



*Old Westbury Gardens*

ANNUAL REPORT 2024





Old Westbury Gardens seeks to inspire appreciation of the early 20th century American country estate through faithful preservation and interpretation of its landscape, gardens, architecture, and collections.





As Old Westbury Gardens continues well into its second hundred years, it is embracing a forward-looking vision rooted in sustainability, stewardship, and service. This past year has been a time of thoughtful planning and continued growth, grounded in the mission to preserve and share this extraordinary place while preparing it for new opportunities and challenges ahead.

Leadership and generosity from its supporters have made this progress possible as The Gardens is at heart a member and donor supported organization. Because of confidence in the basic mission, it is possible to invest in long-term strategies to protect the landscapes, enhance the visitor experience, and deepen engagement with the community. Each initiative guided by the question: how will these decisions shape the Gardens ten, twenty, fifty years from now?

Old Westbury Gardens was founded as a gift, an act of vision and generosity to enhance the wellbeing of the Long Island community. That founding spirit endures today through a commitment to safeguard a landmark but allowing it to evolve while remaining true to the core purpose. The leaders are positioning the Gardens to thrive, expanding its reach, supporting a vibrant, continually growing diverse community ensuring that future generations inherit a living treasure.

This past year, the Gardens were vibrant. Welcoming more guests than ever before in the tens of thousands to experience a magical oasis of beauty and inspiration in a place that continues to offer peace amid an often fast-paced world.

And nature offers its own lessons. Gardeners are born optimists. We trust that spring will follow winter, bringing new growth to each plant in their season, and that roses will be coming to bloom. The ancient promise of renewal. It is that spirit that guides the work of the Gardens as we reflect on the past year and look hopefully toward the next.

Please join me and visit the Gardens often. Thank you as well for being a vital part of its story.

*Carol Large*

Chairman, Board of Trustees









To say the past year has been eventful would hardly capture its full breadth. Moments for quiet reflection have been few and far between so composing this letter provided a rare and welcome opportunity to pause and look back. As I mentally reviewed the months gone by, I was reminded of the many ways in which the Gardens have grown, the accomplishments we have celebrated, and the meaningful experiences we continue to offer our visitors.

This past year has brought extraordinary momentum and hope. We welcomed more visitors than in any year since opening our gates 65 years ago. This historic milestone reaffirms how deeply the Gardens resonate as a place of learning, inspiration, and belonging.

Equally exciting, we are approaching 3,000 active members, more than ever before in our history. These members form the foundation upon which we build. As we grow, we are committed to ensuring that Old Westbury Gardens is a place where everyone feels welcome. From offering new public programs to welcoming first-time visitors through outreach and free admission initiatives such as our partnership with the Westbury School District, we are working to make the Gardens more accessible—physically, culturally, and programmatically.

Each year, Old Westbury Gardens navigates a range of challenges, from shifting seasons and preservation demands to the evolving expectations of our visitors. In recent years, our stewardship has taken on new urgency. Changing weather patterns, prolonged drought, extreme storms, and rising temperatures have placed increasing stress on plant health. Invasive pests and diseases, such as boxwood blight and beech leaf disease, now threaten our legacy trees and curated collections. The historic home, never designed for today's climate volatility, faces heightened risks from humidity, moisture, and pests – conditions that accelerate deterioration and demand costly, often invasive interventions. These mounting pressures require vigilant care and long-term planning. Yet through every trial, of nature, time, or change, Old Westbury Gardens endures.

This year, we restored the Colonnade and reflecting pool—historic features that exemplify the harmony of design, water, and landscape. Our preservation team also advanced the digitization of Phipps family archives, including letters and photographs, deepening our understanding of life at Westbury House and enriching the stories we share with visitors.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to our Board of Trustees, whose guidance and dedication help shape our direction; to our staff, who bring expertise and passion to every task; and to our loyal volunteers, whose generosity of time and spirit animate the Gardens in countless ways.

With each act of preservation we undertake we are not only repairing the past we are safeguarding the future. I look forward to this next year and all the possibilities it brings.

