



The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Inc.

"The Village News" a Bi-weekly Communication

October 20, 2025

Key Upcoming **Schools** & **Free Webinar**:

- **Landscape Design School**: Series 17 Course 4, October 28-30, 2025, 8:00 AM-12:45 PM
Course 4 – Contemporary LD Trends; Community Participation in Landscaping Projects; History & Development of Community Gardens; Suburban Design; Guidelines for Evaluating Landscape Designs; Evaluation of Landscape Designs. We've been advised by Susie MacPherson late entries will be accepted. Click the link below for more information.
(Registration can be found on the GCFM website at the bottom of the informational page.
Registration Via Zoom [LDS Register Here](#)
- **Free Webinar**: for GCFM Members "Spirit of Christmas Past" with Ken Turino Four Centuries of Christmas in America NOVEMBER 4, 2025, 7:00 PM EST Travel back in time to learn about the history of Christmas in America. Hear how tradition began, trends through the years, and modern twists to centuries of holiday gatherings.
Pre-registration required via link: [Spirit of Christmas Register Here](#)

~ From our GCFM Archives ~

Who were Mr. Edward Farrington and Mrs. Thomas Motely, Jr., and what is their involvement with The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Inc.?



Mrs. Motley

It all started with Mr. Edward Farrington, who at the time in 1924, was the Executive Secretary of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. The Massachusetts Horticultural Society founded in 1829 is the oldest, formally organized horticultural institution in the United States.

Mr. Farrington recognized many garden clubs were being organized throughout the state. He felt there was a need for these activities and was instrumental in organizing the Massachusetts Federation of Garden Clubs and Historical Societies; unfortunately, this group was short-lived.

Three years later a representative group met at the Massachusetts Horticultural Hall and appointed Mrs. Thomas Motley Jr. as their chairwoman. Mrs. Motley Jr. was tasked to work with the garden clubs in the State to create an organizational plan and report at a later joint meeting.

In the fall of 1927 fourteen garden clubs assembled at Horticultural Hall in Boston at the invitation of Mr. Farrington, for the organization of The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts. Mrs. Thomas Motley, Jr. was voted president.

The first meeting of The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts was held October 27th, 1927, with representatives from 25 clubs in total present. A constitution and bylaws were presented as a tentative

arrangement for 1 year. Such was the caution of our early leaders. Ultimately The Garden Club of Massachusetts was incorporated.

A program was established which included two study courses, one on plant physiology and one on landscaping, round table discussions, garden pilgrimages, establishment of a Speakers' Bureau, conservation lectures and participation in the New England Spring Flower Show. The first yearbook was edited in 1930 with a list of 53 clubs and has continued through the years as an asset. The importance of conservation was emphasized, and pledge cards were distributed among school children.

In the words of Mrs. Motely Jr. "we'll show those men on Beacon Hill that we are more than a social club!"

The year 1927 was noteworthy for a few other events too: Charles Lindbergh's solo transatlantic flight, the Great Mississippi Flood considered the greatest natural disaster in the United States, and the introduction of the Ford Model A.

Today we're a proud organization of 170 clubs, with over 10,000 members and growing.



-Today's GCFM Benefits to You -

The GCFM Inc. offers many services and programs for its clubs and individual members. Here is what The GCFM Inc. can do for you. All services are optional to clubs and their members and include Educational Programs and Services:

Educational Programs:

- **Workshops** and lectures on a wide range of gardening, environmental, and design topics
- **Schools** are offered annually – Flower Show, Gardening, Landscape Design, Environmental
- **Flower Symposiums** explore various aspects of floral design

Services:

- the ability to be a non-profit (501)(c)(3) under the GCFM umbrella
- Insurance to protect club and club members
- Grant money for Civic Development and Historic Landscape Preservation
- Helen deOrsay Freidberg Scholarship to GCFM Schools for any club members
- Eleven scholarships presented annually to high school seniors or graduate students studying horticulture, floriculture, botany, conservation, forest, agronomy, city planning, or related fields.

All forms can be found on The GCFM Inc. website under www.gcfm.org/resources

In closing we look forward to hearing from you and welcome your suggestions, comments, and topics you would like us to add to The Village News.

Email suggestions to: chrisanddonnacc@gmail.com