



MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Spring Flower Show Research Aid

1871-2019

Between 1871 and 2008, the Society produced 137 Spring Flower Shows that were the largest and most important horticultural events in the country. This Research Aid lists information about those exhibitions.

The Society was established in 1829 for "the purpose of encouraging and improving the science and practice of Horticulture." To support this mission, the Society's By-Laws provided for exhibitions with awards. In June 1829, the month of its incorporation, the Society began holding weekly exhibitions on Saturdays and a large Annual Exhibition in September. The exhibitions featured fruits, vegetables, ornamental plants, arrangements and cut flowers. Awards bestowed at these exhibitions were highly regarded.

By 1871, the weekly exhibitions became more elaborate and complicated to produce. Therefore, several spring exhibitions were combined into a semi-annual exhibition. At first, those exhibitions were held in June, but by 1879 the shows moved to March. As in the Annual Exhibitions, the exhibitions featured fruits, vegetables, ornamental plants, arrangements and cut flowers. As agricultural production moved west and became industrialized in the late 19th century, the main focus of the shows changed to ornamental horticulture and gardens and the annual spring flower show became the Society's major show of the year.

Over time, the length, size and complexity of the Society's shows grew. The shows were "the event" for horticultural organizations, businesses and professionals and provided a venue to network, compete, learn and promote their goods and services. The public eagerly awaited these annual shows that foreshadowed the brilliant spring days ahead and provided a temporary escape from the fickle weather in March. However, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, society and the economy were changing. The Great Recession in 2007 to 2009, increasing costs, reduced revenues and declining attendance caused many flower shows to cease operations, including the Society's. After its reorganization in 2008, the Society participated in the Boston Flower Show produced by the Paragon Group, as an exhibitor and manager of the show's amateur exhibitions, a role that aligned with its mission, and for which the Society was eminently qualified.

The list below provides the date, number of the show, location and the title/theme used to promote the event.

To search use control/f on a PC or command/space bar on a MAC and a search box will appear.

Dates	Year	Show #	Location	Title/Theme
June 20-21	1871	1	Second Horticultural Hall	Grand Summer Exhibition
June 18-19	1872	2	Second Horticultural Hall	Rose Exhibition
June 17-18	1873	3	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Rose Exhibition
June 17-18	1874	4	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Rose Exhibition
June 28	1875	5	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Rose Exhibition
June 21	1876	6	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Rose Exhibition
June 20	1877	7	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Rose Exhibition
June 19	1878	8	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Rose Exhibition
March 19	1879	9	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Azalea and Rose Show

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Dates	Year	Show #	Location	Title/Theme
March 18-19	1880	10	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Azalea and Rose Show
March 17	1881	11	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Azalea and Rose Show
March 23	1882	12	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Azalea and Rose Show
March 22	1883	13	Second Horticultural Hall	Annual Exhibition
March 20-21	1884	14	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 19-20	1885	15	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 24-26	1886	16	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 23-25	1887	17	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 21-23	1888	18	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 27-29	1889	19	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Exhibition
March 26-28	1890	20	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 31-April 3	1891	21	Second Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Flower Show
March 22-25	1892	22	Second Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Flower Show
March 21-24	1893	23	Second Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Flower Show
March 28-30	1894	24	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 26-29	1895	25	Second Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Flower Show
March 24-27	1896	26	Second Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Flower Show
March 23-26	1897	27	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 22-25	1898	28	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 21-24	1899	29	Second Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 20-23	1900	30	Second Horticultural Hall	"Harbingers of Spring"
March 19-22	1901	31	Second Horticultural Hall	"Grand Spring Exhibit"
March 19-23	1902	32	Third Horticultural Hall	Annual Spring Exhibition
March 18-22	1903	33	Third Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Exhibition
March 24-27	1904	34	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 23-26	1905	35	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 23-25	1906	36	Third Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Flower Show
March 22-24	1907	37	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 20-23	1908	38	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 24-28	1909	39	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
—	1910	40	Midwinter Flower Show on February 26th to 28th & May Orchid Show on May 26th to 30th substituted for usual March Show	
March 25-31	1911	41	Mechanics Hall	National Flower Show
March 22-24	1912	42	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 14-16	1913	43	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 12-15	1914	44	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show