With appreciation and anticipation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Brush". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

President & CEO





## Preservation Update BOXWOOD GARDEN

**The restoration of the Boxwood Garden was completed in August thanks to a matching grant from New York State and support from the Peggy N & Roger G Gerry Charitable Trust, Helen Clay Frick Foundation and Margaret Sullivan Trust.** The garden is visible from the West Staircase of the South Terrace and West Porch in Westbury House. The marble colonnade and marble collared reflecting pool were designed by the British firm of White and Allom in 1927 and completed in 1930. Fully mature boxwood plantings were brought in from Virginia and arranged in an informal pattern that created a sense of enclosure. The boxwoods were removed in 2009 after suffering from a blight.

Over the years the interior of the reflecting pool suffered from a lack of expansion joints meaning that the concrete walls and floor were unable to react to extreme temperatures which damaged the interior walls. The marble collar showed deterioration and the mortar joints that would protect the marble from water damage were deteriorated. The bronze statue or fountain in the center of the pool had become covered in rust and biogrowth. The colonnade is composed of ten 18th century marble Corinthian columns that were

bought from an estate in England and installed within a concrete framework. Over the years protruding pieces of the elaborate capitals fell off and open sky facing masonry joints caused further damage to the structure.

The restoration program redesigned the interior of the pool with engineered expansion joints that can adequately respond to temperature changes and made the pool shallower, requiring reduced water usage and improved water circulation that keeps the pool free of algae, biogrowth and lessens the likelihood of an insect breeding area. The marble collar components were cleaned, repaired as needed and reset in the appropriate mortar bed. The bronze statue was removed and underwent a careful cleaning bringing the frolicking putti back to an age appropriate patina.

The colonnade was cleaned with a non-abrasive, non-ionic cleaning solution that removed harmful biogrowth from the marble columns. The landscape was re-graded so water is directed away from the pool's perimeter. Disease resistant boxwood will be planted in the Fall, guided by archival photos and the Cultural Landscape Report. The Boxwood Garden is now ready for its close-up!





*I salute the faithful keepers  
of this treasure...it was  
intended as a place for  
people to be happy in, and  
so, it is and so it will be:  
past and future meet here  
in a green felicity.*

—From Brendan Gill (1914-1997),  
a noted cultural critic of the  
day, Architecture and Design  
Critic, The New Yorker.





# Horticulture Update

This was a year of transition as Gabrielle Kantor began her first season as lead horticulturist in the Walled Garden, following the retirement of Kimberly Johnson after several decades of devoted service to Old Westbury Gardens. Thanks to the extraordinary talents of both horticulturists, the changeover could not have been more seamless. Gabrielle had the opportunity to work closely with Kimberly during her final months in the garden, and Kimberly generously returned throughout the season for site visits and consultations. The result of their collaboration was a Walled Garden that stood out as one of the most beautiful in recent memory, from the first blooms of April to the last hard frost.

The inspired new plant combinations born of this partnership are perfectly captured by the words of Henry David Thoreau, "The seasons and all their changes are but different aspects of the same beauty."







## Beech Trees

Elsewhere on the grounds, the Beech trees treated for Beech Leaf Disease showed remarkable signs of recovery. Specimens once thought to be beyond saving are once again thriving, with minimal to no visible symptoms on most of the treated trees last season. While this progress is encouraging, the fight is far from over. Ongoing treatment will be necessary for the foreseeable future, as we await the development of a long-term solution or the emergence of a natural predator to combat the nematode responsible for the disease. In the meantime, **Old Westbury Gardens is deeply grateful to Bartlett Tree Experts for their early intervention and steadfast care of our cherished Beech collection.**





## Internship Program

Last year also brought one of the most prolonged droughts in recent memory, underscoring the Gardens' reliance on consistent rainfall, especially in areas not reached by our irrigation systems. Old Westbury Gardens leaned heavily on the students in our Laurie Guthart Internship Program, who played a vital role in monitoring moisture levels and hand-watering plants in need. While some plants did show signs of heat stress, thanks to their efforts, we weathered the season without the loss of any significant specimens.

### **The Laurie Guthart Internship Program continues to be a cornerstone of Old Westbury Gardens' educational mission.**

It offers students meaningful, hands-on experience in plant science, landscape management, and environmental stewardship. Many former interns have gone on to pursue advanced degrees in horticulture, botany, and related disciplines. Their time at Old Westbury Gardens has served as a launching pad for careers in landscape architecture, plant breeding, golf course management, and even medical research. Whether they continue in academia or enter the professional world, the interns carry forward the knowledge, skills, and passion they cultivated here.







