

The University of Oxford

112

Botanic Garden & Arboretum

Friends'
newsletter

*Celebrating
400 years*

Autumn/Winter 2022/23



CELEBRATING
400 YEARS

From the Editor

By Chris Thorogood

Front cover: The Orchestra of The Age of Enlightenment, performing at Oxford Town Hall, in celebration of the Botanic Garden's 400th anniversary.



Above: the Vice-Chancellor planting the English oak; below Chris Thorogood with Raymond Blanc



Actors dressed as historic characters associated with Oxford Botanic Garden

It is fair to say that in all its four centuries, Oxford Botanic Garden has never run so many public engagement activities in one fortnight, as it did last July. Visitors flocked to the Garden in their thousands over the course of six themed days, marking the end of a year of celebratory activity. The themes encompassed history, literature, science, art, health and wellbeing, and were followed by a 'big birthday' finale on Saturday 30th July. Lauren Baker, who ran the campaign of activity with flare and precision, describes more on page 10. She worked with 'Community Connectors' and local stall holders to change how the Garden engages with the city. As



we ate Syrian, Malaysian and Ugandan cuisine, and watched contemporary musical performances in the sticky heat, people commented that they'd 'never heard music like that before' or 'tasted food quite like it'. For an hour or two, I think everyone who joined us that day was transported. And many of the people who came to the Garden had never visited before; some I'm sure, will return.

A few miles away in Nuneham Courtenay, activity was also unfolding this summer. You may recall from an earlier newsletter that we received National Lottery (NLHF) funding last December to engage with new audiences, paving the way for a future Visitor and Learning Centre. We are delighted

to welcome the new Project Manager, Lesley Best, and her team of community engagement officers, Martha Holland and Caroline Moreau to the Arboretum to drive this exciting project forward. In a short space of time, they have concocted a vibrant activity plan that will bring to life tree-planting, rural crafts and wellbeing walks at the site over the coming 12 months. These activities will commence with an autumn fair on October 15th which, building on the success of the 400th anniversary celebrations at the Garden this summer, seeks to engage new audiences and communities - this time in a woodland setting.

Yes, in four centuries, there has never been so much focus on engaging people with the wonder of plants and nature at Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum, at a time when this has never been needed more.

Contents

From the Editor	2
From the Director	3
News from the Garden	4
News from the Glasshouses	6
News from the Arboretum	7
The 400th Anniversary	8
Education at OBG	10
Friends' Section	
News.....	11
Events.....	12
Friends' Garden Visits	12
The Bobarts Patrons' Group.....	16



Pia Östlund demonstrating nature printing

Photo by Sam Allard

From the Director

By Simon Hiscock

After over four years in the planning and a year of waiting, we finally delivered our grand celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Botanic Garden in July. The two weeks of celebration began with a formal 'Encaenia-style' ceremony at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin which represented a contemporary recreation of the founding ceremony of 1621. The ceremony was led by Revd Dr William Lamb, in the presence of the Chancellor, Lord Patten of Barnes CH, the Vice-Chancellor Professor Dame Louise Richardson, and other senior members of the University. It began with a trumpet fanfare and included music from *everything grows extravagantly*, composed especially for the 400th anniversary by Cheryl Frances-Hoad to words by Kate Wakeling, and performed beautifully by Jonathan Evers (baritone) and Jonathan Beesley (piano). Two poems from the song cycle were read by Professor Fiona Stafford and extracts from *Vertumnus, An Epistle to Mr Jacob Bobart* (written by Abel Evans in 1713) were read by the University Public Orator, Dr Jonathan Katz.; addresses were also given by the Chancellor and me. The ceremony concluded with a rousing rendition of *Jerusalem* and a final trumpet fanfare to herald a formal procession to the Botanic Garden led by the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, preceded by the Bedels and Verger, and followed by senior members of the University, all in full academic dress.

Before entering the Botanic Garden the party paid their respects to the dead of the Medieval Jewish cemetery in the traditional Jewish way of placing stones on the memorial plaque. Here Pam Manix, a Medieval Jewish

historian, said a few words about the history of the cemetery. The party then entered the Botanic Garden through the Danby Gate to enjoy a champagne reception followed by a summer lunch in a grand marquee on the events lawn. Ahead of the lunch the Vice-Chancellor planted an English oak (*Quercus robur*) grown from an acorn from an 800 year-old tree growing on the Cornbury Park Estate, the former home of the Garden's founder, Henry Danvers first Earl of Danby KG. During the lunch, the Vice-Chancellor and I gave speeches which looked to the future of the Botanic Garden, most notably the task of fundraising for the new glasshouses and infrastructure. This was a truly historic day and one those who attended will never forget.

The following day the Garden and City welcomed representatives of Oxford's twin cities and their botanic gardens: Padua, Leiden, Bonn, Grenoble, Wroclaw, Ramallah, and Leon. Guests were welcomed by me, Councillor Bob Price (of the Oxford Twin Cities partnership) and the Lord Mayor, Dr James Fry, ahead of a day of 'show and tell' activities celebrating the culture and botanic gardens of each city. Highlights included a performance by the Oxford-Grenoble Byrd Chorus Choir, a poetry recital by Leiden's City poet, Zoë van de Kerkhof, and a celebration of Grenoble's famous walnuts, during which the Lord Mayor and I were admitted to the *Confrerie de Noix de Grenoble*, or 'Brotherhood of the Nut of Grenoble' in a ceremony beside a Grenoble walnut tree planted last year to mark the 400th anniversary. The day concluded with a merry dinner at Magdalen College.

