



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Bridge of Flowers

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts



To say that 2023 was challenging seems an understatement at best. Even as the bridge opened on April 1, unrolling a carpet of spring color into May, we were well into planning for major bridge structural repairs that would require us to remove all the beloved plantings and close the bridge from 2024–2025. We were also preparing for the annual plant sale, as well as a new venture, an art exhibit and sale.

The reconstruction project is being funded by a \$2.28 million state infrastructure grant * to the owners of the old trolley bridge, the Shelburne Falls Fire & Water District.

Cognizant of the impact the closure would have on the local economy, we sponsored a series of informational sessions throughout the spring for business owners and residents with representatives of the engineering firm Tighe & Bond, who will carry out the work.

Scheduling the project, we explained, was driven by the urgency of the repairs needed as well as the availability of state money. We invited all interested parties to work with the Bridge of Flowers Committee to offset our mutual losses with new ideas for attracting visitors during the closure.

The Committee spent much of April preparing for the annual plant sale in mid-May. Once again this year's sale attracted a large and enthusiastic crowd of gardeners on a bright and sunny day who bought nearly every plant.

The wet summer that followed did not seem to discourage visitors: 33,531 people from many different states and countries signed the guest books, nearly the same as the previous year, although the actual number is closer to 100,000, since about only one-third of visitors actually sign in.

Last spring, the formal dissolution of the Preservation Fund, a citizens' organization formed in the mid-1980s to raise money for bridge repair, resulted in modest funds from its accounts being transferred to the Bridge of Flowers' budget. We were also pleased to receive a generous bequest from the estate of the late Hale Johnson, a longtime resident of Colrain and a celebrated artist.

As the season wound down, our attention turned to planning for our first-time art exhibition and sale on October 14 and 15 and for the Herculean task of removing all plantings from the bridge.

The goals of the art exhibit/sale were twofold: to establish ties with the large community of artists and artisans who live here, and to create a new income stream for our budget. Ann Lofquist and Joanne Soroka, artists who also serve on the Committee, organized the event. Held at the Shelburne-Buckland Community Center, the show featured 109 pieces by 67 artists in a variety of media, each piece focused on the bridge or gardens.

Forty-two of the works sold, with the artists generously donating all or part of the proceeds to the bridge. Thanks to all who pitched in to make this event such a resounding success, plans are being made to hold another art show/sale this year on August 16–18. Income will be particularly important while the bridge is closed.

When the gates to the bridge were closed as usual on October 31, a large and dedicated army of volunteers spent several weeks on "the big dig," led by Head Gardener Carol DeLorenzo and Assistant Gardener Elliston Bingham.

Members of the Blossom Brigade, the Bridge Committee, and the Shelburne Falls Area Women's Club, as well as residents and even several engineers from Tighe & Bond, dug and helped transport hundreds of valuable perennials, specimen bushes, and smaller trees to local gardens to be cared for until they can be returned to the bridge when it re-opens.

Some larger trees that can't be returned to the bridge found new homes. Unfortunately, the beloved wisteria that have long graced the mid-point of the bridge cannot be salvaged, but we hope to preserve portions of their uniquely gnarled trunks and make them available for other aesthetic purposes.

The gates re-opened very briefly in late November, when a holiday tree, donated by Apex Orchards, was mounted mid-way on the path, its wreath of white lights lit to coincide with the arrival of Santa as part of Moonlight Magic festivities.

With our plants all snug in their beds, visions of flowers danced in our heads, along with plans for a grand re-opening of the Bridge of Flowers sometime in 2025.

* More detailed information about the reconstruction project is posted on the Bridge of Flowers website: www.bridgeofflowersmass.org.



Gifts in Memory of

Joe Babcock
Rick Bamber
Craig W. Barry, Jr.
Candae B. Bath
Eveline Beauregard
Leigh M. Bernard
Jane S. Burnett
Margaret E. Folgmann
Edward G. Keefe
Doris Mae Klein
Dexter Burt Lyman
Susan Maddern
Margaret Kuhn Madsen
Yvonne Montmeat

Lisa "Tish" Murphy
Carl Nilman
Mary Overton
Florence Kuhn Perry
Donna Remeika
Margalee Riggan
Susie Robbins
Hattie O. Salter
Peter J. Sanborn
Mindy Sparks
Marie F. Spinney
Frances Wood Milne Sullivan
Donald T. Upton
Marian L. Woodsome



