

*Making America a Nation of Gardeners, a Land of Gardens*

# American Horticultural Society Annual Report

July 1, 2003–June 30, 2004

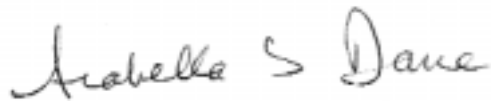
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

## *Tilling Tomorrow's Garden*

**F**ISCAL YEAR 2004 (July 2003 to June 2004) was a landmark year for the American Horticultural Society. As you will see in this Annual Report, much good grows in our garden. We are laying the groundwork for future success. This was a year of cultivation, preparation, and evaluation.

The Board of Directors and the Board Committees, working with the AHS staff under the able leadership of President Katy Moss Warner, have tilled deeply, enriched our soil, and begun planting our future. This year we completed a comprehensive evaluation of our infrastructure, our programs, and our activities. We dug deeply, growing, pruning, adding, transplanting, and composting elements as we established the envisioned structure for AHS as the Center for American Horticulture at George Washington's River Farm. We are committed to maintaining the ongoing financial stability of our organization as we grow our future. How we do it is just as important as what we do. We are confident that the American Horticultural Society is healthy and poised for growth.

I am pleased to share with you this report, which documents our successes, and acknowledges many of those who helped with invaluable financial support and contributions of time and talent during the 2004 fiscal year. Thank you members, donors, volunteers, and partner organizations. With these seeds of success we will become, in the not too distant future, a nation of gardeners and a land of gardens.



Arabella S. Dane  
Chair, AHS Board of Directors



Schoolchildren in *The Growing Connection* program show off their harvest.

## ***Helping Americans Enjoy the Rewards of Gardens and Gardening***

***The 2004 AHS Member Guide listed an unprecedented 171 public gardens and 30 shows that offer free admission or discounts to Society members.***

***Since the first National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in 1993, more than 2,000 educators have taken the opportunity to absorb the most current thought on plant-based education.***

For more than 80 years, the American Horticultural Society has worked to promote horticulture and help gardeners across America fully experience the joys of gardens and gardening. The AHS is a community of gardeners—of every age, from every region of the country, and of every level of interest and expertise. Among the many benefits AHS members enjoy are: *The American Gardener* magazine; the AHS Web site; free or reduced admission at many public gardens and flower shows; and the annual Seed Exchange.

The Society's flagship publication, *The American Gardener*, provides members with in-depth gardening information and a connection to other horticulture enthusiasts who share a commitment to promoting gardening for the greater good of all. This past year, articles on topics ranging from "Waterwise Gardening" and "Garden Havens for Pollinators" to "Kitchen Gardens—American Style" provided inspiration to members across the nation.

Public gardens and flower and garden shows provide outstanding opportunities to experience the richness of American horticulture. The 2004 *AHS Member Guide* listed an unprecedented 171 public gardens and 30 shows across the country that offer admission or discounts to Society members.

The AHS Web site provides links to gardening resources and like-minded organizations. It also offers information on horticultural programs and events throughout the United States.

Since 1959, the annual Seed Exchange has enabled members to donate and obtain seeds from each other. In 2004 the Seed Exchange included 163 different offerings and generated more than 1,000 orders.

## ***Connecting to Tomorrow's Gardeners***

Since the first National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in 1993, the American Horticultural Society has been a leader in promoting and supporting the inclusion of gardens in children's lives. Not only are plants and gardens important to play, learning, and quality of life, but early outdoor experiences can help shape positive environmental attitudes and values that last a lifetime.

AHS's youth programs are guided by the vision of the AHS National Children & Youth Garden Advisory Panel, which includes nationally recognized leaders in youth gardening education.

More than 2,000 teachers, public garden educators, extension educators, and community program leaders have taken the opportunity to absorb the most current thought on plant-based education since the Symposium's inception. The 2003 Symposium was held at River Farm and featured tours to see ongoing gardening programs at Tuckahoe Elementary School and at Green Spring Garden Park. Jane Taylor, founding curator of the Michigan State University 4H Children's Garden, provided a keynote presentation.

An exciting new pilot program—*The Growing Connection*—was launched in May and is the result of a unique partnership between the AHS and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. An interdisciplinary, hands-on program, *The Growing Connection* brings together American middle-school students with their contemporaries around the world to share the experience of growing food and learning the science of good nutrition while using the remarkable capacity of new technology to share information and resources.

