



April 2018

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Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

March rolled in like a lion and out like a lion! Late snow and high winds have kept us on our toes, but we're quickly getting ready for the garden season. Our greenhouses are full of plants just waiting to be put in the ground as soon as it's warm enough.

It is thrilling when I pop into the greenhouses and see our volunteers working to get everything started. Many hands make a very big job much easier, and we appreciate all the help!

If you're interested in volunteering in the gardens (or with the Mass Hort Plantmobile or in the library or office), please contact our NEW Volunteer Experience Manager, Amy Rodrigues. You can volunteer as an individual, or coordinate a volunteer workday for your group or business. Amy can be reached at arodriges@masshort.org. Some of you may have met Amy if you volunteered at the Flower Show, we are excited to have her on board to support our volunteers.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered, exhibited, and supported us at the Boston Flower and Garden Show.

Now, the Flower Show exhibits have been packed away, and we have set our sites on the opening of The Gardens at Elm Bank on May 1. Please help us spread the word about what a wonderful place the gardens are for people of all ages to visit and explore. Take a class, or just come and walk the grounds. I hope to see you here!

Warm regards,
Kathy

Upcoming Classes & Events:

Grafting Fruit Trees

Saturday, April 21
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Gardens Open!

Tuesday, May 1
thru Columbus Day
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Foodscaping

Thursday, May 3
7 - 8 p.m.

Early Season Gardening

Sunday, May 6
10:30 a.m. - noon

Gardeners' Fair

Saturday, May 12
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (member's
entry begins at 8 a.m.)

Greenhouse Growing

Thursday, May 17
7 - 8:30 p.m.

Landscaping for Watershed Health

Tuesday, May 22
1 - 5 p.m.

Spring Landscape Tour

Wednesday, May 30
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Thank You for a Successful Flower Show!

Our gratitude is with everyone who supported Mass Hort at the Flower Show. To all the exhibitors, volunteers, and members who came by-- Thank you! We were able to promote horticulture, our mission and initiatives, and membership to thousands, because of your efforts.

We would also like to welcome our new members who joined the society at the Show. Please enjoy

our monthly newsletter, *Leaflet*. It is full of Mass Hort news and horticultural tips. We hope you'll get involved: take a [class](#), [volunteer](#), or come visit the [gardens](#)!

Spring Classes at the Hort

Did you receive your [Spring and Summer Calendar and Courses](#)? We have a number of classes, workshops and events offered to inspire you and connect you to plants and the natural environment. We hope you can join us!



Many of our programs fill up, so please register early! One such program is the [Spring Landscape Tour](#), offered in partnership with Historic New England. Spend Wednesday, May 30 touring estates of the area, starting with the Lyman grounds and greenhouses in Waltham. Then tour and lunch at the Eustis Estate in Milton. The day will wrap up with a tour of The Gardens at Elm Bank. Mass Hort members must call Historic New England and request the member rate of \$40, 617-994-5959. Space is limited, so register soon.

This month, we have Wes Autio, Director of UMass Stockbridge School, presenting a [hands-on workshop on 'bench grafting' and 'cleft grafting'](#) of apple trees. Many people do not realize that all apple varieties are reproduced by grafting – they are not grown from seed. For horticultural enthusiasts, one of the most satisfying techniques to master is grafting. All participants in the workshop will graft several of their own apple trees to take home. Saturday, April 21, \$60 members.

We have a few classes in early May to note as well. [Foodscaping: How to Grow a Beautiful Edible Landscape](#) will be held Thursday, May 3, 7 - 8:30 p.m. More and more gardeners want to grow their own vegetables, herbs, and berries but don't have room or don't want to sacrifice their flowers, trees or shrubs. The solution is edible landscaping or Foodscaping. Charlie Nardozzi will talk about some basic garden design techniques, unusual places to grow edibles in your yard, good edible substitutes for common ornamentals and favorite vegetables, herbs and berries for creating an edible landscape. His book, *'Foodscaping'* will be available for sale and signing. \$12 members

On Sunday, May 6, our Senior Horticulturist, Hannah Traggis, will lead a [Early Season Gardening](#) workshop. Get an early start on implementing a successful growing season! Learn essential vegetable gardening skills, such as handling and transplanting young seedlings, soil preparation, cover cropping, and proper weed management. You'll be sent home with a few cold-hardy seedlings, too! \$20 members

Have questions or program suggestions? Contact education@masshort.org.

