

## THE KEW GUILD

Patron: Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra

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## EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

We have to thank all contributors for their help in producing this Journal.

Be amazed by Kew's work and the efforts of those current and past members of the Kew Guild Committee and Kew staff who have shared their stories within these pages. Surely you, dear reader, have inspiration and a message to offer next time round? We provide the chance for you to go down in Kew's, and your own, history and thanks to modern technology we can receive your news, articles, photographs, updates at any time. Do it now!

Why not check out your new investment – your website! ([www.kewguild.org.uk](http://www.kewguild.org.uk))

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### ***With thanks to Anthony Ross for the 2009 Journal commemorative cover design.***

'To commemorate Kew's 250 years, the front cover illustrates Princess Augusta, mother of King George III, who greatly developed her botanical collection, 3,400 species, and many important features of the gardens from 1757 including the Orangery, the Pagoda and the Ruined Arch. A *Ginkgo biloba* tree still survives from her garden at Kew and a leaf from this tree was used in my design for the Kew Guild Medal.'

The back cover shows the 13 official Directors since 1841:

- |     |             |  |
|-----|-------------|--|
| 1.  | 1841 – 1865 | Sir William Jackson Hooker                       |
| 2.  | 1865 – 1885 | Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker                         |
| 3.  | 1885 – 1905 | Sir William Turner Thiselton-Dyer                |
| 4.  | 1905 – 1922 | Sir David Prain                                  |
| 5.  | 1922 – 1941 | Sir Arthur William Hill                          |
| -   | 1941 – 1943 | Acting Director – Sir Geoffrey Evans (not shown) |
| 6.  | 1943 – 1956 | Sir Edward James Salisbury                       |
| 7.  | 1956 – 1971 | Sir George Taylor                                |
| 8.  | 1971 – 1976 | Professor Heslop-Harrison                        |
| 9.  | 1976 – 1981 | Professor John Patrick Micklethwait Brenan       |
| 10. | 1981 – 1988 | Professor Ernest Arthur Bell                     |
| 11. | 1988 – 1999 | Professor Ghilleen Prance                        |
| 12. | 1999 – 2006 | Professor Sir Peter Crane                        |
| 13. | 2006 –      | Professor Stephen D. Hopper (centre photo)       |

**PROFESSOR SIMON JAMES OWENS BSc PhD FLS**  
President 2009/2010



Simon is a farmer's son who was brought up on a small farm in Kent on the sometimes bleak hills between Canterbury and Ashford. The farm lies in an area of outstanding natural beauty and some areas remain as refuges for native plants and animals. Kew today is a long way from a farmhouse which, in 1948, had no electric light, no running water and only one fire to cook and heat by. The winters were tough. He still remembers delivering lambs on cold, dark wet mornings, mucking out pigs on hot summer days and milking cows by hand.

Educated at the local village school in Waltham (total number of pupils in junior and senior school 28), he passed the 11 plus and went to Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys in Canterbury. From Simon Langton, he went to University in Wales (Aberystwyth) where he studied Agricultural Botany. It was in Aberystwyth that he was introduced to the science of chromosomes and genetics and, although difficult to master at first, it became a lifelong interest. Aberystwyth was then a world-class centre for the subject with Professor Hugh Rees at the helm and from that department came Mike Bennett (former Keeper of the Jodrell Laboratory), Mike Fay (currently the Head of Cytogenetics in the Jodrell laboratory) and a remarkable number of Directors and senior geneticists today.

A chance to study the genetic control of breeding systems in the Umbelliferae (now Apiaceae) took him to the University of Reading to study for a Ph.D with Professor Vernon Heywood and Dr Lesley Crowe. The model organisms, species in the carrot genus *Daucus* and its spiny-fruited relatives, were not ideal for detailed work on breeding systems. Indeed, the family that had been selected for his study, though interesting in many ways, turned out to be one of the few families in the plant kingdom where the breeding system self-incompatibility was not found except in a few species in New Zealand.

The Botany department at Reading University was, at that time, a European centre for systematic botany and there was a vibrant student body. It was while demonstrating in a practical class to undergraduate students that he met Professor Keith Jones (former Keeper of the Jodrell laboratory) who was a visiting lecturer for the Spring term standing in for a member of staff who was on fieldwork in South America. Keith was lecturing to the students in genetics and was a man with such a great enthusiasm for science and particularly the study of chromosomes that it became infectious! It was primarily Keith's enthusiasm and influence that led Simon to apply successfully for a post of scientific officer in the cytology department of the Jodrell laboratory to work on breeding systems. It was a decision that he did not regret and has ultimately given him many opportunities, both scientific and administrative.