Merriment continued later that week when the effervescent Michelin-starred chef Raymond Blanc gave a passionate talk about his love of gardening and cooking fresh healthy heritage fruit and vegetables - passions acquired during his childhood in France spent helping his father and brothers in the garden and his mother in the kitchen. Such was Raymond's enthusiasm for the Oxford Botanic Garden that he wants us to help him create a garden themed on the Botanic Garden at Le Manoir!

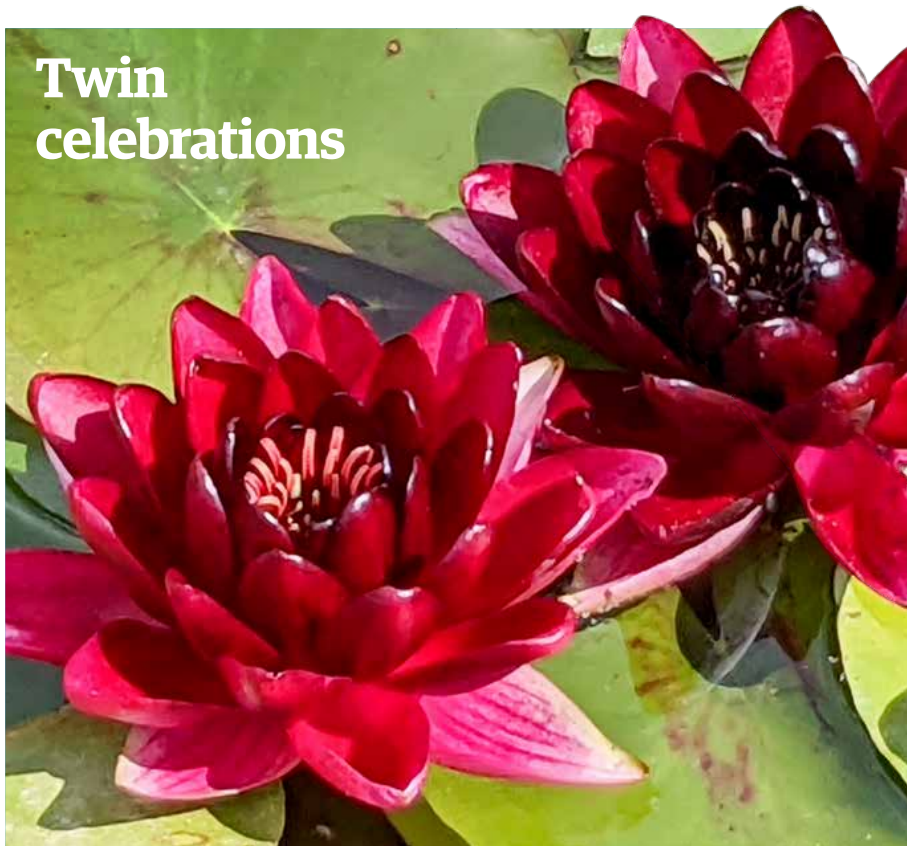
These were just a few highlights of two weeks of celebrations with events that spanned the arts - Poetry with Professor Alice Oswald, Nature Printing with Pia Östlund and Matthew Zucker - and the sciences - the Department of Chemistry in particular delivering a fascinating interactive insight into the chemistry of plants.

So now, with the festivities past, we must look to the future and focus on delivering a new Visitor and Learning Centre and new paths for the Arboretum, and raising money for new glasshouses and buildings at the Garden. At the end of my speech at the 400th anniversary lunch I looked to this future with some words written by Sir Roy Strong: "*A garden does not stop still in time. Who wants a horticultural albatross hung around their necks? So putting the old into good order is matched by the addition of something new which will make it work in a 21st century context.*" This is where we stand now at the Botanic Garden and Arboretum as we seek to raise the money needed to secure a bright 21st century future.



News from the Garden

By Mark Brent



Twin celebrations

Nymphaea 'Black Princess' Lily Pond

Alongside the marvellous events celebrating the Botanic Garden's 400th anniversary we have celebrated the 75th anniversary of the twinning of Bonn and Oxford. This was one of the first links to be set up as part of a twinning programme of post-war reconciliation between British and German cities; our respective botanic gardens have forged strong ties in recent years.

I have worked closely with my counterpart in Bonn, Markus Radscheit to mark this relationship in a meaningful way and it was our great delight to host a group of twenty five visitors from the Friends of Bonn Botanic Garden in early July. Meeting early on a fine Sunday morning, and kindly assisted by our German speaking volunteer guide Avril Hughes, our guests were given a tour of the

Botanic Garden before heading into the city. The following day they were hosted by Ben Jones and his team at Harcourt Arboretum where they enjoyed a tour of the collections and heard about future developments.

Among the many gifts exchanged, we were presented a miniature waterlily Dahlia 'Bonn Universitat'. A highlight of their stay was a gala dinner at St. Catherine's College attended by the Lord Mayor of Oxford, James Fry and his wife Susanna Pressel, Chairman of Oxfordshire County Council.