## Sharing the Art and Science of Horticulture

Through its educational programs, the AHS provides a variety of opportunities for members to explore the world of gardening and to pursue their passion for plants. The Society's educational programs, ranging from national symposia to intimate garden tours, offer one-of-a-kind experiences that appeal to a diverse audience of horticulture enthusiasts.

Through a partnership with the Leonard Haertter Travel Company, the AHS's Travel Study program gives American gardeners a chance to visit renowned public and private gardens and natural areas in all parts of the world. In 2003–2004, nearly 300 members participated in this program, going to 13 different destinations.

Making its debut in April 2004 was the AHS Garden School with programs on Indoor Plants and Garden Photography. Allowing avid gardeners the opportunity to explore their passion through a variety of in-depth experiences, the AHS Garden School concept features personal, hands-on instruction from nationally renowned horticultural experts and unique behind-the-scenes tours of gardens, nurseries, and more.

An integral part of the Society's educational programs is the AHS Internship program. Five outstanding students interned at River Farm this past year, working alongside our AHS staff, gaining practical experience, and applying classroom learning to real-world situations.

Co-sponsored programs, including the Magic of Landscaping professional development conference, the Horticulture Gardening Institute's online courses, and the respected Colonial Williamsburg Garden Symposium offer further opportunities for members to explore the art and science of horticulture.

## Providing Useful and Authoritative Information

The love of plants creates a common bond between people that transcends language. The American Horticultural Society has been a leader in standardizing, communicating, and enriching that language throughout its history.

Over the years, nearly 100 separate AHS reference books have found a place on the bookshelves of American gardeners. In partnership with DK Publishing, the Society is recognized as one of the leading sources of authoritative references covering all aspects of horticulture. One of the most popular references—*The AHS A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants*—has sold over 200,000 copies. An updated second edition of *The AHS Encyclopedia of Gardening* was published in 2003. In collaboration with leading horticulturists and garden writers, the Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast *AHS SMARTGARDEN™ Regional Guides* were published, offering a practical approach to environmentally responsible gardening.

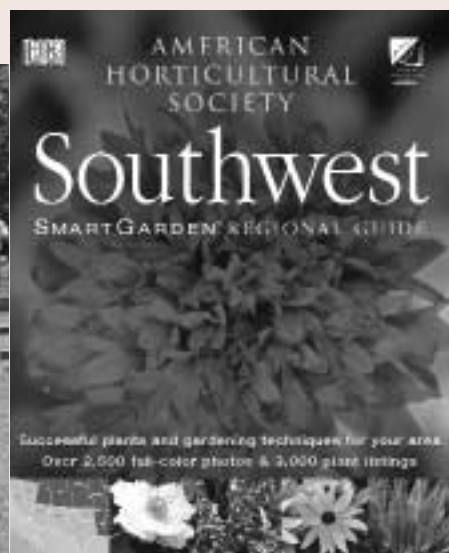
In 1997, the Society introduced the AHS Plant Heat Zone Map, which has revolutionized the way American gardeners select region-appropriate plants. Across the country, AHS heat tolerance and USDA plant hardiness codes are the standard for gardeners and growers alike. To support the Society's ongoing publication programs, the AHS maintains heat and hardiness codes for more than 30,000 plants in the Showtime® database.

Of all AHS publications, *The American Gardener* magazine is the most well known. Since its beginning as *The National Horticultural Magazine* in 1922, more than 600 issues have been printed. Originally a publication for professional horticulturists and scientists, *The American Gardener* has evolved into a magazine where the best information is made accessible to all.

**Nearly 300 members participated in Travel Study programs to 13 different destinations in 2003–2004.**

**Over the years, nearly 100 separate AHS reference books have found a place on the bookshelves of American gardeners. The AHS A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants—has sold over 200,000 copies.**

Tuckahoe Elementary School's children's garden, 2003 Children & Youth Garden Symposium.





Rick Darke, center, 2004 Horticultural Writing Award winner.



Staff and volunteers planting the André Bluemel Meadow at River Farm.

**To support the Society's ongoing publication program, the AHS maintains heat tolerance and cold hardiness codes for more than 30,000 plants in the Showtime® database.**

**André Viette, acclaimed nurseryman, garden communicator, and educator, was the recipient of the Liberty Hyde Bailey award in 2004.**

### **Recognizing Horticultural Achievements**

American horticulture has advanced because of its champions—innovators and leaders who have made significant contributions to the quality and diversity of plants available to us, our success in maintaining our gardens, and our knowledge of plants. Many of these champions are unsung heroes, their contributions unknown to all but the most avid gardeners. The Society's awards programs strive to change that, recognizing and promoting the achievements and contributions of individuals and organizations across the entire spectrum of horticulture.

