

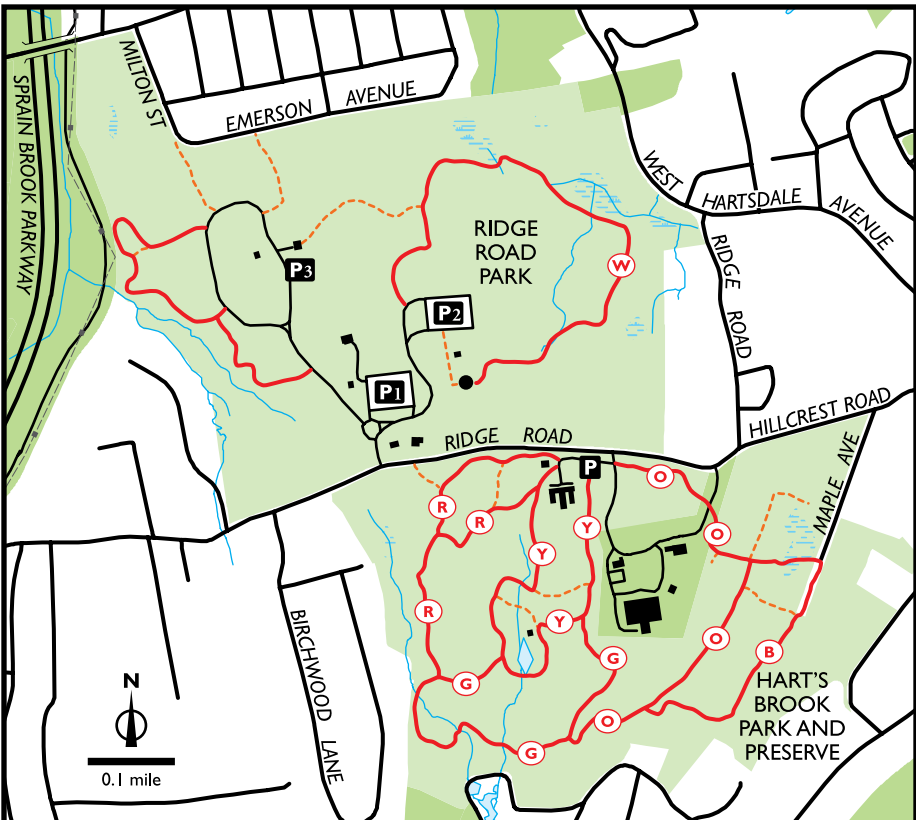
Hart's Brook Park and Preserve

Hartsdale • 3.2 miles, 124 acres



Stately woodlands, flowing streams, open fields, and flowering trees are a few of the many enticements to Hart's Brook Park and Preserve. The land was once the imposing estate of Henry Gaisman, an enterprising inventor, that included an elegant main house, a caretaker's house, a milking barn, a greenhouse, an ice-skating pond with warming hut, and a swimming pool with pool house. Mr. Gaisman acquired the property in 1931 and sold it to the Archdiocese of New York in 1957 with the proviso that he and his wife could remain on the property for as long as they lived. He died in 1974 at the age of 104 and his wife stayed there until 1995, when she moved. She died in 2010 in New York City.

The Archdiocese wanted to establish a convent for retired Sisters of Mercy and elderly nuns from other orders. In 1999, through a cooperative agreement, the Town of Greenburgh, Westchester County, and the New York Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation purchased 124 acres with the remaining property set aside for the convent named Marion Woods. The Town of Greenburgh manages the park.



The preserve is also notable for its role in the Revolution. In 1781, it was the bivouac of the French Army of General Rochambeau. To the west was Washington's Continental Army, with both poised for an assault on Manhattan. However, with word of a French fleet headed to Virginia, the Continentals and their French allies began their march south to the decisive battle at Yorktown.

T R A I L S

Stately tulip trees and geological features are along the woodland trails, many of which are gently graded and wide enough for walking two or three abreast. The rhododendrons, which line the yellow trail, are splendid in spring when in bloom and in winter when covered with snow. Five connector trails add 0.3 mile to the miles of trails in the park. Conditions permitting, the trails are ideal for cross-country skiing or snowshoeing.

Red Trail

Length: 0.6 mile Blaze: red

Paralleling Ridge Road and passing in front of the caretaker's house, the red trail heads uphill. It passes an unmarked woods road to the left leading to another section of the red trail. The one to the right leads 200 feet out a locked gate at Ridge Road. Exposed bedrock peeks up from the grass in the mowed path; at other times a larger slab is visible. After passing through a field, the red trail reenters the woods on a treadway with remnants of pavement. At a three-way intersection to the left, the red trail heads 0.1 mile back to the yellow trail near the greenhouse. The right branch leads into a field and descends through thick understory to end at a T junction with the green trail.