A reciprocal visit by a delegation from Oxford was made in August to Bonn at which the friendship between our two botanic gardens remained centre stage. Among the 150 guests was the Lord Mayor of Oxford, once again, and a particular feature of the occasion was the planting of an Oxford Physic Rose.

During the 400th celebrations it was our great pleasure to host a second year horticultural apprentice from Bonn, Max Heupel. Over the course of a fortnight, Max studied our horticultural practices, took part in the 400th celebrations and made visits to Kew and Hidcote. At the end of September our own apprentices, Jack Willerton and Lucy Hoggett will travel to Bonn to spend ten days in the botanic garden there to experience how our counterparts manage their collections.

Interestingly, following a previous visit to Oxford in 2002, the Friends of Bonn were suitably inspired by our Friends' Newsletter to start one of their own!



A group of delegates from Bonn and Oxford

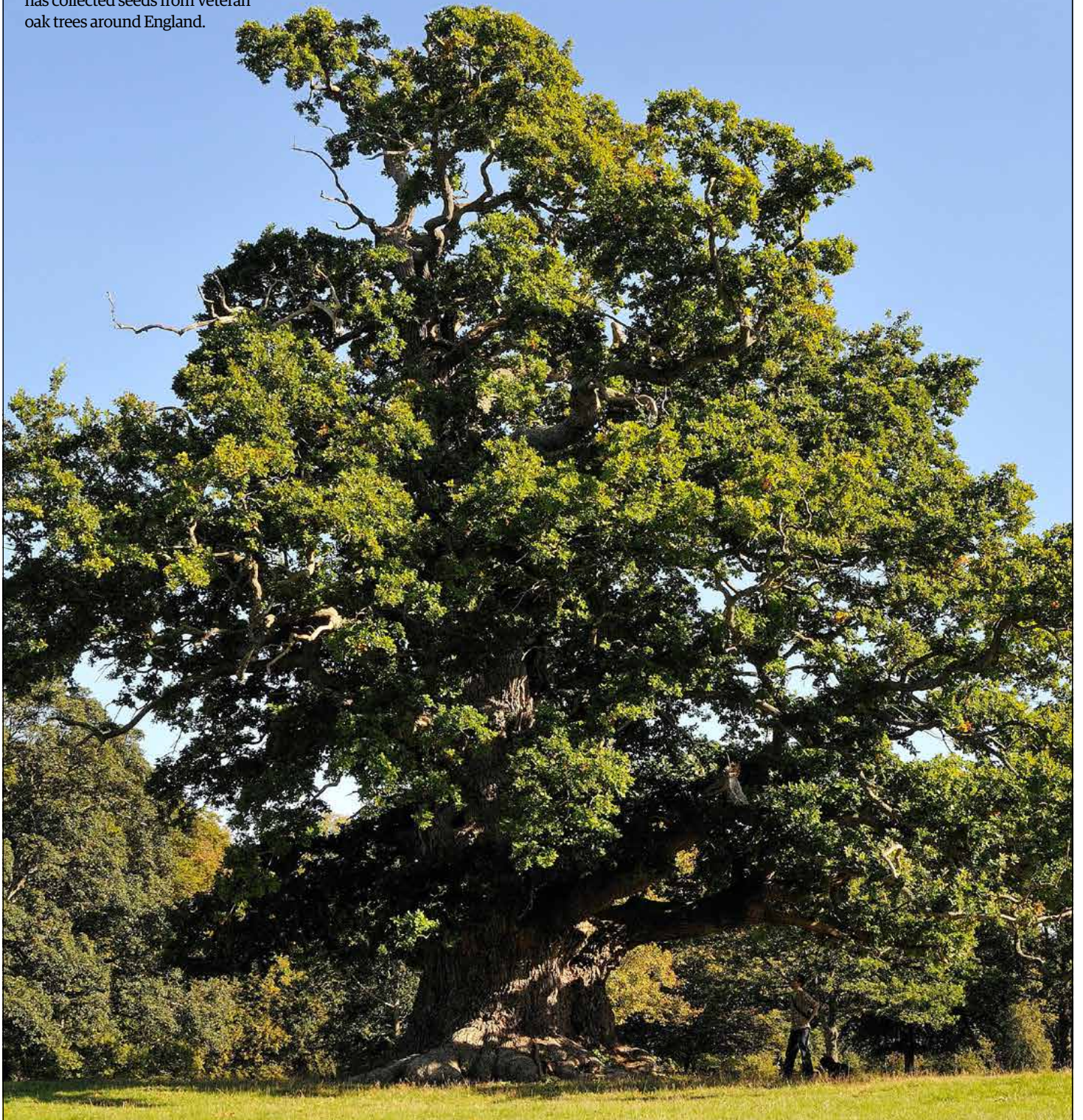
A tree to commemorate our 400th anniversary

You may be interested, or puzzled, by the choice of tree, an English oak (*Quercus robur*) planted by the University of Oxford's Vice-Chancellor, Louise Richardson, to commemorate the Botanic Garden's 400th anniversary this summer. It arose from a serendipitous meeting. Friend of the Botanic garden, Benedict Pollard, introduced himself to Professor Simon Hiscock at the Friends' Annual General Meeting this year. Benedict has collected seeds from veteran oak trees around England.

