Funding a commemorative bench at the Arnold Arboretum offers members of our community a thoughtful and distinctive way to recognize a special person or occasion. Available for placement in numerous locations throughout our 281 acres, the benches provide respite to visitors and command remarkable views of the landscape year-round. Over time, we aspire to replace all existing slat-style benches in our landscape with this new design, all procured through donor support and crafted from trees that served science as a part of our collections.

Importantly, the donations received through the Commemorative Bench Program contribute directly to the care and expansion of our renowned living collections—giving our old trees new agency in helping grow the Arboretum of tomorrow. 

For additional information about donating a commemorative bench at the Arnold Arboretum, please visit the Arboretum website or contact Jon Hetman, Associate Director of External Relations and Communications, at jon_hetman@harvard.edu or 617.384.5763.

Remembering Henry Hixon Meyer, Jr. (1921-2017)

On June 26, 2017, the Arnold Arboretum lost a longtime friend, advocate, and benefactor with the passing of Henry Hixon Meyer Jr. at his home in Rhode Island at age 96. A member of the Harvard University Class of 1944, graduate of Harvard Business School, and a Second Lieutenant in the Allied Army in World War II, Henry worked for nearly five decades in Boston’s financial community. He and his wife, Edith “Nod” Knight Meyer, first got involved at the Arboretum in the 1970s as members and through Nod’s participation as an Arboretum Associate, Dana Greenhouses volunteer, and plant information expert. After Henry retired in the 1990s, they moved away from Boston but remained active with the Arboretum—Nod as a member of the Arnold Arboretum Visiting Committee for Harvard and Henry as a member of the Director’s Advisory Committee. In 1995, Henry and Nod made a transformational gift to establish an endowment in support of elementary school programs at the Arboretum—the Nature Study Fund for City Children.

Since that time, tens of thousands of students from Boston Public Schools have participated in guided spring and fall explorations of plants and ecology in our landscape. Henry remained deeply involved with the programs for the rest of his life, consulting regularly with Arboretum directors and educators and—as a prodigious correspondent—writing letters to decision-makers and philanthropists to raise awareness and support for our work in children’s education. In recent years, he helped raise funds to renovate the Dana Greenhouses as a memorial to Nod, and provided significant annual funding to establish special training and outreach opportunities in our landscape for public school teachers. A larger-than-life figure committed to improving outcomes in disadvantaged communities, Henry Meyer created an indelible legacy in sharing the beauty and wonders of the natural world with the schoolchildren of Boston and beyond.

To make a contribution to the Nature Study Fund for City Children, please contact Janetta Stringfellow at 617.384.5043 or janetta_stringfellow@harvard.edu.