

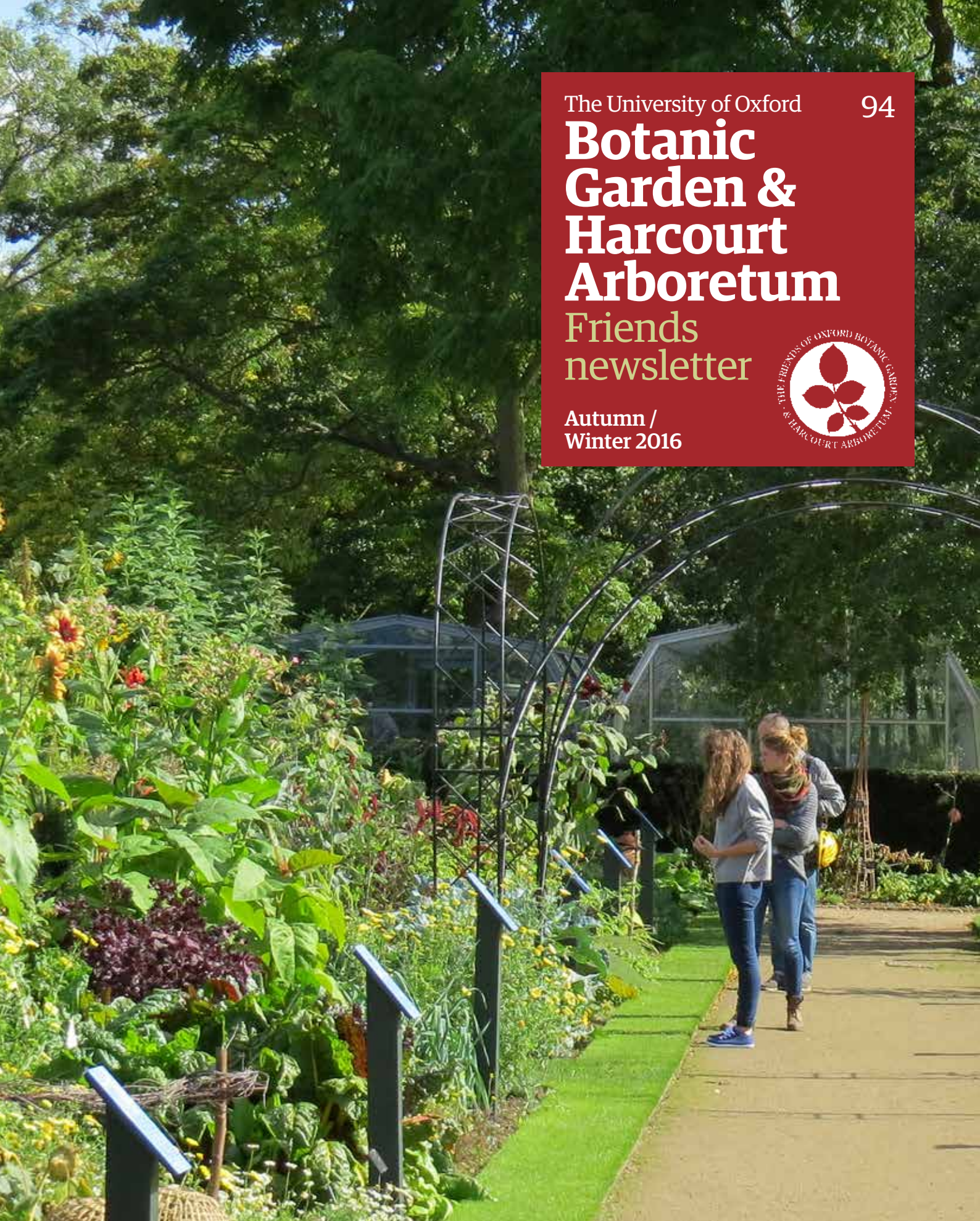
The University of Oxford

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Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum

Friends
newsletter

Autumn /
Winter 2016



Plants that changed the world

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Clare Kelly

Family double at Botanic Garden

Clare Kelly has recently completed 30 years of work as a horticulturalist at the Botanic Garden. She sees her role as being lucky enough to approach the Garden with a visitor's eyes - to be able to see the long grass and weeds - but then be able to do something about it. When asked recently how she would like the 30 years to be marked, Clare chose to have a flowering cherry planted in the garden so that gardeners and visitors would have their spirits lifted by its beautiful blossom each spring as a new season begins. A typically modest and thoughtful choice from someone who has contributed so much to the garden, although in her words 'just a small blip in the 400 years of history'.

Clare's daughter, Isabel, has recently joined the team in the ticket office, in part at least to fund her English Literature degree, which is just into its second year. She hopes that some of the famous literary associations with the Garden - Carroll, Tolkien, Pullman and Waugh - will rub off. She feels lucky to have been brought up in and around the Garden and has fond early memories of trying to spot the silver fish in the pond. Most visitors came to see that fish, alas the heron eventually ate him, he was at least 40 years old.



Isabel on lily leaf

New Staff Join OBGA

We welcome Sally Jeffery and Sophie Torrance as our new Administrative Assistants. Sally will have responsibility for Friends' administration and Garden Administration, while Sophie will have responsibility for Garden and Arboretum administration in a job share position with Frances Young. Also Victoria Yates and Ruth Jordan who have joined the Education Team as maternity cover and sabbatical cover for Emma Williams and Kate Castleden, respectively. And finally we welcome new horticultural trainees Jamie Todd and Neil Alderson; Jamie is funded by the Friends for 2016/17.

Education events at OBG

We were lucky to have glorious weather for our Green Picnic Afternoons that took place back in July and August. Many families attended from far and wide and children were kept busy with face-painting, arts and crafts and a trail. We hope to run these events again next year, with the help of volunteers from the University Museums Service. We are always very grateful for the support of volunteers at our events. The education team are now leading their first educational visits for the school term and preparing for family friendly events that are coming up soon.



Green picnic afternoon

A Café at the Botanic Garden at last

The Tangerine Dream café van opened for business in late June and has been open Tuesday-Sunday throughout the summer, greatly enhancing the visitor experience. Tangerine Dream run the acclaimed restaurant at Chelsea Physic Garden and cater for all their corporate events, which together provide significant income for the Physic Garden. The café van (a vintage Citroën) is Tangerine Dream's first café venture outside of London. Visitors have enjoyed their quality coffee and their famous lavender scones, courgette and walnut cake and chocolate brownies. We are hoping that Tangerine Dream will be back at the Garden in spring 2017.



Tangerine Dream



Gin Tasting - Cory Mason of TOAD explains

Botanic Garden joins Oxford Festival of the Arts

As part of the Oxford Festival of the Arts OBG hosted a gin deconstruction/tasting event by The Oxford Artisan Distillery (TOAD) on June 25th. One hundred and fifty people attended in three back to back sessions sampling 'naked gin' created by TOAD who will be working with OBG to create Oxford Physicke Gin and Black Pine Whisky. The event was a sell-out despite the bad weather. Concurrently Tangerine Dream ran a 'pop-up' cocktail bar in the Conservatory. The previous weekend (June 20th) saw 70 people gathered in the Conservatory for a recital of Shakespeare sonnets and scenes from his plays that feature plants.