At a subsequent meeting with Benedict I realised that by chance he had raised from seed, several young trees derived from an 800 year old oak, which grows at Cornbury Park. Our great benefactor Henry Danvers, Earl Danby was residing there in 1621 when the Physic Garden was founded. Danvers died at Cornbury on 20th January, 1644 (aged 70 years).

The ancient tree is a remnant of the Royal Forest of Wychwood which survived being felled during the Napoleonic wars when timber was sourced for the Royal Navy; its immense hollow girth meant that it was probably beyond use.

The connection seemed entirely appropriate and a wonderful way to mark the 400th anniversary.



News from the Glasshouses

By Kate Pritchard

Passiflora coriacea

We have sourced over 50 new taxa for the glasshouse collections this year. Thanks must go to colleagues at botanic gardens around the world who have enabled the exchange of plant material throughout the pandemic. New to OBGAs collection is the bat-leaved passionflower (*Passiflora coriacea*).

Although the flowers are not as showy as some species in the genus, the leaves are striking - they resemble a bat in flight!

This climber is native from Panama to northern Venezuela and Bolivia. It has medicinal and culinary uses, and we will grow it in one of our warmer glasshouses.



Christert Johansson

Passiflora coriacea



Musa 'Gros Michel'

Musa 'Gros Michel'

In 2013 Myles Karp, a student at St Catherine's College and recipient of the Wallace Watson Award, travelled to

Central America in search of *Musa* 'Gros Michel'. His investigations resulted in the donation of plants to OBGAs glasshouse collections. After an eight-year wait, the banana cultivar 'Gros Michel' has finally flowered in the Rainforest House!

Thank you!

This season we have received significant help from our horticultural volunteers, from left to right: Maryam, Lottie and Philippa, thank you so much to you all.



Gossypium *raimondii*

Cotton is one of the world's most important economic crops, with *Gossypium hirsutum* cultivation producing over 90% of cotton lint globally. We often grow this species in the glasshouses, and this year its wilder relative from Peru, *Gossypium raimondii*, has joined it.

'Crop wild relatives' is a term used to describe species that are found in the wild and are related to important food or crop plants. Understanding the genetic relatedness of different species can help plant breeders and farmers to overcome environmental stresses and increase crop production.

Gossypium raimondii

News from the Arboretum

By Ben Jones

With record temperatures this summer, our main priority has been maintaining and looking after our newly planted accessions. 39.2° Celsius was recorded in Palmer's Leys on the 19th July, and with no rainfall for prolonged periods throughout the summer, it has been a learning experience to observe which plants thrived, and which didn't. The team worked tirelessly to ensure that our new accessions, or unestablished plants as we call them, were weed-free to reduce competition, had a good layer of mulch to regulate soil temperature and moisture levels, and in some cases had an irrigation bag or 'TreeGator' in place. These irrigation bags are very efficient at providing water directly over the plant's roots, and with a capacity of 55 litres are able to deliver a suitable amount of water over 24 hours. Whilst we have sustained a few losses during the summer, I am sure the number would have been much higher in the absence of this work.

Observing how particular areas of the Arboretum, or specific trees or shrubs

faired through summer was a valuable experience. Some trees defoliated early in the growing season, and whilst they will flourish next spring, a shortened growing season will undoubtedly take its toll. Others flourished this summer, a good example of which was the golden rain tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*), and has thrived in its open, full-sun position near the meadows. Amur maple (*Acer tataricum*) is another example of a specimen which enjoyed this summer's growing conditions.

In February the team visited RBG Kew for a day to undertake aerial rescue training with Kew's Tree Team, and in early summer I'm pleased to say that we were able to reciprocate. Our respective teams spent the day climbing our magnificent black pine on the Serpentine Ride, and enjoyed a tour of the Arboretum. The day was an opportunity for us to share knowledge and experience, something which is even more important in light of the challenges we all face in caring for and managing tree collections in a changing climate.



Acer tataricum



Monarch birch (*Betula maximowicziana*) with a TreeGator



Golden rain tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*)

If you would like to get involved at the Arboretum, you can find lots of information on our website: <http://www.obga.ox.ac.uk>, on the 'What's On' page. If you would simply like to hear more about the unique collection of plants we grow from around the world at the Arboretum or the latest development updates, then you'd be welcome to join our monthly 'Insight Tour' which takes place at 1.30pm on the first Wednesday of each month.



Celebrating the Botanic Garden's 400th anniversary, clockwise top left to bottom left: the inauguration of the Lord Mayor of Oxford, James Fry, and Director of OBGA, Simon Hiscock, into the 'Brotherhood of the Nut of Grenoble' beside a walnut tree from Grenoble; the finale week of festivities featuring plant-based food from around the world; live music from local artists; the historic ceremony at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin celebrating the founding of OBG; representatives from each of Oxford's Twinned City botanic gardens convening in celebration of the 400th anniversary; the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment performing at Oxford Town Hall.





Education at OBGA

By Tegan Bennett, Catherine Vivian and Lauren Baker

Oxford Botanic Garden celebrates 400 years

In the last two weeks of July, Oxford Botanic Garden became a hive of activity. The second week in this fortnight of celebratory activity saw over 9,000 guests visit the Garden between 25th - 30th July over six themed days: history; literature; science; art; health and wellbeing; and, finally, a 'Big Birthday Finale'.