## VISITOR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

In 2024, Old Westbury Gardens expanded upon its successful series of programs, inspired by the Gardens' landscape and the historical context of Westbury House and the Phipps family's life here. These programs included Saturday Storybook Strolls for preschoolers and introductory classes in watercolor painting and embroidery for teens and adults. Participants shared learning experiences while immersing themselves in the beauty of nature.

A series of evening presentations focused on the history of Westbury House and Long Island further enhanced the program.

The Visitor Services staff organized bus trips to several locations, including the annual visit to the Philadelphia Flower Show, and to Hollister House Gardens in Washington, Connecticut and Storm King Art Center in New Windsor, New York.







Students engage in hands-on learning, feeling the velvety leaves of a lamb's ear plant as they explore the garden through touch and smell on the "Follow Your Nose" tour.



# Another Year of Learning at the Gardens



Children investigate lily pads and pond life up close in the Walled Garden during the immersive “Spring Breakout” exploration.



Girl Scouts investigate symmetry and collaborative design while building in the ballroom on the Amazing Architecture tour, earning their Junior Art and Design badge.



An early learner carefully plants grass seeds to grow their “plant pal” as part of the interactive “Plants Are Like People” tour.



Students study historical family photos in the Walled Garden during the Gold Coast Gardens tour, connecting the grandeur of estate life to their Great Gatsby literature unit.





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*... our main object has been to preserve the charm and beauty of the Gardens in the tradition of my parents during their long and happy time and sometimes to give a sense of delight and beauty to the gentle, welcome visitors.*

—From Peggie Phipps Boegner  
Founder of Old Westbury Gardens

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# Trustee Welcome

## Tham Kannalikhram

Thammanoune (Tham) Kannalikhram is the founder and principal of Kannalikhram Designs, LLC, a New York-based firm dedicated to the historic restoration of residential spaces through classical design. Her career began at Ralph Lauren Home, where she learned to romance a space and craft a lifestyle rooted in how people truly live. In 2008, she launched a long-term masterplan focused on preservation and architectural identity, with projects ranging from an 18th-century family home in North Carolina to restoration work at The White House. Passion and preservation form the foundation of her work, but her design philosophy goes further—integrating classical principles in a way that reflects how families live today. Her goal is not only to restore history, but to make it personal: allowing families to feel part of something greater than themselves. Each home becomes a bridge between past and present, where tradition lives on through the lens of modern family life. Guided by a deep sense of duty to American and European craftsmanship, Tham collaborates with historians, architects, and artisans, continually drawing from travel and study. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the White House Historical Association, the President's Council and Travel Committee of the ICAA, and co-founded TED, a foundation mentoring woman in architecture and design.



"I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Old Westbury Gardens for being the guardians of a living heritage. Your dedication to preserving this historic site honors the artistry and craftsmanship that embody the spirit of American creativity and resilience.

Old Westbury Gardens is more than just a place of beauty; it symbolizes the profound concept of Home. Home is where our sense of identity, belonging, and aspirations are shaped. Through your unwavering efforts, this institution continues to inspire, connecting generations with a shared narrative that seamlessly blends tradition and innovation.

To my fellow board members, your leadership and vision have been crucial in maintaining this esteemed legacy. To the broader community, your ongoing support ensures that this story endures—not merely as a reflection of the past, but as a guiding light for the future of preservation and beauty. It is a great honor to serve as a steward of Old Westbury Gardens. Together, we will ensure that the soul of this home remains vibrant and continues to inspire all who walk its paths."



