

# MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



## FY18 Annual Report

October 1, 2017—September 30, 2018





**Mission** Massachusetts Horticultural Society (Mass Hort) is dedicated to encouraging the science and practice of horticulture and to developing the public's enjoyment, appreciation, and understanding of plants and the environment. Mass Hort is the oldest formally organized horticultural society in America.

*We help people connect to the natural world through plants, gardens, and design.*

## Attendance and Membership

**The Gardens at Elm Bank** welcomed over **25,000** visitors for events, functions, and the gardens during the 2018 season. We also welcomed **173** reciprocal garden visitors.

**Seasonal garden visitation** revenue was **\$21,612**.

Admission was \$10 per adult, free for children under 12, and free admission for members — one of our membership benefits.

Memberships sold through the **Visitors Center** totaled **\$7,925**, up almost **19** percent over FY17.

**Membership** ended FY18 with **3,800** members and revenue of **\$275,984**. New supporter membership benefits included the AHS Reciprocal Directory and *The Garden Tourist* book by Jana Milbocker, both useful for planning garden trips.



## Development

In FY18 our development efforts raised **\$510,967**, including the Annual Fund, grants, and sponsorships. The Annual Fund raised **\$171,674**, nearly **26** percent over FY17, thanks to the support of more than **450** donors. Our June Garden Party invited our guests to a “A Night in Napa” and grossed **\$52,855**.

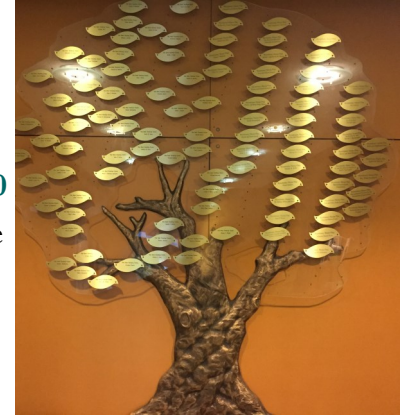
Thank you to our donors, foundations, and sponsors for your generous support!

## Bicentenary Master Plan

### Imagining the Future Campaign

*The Master Plan fundraising effort was a success.* Last year we raised **\$250,000** which included **104** gifts. Individuals provided **99** gifts totaling **\$188,500** and five foundation gifts totaled **\$61,500**.

We hope you will visit our \$1,000+ Master Plan Donor Recognition Tree in the lobby of the Education Center.



### —Master Plan Foundation Gifts—

Helen Clay Frick Foundation, Mass Cultural Council/Mass Development, Mezitt Horticultural Foundation, Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation, and the capsule gift from Massachusetts Society for the Promotion of Agriculture

## Bicentenary Master Plan

**Kyle Zick** and his team have wrapped up the Master Plan which will be voted on by the Mass Hort Board of Trustees. We are thrilled with the many ideas that were contributed to Mass Hort's plan for the future, including:

- ♦ New gardens
- ♦ New Interpretive Visitors Center
- ♦ Restored Asian Garden
- ♦ Aquatic Trail
- ♦ Conservatory
- ♦ and much more.





## Gardens & Greenhouses

Mass Hort is steward of **36** acres of grounds with **12** gardens and **17** acres under cultivation, and **4** greenhouses including our Hartley Botanic Victorian Lodge. This year we grew over **14,500** plants for the property. The Hartley Greenhouse held Oriental Lily and Succulent shows during the season.

### *Garden highlights:*

**Seed to Table Garden** — A generous donor provided funds to rebuild garden beds and make additional improvements in the garden, including irrigation. We started **4,500** seedlings in the greenhouses to transplant into the garden in four plantings throughout the growing season (late March to September). Seed to Table provided produce to two food pantries: the Wellesley Food Pantry and the Natick Service Council. Through these donations, our produce reached **1,417** people in **648** households, **35** percent of whom are senior citizens. We delivered over **5,000** pounds of organically grown produce.



**Bressingham Garden** — A substantial gift helped to make important changes to the Bressingham Garden, including replacing ‘Rozanne’ geranium with the varieties ‘Brookside’ and ‘Johnson’s Blue’, replacing the miscanthus grass with varieties ‘Heavy Metal’ and ‘Karl Foerster’, switching out ‘Lime Light’ hydrangeas for dwarf varieties, and installing irrigation in the “river of blue geraniums.” Perennial plant donations from ***Russell’s Garden Center*** also helped fill out the garden.

**Italianate Garden** — This year’s design of the garden beds added ‘David Austin’ roses, coral bells, cotton candy grasses, and bergenia.

