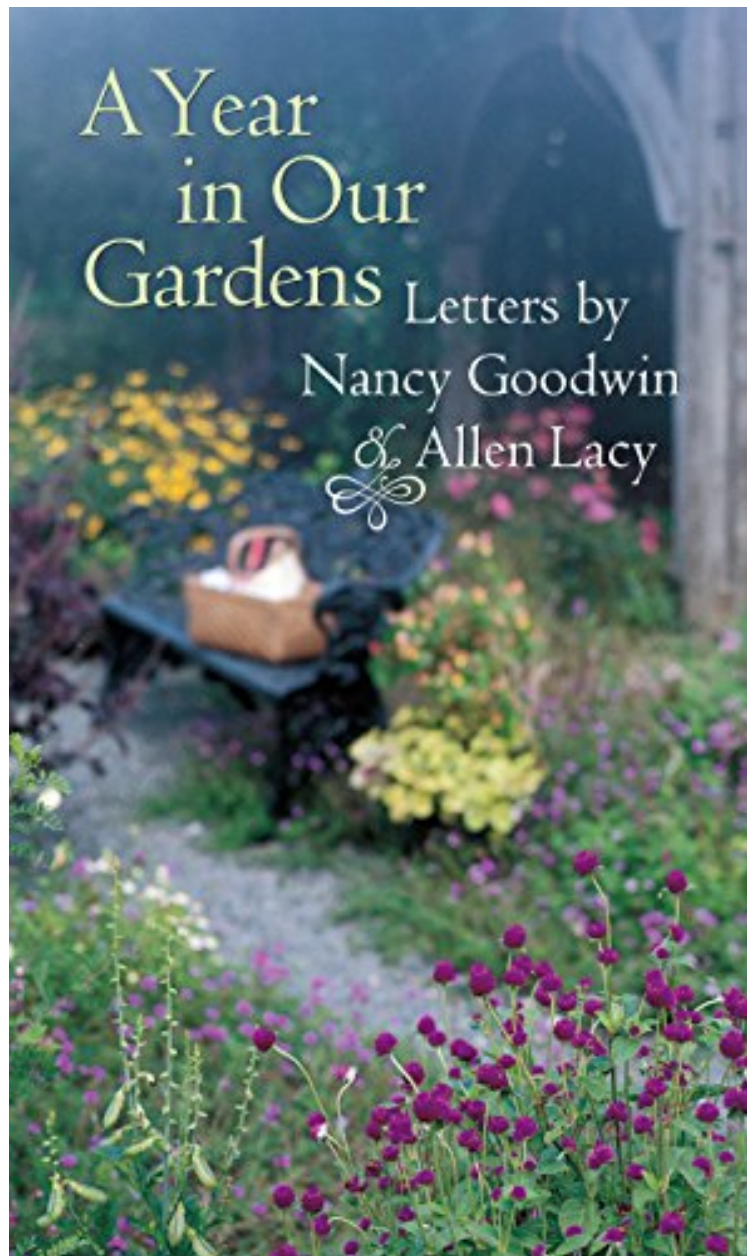


(Mobile pdf) A Year in Our Gardens: Letters by Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy

