

The Beebe family, who built Highfield Hall and lived there from 1878 until 1932, loved gardens and trees. The three Beebe siblings who resided at Highfield Hall — Pierson, Emily, and Franklin — all considered themselves horticulturalist or arborculturalists. They had extensive gardens and greenhouses and employed many servants and gardeners to help them care for their large property of 700 acres.



The Beebes were early members of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and often participated in contests where they would grow an acre of trees for a year to see if their trees were better than other growers. Franklin Beebe, pictured below, was known to walk the trails and paths of Beebe Woods, marking different trees with ribbon so that he could observe their changes as the seasons passed. Some of the trees and other plantings from the Beebe era were lost in a huge forest fire that ripped through Beebe Woods in 1947.

The Beebes planted all of the specimen trees on the Highfield property which include the English Weeping Beech, Copper Beech, European Beech, Fern Leaf Beech, and English Weeping Beech. Most of the trees are now 100 to 130 years old. Historic Highfield, which now operates and takes care of the property, is trying to plant new specimen trees that will take the place of these old trees as they die out.

On April 17, 2008, many local tree contractors and landscapers will converge on Highfield, which is owned by the Town of Falmouth, to prune the Beebe's beautiful trees, remove scrub trees so that gardens can be restored, and help prepare new gardens for planting. The Beebes would probably be very happy indeed to see all of this activity at the home that they loved — a home that now belongs to the entire town!