These days had a strong community focus, and were curated in collaboration with community groups. The week saw over 40 providers and collaborators onsite engaging with the public, over 35 different soapbox talks from Oxford University staff and students, and eight local musicians mesmerise visitors with their talent. The Plant-Based World Food Fair and live music



Iraqi Women Arts and War at the Plant Based World Food Fair



The Bodleian Printing Press making an OBGA mandrake bookmark

were particularly popular, and brought visitors to the site from across Oxfordshire's communities. Personal highlights for me included: a Sensorium, which allowed visitors to explore our glasshouse collections using their sense of smell; the Bodleian printing press which attracted a long queue of curious people waiting to make botanical bookmarks and posters; 'Fizz Pop Science Shows', in which children in lab coats learnt about photosynthesis; the History of Science Museum making cyanotypes with leaves and flowers from the Garden, and the Chemistry Zone, where the Department of Chemistry brought indicator art, chilli tasting, matching activities and a 3D molecular printed treasure trail, informing visitors about the chemicals found in plants.



Fizz Pop Science Shows



One of the soapbox speakers talking about biochemistry

A new Public Education Programme

The Public Education Programme (PEP) for 2022-2023 has now been launched. An exciting programme of events follows a successful year of activities led by experts in photography, foraging, painting, wellbeing (including yoga and forest bathing), scything and tree climbing. OBGA staff also ran courses including coppicing, hedge-laying and tree planting, as well as a special horticultural 'Survive and Thrive' series of houseplant care classes as part of the Garden's 400th anniversary.

Whilst visitors enjoy the variety of skills brought to the programme by

external experts, they love spending time with staff and getting a behind-the-scenes glimpse of OBGA. The Public Education Programme is an important revenue stream, supporting the work of the Botanic Garden and Arboretum.

This year we will be running new heritage craft courses such as willow weaving and spoon carving, as well as some exciting night-time bat walks at the Arboretum. Do look out for the new programme of courses, lectures and practical activities on the 'What's On' page of our website.

Natty Mark Samuels delivering botanical Caribbean folklore



Friends' Section

News

From the Friends' Chairman,
Sarah Taylor

I was lucky enough to be present at the opening ceremony for the Garden's 400th anniversary celebrations in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin. We heard an uplifting mixture of poetry, music and garden musings past and present before proceeding along the High Street, led by the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor and other University dignitaries in their colourful gowns - wholly unsuitable for a glorious summer's day. We were told about the fascinating history of the memorial to the medieval Jews of Oxford in the rose garden outside the Botanic Garden, saw the Vice-Chancellor plant an historic oak then sat down for a delicious lunch.



© Seonaid Danziger

Listening to the history of the Jews' Cemetery

One of the great joys of the day was knowing that the Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum has been fully embraced by the University as an important place, both physically, historically and in terms of its potential contribution to science and the environment. This has not always been the case and the Garden has long struggled for recognition and funds and has run on a shoestring: one of the main reasons for the creation of the Friends' charity some thirty years ago. It is a delight to see the Garden thriving under its current team, looking stunning, educating countless primary and secondary school pupils, taking part in many international joint ventures of huge conservation importance, producing ground-breaking research, collaborating with other University departments of physics, engineering, plant sciences, ecology, zoology and psychology, to name but a few. They have also worked with City and County organisations in the musical, theatre and civic world. Hugely exciting plans are afoot to build new glasshouses for the Garden incorporating not just a tropical rainforest but also a café and teaching space. The Arboretum has applied to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for money

to build a Visitor Centre and been successful in stage 1 of the application - much hard work and finger crossing for the next phase!

It is against this background, as I have said before, that the Friends have decided that they no longer need to exist as a separate legal entity: keeping up separate accounts and effectively running two administrations. It is a waste of effort that can be put to better use. Our administrator (now full time!) is already a University employee. Irritating niggles like the Welcome Centre not being able to check if someone is a Friend or not, because of GDPR rules, can be a thing of the past.

The mainstream business of the Friends, raising money for the Garden and advocating on its behalf can continue exactly as now, as can all the wonderful things that our members have access to, like the amazing programme of Garden visits, coffee mornings, entry to May morning, reciprocal entry to other botanic gardens, the newsletter, celebrations galore. Volunteers to help with these things are wanted as much as ever: the more volunteers we have, the more we can do, both to support our Friends and to raise much needed funds for the Garden and Arboretum. Our valuable Patrons' groups will continue to provide additional support.

Above all, for now, the Paths Appeal continues. Only £300,000 to go, so do please dig deep: quite apart from widening the access to the Arboretum for both the able and the disabled, it is a crucial part of the application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the creation of the much-needed Visitor Centre. It has also triggered some valuable partnerships with all sorts of local organisations such as My Vision, groups of older people and families. The Arboretum is a source of much pleasure to many people: help us to reach even more and spread the happiness more widely as we approach the 60th anniversary of its acquisition by the University.