Corporate Volunteers: Grow With Us!



We invite you to join Mass Hort for a team building day in The Gardens at Elm Bank. Projects include planting, pruning, weeding, and other tasks that are vital to the success of the plants and gardens. It's a great way to promote wellness, to care for our environment, and to learn new skills.

We welcome groups of all sizes for a minimum of four hours, Tuesday through Friday. Food and meeting space options are available.

For more information, please contact Amy Rodrigues, Volunteer Engagement Manager, at arodrigues@masshort.org



Don't Miss the Gardeners' Fair!

Saturday, May 12, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Members Hour: 8 - 9 a.m.

Save the Date for Mass Hort's Gardeners' Fair and Plant Sale! A number of vendors will be on site, offering everything you need to plan, dig, plant, and enjoy your home garden space. [Learn More](#).

The Gardeners' Fair is an opportunity to find rare and unusual perennials, trees and shrubs; ready-to-plant herbs and vegetables; and tomato varieties by the dozens. It's also a chance to hear talks by experts, find unique garden tools, garden ornaments and accessories, as well as other gardening necessities. The fair will feature tomatoes by Allandale Farm and the Herb Society Plant Sale. The event is free for Mass Hort members, and \$5 per car for the general public.

The New England Unit of the Herb Society garden will have their annual plant sale, and other plant societies will be there with exciting plants for sale. The Mass Master Gardener Association will host their Ask a Master Gardener booth and offer [pH soil testing](#).

Mass Hort will also be hosting a Tool Sale. Please contact education@masshort.org to donate tools. The Library will be selling duplicate titles from their collection.

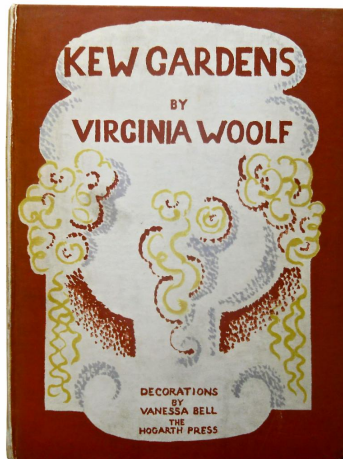
Interested in being a vendor? Find more information [here](#).

From the Stacks:

By Maureen T. O'Brien,
Library Manager

The tree I had in the garden as a child, my beech tree, I used to climb up there and spend hours. I took my homework up there, my books, I went up there if I was sad, and it just felt very good to be up there among the green leaves and the birds and the sky.

- Jane Goodall



Gardens mean different things to different people. Gardens touch the soul and provide memories of times past, both happy and sad. They are places of discovery, romance, fear and peace. Many artists and authors cite their gardens as inspiration for their work; others portray the garden in their work, and still others create their work in the garden. Aficionados of these creators place special significance on these gardens, real or imagined. The intertwining of art, literature and gardens dates back to ancient times; our knowledge of ancient gardens come primarily from literature and paintings. The intrinsic meaning of the garden to people is illustrated by the fact that a garden, *i.e.* the Garden of Eden, plays a central role in the Bible's first book, the Book of Genesis. The Society's first *Transactions* quotes Genesis 2.8 "And the Lord God planted a garden; and there he put the man, whom he had formed."

The Library has many books that can be considered literature, rather than just a book about nature or horticulture. These books do not give advice, record scientific evidence or recount the history of horticulture. Why do we collect them? In fact, these works provide insight into great and memorable gardens, what gardens mean to humankind and gardens' place in history. Mass Hort's founders were not adverse to seeking pleasure in gardens and many of them toured gardens for inspiration and collected art relating to gardens, horticulture and the landscape as a pastime. Many of their collections were donated to the Society.

Featured Book

This month's featured book was acquired by the Library in 1934 and falls into the category of literature.

