



Fall/Winter
2020

OUR GARDENS ARE LOVE THERAPY

The flowers in Gloucester's public spaces gave joy and peace to visitors and residents.

Many people have reached out to Generous Gardeners on Instagram, Facebook, by email or in person to say that our gardens spread love. We know our efforts are appreciated by everyone who strolls Stacy Boulevard or drives by a cheery traffic island, but it is always gratifying to hear.

Our flagship gardens on Stacy Boulevard were especially stunning as we continue to learn what thrives in that challenging gardening environment. This year there were over 2,000 annuals, 2,000 daylilies and 900 dahlias to thrill and delight all ages.

*"Gardens are not made by singing 'Oh, how beautiful,' and sitting in the shade." - **Rudyard Kipling***



Photo by David Cox

WE ARE VERY PROUD OF THE TWO NATIONAL AWARDS GRANTED TO GLOUCESTER FROM THE AMERICA IN BLOOM ORGANIZATION FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN FLOWERS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. KUDOS TO MAYOR SEFATIA ROMEO THEKEN, DPW DIRECTOR MIKE HALE, AND ALL OF THE HELPFUL CITY EMPLOYEES WHO SUPPORT OUR WORK.



IMPORTANT DATES:

GENEROUS GARDENERS' PLANT SALE, MAY 22, 2021

GLOUCESTER GARDEN TOUR, JULY 10, 2021

Our gardened spaces are free for everyone to enjoy. We are all volunteers and the flowers are funded with private donations and proceeds from our garden tour. Please consider a donation to Generous Gardeners, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Our Annual Garden Tour

As one can imagine, keeping Gloucester gardens filled with a full season of colors and a huge variety of flowers is quite expensive. Generous Gardeners usually covers much of that expense with our annual garden tour fundraiser. Each year over 600 people look forward to enjoying a self-guided walking tour of a dozen or so gardens in a chosen Gloucester neighborhood on one day in July. This year we couldn't hold the tour with that many people gathered together, so we got creative and made the tour virtual. Generous Gardeners' volunteers made videos and slideshows of their own gardens. For a small donation one could sign up to receive a link on the tour date to watch the video. The 45-minute tour features a delightful collection of 18 gardens large and small, all very different from each other. One highlights a Japanese garden, another is cleverly decorated with colorful handmade ceramic tiles, and yet another covers four acres of fabulous views and beautiful flowers. The common feature in all of them is the pride of the owner.

While this was not as financially successful as our walking tour, it had the added benefit of being handicapped accessible and pet friendly because it was viewed in the comfort of your own home. We plan to video next year's tour to be accessible to everyone, but we also hope (fingers crossed!) to be holding the event in person in an East Gloucester neighborhood on July 10, 2021. More details will follow in the spring, but if you need a garden fix in the meantime, you can go to our website generousgardeners.org on the 2020 garden tour page and enjoy the video.

2020 STARS OF THE BOULEVARD



Lantana 'Marmalade Orange' is a stunning annual in the orange beds on Stacy Boulevard. These salt tolerant prolific bloomers attract every type of attention.

Dahlia 'Nick Sr.' is a bold and bright dinnerplate variety in the red beds. With unusual petals that ruffle and turn, this dramatic flower won our hearts.



Day-lily 'Heavenly Angel Ice' is a new almost white spider variety added to the white gardens this year. The unusual structure of the flower with the narrow, ruffled petals delighted all passers-by.

DAHLIAS!

In 2020 there were over 900 dahlias on Stacy Boulevard. There were 125 varieties representing the different flowering types and sizes. The American Dahlias Society is a great online resource at their website *dahlia.org*. Antonietta Calabrese is the Generous Gardeners' "dahlia whisperer" and takes very good care of her "babies." Here are some pointers if you would like to grow dahlias in your own garden:

- You can purchase dahlias as tubers online now for delivery next year or at garden centers in the spring. Next year Generous Gardeners will be selling our extra tubers at our spring plant sale or directly, if that is not safely possible. We purchase many of our tubers from Jessie Sorrells who has a dahlia farm in Rockport and website at *rovingradish.net*.
- Tubers should be planted in full sun after the last frost. In our area that it is usually early June.
- Most dahlia varieties require staking. We have found that square tomato cages provide the best support.
- Most dahlia varieties should be "topped" in the first month of growth to encourage side branching, increase bloom size, and promote a sturdier and more compact growth habit. Gently pinch out the central growth stem just above a set of leaves, taking care not to damage the side buds at the junction between stem and leaf.
- Dahlias must be dug and stored for the winter in New England. We dig them out at the end of October, dry them and pack them in peat moss for the winter. They are stored in volunteers' basements, ideally at 40-50 degrees.
- Dividing dahlia tubers is an art and needs to be done either before storing or in the spring. Each tuber needs to have an "eye" to sprout. Eyes are located around the crown of the tuber. Each flower generally creates a few extra tubers each summer, so they are a generous flower.
- Dahlias are extremely vulnerable to viruses, so be sure to sanitize any tools used to divide.



Photo by Cyndi Deal

2020 GARDEN RENOVATIONS

FITZ HENRY LANE PARK

This area is adjacent to the new Chamber of Commerce building and visiting boat center, making it a delightful way to welcome people to Gloucester. In collaboration with the DPW, we created new gardens along Rogers Street and a trailing garden alongside stone steps on the Harbor Loop access to the Lane house.

O'MALEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

As part of a complete DPW overhaul of the front of the school, Generous Gardeners installed over 200 plants of zebra, feather reed, purple muhly, and gold Japanese grasses which will result in a variety of height, color, shape, and texture.

POLICE STATION ENBANKMENT

After the DPW installed an erosion control barrier, Generous Gardeners planted lavender on the steepest slope to become hedged rows over time to prevent slippage. Along the top of the new wall, we planted varieties of sedum. Rose of Sharon trees, mums, butterfly bush, daisies and grasses were also added to other sections of the garden.

HESPERUS TRIANGLE

The large traffic island at Hesperus Triangle in Magnolia was also adopted by Generous Gardeners. After clearing out the bed, we planted a magnolia tree, added stepping stones, and planted a variety of hardy perennials.

Our Gardened Spaces

Although the Stacy Boulevard Gardens are our flagship, we care for over 45 other spaces in Gloucester. Please see our website for more information:

GenerousGardeners.org



Stacy Boulevard in bloom. *Photo by David Cox*

VOLUNTEER WITH GENEROUS GARDENERS

We currently have over 60 volunteers associated with our organization and welcome new volunteers who are interested in our mission. Susan Kelly maintains an email list of all volunteers to keep them updated all year.

Caring for our gardens takes the majority of our volunteer time. We plant, weed, rake, water and deadhead. Some garden volunteers like to be assigned to work as part of a team at a designated space for an ongoing commitment, and others work on a more intermittent basis when a specific task needs a group effort (such as tulip planting, spring clean-up, etc.).

Volunteering at one of our fundraising events is another way to participate. We also have a volunteer board of directors that keeps the organization focused on its mission and works with sponsors, grants, garden designers, website review, and finances.

If you are interested in volunteering with us, please email Susan Kelly at susan@generousgardeners.org and let her know of your interests!

Generous Gardeners

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