FRIENDS

New England Aster (gifts of \$500+)

W. E. Aubuchon Co. Inc.
Sarah Hill Buck
Nancy Edwards & Anders Ferguson
Barbara & John Hurley
Walter Burnham & Joy Knohr

Bob & Judy Lawler
Peter & Eva Otten
Three Friends Fund
Cliff & Carol Washer
Dave Weiland & Virginia Brown

Gardener's Circle (gifts of \$250-499)

Greg Beck; Bartlett Tree Experts
Carl's 4 Season Yardscape Services
Chickley Alp Farm, Ellen & Scott
Purinton
Clark's Corvair Parts
Lisa & Charlie Cornish
Country Aire Campground
Davenport's Service Station
Thomas & Janet Fetter
Florence B. Fowlkes
Andrea & Steven Frank
Greenfield Co-op Bank
Dr. & Mrs. Greg Grillone
Bob & Cheryl Handsaker
Hall Tavern Farm

Michael Herr
MaryAnn Dalton & Paul Hollings
LaPierre's Media Marketing
Arnold Levinson
Marion & Peter London
Joan MacIver
Mill River Farm
David Nims
Kim & Tim Paige
Palmeri Electric LLC
Roberta L. Potter
Peter & Susan Schriber
Vic Sloan & Sue Rees
Nikki & Bob Welsh
West End Pub

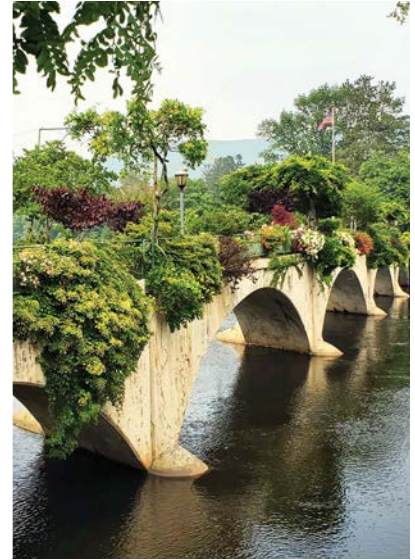
For additional information about the garden
or to join the *Friends of the Bridge*
(with a gift of \$25 or more) visit our website:

bridgeofflowersmass.org

*Memorial Gifts are listed on the bulletin board
located at the Buckland side of the bridge.*

Gifts in Honor of

Car & Joe Bart
Angus & Laurel Dun
Hindell Grossman & Brad Smith
Kip Moeller
Max Spinner





Silver Trowel (gifts of \$100–249)

Patricia Adams	Mary Duane; Miss Mary's Honey	Ellen & Ron Louie	Georgia Russo
Callie, Liza and Don Ahern	Christine Ermenc	Tom & Gail Lucia	Steven P. Shulda
Heather Alexander	Cheryl Faufaw	Mildred March	Peter Slack & Family
Carol Angus	Maureen Flaherty	Lorraine McCarthy	Russ & Cheri Snow
Apex Orchards	Judy Fogg	Belden Merims	Randi Stein
Colleen M. Armstrong	Sharon Glazer	Wanda Mooney	Shauna Stokes & Joel Chew
Amy Barry	Gail R. Hanlon	Karen O. Moore	Annette Szpila
Baystate Perennial Farm	Marian Hazzard	Maureen Moore	Steven Thomashow
Blackmer Insurance Agency	The Hydefrost Family	Faith Moseley	Cynthia Tomasini
Marlene A. Borer	Rita Jaros	Jon & Marilyn Osgood	Eileen Travis
Adam Buursma; Arboreal Habitats	Patricia Baiardi Kantorski	Elizabeth Otis	Tom & Ann Weisse
Patrick L. Cadam & Cynthia Brown	Patricia Kelleher	Nancy Parland & Steve Howland	Western Mass Estate Planning
Myra & Earl Carlow	Kerry LaFleur	Margaret Payne	Marguerite Morris Willis
Mike Chovenec & Rick Connor	Carol Lambrie-Parise	Judith W. Perera	Karen Winkler
Chia Collins & Michael Cohen	Carmela & Raymond Lanza-Weil	Carol Perman	Williamstown Garden Club
Lynn Connelly	Dr. Laplante & Susan Bissell	The Perry Family	Deborah Woodsome
Deborah Decoigne	Pat & Henry Leuchtman	Raymond & Melanie Poudrier	
Ron & Karen Dobosz		Regina Purinton	
Nancy L. Dole Books & Ephemera		Jean & Larry Rankin	