Librarian Sarah Cummer is diligently cataloging our early 20th century collection of books into Massachusetts Library System's [online catalog](#). This month Sarah cataloged *Kew Gardens*, a short story by Virginia Woolf published in a limited edition of 500 in 1927 by The Hogarth Press, owned by Woolf and her husband, Leonard. The story was originally published as a slim pamphlet edition of 150 in 1919 and then as part of her short story collection, *Monday or Tuesday* in 1921. The 1927 limited edition, published as a single volume, was the first fully illustrated edition of the story with woodcuts by Woolf's sister, artist Vanessa Bell, intertwined with the text. The story recounts ephemeral moments in a flower bed and bits of conversations of passersby.

The book had nothing to do with horticulture other than its setting. However it resonates with garden lovers. It is beautifully crafted and is a piece of art. It is interesting to observe that Woolf had no fondness for gardens but created many of her works in her studio in the garden lovingly tended by her husband.

You can learn more about this book, read the text and see its illustrations in the accompanying slide show [here](#).

In the Windows – Bulbs!

Daffodowndilly
She wore her yellow sun-bonnet,
She wore her greenest gown;
She turned to the south wind

And curtsied up and down.

She turned to the sunlight
And shook her yellow head,
And whispered to her neighbour:
"Winter is dead."

- A.A. Milne

Daffodowndilly, aka daffodil, is a harbinger of spring. Spring bulbs bring joy and expectation to our lives. Bulbs provide brilliant splashes of ephemeral color and are easy to grow, if you know how, where and who their predators are. Now is the time to take notes and plan for your late summer and early fall spring bulb order. We are featuring a few of our 161 books on bulbs in our windows in April. You can borrow or peruse them while you plan your dream garden for spring!

We are Still Collecting

Since its inception in 1829, the Library relied on the generosity of its members to build its Collections and often had a "Want List" in its *Transactions*. We continue to rely on the generosity of our donors. This month we received three children's books from our [**Wish List**](#) – *Nature Anatomy: The Curious Parts and Pieces of the Natural World* by Julia Rotham; *Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots: Gardening Together with Children* by Sharon Lovejoy and *Experiment With Parts of a Plant* by Nadia Higgins from Phyllis Andersen, landscape scholar and author. Her donation will inspire our young people at the Society and nurture their budding interest in horticulture. We look forward to the release of the book Phyllis is writing for the University of Virginia Press, *A Matter of Taste: The Public Pleasure Garden and Civic Life*.

Periodicals provide invaluable resources for researchers since some of the most valuable information is only recorded there. A welcome addition to the Library came from [**Brooklyn Botanic Garden**](#) of the entire run of *The Home Garden*. This periodical was founded by the preeminent horticulturists in the country in 1943. It provides an excellent snapshot of home life in this country during the war and post war years. Ernest G. Moore of the Department of Agriculture wrote the opening article, warning about the scarcity of agricultural crops in stores and urged citizens to grow their own crops, crops that are fresh, favorable and "impossible to duplicate at the market." In an appeal to citizens' patriotism and to advocate the Victory Garden campaign that rolled out later that year, he stated that "you gardeners, who have the space, have an obligation to your country to grow the best garden this year you have ever grown." The magazine covered a wide range of topics and was meant to be saved as a reference.

A welcome addition to our local history, *The Garden Squares of Boston* by Phoebe Goodwin, a history of the garden squares fronting Boston's South End townhouses, was received from our Librarian Sarah Cummer.

Save the Date

Want to add to your antilibrary or get inspired? The Library will hold a *Book Sale* of duplicate titles at the [**Gardeners' Fair**](#) on May 12, 2018, at The Gardens at Elm Bank. All the books and periodicals will be bargain priced. Plan to pick up a book or two along with your new plants and support your Library at Elm Bank.



MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

A Night in Napa

— THIRD ANNUAL —

Garden Party

Thursday, June 14, 2018

Italianate Garden, The Gardens at Elm Bank
900 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY
6:00–8:30 pm

*Enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres and wines of the
Napa Valley while live entertainment and festive décor
transport you to an elegant Night in Napa.*

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Cornus mas - the Cornelian Cherry

*By R. Wayne Mezitt
Mass Hort Trustee Chairman*

Every year those long-awaited first flowers of spring always arouse my senses and give birth to a primal appreciation of the renewal of life. And few trees or shrubs are more appropriate than the cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*) for ushering-out winter, enticing spring to begin. No, despite its name, it's not a cherry; it's really a dogwood, and the first of this diverse genus to flower every spring.