Plant Science Masterclasses at the Botanic Garden

Funding has been secured from the Gatsby Foundation to run an 'After School' Plant Science Masterclass Series in 2017. Talented young biologists often assume that the best way to make a difference is to become a doctor. The masterclass series at the Botanic Garden aims to encourage A level biologists to think about plant science as an important and interesting area of biology and one that would allow them to tackle global challenges and apply for courses that have a significant amount of plant science. The Masterclasses will be co-ordinated by Education Officer (Secondary) Sarah Lloyd in collaboration with staff in the Department of Plant Sciences. Teachers and students will

be invited to attend a series of talks given by inspiring speakers and take part in discussions facilitated by early career scientists. Themes will include key issues in plant science, such as genetic modification, food security and biodiversity.

For more information contact sarah.lloyd@obg.ox.ac.uk

Director Awarded Major Research Grant from Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)

In collaboration with researchers at the Universities of Bristol, Naples and Catania (Sicily), Simon Hiscock and Dmitry Filatov (Department of Plant Sciences) have been awarded just under £800K (£300K to Oxford) to investigate the limits of adaptation and phenotypic plasticity in two species of ragwort (*Senecio*) that grow at high and low altitudes on Mount Etna, Sicily. These ragworts are the parents of the hybrid species Oxford Ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*) which was introduced to the Oxford Botanic Garden in the early 1700s. The findings from this research will have important implications for predicting the continued ability of species to respond plastically to climate change. In particular, it will indicate if rapid evolution will be necessary to prevent population and species' extinction where rates of environmental change exceed prevailing conditions within a species' geographical range. Just over £4000 has been allocated to delivering public engagement with this research through the Botanic Garden.



Pacific Silver Fir (*Abies amabilis*) on Mount Rainier, Washington

OBGA Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)



On August 30th the Director signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Dr Paul Smith, Secretary General of Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI). This MOU will endorse and strengthen OBGA's commitment to plant conservation and recognizes the value of OBGA's collaborations in Japan, North America and Ethiopia.

RHS Woody Plants Committee (WPC) day

On Tuesday 6th September the Arboretum hosted a meeting of the RHS WPC in the Woodland Barn. Nearly all committee members attended, including Roy Lancaster, John Grimshaw, Rosie Atkins (Chairman) and Tony Kirkham. After over three hours of discussion and a hearty lunch at the Seven Stars, the group toured the Arboretum with the Curator, arborists and horticultural trainees.

Seed collecting in the Rocky Mountains

In September Arboretum Arborist Luke Rowland took part in a conifer seed collecting trip to North America as part of OBGA's ongoing conservation collaboration with the Millennium Seed Bank Wakehurst Place, the US Forest Service and US National Parks. He worked alongside six other tree climbers collecting seed from rare and endangered conifers such as *Abies amabilis* (pictured). Material raised from seed collected from previous trips can be seen growing at the Arboretum and has greatly enhanced the diversity of our conifer collection.'

Arboretum Volunteers

An eight-week project was initiated with the arboretum volunteers to carry out maintenance work on the Serpentine Ride through June & July. Every week on a Wednesday, Guy & Luke have been joined, on average by 5 or 6 volunteers. Their hard work and investment of time is plain to see as you walk along the Serpentine Ride. Specimen Rhododendrons have been pruned, *Rhododendron ponticum* have been removed and certain areas have been opened up ahead of being replanted when the ground is ready. Not only does this

work go a long way in restoring the historic landscape, but is also vital in securing the Ride from a biosecurity perspective.

Due to the success of this work and requests from the volunteers, the work party has now been extended permanently from the last Wednesday of each month to every Wednesday. Looking forward into 2017, the arboretum is looking to expand its volunteer program with several exciting new opportunities - watch this space!

For more information contact ben.jones@obg.ox.ac.uk

Harvesting for the Autumn Display

Glasshouse staff have ventured out into the Walled Garden this summer and took over the *Cucurbitaceae* Family Bed so that we could grow some produce for the Autumn Display in the Conservatory. The small mixed gourds, crook neck squash and variegated maize cobs were harvested early in September and we now have a fine mix drying in the sun of the lobby of the Charlotte Building. They will be joined by other seasonal delights in the Conservatory later in September.

For more information contact lucinda.lachelin@obg.ox.ac.uk



Mixed gourds

Bulb planting at the Arboretum

Saturday 5th November - next lot of bulb plantings to take place, predominately Narcissus. The Friends have kindly offered to provide soup, tea & cake and the planting will take place between 10:30am to 3pm. All helpers most welcome for as much as you feel able to!

For more information contact ben.jones@obg.ox.ac.uk

Interpreting Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum

by Simon Hiscock,
Director

High quality interpretation is a critical element in my vision for transforming the Botanic Garden and Harcourt Arboretum. All collections and displays need to be accessible to visitors, whether members of the public, school children, or University students, without the necessity of a guided tour. The casual visitor (by which I mean, for instance, a tourist with little or no prior knowledge of the sites) needs to know where they are, why the place is significant, and what they are looking at - basic information that will enrich their visit and allow them to leave having learned something about the place and its contents. This information can be presented in the form of high quality sympathetically positioned interpretation boards, informative plant labels, a basic site map and guide for orientation, and, for those of digital inclination, a means of linking to online information via their smart phone (e.g. via a QR code or similar). The guided tour is then an added extra that can go one step further and give the visitor the guide's personal insight into the collections and their own favourite plants - that higher value element of visitor experience.

Moving towards this ideal, over the summer we installed the first high quality interpretation boards at OBG - in the 'Plants that Changed

the World' display - and, with the help of new Friend Peter Girling, we have trained up the first cohort of volunteer guides.

Earlier this year we commissioned acclaimed designer Pia Ostlund, of Chelsea Physic Garden fame (see interview with Pia on p6), to deliver the first phase of interpretation at the Botanic Garden. With generous financial support from the Friends and expert text from Dr Stephen Harris (Curator of the Oxford Herbaria), Pia has crafted the beautiful and highly informative interpretation boards that sit within the 'Plants that Changed the World' collection and display. This display showcases the importance of plants in the development of human civilizations, as food, medicines, fabric, and building materials. The main introductory board tells the story of how the domestication of wild plants and artificial selection created the varieties of plants that modern human civilizations depend upon. Smaller individual boards then give insight into the origins and uses of some of our everyday 'supermarket' foods, such as cabbages, carrots and onions. The text on the boards is complemented by monochrome images reproduced from historic botanical works in the Oxford Herbaria and Bodleian Library, including Gerard's Herbal. In due

course Pia and Stephen will be taking 'Plants that Changed the World' into the Glasshouses where, for instance, tea, coffee and rice will be featured.

Pia is currently working on a 'Welcome' board for the point of entry to the Garden. This board will tell the visitor that he/she has entered the oldest botanic garden in Britain and present a timeline explaining the history of the Garden and that it is here that the science of Botany (Plant Sciences) began in Oxford - a critical message to get across as we approach the Garden's 400th anniversary in 2021.

Perhaps the most challenging task for us will be the interpretation of the taxonomic beds, formerly the 'Family Beds' which are currently being reconfigured as 'Order Beds' (Orders comprise groups of related Families) according to the latest DNA-based classification of the flowering plants produced by the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group (APG). Interpreting this modern classification was one of my most exciting challenges at Bristol, where we displayed the phylogeny as a tree of paths bordered by plants of the various Orders beginning with the most ancient basal lineages. Here at Oxford the layout of the beds, conceived in 2013 by Stephen Harris and Tom Price, is to present the Orders in a 'linear'



Visitors enjoying the 'Plants that Changed the World' display and its informative interpretation.

fashion similar to how they would appear in a herbarium structured according to APG. Such a scheme works effectively to preserve the historical look of the walled garden with its distinctive rectangular beds. Each of these 30 beds will be defined through carefully conceived interpretation material that will appear over the coming months as the APG Order Bed display evolves.