**Trial Garden** — **12** varieties of Syngenta AG’s new tomatoes and **6** varieties of peppers were added. Kitazawa Seed Company, specializing in Asian vegetables, added **4** varieties of hot peppers. Basil (from Burpee) and squash varieties (Vitalis Organic Seeds) were also trialed.

**Goddess Garden** — Perennials were added, including brunnera ‘Jack Frost’, cotton candy grass, crocosmia ‘George Davidson’, and crocosmia masoniorum.



## Education



Our **Adult Education** program served **1,263** people this year, offering **53** public programs. We partnered with the **Perennial Plant Association** to host four leaders in their field to present on growing perennials in sustainable and beautiful ways. We have increased our adult educational offerings, to include more tours of horticultural interest, such as the Arnold Arboretum and the Little Leaf Farm hydroponic production greenhouses. We also introduced a popular half-day symposium model. These programs featured three presenters and themes such as ecological gardening and garden history, with an average attendance over **50**.

**Weezie's Garden for Children** — This award-winning garden is a magical place that is enjoyed by the young and young at heart. Throughout the garden season, thousands of visitors explored the rejuvenated pollinator garden. Each corner of the garden is designed to engage the senses and provide teachable moments. Our garden educators led **23** weeks of programming which taught nearly **1,000** visitors of all ages. A new topic was presented each week, such as “Plants as Engineers,” “The Families of Flowers,” and “Backyard Birding.” We were excited to welcome back Dover Town Library for their **Super Awesome Fun Time** (a nationally-recognized story hour program) and **Caterpillar Club** taught by one of our members.



**Plantmobile** — Thanks to a generous donation, Mass Hort purchased a new Plantmobile and brought the plant science program to many communities for free. We reached a larger area, travelling to points further North and West. More educators were brought on board to meet the demand, and we reached over **4,000** kids, teaching them about plant adaptations, life cycles, and pollination. Our Director of Educational Outreach noted: “My favorite week was when we visited seven different sites in six days. Girl Scouts in the Merrimack Valley learned about carnivorous plants and plant adaptations, residents of Somerville planted seedlings at SomerStreets, and kindergarteners and pre-schoolers discovered the secrets of a seed and the plant life cycle.”





**Seed Lending Library** — The seed library program is thriving, supported by staff, a generous donor, and hundreds of volunteer hours. Our goal is to help communities grow and eat wholesome food, and to celebrate biodiversity. Seeds were distributed at our school garden conference, at workshops, and at three local libraries. Over **100** people ‘checked-out’ seeds to grow, and we hope they will save the seeds they grow and return them to their local seed libraries. We distributed **40** varieties of seeds spanning from vegetables to native plants. In September, we hosted a workshop to support local libraries in their seed library efforts.



## Events - Community Outreach

FY18 Events revenue totaled **\$301,566**. **Festival of Trees** raised **\$123,031** in revenue and sponsorships, and increased attendance to over **10,000**. Thanks to the hardworking committee, many dedicated volunteers and staff, and our appearance on **WCVB TV 5's *Chronicle***.

**New England Sculptors Association** returned to The Gardens at Elm Bank for a second year of ‘Sculptures in the Gardens’ featuring **25** of NESA’s members.

**Boston Flower & Garden Show** attracted approximately **50,000** people where Mass Hort managed the amateur competitions for horticulture, floral design, and photography. Our exhibit “Nuptials in Napa” brought the Open Floral Design classes onto the main floor. **Bartlett Tree Experts** generously supported us. The exhibit won the Superlative Award for Fragrance.



**Summer at The Gardens at Elm Bank** — This was a spectacular summer! More than **1,000** people visited the gardens for **Free Fun Friday**, a day with extra activities and tours. We are grateful to the **Highland Street Foundation** for helping to make this incredible day possible. This past August, we hosted our fourth annual **Arts on the Green** and **Goddesses in the Gardens** events. These free evening events featured live music, extra tours, family activities and more! Over two-dozen artists set up their work in the gardens for an art walk, and our vegetables were harvested for a special tasting that the public enjoyed. New this summer, the **Commonwealth Shakespeare Company's** apprentice program staged a performance of ***Henry VI, Part II*** to a packed house. These events serve our mission to connect the public to the natural world, showcasing the beauty of garden arts and design.

## Volunteers

Volunteers continue to be one of our greatest resources. Mass Hort hired a part-time Volunteer Engagement Manager to recruit and engage over **500** volunteers in the gardens, office, Library, Visitors Center, Boston Flower & Garden Show, and at our outreach events. With over **\$150,000** of volunteer hours, our volunteers provide



vital support to the care of the gardens and administration of our programs and events.