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Dates	Year	Show #	Location	Title/Theme
March 18-21	1915	45	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 17-19	1916	46	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 21-25	1917	47	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 13-17	1918	48	Third Horticultural Hall	Red Cross Flower Show
—	1919	—	No Annual Flower Show in 1919. A Chrysanthemum Show was held on February 19th and an Orchid Show held on March 8th and 9th	
March 24-28	1920	49	Third Horticultural Hall	Grand Exhibition of Orchids and Other Plants
April 6-10	1921	50	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition with American Rose Society
March 23-26	1922	51	Third Horticultural Hall	Grand Exhibition of Spring Flowering Plants
April 5-8	1923	52	Third Horticultural Hall	Grand Spring Exhibition
March 27-30	1924	53	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 26-29	1925	54	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 17-21	1926	55	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 30-April 3	1927	56	Third Horticultural Hall	Spring Exhibition
March 20-25	1928	57	Horticultural Hall	Boston's Spring Flower Show
March 19-23	1929	58	Mechanics Building Boston	"Centennial Flower Show"
March 25-30	1930	59	Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Show
March 17-21	1931	60	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Exhibition
March 10-14	1932	61	Horticultural Hall	Spring Flower Exhibition
March 13-19	1933	62	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Exhibition
March 12-17	1934	63	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Exhibition
March 25-30	1935	64	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 23-28	1936	65	Mechanics Building Boston	Boston Spring Flower Show
March 12-18	1937	66	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 17-23	1938	67	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 16-21	1939	68	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 11-16	1940	69	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 17-22	1941	70	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 16-21	1942	71	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 13-20	1943	72	Horticultural Hall	"An Inspiring Wartime Effort"
March 18 -25	1944	73	Horticultural Hall	"Gardens of Our Allies"
March 10-17	1945	74	Horticultural Hall	"Springtime in America"
March 18-23	1946	75	Mechanics Building Boston	"Diamond Jubilee"
March 10-15	1947	76	Mechanics Building Boston	"Gardens for Better Living"
March 15-20	1948	77	Mechanics Building Boston	"Tulip Time"
March 13-19	1949	78	Mechanics Building Boston	Spring Flower Show

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Dates	Year	Show #	Location	Title/Theme
March 12-18	1950	79	Mechanics Building Boston	"Old-Time New England Village"
March 11-17	1951	80	Mechanics Building Boston	"Mid-Century Spring Flower Show"
March 9-15	1952	81	Mechanics Building Boston	"Springtime in New England"
March 15-21	1953	82	Mechanics Building Boston	"Golden Gardens"
March 14-20	1954	83	Mechanics Building Boston	"Gardens Old and New"
March 13-19	1955	84	Mechanics Building Boston	"Gardens the World Over"
March 11-17	1956	85	Mechanics Building Boston	"Gardens on Parade"
March 10-16	1957	86	Mechanics Building Boston	"It's Spring Again"
March 9-15	1958	87	Mechanics Building Boston	"The Miracle of Spring"
March 10-15	1959	88	Symphony Hall & Horticultural Hall	"Symphony of Spring"
March 13-20	1960	89	Wonderland Park, Revere	"Wonders of Spring"
March 11-19	1961	90	Wonderland Park, Revere	"Gardens of the Americas"
March 17-25	1962	91	Wonderland Park, Revere	"Adventures in Gardening"
March 16-24	1963	92	Wonderland Park, Revere	"Wonderland of Spring"
March 14-22	1964	93	Wonderland Park, Revere	"Gardens for Living"
March 13-21	1965	94	Wonderland Park, Revere	New England Spring Flower Show
March 12-20	1966	95	Wonderland Park, Revere	"Gardens Beautify America"
March 16-23	1967	97	Suffolk Downs, East Boston	"Plan Plant Preserve"
March 16-24	1968	97	Suffolk Downs, East Boston	"New England Holiday"
March 15-23	1969	98	Suffolk Downs, East Boston	New England Spring Flower and Garden Show
March 14-22	1970	99	Suffolk Downs, East Boston	New England Spring Garden & Flower Show
March 13-21	1971	100	Suffolk Downs, East Boston	"Centennial Spring Flower Show"
March 18-26	1972	101	Commonwealth Armory, Boston	New England Spring Flower and Garden Show
March 17-25	1973	102	Commonwealth Armory, Boston	New England Spring Flower and Garden Show
March 16-24	1974	103	Commonwealth Armory, Boston	"Warm up to the Flower Show"
March 15-23	1975	104	Commonwealth Armory, Boston	"Welcome to the Greenest Show on Earth"
March 13-21	1976	105	Commonwealth Armory, Boston	New England Spring Flower and Garden Show
March 19-27	1977	106	Commonwealth Pier, Boston	Spring Garden and Flower Show
March 11-19	1978	107	Commonwealth Pier, Boston	Spring Flower Show
March 17-25	1979	108	Commonwealth Pier, Boston	150th Anniversary Show
March 15-23	1980	109	Commonwealth Pier, Boston	"self sufficiency"
March 14-22	1981	110	Commonwealth Pier, Boston	"Gardening in Your Own Back Yard"