As we start rolling out interpretation boards at the Garden and Arboretum we will also be developing and trialling digital interpretation in the form of QR codes or similar technologies that link a plant label or display board online information via a smart phone. This technology is now fairly common-place in museums and galleries with WiFi access. Access to WiFi is good across the Botanic Garden and improving at the Arboretum so using this technology is an option. Given the wealth of botanical information that is accumulating on the Plants 400 website our first thought is to make this information available via a suitable label for every plant featured in Plants 400. This will allow themed trails to be created at both sites. Another digital project that we are working on in collaboration with colleagues in Plant Sciences and University Parks is to develop a smartphone led trail around Oxford via its most important and iconic trees. The idea was conceived by Arboretum Curator Ben Jones in response to a suggestion by the University that Parks and Gardens should do more to promote their collections of trees. We are presently finalizing which twenty or so trees to build the trail around and the level and extent of online content to make available via the app that Ben and colleagues will produce.

Well interpreted themed trails and tours are a good way of making the Garden and Arboretum more attractive to visitors. Making clear links between people and plants is a good way to do this, just as 'Plants that Changed the World' display does. This is the thinking behind the 'Literary Garden' and trail we are developing at the Garden (have you spotted

the Cheshire cat yet?) and the Lord of the Rings-inspired 'Ent trail' we are planning for the Arboretum. Oxford has an unparalleled literary history and much great literature has been inspired by plants and gardens. Indeed I cannot think of a single play of Shakespeare (a regular visitor to Oxford) that does not mention a plant by name and some, like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* abound with botanical reference. This was made clear at the Garden over the summer with our 'Bill's Blooms' trail developed by Education Officer Emma Williams and Glasshouse Curator Kate Pritchard to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. This was up and running to coincide with the Oxford Festival of the Arts which OBG participated in. In addition to Bill's Blooms the Garden hosted a talk by author Margaret Willes on Shakespeare and botany, and a recital of extracts from plays and sonnets of Shakespeare that feature plants. Both were a sell-out with the latter proving what a glamorous and versatile venue the Conservatory can be – just under 70 people were seated for the recital by a group that included actors Joanne Pearce (RSC) and Tom Ward (of *Silent Witness*).

As we approach 2021 there is much to look forward to and plan for at OBG to make its collections, history and linkages more obvious and accessible to visitors, so over the coming months and years we will be blazing a trail of innovative interpretation and public engagement. Much of this will be led by our new Head of Science and Public Engagement, a post created from the vacant position of Senior Curator. And I am delighted to announce the appointment of Dr Chris Thorogood to this role. Chris, a talented scientist, artist, educator and author, will be joining OBG in January 2017 (more about Chris in the next Newsletter). I have every confidence that the combined creative talents of Chris and Pia will deliver the world-class interpretation that will make OBG a truly great place for public engagement with plants and science.

Coffee with Pia Östlund

Richard Mayou

Pia Östlund is a graphic designer & printmaker who worked at Chelsea Physic Garden for 14 years and who is designing and producing interpretation signage for the Oxford Botanic Garden (funded by the Friends). Strongly influenced by attitudes to nature in her native Sweden she believes that the designs should reflect the plants, buildings and historic collections in collaboration with the OBG team.

At the Friends' summer party the first instalment of the new signage for *Plants that Changed the World* (based on the book *What have plants ever done for us?* by Stephen Harris) attracted much admiration. It was again surrounded by visitors when I returned to the Garden the next morning to talk to Pia in the sunshine over coffee outside the Charlotte building.

Pia grew up by the sea on the west coast of Sweden spending weekends and holidays at her family's forest hut. Commenting that: "In Scandinavia, people see the whole of nature as their extended garden. Foraging for berries



Nature printing

and mushrooms, fishing and wild swimming are part of daily life. When I moved to London in 1996 I missed all that." However nature has since become a major theme in her professional life.

Pia studied natural science at school but then wanted to take a foundation course in art and design. As there was nothing suitable in Sweden she looked abroad, choosing London because of the language and made possible because Sweden had just joined the EU. A Foundation Course at Central Saint Martin's School of Art & Design was followed by a BA (Hons) in Graphic Design at the same school. She then worked in Switzerland and Austria before returning to Sweden to work on graphic design and illustrations for botany and ecology projects for to Malmö University. However, missing the arts and social life of London, she returned to live in Brick Lane, East London, to pursue a freelance career.

Very soon after her return to London, Pia began 14 years as a graphic design consultant for Chelsea Physic Garden. She first became involved through meeting the then Curator, Rosie Atkins, who was a judge when she won a Royal Institute of British Architects competition to design an interpretation scheme for a proposed garden which explained geological time at the British

Geological Survey in Nottingham. With only a small space, she sought to engage people's imagination through intrigue and humour and was inspired by William Blake's line, "to see a world in a grain of sand".

At that time the Physic Garden had little infrastructure and opened only twice a week and Rosie Atkins (who had previously started the *Gardens Illustrated*) asked Pia to join an enthusiastic group aiming to transform the Garden. She describes her role as trying to capture some of the intrinsic nature of this historic and educational place in the design of the visual identity, interpretive signage, guidance material and merchandising". This included developing the Physic Garden branded products for the shop together with the Book & Gift shop manager Linda Forrest, and marketing material such as

leaflets, posters and banners. Between 2011-2016, Pia worked closely with the Head Gardener, Nick Bailey, on the design of all interpretation material, often making use of historic image material from the library, herbarium and paintings by the Garden's Florilegium Society to illustrate the panels and the Physic Garden's new guidebook.

Other clients have included London Review of Books, The English Gardening School, *The Winton Beauty of Mathematics Garden* at the Chelsea Flower Show, the European Commission and NESTA (National Endowment for Science Technology & the Arts).

Alongside her work Pia is keenly interested in drawing, printing and printing history and has been working on reviving a lost printmaking art, called Nature printing which has historic links to Chelsea Physic Garden. Rosie Atkins showed her an 1855 volume *Ferns of Great Britain & Ireland* by Thomas Moore, the Victorian curator responsible for the Physic Garden's Cool Fernery area. She had never seen anything like the curious, lifelike and life-size illustrations which could be felt by running one's finger across them. The only clue to how they had been made was a small caption in the corner of the page that read "Nature Printing". It turned out that during the 19th century, there had been enthusiasm for a form of scientific image-making. A plant was pressed into a sheet of lead under high pressure and the resulting very detailed impression was transferred to a copper printing plate and used for the mass production of botanical books. Pia has revived the method using the description in the original 1853 patent. Her research led to an MA (Res) from the Department of Typography & Graphic Communication, University of Reading (2013) and to a recent book *The Nature-printer* with text by Simon Prett (TimPress 2016). She has a printmaking studio in Hackney, East London where she

works on limited editions and has also taught nature printing workshops at Chelsea Physic Garden, Cambridge University Botanic Gardens and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh.

Pia was introduced to Simon Hiscock at Chelsea by Nick Bailey and he invited her to come to Oxford. She is working on interpretation for several areas - a history board at the entrance, Plants that changed the world, Flowering plant diversity and Angiosperm Phylogeny. While we also have a historic walled garden, she sees Oxford as very different from Chelsea being part of a University, having extraordinary historic collections and the grander design with the Danby Arch and formal beds. She has spent time in the garden and with the whole team but collaborating with Tom Price on identifying key features and the positioning of boards as she developed designs. She has worked particularly closely with Stephen Harris, Curator of the Herbaria, whose great knowledge of plants and the collections, his recent book *What have plants ever done for us?* and his forthcoming Guide to the Garden have been very important sources of ideas, illustrations and text.