Yellow Trail

Length: 0.7 mile Blaze: yellow

Starting at the parking lot, the yellow trail heads across the lawn. Greenhouses and a demonstration garden are to the right. It crosses a short section of pavement and heads into the woods. After passing an unmarked trail to the right at 0.2 mile, it turns right at the Y junction with the green trail, and then it reaches a Y junction with another unmarked trail. The yellow trail goes around the pond, passing a stone warming-house and a short trail to the pond. At 0.3 mile, it crosses the

A MAN OF INVENTION

Henry Jacques Gaisman, a quiet philanthropist, was a prolific inventor with patents for inventions such as the safety razor, cutlery making machinery, a photographic captioning process, and a filter cigarette design. At the age of 13 he left school to go to work. He founded a safety razor company and in a patent dispute with the Gillette Company, negotiated for his company to be purchased by Gillette, where he became Gillette's company chairman.

He was single until 1952 when at the age of 82, after his close friend Cardinal Spellman suggested that he needed a wife, he married Catherine Vance, a nurse, who was 49 years his junior.

Mr. Gaisman, who was Jewish, made most donations anonymously and made little religious distinction in his philanthropy. In 1962, he donated money for a new building at Mount Sinai Hospital and in 1971 gave \$2.5 million to the Archdiocese of New York completing the purchase of property behind Saint Patrick's Cathedral.



PHIL HEIDELBERGER

Weathering: *A rock, smoothed by time and the elements, forms a pond islet.*

outlet of the pond and then passes the green trail to the left. Curving to the right, it passes the other ends of unmarked trails. The yellow trail reaches the driveway to the barn and ends at the parking lot.

Blue Trail

Length: 0.4 mile Blaze: blue

Beginning on a wide grassy strip near the north junction with the orange trail, the blue trail follows a sewer line. It reaches a T junction with a paved road leading to a barrier at Maple Avenue (no parking). The blue trail turns right to follow the paved road. After passing a fire hydrant, it turns right. Straight ahead, the mowed path is a shortcut to the orange trail. The blue trail jogs left up an embankment, graded to even off the slope. At 0.25 mile, it enters a wooded area. After a sharp right turn, it crosses a bridge, heads steeply uphill, and ends at the orange trail.

Green Trail

Length: 0.6 mile Blaze: green

Beginning near the southwest corner by the pond, the green trail reaches a Y junction where a branch of the red trail ends. The green trail turns left, heads downhill, and crosses a bridge. It goes uphill then downhill to cross a second bridge at 0.2 mile. It flattens out, crosses another stream on a causeway, and heads uphill. After passing the orange trail to the right at 0.4 mile, it curves left and continues uphill. At 0.5 mile, it makes a sharp left onto a narrow footpath. Going through dense forest, the green trail passes a rhododendron grove and ends at the yellow trail at 0.6 mile.

Orange Trail

Length: 0.6 mile Blaze: orange

Beginning at the green trail, the orange trail goes downhill on a woods road, turns, and follows a graded path. It goes left at a Y junction and passes a grove of white pines. The trail passes a mowed path leading to the blue trail. At 0.3 mile, it reaches a T junction with a sewer line, where, to the right, is the other end of the blue trail. At the top of the steepest grade in the park, the mowed grassy path to the left leads

to the convent. The trail heads up stone steps, immediately turns right, and passes the stone steps of the former mansion. It turns again to head uphill and reaches the park exit road at 0.4 mile. Turning right, the orange trail leaves the exit road and heads across the lawn toward the road to the parking lot, where it ends.

DRIVING: From the Sprain Brook Parkway, take Route 100B Exit. At the end of the ramp, head east. At West Hartsdale Avenue (Route 100A), turn right and continue about 3.0 miles to Ridge Road. Turn right and follow Ridge Road for 0.3 mile to the entrance to the preserve [41.020487N 73.808706W].

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: None available

For contact information, see Appendix, Greenburgh.

Ridge Road Park

Hartsdale • 2.0 miles, 236 acres



Where there's a will, there's a way to find a good place to walk nearby. If you live in Hartsdale, Ridge Road Park provides it. Sounds of picnickers and the smells of barbecuing in three picnic areas greet walkers during summer weekends. Off-season and early or late in the day are better times to take advantage of the less-crowded park roads and the small trail system. The gates at parking areas #2 and #3 are locked late in the day; unfortunately, the exact times are not posted.

The park property was acquired by the county in 1925. Later, in 1942, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) financed and built the stone picnic shelter. Relatively level unmarked trails traverse dense woods with large tulip trees, including a tree with a 15-foot circumference approximately 120 feet off the trail. Logs line the trails. On the west side, there is a 0.5-mile trail accessible from the road leading from the gate for picnic area #3. Two 0.1-mile access trails go to Emerson Avenue and Milton Street (no parking). A road walk around the picnic area is 0.5 mile.

White Trail

Length: 0.8 mile Blaze: white

Volunteers from the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference supervised days of service to refurbish and blaze the white trail. It begins at the entrance road to parking lot 2. Just after entering the woods, it turns right. At a T junction, the trail goes right and reaches the first of seven puncheons. At 0.4 mile, it crosses a bridge and then at 0.7 mile a boardwalk. When the trail leaves the woods, head towards the picnic pavilion and take the path to the parking lot.

DRIVING: From the Sprain Brook Parkway, take Route 100B Exit and at the end of the ramp head east. At West Hartsdale Avenue (Route 100A), turn right and continue about 3 miles to Ridge Road. Turn right and follow the signs to the park entrance to the right [41.021728N 73.812891W].

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: None available

For contact information, see Appendix, Westchester County Parks.