Green Thumb (gifts of \$25–99)

Beth Bernstein	Flanders Law Offices	Lynda & Bill Leitner	Sarah Saville Shaffer
Olivia & William Blumer	Dick & Shirley Floyd	Amelia & Alex Leonardi	Susan Shearer
Daniel Brown	Margaret & Donald Freeman	Eric Lewanda	Mara Silver
Penny Butler	Kathe Geist	Karina Lutz	Wes Slate & Georgia Bills
Polly Byers	Stephanie Gelfan	Jorie MacLeod & Jim Bonham	Suzanne Smethurst
Richard Casten	Jacqui Goodman & Norman Beebe	Peggy March	Penelope Spearance
Kate Clarke	Jeffrey & Lorrie Grass	Nathalie McCormick	Lisa Spinney
David Close & Gail Chapman Close	Richard & Roxanne Hamilton	Bill Mish	Allen Swedlund
Emily & Jon Crawford	Barbara Hoffman	Dale Moss	Ho & Marti Taft-Ferguson
Catherine Daly	Sally Judd	Vanda & Tom Mullins	Cynthia Price Taylor
Penny DeGeorges	Richard & Sharon Kachadoorian	Sarah Neelon	Lauren Thompson
Frances Drzymala	Andrew & Carol Klyman	Sylvia & Keith Orcutt	Dolores & Fred Turcotte
Barbara Edsall	Nancy Kocik	Elaine Parmett	Sylvia A. Varney
Ken & Nancy Eisenstein	Robert & Toni Ann Kubica	Paula Parsons	Wandering Moon
Ellen Eller	Jen & Aaron Lapan	Julie Petty & Dave Reading	Ellen Weeks
Karen Fairbrother	Jennifer Lapierre	Margaret Phelps	Ann Wetherbee
Fred & Lois Feldman	Laporte Bookkeeping	David & Melissa Roberts	Patricia Wood
Nan & Bob Fischlein		Barbara & Robert Ruchames	Nancy & Joe Woods
		Paul W. Schroeder	



We carefully review lists of donors for accuracy. We sincerely apologize if any names were missed.



SAVE THE DATES

Bridge of Flowers Plant Sale, 2024

Saturday, May 11
9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon

Corner of
Main and Water Streets
Shelburne Falls, MA

Art Show

August 16, 17 and 18

Shelburne Buckland
Community Center

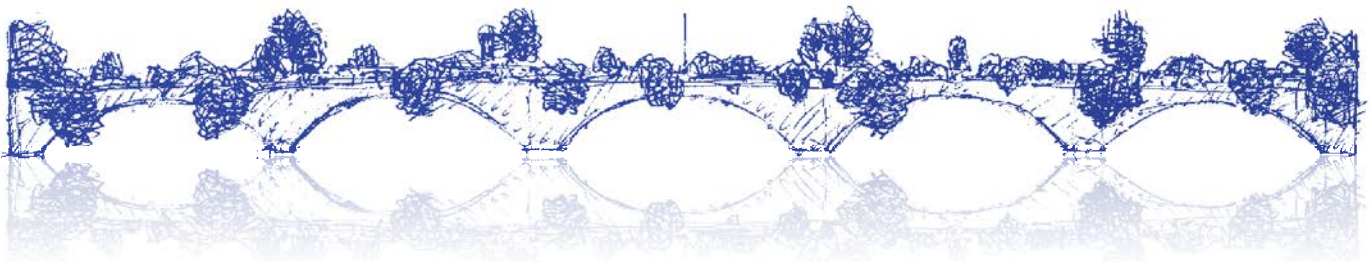


Bridge of Flowers Committee 2023

Annette Szpila *Chair*
Carol Angus & Lynda Leitner *Co-Chairs*
Virginia Ray *Recording Secretary*
Peggy March *Treasurer*

Kathryn Atkins
Ann Lofquist
Jorie MacLeod
Laurel Rollins
Joanne Soroka

Carol DeLorenzo *Head Gardener*
Elliston Bingham *Assistant Gardener*



Bridge of Flowers

P.O. Box 335, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

bridgeofflowersmass.org