For me the real appeal of this plant (which can be grown as a multi-stem shrub or trained to form a 15-20 ft. tree) is its display of golden-yellow flowers which appear in earliest spring, just as the days begin to warm. One of the first of the woody plants to bloom in my garden, it signals the beginning of a cascade of color about to begin. Yes, its flowers don't last long, usually only a week or two, but that's enough to get my senses tuned to what's soon to follow: the earliest magnolias, *Forsythia*, "real" cherry trees and the Early Rhododendrons like Weston's Pink Diamond and PJM.



Finishing its bloom, *C. mas* displays clean, dark green leaves (there's now a yellow-variegated-leaf cultivar, 'Variegata'), followed in mid-summer by a profusion of edible berries. Hybridizers in Russia have developed some cultivars with exceptionally large fruit, and they're only recently becoming available in the USA from specialty nurseries. Its fruit, only fully ripening after it falls or is picked off the plant, tastes a lot like a melding of cranberry and sour cherry; for centuries traditional European cultures have valued it for preserves and beverages.

Fall foliage color is variable depending upon conditions, but most years, its leaves turn a rich wine-red before dropping in October. Even in winter the bark on mature stems and trunks exfoliates to create a colorful contrast against the snow. Few plants in my garden offer so much visual interest in every season. It's these aspects of year-round appeal that helped qualify *Cornus mas* to become a Cary Award winner – a well-deserved honor.

It's one of the most winter cold-hardy plants you can buy, thriving even in those northernmost climates where minimum winter temperatures plunge as low as -30°F. It's also not picky about where it grows, performing well in both sandy and clayey soils, even tolerating a bit of shade at the edge of the woods.

More importantly, cornelian cherry is readily available at garden centers. For those who wait until reliably warm weather to shop for plants, the flowers of *Cornus mas* will have already passed. But look around your neighborhood now – chances are some savvy homeowners have recognized the value of early flowers and have chosen this plant to display its beauty for all who see it to enjoy.

Image: Raymond, "Gotta Get: Cornelian Cherry." www.louistheplantgeek.com

R. Wayne Mezitt is a third generation nurseryman and a Massachusetts Certified Horticulturist, now chairman of Weston Nurseries of Hopkinton and Chelmsford, MA and owner of "Hort-Sense", a horticultural advisory business. Wayne currently serves as Trustee chairman for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society at The Gardens at Elm Bank in Wellesley MA.

Public Parks, Private Gardens: Paris to Provence

by Colta Ives

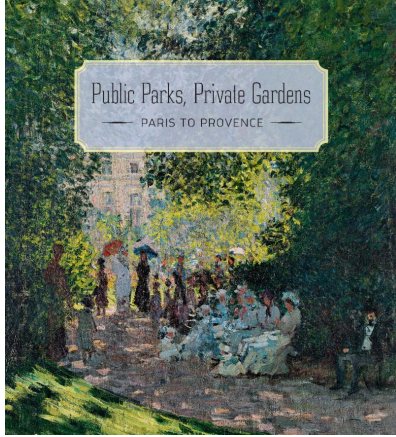
Published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York,

Distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London. 2018.

Reviewed by Patrice Todisco

Just in time for spring The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, has published the book *Public Parks, Private Gardens: Paris to Provence*. A guide to the current exhibition by the same name, it traces the horticultural evolution that transformed the landscape of France during the 19th century and its impact on the pictorial and decorative arts.

Its story, of the spectacular transformation of Paris into the beloved city of tree-lined boulevards and public spaces we know today, is told through the works of the artists for whom the greening of the city provided inspiration. The result is an



engaging portrait of the power of horticulture to shape both the physical and creative world.

Beginning with the great age of horticultural exploration and its influence on both scientific and popular culture, *Public Parks, Private Gardens* explores how the democratization of landscapes, once the domain of the upper classes, launched a great era of park building and innovation. These reimagined and newly conceived public spaces were designed to be beautiful and accessible to all.