Once the first OBG phase is complete, Pia will be starting on further interpretation (again funded by the Friends) for the glasshouses and for the Arboretum. She is also going to prepare a design concept for the conversion of the exhibition room to a Herbarium Room. This will include wallpaper and curtains based on botanical art in the Herbaria and Sherardian Library, an idea inspired by the decoration in Linnaeus's house at Hammarby outside Uppsala.

I was excited and impressed by Pia, not only by her signage but also by her commitment to an overall approach to design that draws on the Garden's history and collections. I will be going back to Chelsea very soon and look forward to seeing the further Oxford work.



Andrew Montgomery



PTCTW small panel for Woad

Recent and Upcoming Developments at the Botanic Garden

by Tom Price,
Gardens Curator

There has been a great deal of activity at the Botanic Garden over the past twelve months and much of this has been possible thanks to generous support from the Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum. The purpose of this feature is to highlight recent developments and to provide an insight to those that are planned for the year(s) ahead.

Walled Garden

The project to reconfigure the Taxonomic Beds (ex Family Beds), which form the heart of Walled Garden, according to the modern DNA-based (APG) classification of flowering plants, continues as scheduled. We are now over halfway through this project and the metal edging of the beds. By Spring 2017 two thirds of the project will have been completed, with beds replanted on four of the six sectors. These include the Campanulids, Fabids, Basal Eudicots, Basal Angiosperms, Magnolids and the Monocots.

This autumn new, seed-raised plants, collected as part of the Japan biodiversity hotspot project, will be incorporated within the Japan Border on the west axis of the Walled Garden (Fig. 1, no. 1). Many of the plants are endemic species, only found growing in Japan.

The old Fern Borders (Fig 1, no 2) on the east axis of the Walled Garden are to be replanted this autumn/winter. The new scheme will be an ornamental mixture of shrubs, herbaceous, bulbs and biennials. The planting will demonstrate succession

Fig. 1. Map indicating areas of ongoing work



Reconfiguration of the Family Beds as Order Beds according to APG system - metal edging being installed (September 2016)



The Cheshire Cat appeared in the White Mulberry in time for Alice Day on July 3rd. He sits in pride of place within the developing Literary Garden

planting in dry, shady conditions and house some of the variegated plants, a collection originally established by former Sherardian Professor and Keeper Cyril Darlington and Superintendent Ken Burras.

Phase one of the Literary Garden and Woodland Walk has been completed (Fig 1, no. 3). The Fern Border ferns have been moved across into this area to form part of a collection focussed on the evolution of non-seed plants. Further paths have been opened up for visitor access and the Cheshire Cat has taken up residency in the *Morus alba*. This piece of sculpture was created by acclaimed Bristol-based sculptor Julian Warren whose commissions include Sir

David Attenborough, the BBC and University of Bristol. Phase two of this project is planned for late 2016/early 2017.

With the proposed development of the Herbarium Room in the former Exhibition Room (Fig 1, no. 4), a new Bobart Collection is being planned for the border outside this room. The room is part of a building (now called the Daubeny Building) owned by Magdalen College which once housed the Oxford Herbarium and Department of Botany before they were relocated to the Science Area on South Parks Road in the 1950s. The Herbarium Room will be

a reference to this historic relationship as we approach our 400th Anniversary in 2021 and be a reminder that the science of Botany at Oxford began here at the Botanic Garden and was based here for over 300 years.

Lower Garden

The most significant change to the Garden this year has been the creation of a new collection, the 'Plants that Changed the World' display (Fig 1, no. 5). The area, which was previously used to cultivate vegetables on an allotment sized scale, has been transformed into to a showpiece collection highlighting plants that have changed the course of human civilisations across the globe. The plantings are a mixture of edibles, medicines, fibres, dyes and much more, all highlighting how important plants are to our existence.

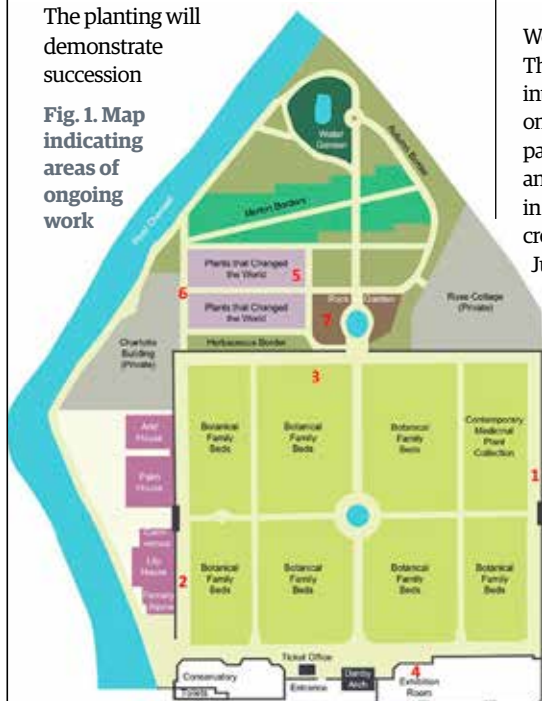
Botanicals used to flavour alcohols are now highlighted in the Gin Border (Fig. 2, no.6) which forms another element of the Plants that Changed the World Display'.

This autumn/winter a Winter Garden will be planted in an area at the southern end of the Lower Garden. This year we opened up the overgrown patch of *Berberis* to reveal a lovely view in and out of the Garden, across the River Cherwell and Christ Church Meadows. The planting will include plants producing colour, scent and structure during the winter months and blend subtly into the more informal plantings of the Water Garden.



The beginnings of the 'Plants that Changed the World' display in the former vegetable beds in the Lower garden. Alison Quantrell is marking out the areas for planting. (April 2016)

Further off is an exciting project to completely reconfigure the Rock Garden (Fig 1, no. 7). The notion of cultivating alpinines in Oxford is neither practical, nor unique to the Botanic Garden. Instead the area will, in the longer term, be developed into the Sibthorp Collection, highlighting the botanical exploration of Greece and the production of the *Flora Graeca*. The area will be designed to represent a transect from higher altitude evergreen oak and pine woodland, through shrubby maquis, lower garrigue and cultivated slopes of the hillsides found in Greece and throughout regions of the Mediterranean Basin.



New 'Wow!' plants for the Glasshouses

by Kate Pritchard,
Glasshouse Curator

Our vision for OBG is world-class status and for that we need to ensure our collections contain some remarkable 'wow factor' plants. In the glasshouses we already have a number of botanical jewels, including the majestic *Cereus uruguayanus* in the Arid House and the giant water lily *Victoria cruziana* in the tropical pond. Over the next 3-5 years, thanks to funding from the Friends, we will be acquiring many new plants, not only for glass, but also for hardy and the arboretum to enhance the status of our collections. This will ensure we continue to fulfil and extend our commitment to learning, research, conservation and public engagement.

In the glasshouses we endeavour to cultivate to a standard of excellence, a beautiful scientific plant collection that is taxonomically representative, botanically interesting and diverse. Recently we have started the process of reviewing the collections. This is to safeguard the plants we currently grow and to increase the breadth of what is possible to grow in line with the Director's vision. The collections need to remain exciting and

relevant to people. We currently cultivate in the region of 1200 species from more than 150 families, packed into some rather rickety houses - no wonder we need new glasshouses!