Since December 1<sup>st</sup> 1971 Simon's career has been entirely at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. From 1971 to 1995 he was employed in the Jodrell laboratory, serving in both the departments of cytology and anatomy, as a research scientist. Professor David Cutler was

an excellent tutor. For a period, following the surprise resignation of Director Jack Heslop-Harrison in 1975, Simon moved out of the Jodrell Laboratory main building to 47A Kew Green, a laboratory in the old servants quarters of the Director's House (49 Kew Green). It was here that the Transmission Electron Microscope was housed. Work continued on breeding systems with greater emphasis on the structure and chemistry of reproductive structures in flowers. With the building of the first extension to the Jodrell Laboratory in 1993 (opened by Her Majesty The Queen in 1994), the team in 47A decanted back to new facilities and a new Transmission Electron Microscope. In 1995, and during the time of Sir Ghillelan Prance as Director, Simon applied for and was appointed as Keeper of the Herbarium, a post he held until he became the Head of Strategic Projects in 2007. The Herbarium was a challenge because of its very significant and heavily visited Herbarium collection and because of the continual constraints on funding. However, the appointment came at a time when the Foundation and Friends had been set up and the opportunities for external funding of research and collections became possible. Much of the Herbarium work is world class and many staff are truly dedicated to the cause of systematics, a discipline which is almost absent from University departments today. The International Plant Names Index, a permanent Geographical Information Systems group, and the accession of around 500,000 specimens happened during his time in the Herbarium. He did not stay quite long enough to see the completion of the 50 year project The Flora of Tropical East Africa (due to finish in 2010) but he did manage to have all the Herbarium Wing buildings renovated externally and to support the conservation programmes that Jack Heslop-Harrison started, and that Grenville Lucas continued in such an able manner. A roof extension to the Herbarium Wing D was completed in his time, with great help from a fellow Kew Guild member Martin Sands, and it was celebrated with the dedication of a lecture and meeting room (the Pat Brenan Suite) to Pat Brenan, a former Director of Kew. The room was opened by his widow, Jean. Simon has worked under six Directors from Jack Heslop-Harrison until Steve Hopper today.

From his time as Keeper of the Herbarium to the present Simon has been Kew's main contact in collaboration with, and funding from, the European Union through the Framework programmes and he was a founder representative of the Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities (CETAF). He has undertaken regular grant assessments of projects in European research programmes for more than twenty years.

Simon continues just a little research in his favourite subject of breeding systems and their genetic control. He has published 70 papers, the majority in peer-reviewed journals and he regularly reviews manuscripts and grant proposals as well as examining M.Phil and Ph.D students. He works with collaborators all over the world. He is a member of the Linnean and the Genetics Societies.

Simon lectures to Kew Diploma students (since 1972) and to undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of Nottingham. At the latter he is a special Professor in Life Sciences. There are Kew Diploma students who will remember labouring, perhaps even slaving, over the difficulties associated with the genetic control of self-incompatibility with its multiple alleles and dominance, recessive and independent action of specific alleles. Current students might consider that easy now that they are facing the molecular revolution and grappling with the intricacies of transcription factors and MADS-box genes.

Simon has been a member of science visiting groups at the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh and the National Botanic Gardens, Meise. He was on the committee that wrote The Banks Report for the Royal Horticultural Society and also a member of the group that reviewed and evaluated the University of Cambridge Herbarium Collection resulting in the building of a new herbarium at the Cambridge Botanic Garden.

Outside of Kew Gardens Simon has held posts as a Church treasurer and Churchwarden, school governor, Chairman of St Luke's Community Trust (a day centre for the elderly) and Chairman of the Richmond Park Conservative Association. He is married to Emma and has 3 children, 5 grandchildren (with 2 more due this year) and 3 chocolate Labradors. He has lived on site in Herbarium House since 1996.

**MICHAEL WILKINSON**

Vice President 2009/2010

Although Michael's profile appeared in the 2004 Journal he has elected to reproduce it and bring it up to date.

After leaving RBG, Kew in 1971, Mike attended the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management's staff College at Goring-on-Thames. Mike's working life has been spent with four London Boroughs – Hammersmith and Fulham, Enfield, Hounslow, where he was Assistant Director, and finally as Head of Parks for Wandsworth Council.



The 17 years spent at Wandsworth proved challenging as well as fruitful. Achievements included the creation of the London Lakes Rehabilitation Project, which was part funded by the European Union. The project provided a management model for hypereutrophic lakes, and resulted in a European Conference being held in 1997. Following the success of the conference he represented the council at the 1999 finals of the Nations in Bloom competition held in the Japanese city of Hamamatsu winning one of four awards for environmental achievements.