# Trustee Welcome

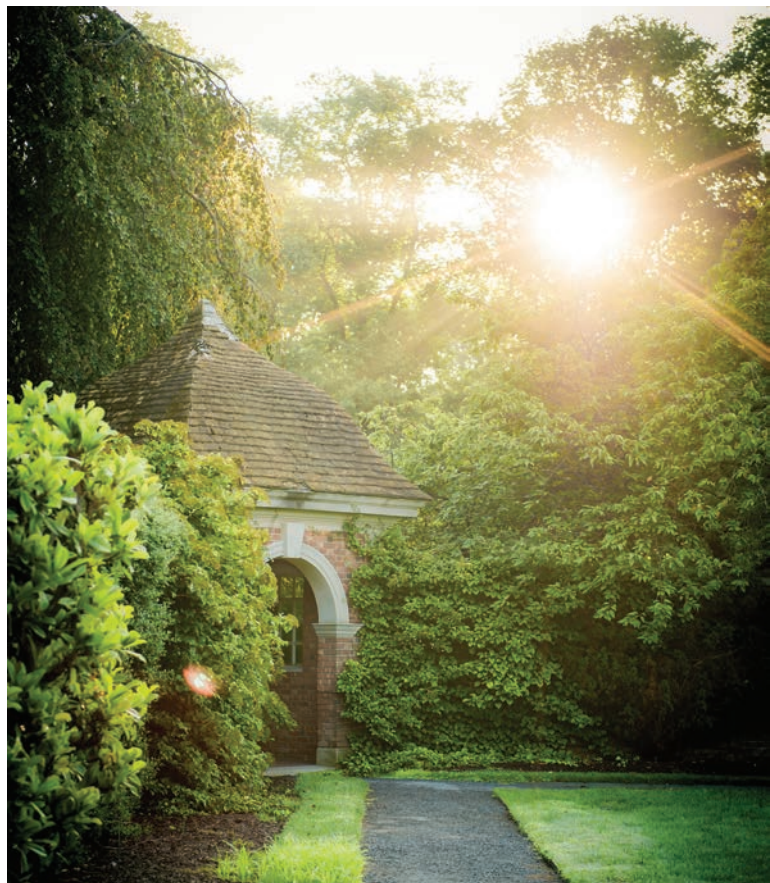
## Jacques Busquet



Jacques Busquet is an accomplished independent corporate board member and former banking executive combining more than 40 years of experience in banking and capital markets with deep expertise in financial management, risk and compliance management and legal and regulatory affairs. Since 2016 he has served as director of Onity Group Inc., a public company operating in the mortgage servicing and origination areas, where he currently chairs the Human Capital and Compensation committee. He is a director of Mizuho Americas LLC, Mizuho Securities USA and Mizuho Bank USA, where he chairs the Risk Committee. He is also a director of Prolitec, a worldwide leader in air care and odor remediation. Jacques previously served as a trustee of the African Wildlife Foundation, and the Institute of International bankers. He holds a Master of Business Administration in Finance from each of The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and Hautes Études Commerciales (HEC), Paris.

“I joined the board of this historic mansion and its surrounding gardens as I believe in the power of place to connect us - to history, to nature, and to one another. This estate is not only a beautiful and significant architectural treasure, but also a vital cultural resource for our community.

As a person who grew up in Europe, I very much care about preserving its historical legacy to ensure it remains vibrant and accessible for future generations. Whether through educational programs, public events, or quiet moments of reflection in the gardens, this space offers something truly meaningful to our community and visitors. I'm honored to contribute my time and energy toward sustaining its beauty, relevance, and impact.”





# Trustee Spotlight

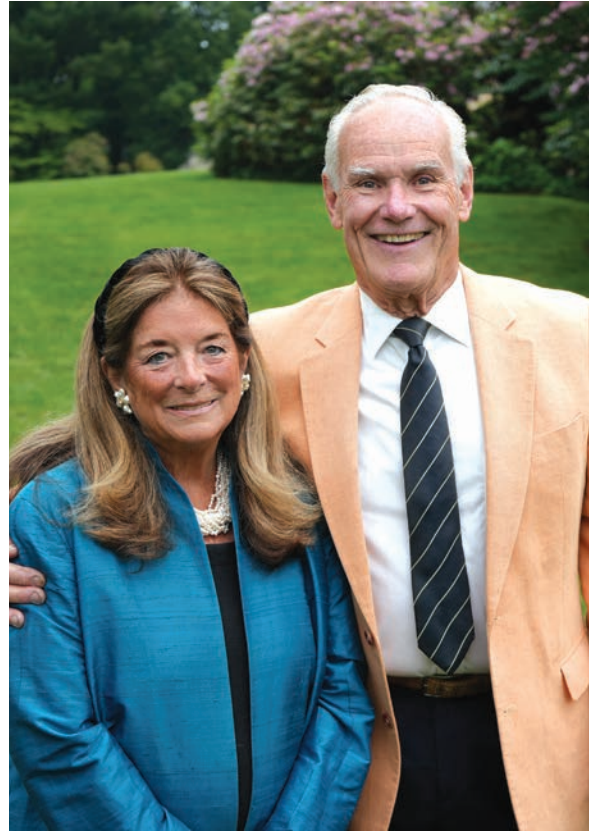
## Robert F. Hussey

Robert F. (Bob) Hussey joined the Gardens as a Trustee in 2008 and served on the Preservation and Finance & Audit committees. In his tenure as a Trustee he chaired the December Dinner, was honored at the Gardens' golf outing and has been a mainstay at many Gardeners' Fairs!