## A Year in Our Gardens: Letters by Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy

*Nancy Goodwin, Allen Lacy*

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**Nancy Goodwin, Allen Lacy : A Year in Our Gardens: Letters by Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Year in Our Gardens: Letters by Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A treasure!!By maggiemoonbeamThis book, written in the epistolary style, offers us a rare glimpse into the minds of both Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy. Their interaction, comparisons of one garden to another at nearly any time of the year, agonies over weather and ecstasies over serendipitous eruptions of beauty are a joy to read. It's a book to keep at your bedside long after you have finished it, to be able to pick it up and delight in a few minutes (or hours!) of excellent writing by acknowledged experts who are passionate about their subject. I know they'd never find the time, but I'd happily read about another year should they ever decide to do it again!9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Chatty exchange of letters....By Dianne FosterA YEAR IN OUR GARDENS by Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy is a chatty exchange of letters and faxes between two old friends, both of whom have many years of gardening experience to their credit. Ms Goodwin ran Montrose Nursery for many years and is very informed and informing about plants -- native, cultivated, imported, and home-grown. Dr. Lacy has written many books about gardening and garden design -- centered on his garden in New Jersey and other gardens further afield. My personal favorite of Lacy's books is THE GARDEN IN AUTUMN, although THE INVITING GARDEN is probably his best selling book. I wouldn't recommend A YEAR IN OUR GARDENS to the novice gardener since it has no colorful photographs and a plethora of Latin named flowers and plants. Even the intermediate gardener searching for tips might find THE INVITING GARDEN a better read. If you've been gardening awhile and like to read about green adventures from the comfort of your easy chair or need a good book for bedtime reading, you'll probably enjoy A YEAR IN OUR GARDENS. To me it's something of a cross between the books by Elizabeth Lawrence and Beverly Nichols. In fact, if Lawrence and Nichols had written to each other their conversations might have been a bit like the conversations of Goodwin and Lacey. Goodwin and Lacey both had an affiliation with Duke University as did Elizabeth Lawrence though neither Goodwin nor Lacey is a botanist like Lawrence. Lacey wrote garden columns for the Wall Street Journal and New York Times and until recently taught philosophy and horticulture at Richard Stockton College in New Jersey where he lives and gardens. Lawrence's father was Lacey's professor of English at Duke University, and Lawrence lives and gardens near Hillsborough NC. Both Goodwin and Lacey have gardens in growing zone 7. As they relate their experiences over the course of the year, it becomes obvious this counts for little. Lacey lives near the Atlantic, has sandy soil he must amend with humus, and experiences milder summers and colder winters. Goodwin lives in the NC piedmont, gardens in clay, and has hot-hot summers. Both have green houses that allow them to cultivate a variety of plants more suited to tropical climates. Lacey tends to grow many plants in pots on a large extended deck, while Goodwin has a much larger property with room for numerous shrubs and trees and a woodland garden. Lacey says he prefers summer months for gardening, and Goodwin says she prefers anything but summer. In addition to the exchange about plants, garden design and the various wildlife sightings, both correspondents share the ups and downs of daily living. Over the course of a year, Lacey undergoes major surgery and Goodwin's husband has eye surgery and her father dies. Both Goodwin and Lacey travel to various locations to give lectures and undergo interviews on television and radio. Martha Stewart drops by for a fifteen minute tour of Montrose, and Lacey goes to Disneyland. All in all this book is mildly entertaining, and a peek into the lives of two relatively well educated gardeners.

This engaging collection of letters follows the course of a year in the gardens of two passionate gardeners, Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy. They share a climate zone (7A), but their gardens differ enormously. Lacy gardens on a 100-by-155-foot plot of former farmland in southern New Jersey, on soil so sandy that he must water frequently if he is to garden at all. Goodwin gardens on rich clay loam at her historic piedmont North Carolina home--which comprises more than sixty acres of woodland, meadow, and established plantings--and she refuses to irrigate, because she believes in growing only those plants that are naturally adapted to the conditions of her land. Through their letters, Lacy and Goodwin provide a charming and revealing chronicle of their lives and the lives of their gardens. They exchange stories of their horticultural successes and failures; trade information about a great many plants; discuss their hopes, fears, and inspirations; and muse on the connections between gardening and music, family, and friendship.

From BooklistAny woman who buys a house because of the quality of its dirt is a true gardener. Any man who reads garden catalogs word for word, cover to cover, is equally enthusiastic about plants. Meet Goodwin and Lacy, two kindred spirits whose abiding friendship based on their mutual love of all things horticultural spawned this collection of letters spanning the year between the winters of 1998 and 1999. Gardeners are often more keenly aware of the natural world than most other folk. They can spot the lone hawk perched atop a towering oak tree and discern a tree frog's chirp above all other sounds. Goodwin and Lacy have this gift of observation, and their insights into the world around them make for fascinating reading as they explore subjects as diverse as mulch and Mozart. While they relate the changes in their gardens, they also reveal the changes in their lives, sharing their innermost feelings and experiences, as one does only with a very close friend. Carol HaggasCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved " An excellent gift book. . . . It's entertainingly distracting, and can be read in bits and pieces or in one go." -- AMERICAN GARDENER "The authors...drew me headlong into some very pleasurable reading....There is no limit to what thoughtful writers find revealed in minute events." -- BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN "This book is

one of the riches in an unusually rich season for literary gardening." -- NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW "[This book] presents intriguing possibilities for the gardener. . . . [and] can serve as a supplementary reference." -- Fine Gardening Readers seldom have a chance to peer as intimately into gardeners' intentions as we do in *A Year In Our Gardens*. . . . This book is one of the riches in an unusually rich season for literary gardening.--New York Times Book