The themes that unite this wonderful collection of plants are evolution, adaptation and biodiversity. We aspire to be able to demonstrate these themes even more effectively by cultivating an unparalleled collection of plants. Some of the most ancient living lineages of flowering plants comprise the basal angiosperms. We already have this group represented with species from the families *Austrobaileyaceae* and *Nymphaeaceae*, but the plant that embodies this group more than any other is *Amborella trichopoda*, and this we don't yet grow. Director Simon Hiscock's research on plant evolutionary genetics and reproductive biology uses *Amborella trichopoda* so we will be acquiring it shortly. In the first half of the twentieth century the Botanic Garden had a reputation for growing *Nymphaea*, which after *Amborella* is the oldest extant lineage of flowering plants. Horticultural

trainee Jamie Todd is working with Lisa Friend to select water lilies that could be added to the collection in the tropical pond. Most are night flowering, so we shall be looking to species and cultivars that flower during the day when visitors to the Garden can appreciate them fully.

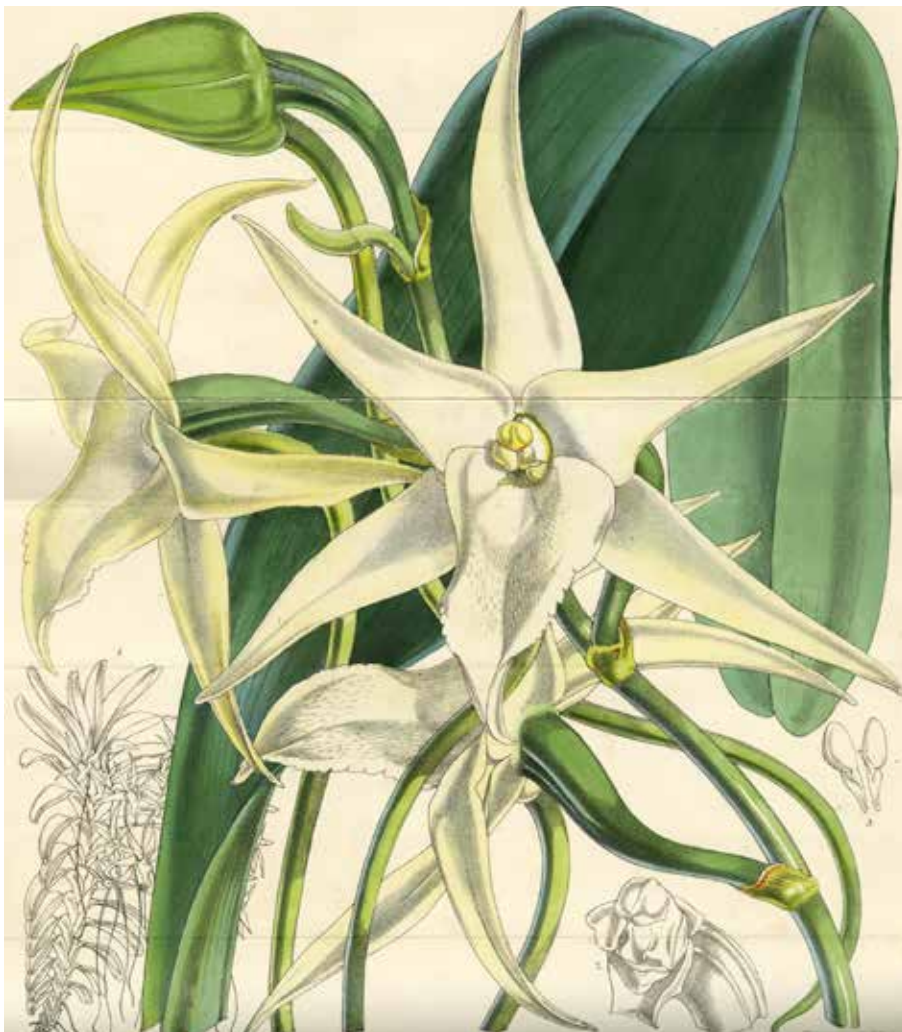
A highlight of any visit to the glasshouses is the temperate carnivorous plant collection. These plants are grown in a wetlands type environment and displayed in a naturalistic style. They encapsulate dramatically the theme of adaptation that unifies the glasshouse collections. We need to be able to display obvious adaptations such as active and passive trapping mechanisms, and also less well-known modifications such as fire resistance. Species of both temperate and tropical carnivorous plants are of high conservation status in the wild due to habitat destruction and poaching to order for the horticultural trade. All species of *Sarracenia* have a conservation listing and specimens of these are held in the glasshouse collections at OBG. All have collection data, and many include wild source information. Provenance information makes them much more useful for research and conservation activities. With improved growing conditions we would be able to increase the volume of plants grown and also better display the variation within species.

The genera *Drosera*, *Pinguicula*, *Utricularia* and *Roridula* are under represented and species will be added to the collection this year.

The temperate carnivorous plant collection has been used for study by Oxford University students investigating prey capture and digestion. There is huge potential to increase this area of activity with temperate species, but also extending study to the collection of tropical carnivores. We grow several species such as the pitcher plant *Nepenthes spectabilis*, with its striking purple and green mottled pitchers and *N. merrilliana*, the lower pitchers of which can be more than 40cm long and have a volume of 2-3 litres! In size, these pitchers rival those of *Nepenthes rajah*, a plant we are hoping to include in the collection. *N. rajah* has the largest of any pitchers in the genus and although it is not specifically adapted to catch mammals, there are records of young rodents falling prey.

In the wild in Sabah, tree shrews visit the pitchers of *Nepenthes lowii*. These rodents perch on the pitcher rim, the peristome, and lick secretions from the underside of the pitcher lid. Whilst perched they often defecate into the pitcher, providing a nutritious meal for the plant. At the recent International Carnivorous Plant Conference held at RBG Kew Gardens, Sir David Attenborough made the suggestion that perhaps these plant secretions have laxative properties! *Nepenthes lowii* is another plant we will look to add to the collection, increasing the range of plants displaying unusual adaptations. This will enable us to better interpret key narrative themes such as evolution and ecology.

Indispensible to a collection like ours, are plants whose development and distribution



Angraecum sesquipedale (Curtis_Bot_mag_t5113)

is inexorably entwined with that of human civilisation. To complement the outdoor display of 'Plants That Changed the World', we are focusing on some of those plants of major economic importance. These will include two palms, the coconut, *Cocos nucifera* and the oil palm *Elaeis guineensis*. Plants that historically have provoked wars and provided huge economic wealth are the nutmeg tree, *Myristica fragrans*, clove, *Syzygium aromaticum*, and the cinnamon tree, *Cinnamomum verum*. Some plants such as the Brazil nut tree, *Bertholletia excelsa*, which reaches dizzying heights above 50 meters, will continue to elude us until we have the new glasshouses that we so desperately need.

An arid plant that would make a fine addition to the collection is *Boswellia sacra*, frankincense. There has a long history in the trade of the sticky, oily resin harvested from this tree. Records indicate that it was already a valuable commodity more than 2000 years ago.

Vanilla planifolia originates from Mexico and has been cultivated for over a thousand years. Today it is grown on a commercial scale in both Mexico and Madagascar. This orchid provides the vanilla flavouring for confectionary, cosmetics and beverages. It is a member of the family *Orchidaceae*, considered to be the largest plant family, containing in excess of 25,000 species. Whilst we can't grow all of them, we can certainly improve representation. Lucinda Lachelin and I have been selecting genera and species we should be able to grow in the environments we have. We will be adding to the collection *Vanilla planifolia* and species and cultivars from the genera *Cattleya*, *Dendrobium*, *Epidendrum*, *Laelia*, *Oncidium*, *Vanda* and *Sarcocylus*. An orchid from Madagascar that we should grow as an icon of adaptation and the wonder of evolution is *Angraecum sesquipedale*. This is commonly known as Darwin's orchid. The flower spur is more than 30cm long and in 1862 Darwin predicted that a moth with a tongue longer than that of any moth known to science at that time must be its pollinator. Forty one years later, well after Darwin's death the long-tongued pollinating hawkmoth he predicted was discovered.