Through the AHS Great American Gardeners Awards program, AHS honors a range of accomplishments, from plant breeding and garden technology to garden writing and landscape design. Eighteen such awards were presented in 2004. One of the most prestigious is the AHS Liberty Hyde Bailey award, which recognizes an American who has made significant contributions in at least three major areas of horticulture. André Viette, acclaimed nurseryman, garden communicator, and educator, was the 2004 recipient of the Liberty Hyde Bailey award.

The AHS Book Awards program debuted in 1996 in recognition of the Society's 75th birthday. Five exceptional gardening books were recognized in 2004, including *The Passion for Gardening* by Ken Druse, *An Encyclopedia of Cultivated Palms* by Robert Lee Riffle, and *Time and the Gardener* by Elisabeth Sheldon.

Another important award is the AHS Environmental Award, which was presented at 33 flower and garden shows across the country in 2004. This recognition is given to American green-industry leaders who demonstrate a sensitivity to environmentally responsible gardening through flower show exhibits.

### **Showcasing and Demonstrating the Best of American Horticulture**

Since the AHS moved its national headquarters to River Farm in 1973, the property has been a meeting place for horticultural and community groups and a green space for families to enjoy. With its 25 acres of lawns, meadows, woodlands, and formal gardens surrounding the Estate House, River Farm combines historic significance with contemporary relevance. River Farm has been the focus of much attention in 2003–2004 as existing programs have been strengthened, new programs have been created, and a visionary plan for the future has been crafted.

Several new gardens that showcase the Society's programs were established in 2003–2004. *The Growing Connection* Demonstration Garden was created, serving as a model and learning center for this exciting new program, and the André Bluemel Meadow is taking shape with the addition of 32,000 plugs of native perennials and grasses.

In June 2004, a milestone was reached in the realization of the Society's dream of transforming River Farm into a national center for American horticulture. After more than two years of work, a conceptual master plan was approved by the AHS Board of Directors. The Society was very fortunate to have the services of a nationally renowned landscape design firm, Marshall•Tyler•Rausch, in the plan's development. The plan balances the desire to maintain the character, historic context, and natural beauty of the site with the changes required to meet the needs of a growing organization with a more dynamic future role. Thanks to the hard work of our AHS Board and staff, we have a strong foundation from which to fulfill the vision of creating a "nation's capital" for American horticulture at River Farm.

## *American Horticultural Society Financial Summary*

The following financial statement shows that the American Horticultural Society is in a strong financial position, enhanced by the debt-free ownership of the 25-acre headquarters property, George Washington's River Farm. This property was purchased for AHS in 1976 with a generous \$1 million gift from Enid A. Haupt.

### **Statement of Financial Position Year ended June 30, 2004**

<b>ASSETS</b>	
CASH ACCOUNTS	\$136,054
PLEDGES RECEIVABLE, NET	209,975
OTHER ASSETS	23,537
INVESTMENTS	2,692,409
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET	854,665
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,916,640</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES	\$353,311
DEFERRED REVENUE AND SUPPORT	688,643
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$1,041,954</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	
UNRESTRICTED	\$2,384,989
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	281,848
PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	207,849
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$2,874,686</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 3,916,640</b>

### **Statement of Financial Activities Year ended June 30, 2004**

<b>REVENUE SUMMARY</b>	
MEMBERSHIP	\$987,786
EVENTS AND SERVICES	223,761
CONTRIBUTIONS AND GALA	998,928
RIVER FARM RENTALS	233,700
NET INVESTMENT INCOME	234,367
ROYALTY AND OTHER INCOME	88,576
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$2,767,118</b>
<b>EXPENSES SUMMARY</b>	
MEMBERSHIP	\$506,058
EDUCATIONAL EVENTS	180,514
COMMUNICATIONS	478,562
DEVELOPMENT	243,763
GROUNDS AND BUILDING	496,091
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	522,846
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,427,834</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$339,284</b>

The numbers above have been excerpted from the American Horticultural Society's June 30, 2004 audited financial statements. A copy of the complete audit report is available upon written request from the American Horticultural Society's national office.

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