Bob's involvement with the Gardens began when he helped restore the alabaster lamps in the West Porch of Westbury House, a project close to his heart as his family lived abroad and collected fine alabaster art throughout their travels. Bob has also been a longstanding member of the BMW Car Club of America and was instrumental in the successful and popular "Great Marques Concours d'Elegance" car show, exhibiting Mercedes, Ferrari, BMW and Porsche, on the grand lawn of Old Westbury Gardens.

Professionally, Bob is a seasoned financial, marketing and operations executive who worked in various sectors including consumer packaged goods, financial services and advertising. In more recent years, he focused on advising private equity and institutional investors in these industries.

Old Westbury Gardens is truly grateful for Bob's years of service as a Trustee.









*How lucky our descendants when we bequeath to them buildings and objects and sites that are of the highest possible value in our eyes and cannot fail to be of even higher value in theirs.*

—From Brendan Gill (1914-1997),  
Architecture and Design Critic, The New Yorker.







# **2024 GARDENERS' FAIR**

## **English Folly: An Evening in the Garden**

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# An Evening of DESIGN AND GARDENS

September 19, 2024

Connie Cincotta hosted a serene garden party at her home, Highwood Estate in Oyster Bay Cove, the former Edwin Gould Estate. In her remarks, Connie described beautifully what drew her to the home and the process of preserving and updating different features of the estate. She was joined by Andrew Maier of Andrew Maier Interiors and Mary MacDonald of M & A Landscape Design, the team responsible for the restoration.



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# Children in BLOOM

October 8, 2024

The 15th Annual Children In Bloom Luncheon was held on October 8th in the Red Ballroom of Westbury House to support children's environmental education. This year's event "Champagne and Roses" honored internationally recognized philanthropist Jean Shafiroff and was hosted by Antoniette Biordi. Thank you to our many generous sponsors and contributors.



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# DECEMBER DINNER

December 7th, 2024 – Red Ballroom – Westbury House

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HONORING John F.W. Rogers

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# Shining a Light on Collections Care

This past year a long-awaited restoration of the Dining Room chandelier was completed, a significant achievement in the care of one of the most important pieces in the Gardens' collection. The chandelier symbolizes the successes of the Phipps family via its original location in Henry Phipps' Fifth Avenue mansion and subsequent relocation to Westbury House, the home of Henry's eldest son John Schaffer Phipps and his wife, Margarita Grace Phipps. The chandelier was designed by British aesthete, George A. Crawley, and recently discovered correspondence illustrates Crawley's relationship with the fledgling lighting firm of E.F. Caldwell in the early 1900's. The chandelier is the most complex and elaborate fixture fabricated by the company under Crawley's watchful eye.

The chandelier was cleaned, rewired and gently polished in order to preserve the original silver plate. The Aurora Lampworks conservators worked closely with the



Pictured with the Hon. John F.W. Rogers are Lloyd Zuckerberg, Preservation Committee chair and Lorraine Gilligan, Director of Preservation. John's support of the chandelier restoration has been followed by generous underwriting for the reproduction of the Dining Room rug which will enhance the visitor experience for years to come.

preservation staff to identify missing elements and to sensitively treat the complex surface of three dimensional leaves, coils, and putti. Their sense of pride in conserving

the eighteen arm chandelier was palpable as they unpacked it and assisted the fine arts handlers in reinstalling it in the Dining Room.

## HONOREE: The Honorable John F.W. Rogers

John serves as Executive Vice President and Secretary to the Board of Directors of the Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. He serves as Chairman of the Goldman Sachs Foundation and the Chairman of Goldman Sachs Gives, its donor-advised fund.

John's lifelong passion for American history, preservation and institutions is evident in numerous projects he has helped bring to fruition. Among these are the monumental restoration of the State, War and Navy Building (now the Eisenhower Executive Office building), and the restoration of the magnificent United States Treasury building. His passion for historic preservation is best reflected in his decades-long dedication to the White House and its surroundings, most recently in the creation of the new White House Visitor Experience; The People's House at 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue.











