

HISTORY OF TOWER HILL BOTANIC GARDEN

TIMELINE

- 1842** March 3, Worcester County Horticultural Society incorporated
- 1846** Society receives its first bequest, \$3,000, from Daniel Waldo
- 1851** 1st Horticultural Hall built at 16-20 Front Street, Worcester
- 1853** Because of their popularity, fruit, flower and vegetable exhibitions begin to be held weekly from May through August
- 1861** All exhibitions canceled due to poor growing season (first & only time)
- 1867** Exhibitions outgrow Horticultural Hall and larger ones held in Mechanics Hall
- 1874** First Spring Flower Show held
- 1875** Membership nears 1400; WCHS is debt-free and leases first floor of Horticulture Hall for steady income
- 1876** WCHS sends representatives to the Centennial Int'l Exhibition in Philadelphia to exhibit prize-winning fruit
- 1892** 50th WCHS anniversary celebration held in spite of blizzard
- 1906** First Children's exhibitions held
- 1917** WCHS sponsors program of Victory Gardening during World War I including lectures on the best way to grow vegetables
- 1924** Horticultural Hall leased to F.W. Woolworth for 50 years; WCHS purchases the home of Harry W. Smith to build a larger WCHS building
- 1928** New Horticultural Building opens at 30 Elm Street, Worcester
- 1942** 100th WCHS anniversary celebrated; party briefly interrupted by WWII air raid siren requiring move to bomb shelter
- 1952** WCHS begins support of Experimental Orchard of Old Apple Varieties on S. Lothrop Davenport's farm; orchard moves to Old Sturbridge Village in 1973 and to THBG in 1990
- 1983** Trustees vote to establish a Botanic Garden
- 1986** Tower Hill Botanic Garden officially opens in Boylston, MA
- 1988** Initial 50 year Master Plan for Tower Hill unveiled and approved
- 1990** Lawn Garden, Secret Garden and Harrington Orchard dedicated
- 1991** Over 15,000 attend the last WCHS Spring Flower Show at Worcester Centrum
- 1992** WCHS celebrates its 150th Anniversary with party at Mechanics Hall
- 1992** Fuller Drive opens creating new entrance at 11 French Drive
- 1994** Stoddard Education and Visitors Center opens
- 1997** The Cary Award, recognizing distinctive plants for New England, introduced
- 1999** The Orangerie, Tower Hill's temperate conservatory, opens
- 2000** The Systematic Garden opens
- 2001** The Folly constructed in the Inner Park
- 2002** The Hope H. Spear Wildlife Refuge Pond completed
- 2002** The Temple of Peace opens in the Inner Park
- 2010** The Winter Garden and Limonaia open
- 2015** The Court: A Garden Within Reach, an accessible garden, opens
- 2016** A new Master Plan is approved by the Board of Trustees
- 2016** The Worcester Tree Initiative becomes an independent program of THBG
- 2016** THBG celebrates its 30th anniversary, and recognizes the WCHS 175th anniversary with a Gala held in the fall
- 2017** After a several years of increasing attendance, we are welcoming 140,000 visitors annually