© Seonaid Danziger

A tranquil glade in the Arboretum

Friends of Botanic Gardens Forum (FBGF)

By Harriet Bretherton

A constitution for the FBGF is being drawn up. Before, the FBGF was just an informal body. **Now a Purpose is defined in the constitution.**

To provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas to promote the use, value and role of Friends of Botanic Gardens groups in their support and engagement of the mission of their respective botanic gardens

And Objectives

- Encourage and support interest in botanic gardens
- Encourage exchange of information and experience
- Raise awareness of the value of Friends/Members in supporting botanic gardens
- Represent the interests of Friends of Botanic Gardens
- Collaborate with relevant organisations as appropriate

The most recent Newsletter of the FBGF is available at <https://fbgf890441273.files.wordpress.com/2022/07/newsletter-summer-2022.pdf>

© Shiona Macle



Birmingham Botanic Garden

Events

First Friday of the Month

Coffee mornings

The coffee mornings are an opportunity for Friends to get together for a chat, coffee and biscuits, and to keep in touch with garden events. We meet in The Garden or Arboretum at 10.30 on the first Friday of each month except August and January. All welcome, no need to book, but do remember your Friends' membership card. The dates of future meetings are as follows:

4th November in the Garden
2nd December in the Garden
2023

January no meeting
3rd February in the Garden
3rd March in the Garden
7th April
5th May

Please check the website for any changes and confirmation of venue.
<https://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/>

Plant Sale

We still intend to resurrect our traditional and extremely popular plant sale, drawing in material from generous Friends, Colleges and others. However, we are searching for a location in which such a sale can take place, which will not have biosecurity issues, which is accessible, has ample parking and which is secure as a storage space in the days ahead of the actual sale. This means that the plant sale is likely to take place in 2024, **unless one of you, our Friends, can suggest somewhere available in the late Spring/early Summer of 2023!**

Friends Gardens for Friends

In early September, we had a wonderful visit to Rosalind Sword's inspirational garden. The garden is carefully planned and full of colour. It looked wonderful in the early autumn light with views to the countryside beyond. We then enjoyed tea in the sunshine. Thank you very much, Rosalind!

If you would like to host a visit, please let me know (Rebecca Mather: rebecca.mather28@gmail.com). These are mainly social events and an opportunity to see a variety of gardens, small, large, in development, or mature!

Friends' Garden Visits

By Harriet Bretherton, Pauline Coombes, Jane Annett, Diana Naumann and Jane Thrift

Welcome to our 2023 February to April garden visits programme, visits which we've organised for your interest and enjoyment. This time last year Jane Thrift joined the Garden Visits team, since when she has become an invaluable member introducing new gardens to our programmes.



The garden visits team (from l to r): Pauline, Harriet, Jane A, Diana and Jane T

Before booking a visit: Please be aware that a number of the gardens we visit can be a bit challenging should anyone have mobility or health issues.

Booking tickets online: We had hoped to offer online and postal bookings at the start of 2023. However, owing to a change in the Botanic Garden office administration, which supports the Friends, this will now be put in place at a later date.

To Book Visits see enclosed Booking Form

Dogs and Garden Visits: Our visits follow the Botanic Gardens policy that dogs are not allowed unless they are registered assistance dogs.

We look forward to welcoming you during the first few months of a new year of garden visits.

Saturday 4th February,
2.00pm

A visit to two charming small gardens in Cumnor Village

Stonehaven

6 High Street, Cumnor,
Oxford OX2 9PE

By kind permission of
Dr Dianne Gull and
Professor Keith Gull

Surrounding a thatched cottage (not open), this is a beautifully designed garden with 20 varieties of snowdrop, dark hellebores, blue irises and many carefully chosen shrubs. There is a wildlife pond. The garden overlooks meadows with old apple trees underplanted with ferns.



At Stonehaven, the snowdrop 'S. Arnott'

© Keith Gull

14 Chawley Lane

Cumnor, Oxford OX2 9PX

By kind permission of Mrs Alice Munsey

This garden has many species of snowdrops, some rare as well as very unusual shrubs. The garden is on several levels. Note: Because both gardens are small, the group will be split into two groups, one starting at Stonehaven, the other starting at 14 Chawley Lane. The groups will then change over. Your confirmation ticket from the Friends' Ticketing Administrator will indicate which group you are in. After both visits, teatime refreshments (which are included) will be at The Vine Inn, located in the middle of Cumnor village.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Maximum 30 (15 in each group)

Friday 10th February, 1.30pm

Private visit to Cerney House Gardens

Cerney House Gardens,
The Garden House, North Cerney,
Cirencester, Glos. GL7 7BX

By kind permission of Mr Nicholas and Dr Janet Angus

Sir Michael and Lady Angus purchased the house in 1983. When they first arrived, most of the garden was a large lawn so what you'll see today has been created in the last 40 years. Lady Angus and her daughter, Barbara, worked extensively to remodel the garden to its former Victorian beauty and today the grounds continue to evolve in unexpected and exciting ways. The gazebo, at the top of the garden, was added as a joint anniversary present in the 1990's. Unfortunately, Lady Angus suddenly became unwell, passing away at the end of August 2016. Her overriding wish was that her garden should continue to be shared and enjoyed by the public so her son, Nicholas and his wife, Janet are planning to continue developing this wonderful legacy. There will be an introduction to the garden and then Friends are welcome to wander around the gardens by themselves. The visit will close with tea and cake in The Bothy. Please note that there is quite a lot of walking for this visit.