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Dates	Year	Show #	Location	Title/Theme
March 13-21	1982	111	Commonwealth Pier, Boston	"Gardens of the World"
March 12-20	1983	112	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	The Flower Show!
March 10-18	1984	113	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Put a Little Color in Your Life"
March 9 -17	1985	114	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Spring's Reflections"
March 19-27	1986	115	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Enchanted Places"
March 14-22	1987	116	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Flowers Around the World"
March 5-13	1988	117	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"A View From Your Window"
March 4-12	1989	118	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Thank Goodness It's Spring"
March 10-18	1990	119	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Bridges to Paradise"
March 9-17	1991	120	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"A New England Sampler"
March 14-22	1992	121	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Rediscover the Americas"
March 6-14	1993	122	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Through the Garden Gate"
March 5-13	1994	123	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"A World of Color"
March 11-19	1995	124	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Magical Moments"
March 9-17	1996	125	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Celebration"
March 8-16	1997	126	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Secrets of the Garden"
March 7-15	1998	127	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Gardening Lifestyles"
March 13-21	1999	128	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Artistry in the Garden"
March 11-19	2000	129	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Symphony of the Senses"
March 17-25	2001	130	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"The Inspired Garden"
March 16-24	2002	131	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Shades of Spring"
March 15-23	2003	132	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"The Garden Journey"
March 13-21	2004	133	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Deeply Rooted"
March 12-20	2005	134	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"A Fresh Perspective!"
March 11-19	2006	135	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Welcome Home! "
March 17-25	2007	136	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Yes! You Can!"
March 8-16	2008	137	Bayside Expo Center, Boston	"Rhapsody in Green"
<p>In 2009, no official flower show was sponsored by the Society. Instead, during the Society's reorganization, it sponsored "Blooms!" in three hotels and three malls between March 12th through 22nd. In 2010, it ceased production of the New England Flower Show. Instead, it was an exhibitor and the manager of the amateur competitions at the "Boston Flower and Garden Shows" produced by The Paragon Group between 2010 and 2019.</p>				
March 24-28	2010		Seaport World Trade Center	"A Feast for the Senses"
March 16-20	2011		Seaport World Trade Center	"A Burst of Color: Celebrating the Container Garden"
March 14-18	2012		Seaport World Trade Center	"First Impressions"
March 13-17	2013		Seaport World Trade Center	"Seeds of Change"
March 12-16	2014		Seaport World Trade Center	"Romance in the Garden"

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Dates	Year	Show #	Location	Title/Theme
March 11-15	2015		Seaport World Trade Center	"Season of Enchantment"
March 16-20	2016		Seaport World Trade Center	"Nurtured by Nature"
March 22-26	2017		Seaport World Trade Center	"Superheros of the Garden"
March 14-18	2018		Seaport World Trade Center	"Savor Spring"
March 13-17	2019		Seaport World Trade Center	"The Beauty of Balance"
The 2020 show was cancelled due to the Covid epidemic. Paragon Group ceased production of the "Boston Flower and Garden Show" after that date.				