# Celtic Festival

The Long Island Celtic Festival and Highland Games were a lively tribute to the rich Celtic heritage of Long Islanders. The 2024 event carried forward the long-standing tradition of honoring the Scottish, Welsh, and Irish roots that are deeply woven into the cultural fabric of the region.

Since 1977, Old Westbury Gardens served as the venue for the Scottish Highland Games held on the fourth Saturday of every August. When the event's producers decided they did not have the capacity to organize the 2024 edition, Old Westbury Gardens recognized its significance to the Long Island community. In response, the Gardens established and produced the Long Island Celtic Festival and Highland Games, celebrating all Celtic heritage while preserving the event's cherished traditions.

Festival-goers enjoyed a vibrant array of traditional activities, from pipe bands marching across the great north lawn of Westbury House to the spirited performances of Irish dancers. Athletic competitions such as the legendary caber toss added to the excitement, embracing the essence of Scottish Highland sports. The festival also featured authentic Celtic cuisine, artisanal crafts, unique merchandise, and captivating storytelling, creating a truly immersive experience. Contemporary musicians further enriched the event, bringing fresh interpretations to traditional melodies.





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*Westbury House and its  
incomparable Gardens are  
among the treasures that  
will survive superbly into  
the twenty-first century.*

—From Brendan Gill  
(1914-1997), Architecture  
and Design Critic,  
The New Yorker.



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# Old Westbury Gardens

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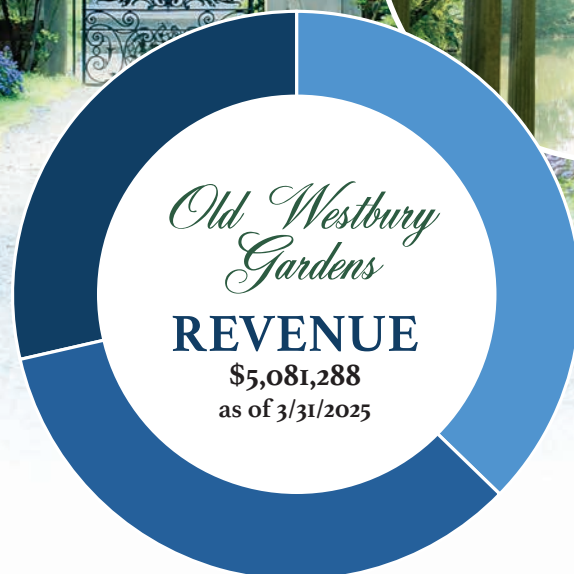




# FINANCIALS



Personnel Costs	\$2,837,688
Gardens and house maintenance	\$814,501
Visitor services	\$355,180
Educational and community services	\$82,370
Management and general	\$909,538
Development	\$297,577



Contributed revenue	\$1,454,090
Earned revenue	\$1,895,743
Investment & Fund Drawdowns	\$1,731,455

## SPECIAL NOTES ON PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Contributed Revenue saw an increase as Annual Appeal reached the highest level in the history of the Gardens.
- Earned Revenue was driven by growth in the both the Gardens' membership and Use of Premises for commercial photography and other events.
- The return of Gardeners' Fair increased revenue for Fundraising Events, which overall performed well for the year.
- Investment Income decreased by over \$600,000 from the previous fiscal year due to market factors and performance.
- Investment and Fund Drawdowns includes an Employee Retention Tax Credit of \$320,000 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.
- Direct expenses, the cost of employee benefits, insurance premiums and more continue to drive up expenses.



# *Old Westbury Gardens*

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 VOLUNTEERS

Mary Arcese  
Jacqueline Beder  
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### PHOTO CREDITS:

Covers and images throughout – Beata Wroblewski

Inside back cover – Katerina Story

### EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY:

Jared Siskin; Patrick McMullan Company for December Dinner

Sean Zanni; Patrick McMullan Company for Children In Bloom Luncheon

Anthony G. Gallego; Gill Associates Photography for Evening of Design and Gardens

Eugene Gologursky; Getty Images for Gardeners' Fair

Old Westbury Gardens Staff including Maura Brush, Laura Erwin Lorraine Gilligan, Brandi Jarrett and Maritza Ramirez

### ANNUAL REPORT DESIGN:

Amy Herling – [www.macomedeasign.com](http://www.macomedeasign.com)









*Old Westbury Gardens*

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