- Friends £18, guests £23
- Maximum 40



Cerney House Garden

Friday 17th February, 1.30pm

Private visit to Blewbury Manor Gardens

Blewbury Manor, Berry Lane, Blewbury
OX11 9QJ

By kind permission of Mr and Mrs Blythe

"Most visits to Blewbury Manor Gardens occur during the summer months when the garden is at its best, resplendent with flowers galore" but a visit in February will give you the rare opportunity to see the garden at its quietest. Gone is the show of blooms replaced with the chance to see the structures and bones of the garden which hold it all together in a simple flowing and cohesive arrangement. However, there are still some plants to enjoy including snowdrops, winter aconites, hellebores, the heady scent of sweet box (*Sarcococca*), hanging catkins of hazel and maybe the discreet flowers of the Persian Ironwood (*Parrotia persica*). Our Friends are welcome to explore the garden and the Head Gardener, Richard Roslyn, will be on hand to

answer any questions. Refreshments, which are included, will be served in The Barn afterwards.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Maximum 40



The winter aconite, 'Eranthis hyemalis'

© Steve Green

© Richard Roslyn



© Viridor

Ardley Energy Recovery Facility

**Thursday 9th March,
10.00am and 2.00pm**

**Helping to save the
environment - Ardley Energy
Recovery Facility**

Viridor, Ardley ERF, Middleton Stoney Road,
Oxfordshire OX27 7AA

By kind permission of Viridor

On this visit, rather than seeing a garden, we will be concerned with the environment more generally and managing the Earth's resources. We will tour the Ardley Energy Recovery Facility, which began operation

in 2014, treating up to 326,300 tonnes of non-recyclable waste each year. It diverts at least 95% of Oxfordshire's residual municipal waste away from landfill and generates enough electricity to power the equivalent of 60,000 homes. The state-of-the-art visitor centre is designed to teach interested adults about sustainable waste management and how energy recovery fits into the waste hierarchy. Visitors should be able to walk approximately a mile over uneven ground. Wheelchair users are welcome but they will only be able to do half the tour. Refreshments on arrival.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Maximum 14 per visit

Thursday 30th March, 2.00pm

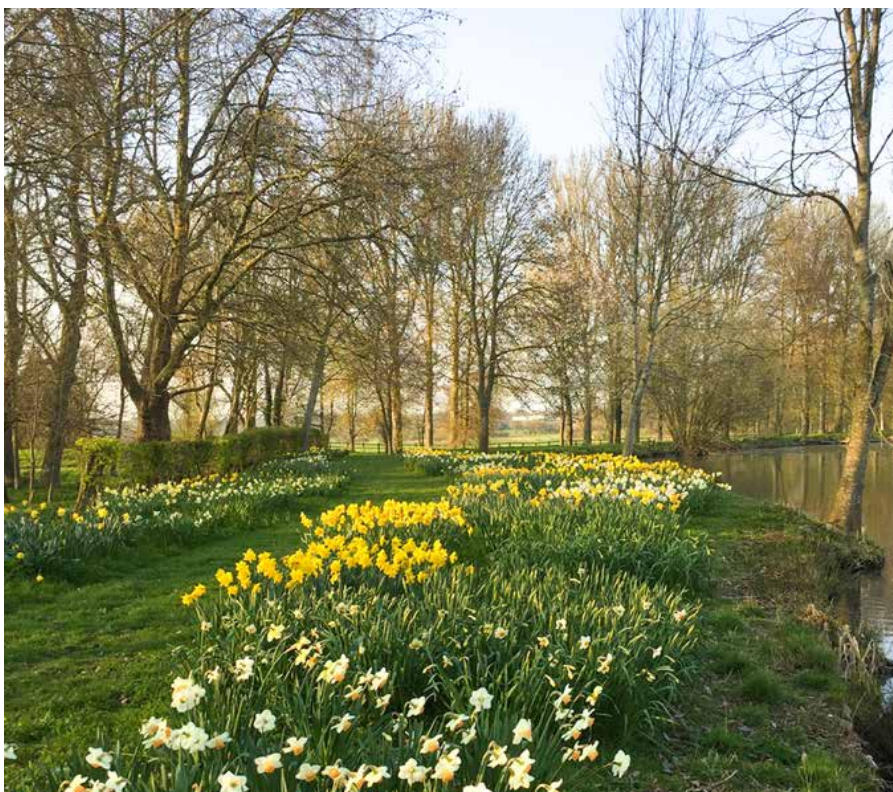
**A private visit to see 'golden'
daffodils at Adwell House**

Adwell House, Adwell, Thame,
Oxon OX9 7DQ

By kind permission of Tom and Imogen Birch-Reynardson

A welcome opportunity to privately visit Adwell House garden which covers four acres, having been developed by many generations of the Birch-Reynardson family. The Head Gardener, Colin Roberts, will lead us on a tour beginning with the more formal gardens close to the house which broaden out onto sweeping lawns featuring many specimen trees under-planted with spring bulbs and a spectacular display of over 30,000 bulbs "...a host of golden daffodils beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze..." and also planted with primulas and irises, leading via a waterfall towards a lake and the Oxfordshire countryside. There will be time to explore on your own before the visit ends with tea and cake.