In addition to managing **180** volunteers from the Massachusetts Master Gardener Association, we recruited over 50 new volunteers from the general public, offering hands-on learning and outreach opportunities in our gardens and at our events. Teenagers and retirees alike met to get their hands dirty, learn about plants, and to beautify their environment. We also welcomed **120** volunteers

from **seven** different corporations and one high school for corporate and group volunteer days in the gardens. Engaging a strong and diverse volunteer corps, and offering meaningful and rewarding volunteer opportunities to people of all ages, backgrounds and experience levels enhances the work of staff, provides volunteers with the opportunity for transformative learning, and provides another level of critical donor support. We look forward to cultivating lasting committed relationships with our volunteers.

## Function Business

The function business finished FY18 with **\$597,547** in revenue, with more than **24,000 guests** attending **169 events**.

## MassHort.org

Mass Hort designed a new website through the generosity of a donor. We are delighted with our new design, meant to make navigation easier. Find classes, horticultural tips, a garden blog and event news. Check it out!

## Capital Improvements

A generous donor bought us a new **Plantmobile** that has been visiting schools and outreach programs throughout the state. This vehicle is a minivan with a larger capacity for plant materials and program supplies, with side-opening doors for easy access.





## Library

The Library received a wonderful \$10,000 donation to help care for and preserve the **Edwin Hale Lincoln** collection. In addition, this year the Library added 432 books to its Collections and 746 seed and nursery catalogs.

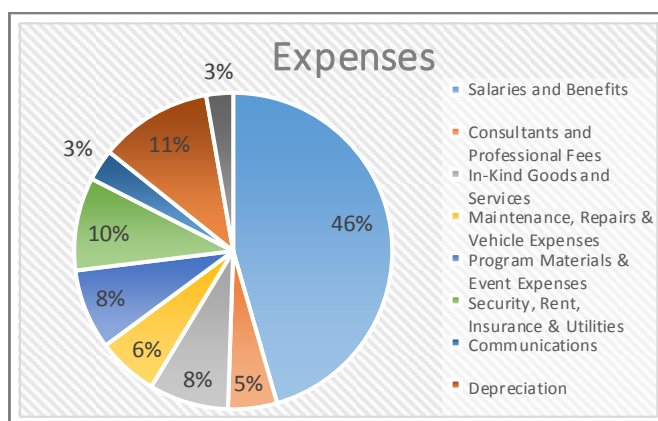
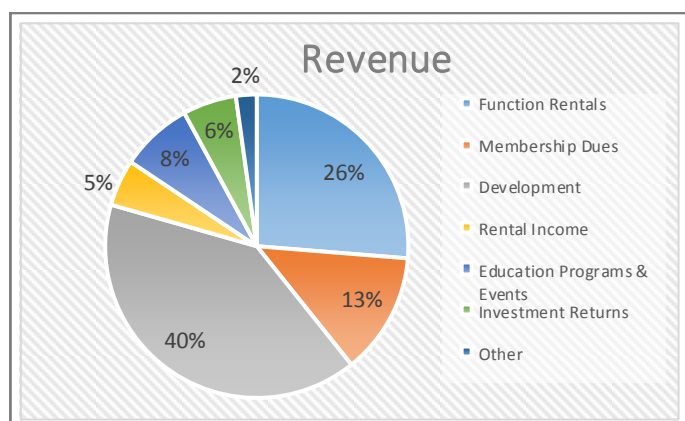
Our Library Manager and volunteers are doing a wonderful job in the library cataloging and preserving our collection.

The portrait to the left is of **Robert Manning, Jr.** (1927-1902), painted by Henry E. Kinney (American, 1866-1954). Robert Manning, Jr., was a Member from 1848 to 1902, and held positions of Secretary, Historian, and Librarian. He was the editor of *Transactions* and author of the *History of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1829-1878*.

## Partnerships

American Horticulture Association, American Public Garden Association, Bartlett Tree Experts, Boston Parks Department, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Digital Commonwealth, Dover Town Library, The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Garden Club of America, MA Environmental Collaborative, Mass Arborists, Massachusetts Master Gardeners Association, Massachusetts Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, Mayor's Office Youth Council, Needham Bank, Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation, The Boston Committee, Weston Nurseries.

## Sources & Uses of Funds FY18 (Audited)



**FY18**

Income:  
\$2,173,029

Expenses:  
\$1,954,406

Net Income:  
\$218,623