Their creation infiltrated the city's cultural life, providing places to see, be seen and participate in public life, allowing for a form of urban civility described as "politesse de la distance."

Integrated into the fabric of community and family, the parks of Paris provided a template for the development of public green spaces throughout the country.

The passion for all things green fueled a mania for gardening throughout France that led to a profusion of suppliers eager to support the public desire to grow flowers and shrubs. With foreign plants readily available, the art of floral-still life painting revived, bringing the garden indoors. An extraordinary era in the creation of private gardens soon followed.

The artists, whose masterworks are included in *Public Parks, Private Gardens*, are well known. What is lesser known is just how deeply influenced and engaged in horticultural pursuits many of them were. It's a pleasure to find uber-gardeners Renoir, Monet and Caillebotte, trading tips on the selection and cultivation of dahlias and a revelation to realize they used their brilliant colors in their palettes.

The penultimate expression of a private garden associated with an artist during this period remains that of Monet's beloved Giverny. His passion for the voluptuously planted, nearly six-acre site and pond that he cultivated, is likened to an intimate communion, playing a symbiotic role in his creative life. While Monet shared "My garden is my most beautiful work of art," his paintings serve as the portal, through which we, too, can experience Giverny.

And perhaps, at the end of a relentless winter, this is the great appeal of *Public Parks, Private Gardens*. Its lushly illustrated pages are full of beautiful, full-color images of parks and gardens that make one long to lounge in the shade of a horse chestnut tree on a languid summer's afternoon.

Deftly told by Colta Ives, an art historian and landscape designer uniquely qualified to the task, *Public Parks, Private Gardens* is also a reminder of the importance of the need for public spaces that are both green and beautiful, providing respite from urban life and serving as a stimulus for creativity.

Patrice Todisco writes about parks, gardens and the public realm at www.landscapenotes.com. She can be reached at landscapenotes@gmail.com.



Qui Hortos?

By Neal Sanders,
Leaflet Contributor

What kind of a person gardens? What attracts them to gardening? Every March, I get to answer those questions anew as 70 or so gardeners either sign up for or return to the community garden I help run. There's no application to fill out and so there is no line titled 'occupation'. I've certainly never demanded to know what people do with their time when they're not gardening. But some people tell me

and sometimes their emails betray an occupation. Others let the cat out of the bag gradually.

For example, we have a surgeon and at least two nurses. I've gotten to know the surgeon fairly well. For him, a few hours in the garden on a Sunday morning is what he needs to let go of the inevitable stress from his livelihood. His garden is neat and orderly; something I like to see in someone who is going to make an incision in me. Our resident school nurse also runs a tight ship, though her husband is an engineer, which might skewer the results just a bit. Another medical professional – an operating room nurse – has a garden so weed-free it's spooky.



We also have an elementary school principal. Her vegetables tend towards the 'free range' variety, but the veggies and flowers are all healthy and growing. 'Well-nurtured' is an apt description.

The most inventive and exploratory gardens belong to our horticulturally-inclined scientists. One is an academician whose plot runs to things like tomatillos. Another plot gardened by a chemist grows nine different types of lettuce and has squares of corn planted ten days apart. I feel as though I am watching experiments unfolding.

It is my observation that attorneys do not necessarily make superior gardeners. One of our number specializes in immigration. His vines conspicuously meander all over his unfenced garden, as though he is loath to limit vegetable mobility. Another is in corporate law. She's just expanded from a half plot to a full one, perhaps the product of a successful takeover.

We've had a veterinarian for two years and are about to get a second one. Our established vet keeps a great garden with exceptionally healthy plants that are kept free of disease and pests. I can't wait to see how the second one fares – especially given that her spouse is a conservation biologist.

We have one banker in our midst, and another gardener whose email identifies the individual as being a sales manager. The less said about their two gardens, the better.

Our retirees fall into two categories. The first is those for whom gardening forms a significant part of their recreation and weekly exercise. They are a pleasure to have as gardening neighbors. The condition of their plots bespeaks a life well lived; they grow copious amounts of produce, and they are quick to share their bounty with our local Food Cupboard. The second group travels frequently and their gardens are, well, something of an afterthought. They tend to sign up for a plot, plant it all at once, and water it too heavily and too often. In mid-summer, they become annoyed by my asking them to weed their aisles. After a year or perhaps two, they move onto the next retirement time-filler.