We also need to expand our collection of myrmecophytes - ant plants. Curious looking epiphytes in the genera *Myrmecodia*, *Anthorrhiza*, *Hydnophytum* and *Myrmephytum* have been the subject of repeated study at the University. Dr Camilla Lambrick's (née Huxley) research focused on the relationship between these plants and ants. More recently the photosynthetic pathways have come under scrutiny, and recent phylogenetic studies have discovered that we have the only known plant in cultivation of one particular species.

There are so many incredible species that we would like to grow but so little space. The traveller's palm, *Ravenala madagascariensis*, with its architectural fan of foliage growing

east to west will look beautiful in the Palm House - there because of its height rather than because it is a palm, which it is not! The sealing wax palm, *Cyrtostachys renda*, which is a true palm, and with the vibrant red colour of the leaf sheaths giving it its name will be an excellent ornamental plant to grow with its multi-stemmed habit.

An awe-inspiring plant grown for its sheer size and unmistakable fragrance is *Amorphophallus titanum*. A member of *Araceae*, the titan arum belongs to the same family as our native *Arum maculatum*. This extraordinary tropical giant produces an inflorescence that can reach 3 metres and smells of rotting meat. What an addition to the glasshouse collections! Continuing on a fragrant theme, we will look to improve the collection of succulents at the Garden. *Stapelia gigantea* and *S. grandiflora* have incredible striped, star-shaped flowers, which also smell of rotting meat to attract pollinators.

As impressive as the titan arum and a real challenge to cultivate, are species of the parasitic genus *Rafflesia*. Originating from south eastern Asian rainforests members of this genus are entirely dependent on their host plants, vines in the genus *Tetrastigma* to complete their lifecycle. Our new Head of Science and Public Engagement will be



Hydnophytum moseleyanum

Dr Chris Thorogood, an expert on parasitic plants, and he is convinced he can help us grow this giant at Oxford - that really would be a wow plant for our collections and the 400th Anniversary!



Nepenthes spectabilis

The Japan Project: an overview

by Ben Jones, Curator Harcourt Arboretum

Background

In 2012, OBGA planned and initiated a long term fieldwork project in Japan, one of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots. Collectively these areas hold over 50% of all known plant species, yet cover only 2.3% of the Earth's land surface. The aim of the Japan Project, which arose from a DPhil thesis undertaken at the Department of Plant Sciences, is to cultivate well documented plant material from Japan to strengthen living collections on public display at both the Garden and Arboretum, provide material to support research activities at OBGA, Plant Sciences and other departments in the University,

and to engage in plant conservation activities at a practical level.

The plant collections are central to this, as they are the means by which we can communicate the value of global plant biodiversity, the threats to it and the impacts associated with such threats. The development of these collections, to ensure they are fit for purpose and remain relevant to the work of OBGA, is therefore key. The acquisition of well-documented, wild origin plant material is of significant importance in conservation and developing the research potential of collections held by OBGA, but also in further improving the educational and

aesthetic value of the collections.

The core objective of the Japan Project is to collect seed and document the indigenous plants of Japan. The plant material will provide new material for the plant collections at OBGA and will be used to highlight the importance of the Japanese flora on a global scale. Seed will also be preserved at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew Millennium Seed Bank for long-term conservation purposes. The documenting of the Japanese flora will support ongoing research into the mapping of plant biodiversity within the Japan Hotspot, conducted by Oxford's Department of Plant Sciences, Oxford.

Pinus parviflora growing in Tochimoto Forest Chichibu Saitama Prefecture (September 2016). The form of the tree is referred to as natural niwaki cloud pruning



Progress

During November 2012 the project team conducted a reconnaissance trip to Japan, travelling from Hokkaido in the north of the country to Shikoku in the south and visiting colleagues in botanic gardens in each region of Japan. The objective for this trip was to focus on introducing the project to our colleagues in Japan, gain in country logistical support, investigate field sites and gain access and permission for seed collection in subsequent visits.

A project meeting was held at the University of Tokyo's Koishikawa Botanical Gardens and attended by representatives from The University of Tokyo, Niigata Prefectural Botanic Garden, Bonn University Botanic Gardens, the Japanese Ministry of Environment and the University of Oxford Botanic Garden and Harcourt Arboretum. A presentation was provided, summarising the project, followed by discussion on suitable sites for seed collection, collection permit requirements and support for fieldwork during future collection trips. This trip was a huge success with project partners being engaged for each region of Japan, suitable collection sites identified and strong support for the project being secured.

Building on the success of the 2012 trip, additional trips were conducted over four week periods in October 2013 & 2014. During these visits, working in collaboration with the University of Tokyo Forests (Chiba, Chichibu & Hokkaido), Botanic Garden of Toyama, and Niigata Botanic Garden we collected seed of indigenous plant species, made herbarium vouchers for them and conducted botanical surveys to support ongoing research in Oxford Plant Sciences. To date, a total of 291 taxa have been collected and sixteen botanical surveys conducted. Over 1,600 herbarium vouchers have been collected, many of which have been mounted, photographed and accessioned into the University of Oxford Herbaria. Seed has been shared with project partners in Japan, most significantly with Ministry of Environment's National Seed Conservation Project, which has the target of seed banking 70% of Japan's indigenous flora by 2020. Seed donated from OBGAs collections will contribute to this target. Seed has also been shared with allied institutions in the UK, namely the Forestry Commission, the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. Distribution of the seed will allow for the development of effective ex situ conservation collections across the UK and promote wider interpretation of the importance of Japan's plant diversity.

Prompted by the success of the 2013 trip OBGAs was invited to join the Collections Working Group, initiated by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Forestry Commission in 2007. The purpose of this group is to facilitate access to temperate woody plant collections and associated research and

training opportunities. As a member of this group OBGAs will benefit from access to plant material collected by other members of the group, allowing us to improve the plant collections at OBGAs even further, but also to benefit from the knowledge and experience of the group and become involved with further fieldwork opportunities.

One particular highlight has been the opportunity to work on a particular birch species. *Betula chichibuensis* or Chichibuminebari is the World's rarest birch species. Endemic to Japan, and with a very small range, it is confined to the Chichibu area in the mountains of Central Honshu. In 1993 the wild population was reported to have declined to just 21 individuals. This species, which has no close living relatives anywhere else in the world, is considered a relict species and is likely to be of very ancient origin. Of the ca. 76 species of birch, this particular species has been assessed as Endangered in the Red List of Threatened Plants of Japan.

Growing as a multi-stemmed shrub or small tree (10m), in the wild, this birch makes a particularly attractive plant. Creamy yellow male catkins and red female catkins with tufts of violet styles provide spring interest, leading through to the autumn, when the leaves turn a delicious butter yellow. Even in the depths of winter and in the absence of foliage, the stems and branches with their prominent lenticels provide a degree of interest.

In October 2014, we were fortunate to not only see this rare plant in the wild, but to collect viable seed. Locating this plant was an adventure in itself, and we were skilfully guided to it by staff from the University of Tokyo Chichibu Forestry Department. Through the dense forest, up steep mountainsides, across rivers and up onto limestone outcrops, we eventually arrived at the isolated population. Despite the heavy rain and the 6-hour journey in, it was an enormous privilege and hugely exciting to see this plant in the wild.