Much of the charm and appeal of this exchange lies in how these differences of circumstance shape their respective point of view, and more so in the warm affection and respect each holds for the other.--Magnolia SummerLetter writing, because of the time required and the mental self-editing that time affords, is a different form of communication. Slow, yes. Superior, I'm convinced, especially after finishing *A Year in Our Gardens: Letters* by Nancy Goodwin Allen Lacy.--Raleigh News Observer A delightful little book. . . . So real are the voices as the two friends discuss their gardens--and life and living--that you'll struggle mightily to keep from joining in and talking about your garden and life, too.--Our State Everything about the physical book [is] stirring: its elegant shape, the frothy purple light in the dust jacket photograph, enthusiastic endorsements on the back panel. . . . Above all, it was the authors of this collection of letters . . . who drew me headlong into some very pleasurable reading. . . . There is no limit to what thoughtful writers find revealed in minute events in even the smallest of places.--Brooklyn Botanic Garden You visit a magnificent garden, and you say 'Oh, how splendid!' Or you read a garden article, and you say 'How perceptive. How finely crafted.' But unless you have made a magnificent garden or written about one perfectly (or done both) you'll be clueless about the effort and thought that lie behind what you so much admire. Here's your chance to know, for Nancy Goodwin has made a garden that has achieved the attention of the world, and Allen Lacy has written more thoughtfully about gardens than almost anyone living. Their quotidian epistolary chatter has been recorded in this volume of letters, which is vivid not only with garden experience, but with all the strands of life that inevitably feed into both making gardens and writing about them. Their conversations are full of revelation. Buy this book.--Joe Eck, coauthor of *Living Seasonally: The Kitchen Garden and the Table at North Hill* In this exchange of letters, two much admired exponents of gardening interweave their shared delight in plants with glimpses into their other worlds of family, books, music, and the rewards and tribulations, joys and sorrows of their day-to-day lives. A rich tapestry of both bright and somber colors.--Pamela Harper, author of *Time-Tested Plants: Thirty Years in a Four-Season Garden* An engaging addition to the horticultural canon. . . . Both Goodwin and Lacy are exceptionally perceptive writers. Their exchange is marked by an admirably restrained dignity that is not without sometimes whimsical observations. . . . These correspondents have produced a graceful, literate book with their graceful literate letters sent up and down the East Coast. . . . A splendid book.--Durham Herald-Sun Gardeners are often more keenly aware of the natural world than most other folk. . . . Goodwin and Lacy have this gift of observation, and their insights into the world around them make for fascinating reading as they explore subjects as diverse as mulch and Mozart. While they relate the changes in their garden, they also reveal the changes in their lives, sharing their innermost feelings and experiences, as one does only with a very close friend.--Booklist Touching, funny, and wonderfully written, *A Year in Our Gardens* is chock-full of personality and brimming with horticultural wisdom. I highly recommend it to every avid gardener.--Steve Bender, coauthor of *Passalong Plants* [These] letters are genuine. . . . I longed to jump into the conversation: Nancy, what's the recipe for your deer spray? Allen, how do I subscribe to your newsletter?. . . . An excellent gift book. . . . It's entertainingly distracting, and can be read in bits and pieces or in one go and Martha Blake-Adams's charming line drawings of scenes from both authors' gardens are additional delights.--American Gardener This exchange of letters between [the authors] is the story of their passionate dedication to gardening and to life. . . . The description of . . . unfamiliar plants presents intriguing possibilities for the gardener. Because of the wealth of plants listed in the index, the book can serve as a supplementary reference.--Fine Gardening