



Gardening Profile

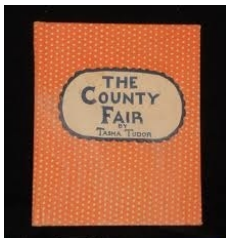
TASHA TUDOR *Pioneer, Artist and Author*

February, 2012
by Sally Pfeifer, MG

This past season, the name Tasha Tudor kept coming up. I gave gifts to people that had something to do with Tasha, people gave me gifts that related to Tasha, and even the conversation I had with my physiotherapist would be about Tasha. I even made a book with my granddaughter for Christmas about Tasha Tudor. I thought she would be noteworthy to mention for those who do not know about her.

Tasha Tudor was an illustrator and author of children's books, Christmas cards, Advent calendars, poetry and cookbooks. She was an avid gardener, seamstress, weaver, made marionettes, and practiced animal husbandry. She won many awards for her books. Tasha spent most of her childhood years in Redding, Connecticut. Her father was William Starling Burgess, a prominent yacht designer and an accomplished sailor. Her mother, Rosamond Tudor, was a well-known portrait artist.

Tasha was born in Boston in August 1915. Her parents lived in Marblehead, Massachusetts. Tasha's parents divorced when she was nine. Her mother moved to Greenwich Village in New York City. New York was no place for children, so Tasha was sent to Redding to live with family and friends. The road they lived on was later named Tudor Road.



In the country Tasha had a wonderful time and became extremely fond of nature -- loving animals, gardening and drawing. She was home-schooled by "Uncle Henry" and attended a boarding school for a brief time. At fifteen, Tasha was finished with formal school. She spent summers in Redding and winters in Bermuda. Tasha and her friends would give dance performances and plays. She also would sketch her surroundings using the animals and plants she was familiar with.

Every year they would attend the Danbury Fair. Her book, *The County Fair*, was inspired by their outings to Danbury.

She loved painting wild flowers. In her late teens she set out the task of painting all of Connecticut's wild flowers she could find. At the age of eighteen, Tasha wrote and illustrated a complete little almanac storybook which was never published.

In 1936, Tasha met the man she would marry. Thomas McCready was also from Redding. He

did his best to work at farming, which was very labor intensive. They had no running water, electricity, or refrigeration. Tasha had two children in Redding: Bethany and Seth.

She had always wanted to live in Vermont, but her husband said it would be too difficult. They set out to look for a home in New Hampshire and finally bought a house with 450 acres in Webster, New Hampshire. It was the royalties from her illustrated edition of *Mother Goose* that allowed them to purchase the farm. Tasha and her family lived in New Hampshire from 1945 to 1972. Tasha had two more children there: Tom and Efner.

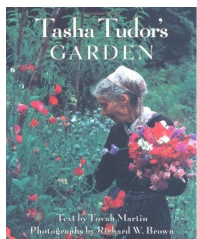
In the farmhouse, the kitchen had a large table which supported so many of Tasha's talents, including baking according to the season. Christmas produced baking of cookies, breads, Dundee cakes, candies, home-made candles, and so many other things that I don't have the space to list them. Tasha would be doing her drawing and sketching at that kitchen table. The house was arranged with fresh flowers in the warm months and dried grasses and seed pods in the winter. Her love of beauty was always present. Gardening started in January and February. Tasha came alive looking through the catalogs, and it was the flower section that she loved the best.

In 1971, Tasha sold the house in New Hampshire and bought a home in Vermont that had been her long-time vision. Her children had grown up and the home in New Hampshire had become too large. She loved her garden in New Hampshire, and transplanted many of her favorite plants to Vermont. The new house had many gardens which included vegetables, flowers and fruit trees.

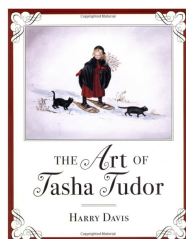
Many say that Tasha was from another time with her skills of illustration, cooking, sewing, weaving, gardening and taking care of animals. Corgi dogs were her favorite. Her books are full of drawings of flowers and scenes of cooking with children in all seasons. She had created over 100 books, many of Redding, Connecticut. Her children have continued her legacy. There is a web site that is worth a visit: www.tashatudorandfamily.com.

I could never explain all that she has created or accomplished, but I have been to the house on Tudor Road. At that time it still hadn't converted to modern conveniences. Do take a look at the website; it will transport you to an era you will enjoy.

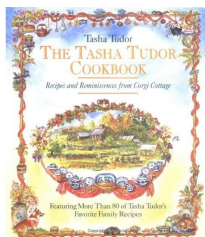
Editor's note: The following titles, and many more, are available at Amazon.com and tashatudorandfamily.com. Many of Tasha Tudor's books can also be found at the Mark Twain Library in Redding, Connecticut.



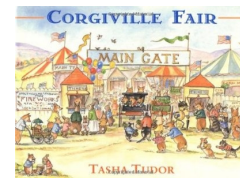
Tasha Tudor's Garden



The Art of Tasha Tudor



Tasha Tudor Cookbook



Corgiville Fair