When something is as lovely and loved as the Bridge of Flowers in Shelburne Falls, it is hard to believe that it can get even better. But so it did in 2016.

In 2015, a new wooden Garden House to hold tools and supplies for gardeners replaced the deteriorated and inadequate former shed. The structure was designed to complement the setting and built with donations from our Friends, including past memorial contributions.

This year, a local artist suggested adding a flower themed stained glass window on the wall of the Garden House facing visitors. The window, designed, constructed and donated by Nancy Katz and Mark Liebowitz of Wilmark Studios in Shelburne Falls, was set into place this summer. In mid July a festive dedication garden party on the Shelburne Falls side of the Bridge celebrated both the new Garden House and its new window. The party had music by the Shelburne Falls Military Band, delicious refreshments and invitations to all those who helped in so many vital ways with the construction effort. Memorably, the party also had a sudden thunderstorm that drenched attendees. Gardeners happily noted, though, that the storm brought much needed rain in a drought season.

Getting drenched at a Bridge of Flowers event was something of a surprise in dry 2016. Dozens of volunteers worked (moody uncomplainingly!) through a cold drenching rain on a Friday evening in May to move thousands of potted plants from their temporary nursery at the home of plant sale chairman and nursery plant caretaker extraordinaire Lynda Leitner and set them up for the annual Plant Sale on the following day. It was an impressive parade of trucks, vans, SUVs, garden carts and wheelbarrows and rain-gear clad volunteers. As always, the plants were gorgeous. They loved the rain! Happily the weather was more pleasant for humans on the day of the sale itself, leading to crowds of eager plant buyers and revenue for the Bridge operating fund. Thanks to volunteer bakers, buyers also enjoyed coffee break treats while shopping. And we cannot forget the kind professional nurseries and other vendors who assist us each year by letting us profit from sales of their plants and merchandise.
The rain in May at the start of the season did not hold through the summer. But, thanks to gardeners Carol DeLorenzo, Elliston Bingham, the Blossom Brigade volunteers, and our new improved irrigation system the Bridge bloomed beautifully. Drought did not deter visitors. Thousands came from all over the world and left comments about the loveliness of the blooming Bridge. They also left welcome contributions in the donation box.

We are fortunate too that our Friends continued to be generous, keeping the Bridge’s financial footing secure and allowing the committee to think about future needs such as resurfacing the footpath to benefit the thousands of feet that trod it – and the health of the flower beds.

Gifts In Honor Of
Paul and Gerry Mead
Dr. Robert Miller and Anna Foster
Kathleen M. O’Neill
Nancy F. Strader
Lisa Talayaco

New England Aster (gifts of $500+)
Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association
John & Barbara Hurley
Nancy Katz/Wilmark Studio
Shelburne Falls Area Women’s Club
West End Pub

Gardener’s Circle (gifts of $250-499)
Blue Rock Restaurant & Bar
Janice Boudreau Photography
Bridge of Flowers Business Center
Carl’s Four Season Yardscape, LLC
Christopher Reilly Design
Clark’s Corner Parts, Inc.
Country Air Campground
Thomas Dame & Denise Duval, ESQ
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Nancy L. Dole Books & Ephemerma
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Shelburne Falls Bookstores
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Stump Sprouts
Cynthia Tomasini
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Nikki & Bob Welsh
Donald & Marcia Wheeler
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Janet & Robert Weissman
Nikki & Bob Welsh
Donald & Marcia Wheeler
Karen Winkler
Deborah Woodhouse
Anonymous

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Sarah & Kusiwick
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Marylin Mele
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