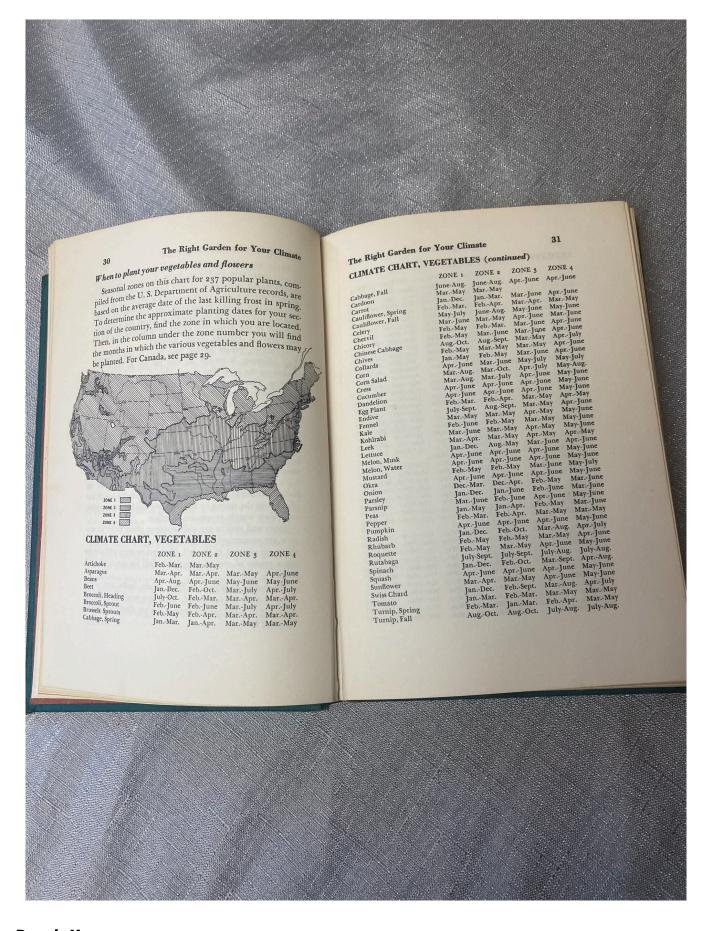
Conclusion

My grandmother has passed away, but the things she taught me while working in the garden, like patience, diligence, and compassion, live on. I am using my garden to teach these things to my children.

I still have some old gardening books that fed my passion for

reading and growing things. So I get them out and look through them now and then. I will share pictures of them below.





Read More:

- 5 Gardening Communities Where You Can Share Your Harvests
- 5 Affordable Indoor Plants That You Might Also Get for Free