- Friends £17, guests £22
- Maximum 40



© Colin Roberts

Adwell House Garden



Berkeley Castle Garden

Wednesday 19th April

Coach trip to Berkeley Castle and Jekka's Herb Garden & Herbetum

8.45am: Prompt depart Redbridge Park & Ride. 6.00pm: Approx return time at Park & Ride. Washroom on board.

Berkeley Castle

By kind permission of Mr Charles Berkeley

Berkeley is a stunning medieval castle which has been the home of the Berkeley family since 1153. Tall towers, deep dungeons, grand and gruesome, homely and horrid. Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn & Elizabeth I stayed there; Edward II was murdered there, Shakespeare wrote 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' for a Berkeley family wedding. It is also the location for filming 'The White Princess', Johnny English 3 and the BBC's adaptation of 'Wolf Hall' & 'Poldark'. Your castle tour begins with a talk by the Head Gardener on both the garden's history from the 11th century and insights into which plants were used and why, tying in nicely when visiting Jekka's herb garden in the afternoon. Friends will then be free to explore the gardens and castle. Refreshments not included in this part of the visit. Although there is a café providing a limited menu, we recommend bringing your own picnic lunch and drinks.



Jekka's Herb Garden and Herbetum

By kind permission of Jekka McVicar

Jekka is a renowned expert on the growing and use of culinary and medicinal herbs and both the Garden and Herbetum have been created to inspire and educate in the

growing and use of herbs, with a collection of over 400 varieties of culinary herbs. Your visit includes a guided tour hosted by Jekka McVicar, tea, coffee & biscuits and a chance to buy plants, seeds, gardening tools and other items in their shop.

- **Friends £65, guests £70**
- **Maximum 30**



Jekka's Herb Garden

Special message to all gmail users

Gmail has a disconcerting way of filtering messages into different categories. You may miss 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. In particular you may not receive your emailed copy of the newsletter magazine that is published three times a year. The dates this is usually sent out are as follows:

Mid-March / Early July / Early November

If you need any help with applying a filter to move our emails into your inbox then do contact the Friends' Administrator: friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk

Don't forget your membership card

when you come to visit the Garden or Arboretum. Our ticket office staff do not have access to the membership database (for data protection reasons) and can't let you in free of charge if you don't have your membership card!

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.

The Bobarts Patrons' Group

By Helen Potts

The Bobarts Patrons have enjoyed visits to a diverse range of gardens this year and have welcomed a good number of new members to this friendly and enthusiastic group. All Patrons gladly share their knowledge and love of all things horticultural.

The weather has been playing games with us this summer. In mid-June rapidly alternating clear and stormy skies over one member's fabulous garden on the slopes below Brill windmill only enhanced a glorious and very sociable evening visit. Further dramatic views, but of a rather different nature, were to be found on a sultry afternoon in the City of London. Our walking tour of secret gardens ended with an imaginative 14th floor rooftop garden looking out over both historical and contemporary architecture.

On a sunny afternoon in July, we were very privileged to visit the rather romantic gardens of Little Rollright, created in 2015-16 with input from Isabel and Julian Bannerman and only opened on one previous occasion. Then heavy rain in September could not spoil a morning at the Cotswold Wildlife Park where the Head Gardener was very generous with her time and many ideas for planting. The animals hardly got a look in!

In October our annual Bobarts' Day will be held at the Garden and we also plan to visit a private arboretum with gardens in Abingdon.

2023 is still in the planning stages but the Bobarts Patrons' Group will continue, and we can guarantee another wonderful

array of visits around Oxford and in June, to Dorset. As ever, we are extremely grateful to the owners and head gardeners who welcome us. Oxford Botanic Garden is the key that opens many garden gates to us.

Do consider joining us. Our loyal Patrons provide extra financial backing to support the valuable work of the Botanic Garden and Arboretum. Our members, and the Danby Patrons' Group, enjoy all the benefits of the Friends plus a programme of small group visits to the University collections and to some of the best gardens and estates in the area.



View from the garden at Brill

Calendar

Please check on the website: <https://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/> for the latest news regarding forthcoming events.

2023

February

Friday 3rd February, 10.30am

**Coffee morning,
Oxford Botanic Garden**

Saturday 4th February, 2.00pm

**A visit to two charming small
gardens in Cumnor Village**

Friday 10th February, 1.30pm

Visit to Cerney House Gardens

Friday 17th February, 1.30pm

**Private visit to
Blewbury Manor Gardens**

March

Friday 3rd March, 10.30am

**Coffee morning,
Oxford Botanic Garden**

Thursday 9th March, 10.00am and
2.00pm

**Helping to save the environment -
Ardley Energy Recovery Facility**

Thursday 30th March, 2.00pm

**A private visit to see 'golden'
daffodils at Adwell House**

April

Friday 7th April, 10.30am

**Coffee morning,
Oxford Botanic Garden**

Wednesday 19th April

**Coach trip to Berkeley Castle and
Jekka's Herb Garden & Herbetum**

**The Friends of Oxford
Botanic Garden and Arboretum,**
Rose Lane, Oxford OX1 4AZ.

All Friends' enquiries, including those about Friends' events, should be made to the Friends' Administrator. The Friends' Office is staffed Monday to Friday. Tel: **01865 610303**

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

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

This Newsletter was edited by Chris Thorogood 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.