Back in the UK and thanks to the National Pinetum, Bedgebury, who have propagated the seed, we now have 35 thriving plants. These young trees represent the very essence of the Japan project. Grown from seed collected under permit in collaboration with UK and Japanese partners and supported by a wealth of field data and seed conserved at the Millennium Seed Bank Project, these rare birches will be planted at the Arboretum this winter and also at other arboreta across the UK.

Future aims

Further trips are planned to central Japan this Autumn (indeed Ben Jones and Ali Quantrell are there as we go to press - *Ed.*) to continue the work started in 2013. Further seed collections will be made within these regions of Japan, as will further botanical surveys to provide additional data to support the research into the mapping of Japan's plant diversity. Throughout the project our intention is to strengthen relationships between OBGAs and colleagues in Japan, to share and develop skills, knowledge and experience and to promote collaborative working to support the interests of both our Japanese partners and that of OBGAs.

Comprehensive plant displays of the Japanese flora continue to be developed at OBGAs providing a collection celebrating the unique plant diversity of Japan and the importance of conserving this diversity for the future.

The plant material from this work will perform on a multitude of levels, providing us with the opportunity to combine both the aesthetic and scientific elements of our living collections. On one level, these plants will form part of the picturesque landscape at the Arboretum, providing a stunning buttery yellow autumnal scene and making a positive contribution to issues around age structure of the tree collection generally. On another level, and of equal importance, these well documented conservation collections will support our teaching and research activities and help make our collections 'world class'.



Newly discovered population of ~50 *Betula chichibuensis*, one of Japan's rarest trees

Friends Section

News

Those who came to our 25th Birthday Summer Party or to our AGM will have heard that it has been a hectic time in the Botanic Garden and Arboretum with continuing changes on the ground, in the Garden office and in the ever more ambitious planning. There will be a very large fundraising campaign by the Botanic Garden, aided by the University's Development Office, principally for new glasshouses and an Arboretum Visitor Centre. The Friends expect to complement the campaign by providing even more support for other important projects. The aim is that by the 400th birthday in 2021 the world's best university (according to the Times Higher Education) will have a botanic garden and arboretum that are both wonderful to visit and are also world class in research and education.

Our Board Meeting at the end of September approved the following requests:

- *A shade frame for the Arboretum* (£31,250) close to the tractor shed to enable the maturation of saplings grown from seeds collected on conservation expeditions;
- *Further interpretation* (£17,180) by Pia Östlund for the glasshouses, at the Arboretum and design work for the decoration of the new Herbarium room;
- *A cold frame for carnivorous plants* (£1,869) which will enable an increased range of genera and species in the Insectivorous house.

New Administrator

When our part time administrator resigned at the end of March, Simon Hiscock suggested that our support should be part of a full time post in an expanded and reorganised garden administration. This change should enable closer collaboration, new initiatives and 5 days/week cover. Our new administrator, Sally Jeffery, started in late September, and has met Friends at the AGM and coffee

mornings. We had to rely on temporary cover for 6 months which inevitably meant that not everything went totally smoothly for which we apologise.



Sally Jeffery

The Newsletter

In recent years the Friends have edited and organized the production of this Newsletter. In future Garden staff will be once again be taking on greater responsibility. Features in this issue have been commissioned by Simon Hiscock and he and Sally Jeffery have been largely responsible for production. They, and we, hope that Newsletter editorial content will reflect both what is happening in the Botanic Garden and Arboretum and in Oxford plant science and underlying scientific and horticultural issues. Friends News will continue little changed.

We will be continuing to send out occasional emails of interest to Friends. It is very helpful to have email addresses for members so that we can keep in touch whilst saving money on postage (one of our largest costs). Our web pages will improve and be more useful.



Crystal Dobson

Crystal Dobson is retiring after 13 years supporting the FOBGHA. As a newcomer to Oxford, she came to a coffee morning in 2003, and became one of our youngest members (as she still is!). Her voluntary work with the Friends "started when I was at the garden one day and saw people sitting under the magnolia tree busy stuffing envelopes (with the newsletter). It looked so lovely and peaceful so I went over to see if they needed help". She then found herself working with our Membership Secretary, Lesley Cowan, who with his wife Doreen, managed all our business from their home in Southmoor. A year or two later we wanted to move on from our basic ticketing for visits and Crystal devised and managed our present electronic procedures. This meant dealing from home with all applications, money and sending out the tickets for the Friends and Bobarts Events, the New Chamber Opera and all the other FOBGHA fundraising activities. She was also the first Secretary when we became a charitable company.

Many Friends will have met Crystal at visits and events; others will know her as the friendly and efficient voice on the telephone who sorted out problems quietly and meticulously behind the scenes. She was always willing to go the extra mile to help the Friends. She has shown an amazing commitment to the Friends and to the Garden and Arboretum. We will miss her enormously.

Message to all email users

If you are not receiving regular e-bulletins, with news of Friends' events, by email it will be because, for some reason, we do not have your current email address. Please send an email with your name, to the Friends' Administrator at friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk. If you have joint membership, please ensure that we have both email addresses.

Special Message to all gmail users

Gmail has a disconcerting way of filtering messages into different categories. You may be missing emails from us because they have been filtered into the Promotions or Update categories. It is advisable to apply a filter to move any emails from Friends' Administrator to force them into your Personal or Primary Inbox. If you need any help with this, do contact Seonaid Danziger at seonaid.danziger@obg.ox.ac.uk.

Events

First Friday of the Month

Coffee Mornings

Friends' coffee mornings are on the first Friday of every month (except January and August) and are an opportunity for Friends to get together and usually about 40 people

attend. All coffee mornings begin 10.30am in the Garden's Conservatory followed by a tour at 11.00am. No fee and no booking required, just turn up. The next dates are:

December 9th, February 3rd, March 3rd, April 7th



Oxford Botanic Garden
Christmas Fair

Enter the most fabulous Christmas Fair at Britain's oldest Botanic Garden

Saturday, 3rd December
10am–8pm

Sunday, 4th December
10am–4pm

Special admission offer for Friends: £3.50 includes one free ticket

Cereus, plate XIV, Plantae selectae by Trew, C.J (1750–1773) © Sherardian Library of Plant Taxonomy

Saturday 3rd December
10.00am until 8.00pm
Sunday 4th December
10.00am until 4.00pm

Oxford Botanic Garden invites you to the Christmas Fair

The Friends have been invited to help with this wonderful Christmas Fair. We will be selling decorated gingerbread, Christmas confectionary and bulbs over the weekend

and decorating the marquee and exhibition room with festive greenery and lights. We need help setting up on Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd Dec, running the stall and marshalling over Sat 3rd and Sun 4th. This event is new to the garden and we hope it's success will lead to it becoming a regular feature in the festive season. Please email Maura Allen on mea@armitstead.com or ring on 01865 311711.

January - April 2017

Oxford Botanic Gardens & Harcourt Arboretum Winter Lecture Series 2017

Nelson Mandela Lecture Theatre, Saïd Business School, Park End Street, Oxford OX1 1HP

- The Thursday lectures start at 8.00pm and are followed by drinks
- Individual lectures £15, whole series £60

January 26

Mary Keen

Paradise and Plenty - the How and Wow of Lord Rothschild's private garden on the Waddesdon Estate

February 9

Dr Mark Johnson

Trees in Towns and Cities: A History of British Urban Arboriculture

February 23

Victoria Summerley

London: An Unexpected Paradise

March 9

Richard Mabey

Botany and the Imagination

March 23

Caroline Holmes

Bory Latour-Marliac - the source of water lilies, before and beyond Monet

Please book online at www.oxforduniversitystores.co.uk which allows secure payment and immediate confirmation of place(s). No tickets are sent out: your email confirmation acts as a ticket. If you are unable to book online please pay on the door.