The final category are the stay-at-home moms and dads (and, yes, we have a few of the latter). I thought there was no correlation between gardening and full-time parenting until I looked at the ages of the children accompanying their parents. Those with toddlers and pre-school kids are terrific gardeners. They use their plots as educational tools. But, as the children age, the parental gardening skills decline. By the middle school years, the weeds sprout with abandon (I have learned to take this into account when sending out reminders). Equilibrium is miraculously restored with high school graduations.

I don't believe these observations are colored by preconceptions. I like all of my gardeners because they've chosen to garden. In a world of choices, they've elected to get their hands dirty and to do so among a crowd of like-minded people. So, what kind of gardener am I? A satisfied one.

Neal Sanders' latest mystery, ***Fatal Equity***, was published in March. You can find it at Amazon and in bookstores.



by Betty Sanders,
Leaflet Contributor

Don't be seduced by the beautiful displays at garden centers. It's too cold to plant any annuals except pansies, peas, spinach and onions. Most plants such as marigolds and impatiens need soil temperatures in the 60s or higher to survive. And favorite vegetables like tomatoes and cucumbers need the soil to be over 70° before you think of planting them outside. Spend a few minutes online getting information from reliable sources, not from the guy at the box store who may have been in charge of light bulbs last week. You'll save yourself time, money, and effort.



Plant cold hardy crops. Put in your radishes, peas, carrots, beets, spinach, and onions as soon as the garden is dry enough not to leave footprints. Use row covers to help warm the soil and exclude insects that will attack your plants.

Save time and money by skipping early spring green-up routines promoted by fertilizer companies. Lawns (which are perennial, meaning they come back every year) should be fertilized in the fall when they will build stronger roots, and when weeds (which are annuals) are dying. Fertilizing now gives a head start to the weeds. All your lawn needs now is a good raking with a spring tine (metal) rake to remove winter debris.

Celebrate Earth Day on April 22. After a winter not soon to be forgotten, make an effort to do something to help Mother Earth overcome the many, many problems we humans have thrown at her. Help clean up the banks of a stream or a beach that 'somehow' collects trash. Put together a group of friends (including younger members of the community) to find and pull, cut down (or dig out as appropriate) invasive plants that have taken over native plants. And plant a group of Massachusetts natives on your property—or on public property (with permission) to provide the food needed by native birds, bees, and butterflies. Not sure where to find them or what to plant? [Grow Native Massachusetts](#) provides a resource list and ample information you will need.

Celebrate Arbor Day on April 27. Trees are a wonderful part of our environment. If you plant natives, you get more than shade. Native oaks are a vital food source for over 500 varieties of caterpillars that grow up to be the colorful butterflies and moths that pollinate flowers, provide food for birds, and enhance our lives. Native maples feed nearly 300 varieties. Too many of the trees we plant originate in other parts of the world and cannot help our environment to stay healthy. Plant for shade and flowers—native dogwood (*Cornus florida*) will delight you with flowers in the spring and a tree that appears to have developed the 'shakes' in the fall as dozens of birds stop to eat their large berries to fatten up for winter or load up before migrating south.

Remove winter protection such as evergreen boughs and mulch or dirt piled around the base of tender plants. But stay off wet beds!

Hold off applying mulch until the soil has warmed to at least 55° — a soil thermometer is a great investment for any gardener. Covering the soil earlier will hold the cold in, slowing down the new growth of your plants. And think about skipping mulch altogether—it's actually not good for the garden — and planting ground covers: ferns or tiarellas in the shade, thyme or carex in the sun. They don't need to be mown or replaced annually and look better than chipped wood!

Enjoy spring bulbs. Make notes of areas where you can add more bulbs in the fall for next spring, include the colors you think will look best and make certain to get the names of bulbs you admire but can't identify.

You can see more of Betty Sanders' gardening suggestions at www.BettyOnGardening.com.

Connect with us



www.MassHort.org - 617-933-4900