Garden Visits

Jane Annett, Harriet Bretherton, Pauline Coombes, Diana Naumann

Welcome to the 2017 programme. Visits tend to get booked up quickly so to avoid disappointment please make your booking as soon as possible, either through the accompanying booking form or by visiting the website: www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/visits-and-events-0. If you have any queries, contact the Friends' Administrator, friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk 01865 286690.



Lynn Keddie

Cotswold Farm Arts and Crafts House

Friday 10th February, 1.30pm

Cotswold Farm and Garden

Duntisbourne Abbots, Nr Cirencester, GL7 7JS

By kind permission of Mrs Mark Birchall

Guided tour of c1700 farmhouse extended in Arts & Crafts style by Sidney Barnsley with Norman Jewson c1900. Garden overlooks a quiet valley, with descending levels, terrace by Jewson, 62 varieties of snowdrops (a collection, begun in the 1930's and further developed by Ruth Birchall in 1996), winter step garden and bog garden. Plants and snowdrops for sale. Garden on a slope with steep steps. Tea & cake included.

- Friends £18, guests, £23
- Maximum 40

Thursday 16th February, 2.00pm

Worcester College, Oxford

By kind permission of The Garden Master

A winter visit to see the garden structure, some magnificent trees and shrubs, picturesque views and snowdrops and early bulbs. A member of the gardening team will show us around and talk about the history, the gardening techniques and plans for the future. Tea & pastries included.

- Friends £12, guests £17
- Maximum 40

Sunday 19th March, 2.30pm

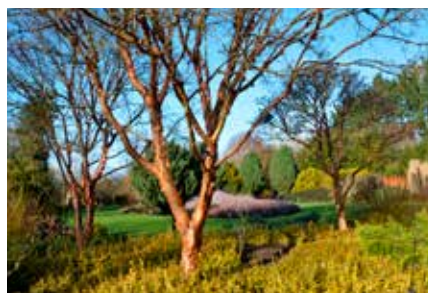
Abbotswood

Stow-on-the-Wold, GL54 1EN

By kind permission of Dikler Farming Co

Head Gardeners, Martin and Bridget Fox, will welcome us. Abbotswood House (not open) of 1869 was altered Lutyens c1900 who also designed the 'hard landscape' and summer houses. Extensive sloping grounds with many naturalised spring bulbs and rock and stream gardens by James Pulham. Refreshments not included; available in Stow-on-the-Wold.

- Friends £10, guests £15
- Maximum 55



Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

Friday 24th March, 11.00am

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

Romsey SO51 0QA

By kind permission of Hampshire County Council

The 180 acres hold the largest collection of hardy trees and shrubs in the world and 14 national plant collections. Before lunch, the Head Gardener, Fran Clifton, and horticulturalist and botanist, Barry Clarke, will lead two groups through the 10 acre winter garden and other areas (about an hour of walking). After lunch free time to explore. Refreshments included on arrival; lunch can be bought in the Pavilion Restaurant.

- Friends £22, guests £27
- Maximum 50



Worcester College

**Saturday 1st April
10.00am and 12noon**

Magdalen College, Oxford

By kind permission of The President

The Water Meadow is full of fritillaries in April. Liam Dolan, Sherardian Professor of Botany and Garden Master at Magdalen, will highlight the history of the gardens and their botanical interest. He will also describe Humphry Repton's early 19th century Red Book proposals to redesign the landscape. Refreshments included either before or after the tour.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Two groups of 15



Saturday 29th April

Double Visit: Towersey Manor and Turn End

11.00am

Towersey Manor, Towersey, Nr Thame, OX9 3QR

By kind permission of Mr and Mrs David Barnett

2.30pm

Turn End, Townside, Haddenham, PI7 8BG

By kind permission of Mr Peter Aldington

The owners of Towersey Manor created this garden 50 years ago from a vast area of lawn. Large formal hornbeam hedges frame small secret areas and a long vista leads to the meadow with a mound and obelisk. Coffee and biscuits on arrival.

Turn End is a contrast to this morning's visit. Walled enclosures that complement the listed post-war house (not open). A plantsman's garden with raised and sunken gardens and courtyards in light and shade with plants chosen accordingly. The architect owner, Peter Aldington, and Head Gardener, Jackie Hunt will give introductory talks.

- Friends £20, guests £25
- Maximum 40



Turn End: The Main Glade

The Bobarts Patron Group

Helen Potts and
Jennie Turner

Bobarts Day was held at the OBG. Director Professor Simon Hiscock joined us there along with Tom Price, Garden Curator and Kate Pritchard, Glass House Curator. Following a reception on the new Events Lawn, the Curators led a tour of the Garden and Glasshouses and Professor Hiscock spoke about his exciting ambitions for the Garden.

Somerset Tour

The first overnight event for the Bobarts was a very enjoyable and successful two days visiting four quite different gardens near Wincanton. We began at Durslade Farm, Bruton, an arts centre created by international art gallery, Hauser & Wirth, with a garden designed by Piet Oudolf. After lunch we visited the 16th century, Stavordale Priory, a Grade 1 listed building now owned by Sir Cameron Mackintosh. His partner, Michael Le Poer Trench has developed this truly romantic and inspirational garden over the last twenty years. At Yarlinton House,

a handsome 1780s house with extensive views beyond the ha ha, Countess de Salis led us around delightful gardens and a walled kitchen garden. Count de Salis, showed us the house and his exceptional Napoleonic collection. Pen Mill Farm is in a secluded valley where a tributary of the Stour cascades down forming many lakes, Sarah FitzGerald gave us a delicious lunch and showed us around the garden which featured in the September edition of 'The English Garden'.

Looking ahead to 2017 we are already planning another exciting year, including a tour of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, an all day visit with lunch and many more new and remarkable gardens. Our overnight visit will be to Herefordshire.

Please do consider joining the Bobarts Patron Group in the knowledge that you are giving extra support to the Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum.



Piet Oudolf's garden at Durslade Farm

Calendar

December

Saturday 3rd and
Sunday 4th December

Christmas Fair

Friday December 9th

Coffee morning

January

Thursday 26th January

Winter Lecture: Mary Keen

February

Friday February 3rd, 10.30am

Coffee morning

Thursday February 9th

Winter Lecture: Mark Johnson

Friday 10th February

Visit to Cotswold Farm

Thursday 16th February

Visit to Worcester College

March

Friday March 3rd, 10.30am

Coffee morning

Thursday March 9th

Winter Lecture: Richard Mabey

Saturday 19th March

Visit to Abbotswood

Thursday March 23rd

Winter Lecture: Caroline Holmes

Friday 24th March

Visit to Sir Harold Hillier Garden

April

Saturday 1st April

Visits to Magdalen College

Friday April 7th, 10.30am

Coffee morning

Saturday 29th April

**Visits to Towersey Manor
and Turn End**

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden and Harcourt Arboretum

Rose Lane, Oxford OX1 4AZ

All Friends' enquiries, including those about Friends' events, should be made to the Friends' Administrator

Tel: 01865 286690

E-mail: friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk

Web: www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk

The Friends Office is staffed on weekdays. This Newsletter was edited by Simon Hiscock and Sally Jeffrey with help from Richard Mayou, Diana Naumann and Carol Maxwell. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Board of the Friends or the Visitors Of Oxford Botanic Garden.