In 1998 he was responsible for obtaining one of the largest grants of £6.9 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the restoration of London's Battersea Park.

He took early retirement in 2002 and is now running his own gardening business. His spare time is spent, among other things, supporting his local Rotary club where he will be President in 2010, church activities and even attempting to look after his own large garden.

## ALEX GEORGE

President Elect 2009/2010

It has been the practice to include an article on the President of the Guild in the *Journal* for the year when they hold office. Since the current President-elect will be unknown to many members, it seems appropriate to introduce him a little earlier.



Photo © Andrew McRobb

Alex George was born in East Fremantle, Western Australia, in 1939 and was educated at Applecross State School, Wesley College, and The University of Western Australia, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in 1963. To this he added a major in Botany in 1964.

In 1959 he joined the Western Australian Herbarium as a technician, later taxonomist, and worked there until 1981. He then spent twelve years in Canberra as foundation Executive Editor of the Flora of

Australia project with the Australian Biological Resources Study. In 1993 he returned to Perth where he has his own consultancy as a botanist, editor and indexer.

Field work has taken Alex throughout Australia. His herbarium collections total more than 18,000 numbers and include many new discoveries; many duplicates are housed in the Herbarium at Kew. His major interests in classification have been Western Australian orchids, *Banksia*, *Dryandra* and *Synaphea* (family Proteaceae), *Verticordia* and *Calothamnus* (family Myrtaceae), and the endemic Australian family Gyrostemonaceae. He also has a strong interest in botanical history. His research has resulted in naming more than 300 new species and several new genera. He has published some 160 botanical papers and (as sole or joint author) ten books. His most recent work, *Australian Botanist's Companion*, is a self-published *vade mecum* of 670 pages for those working in Australian botany.

Alex has had a long association with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. He is the only botanist to have served two terms there as Australian Botanical Liaison Officer (ABLO), the first in 1968, the second in 2004–05. He also spent 2002–03 there when his partner Roberta served as ABLO. The role of the ABLO (a 12-month posting) was described in an article in the *Journal of the Kew Guild* no. 111, pp. 78–82 (2006). The officer is based in the Herbarium since most of the duties relate to taxonomy but they also take the ABLO to the Jodrell Laboratory, the living collections and elsewhere around the Gardens. Frequent visits are made to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, and most ABLOs visit other British and European herbaria during their term.

During his two recent tours he was a horticultural volunteer at Kew, spending each Sunday morning weeding and tidying in the northern areas of the Gardens. Although he has not worked as a professional horticulturalist, gardening has always been a passion. For many years he has grown Western Australian wildflowers at home and currently is in the third year of a major makeover of his garden (which covers 2/3 acre) from an overgrown exotic one to one of native plants, trying a new method of establishment. At the Western Australian Herbarium he was in charge of the establishment of a native plant garden of about 5 acres surrounding a new building that was erected on the site of an old pine plantation in an inner Perth suburb in 1970.

Alex's other interests include conservation, photography, music, travel, reading and aviation (he held a private pilot's licence for 20 years). In 2000–01 he was President of the Royal Society of Western Australia. In 2004 he was awarded the Nancy Burbidge Medal of the Australian Systematic Botany Society, and in 2009 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Science by Murdoch University, Perth.

Alex has been a member of the Kew Guild since 1971.

## NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### MIRANDA KIMBERLEY

Miranda studied English and American Literature at the University of Manchester between 1995 and 1998. After graduating she worked in the university library of the London School of Economics, during which she attended evening classes and passed the RHS General Examination. Her first job in horticulture was as a maintenance gardener for Capital Garden Landscapes in Highgate, looking after upmarket gardens in North and West London, including the Spanish Embassy. After seven months she felt she needed a job that offered more opportunities to learn. She moved to Suffolk to work as Assistant Head Gardener at Little Thurlow Hall, an 8-acre estate owned by the Vestey family. The garden included lawns, herbaceous borders, a large kitchen garden, orchard and woodland. She left the estate after two and a half years to expand her horticultural knowledge by studying on the Kew Diploma. A member of Course 42, she was at Kew between 2004 and 2007. While at Kew she travelled to Ecuador with fellow student and friend Emily Waters, accompanying the University of Manchester on a field trip studying the flora and fauna of the Payamino territory in the Amazon rainforest.



During her Kew course Miranda also worked on a garden outreach project in Bromley-by-Bow at the weekends, with 8-12 year old local kids, in a scheme run by Kew graduate Kate Jenrick. Also during her three years at Kew she went on a horticultural journalism

course which led to a placement at trade magazine Horticulture Week, which she then worked for as a news reporter after graduating. Miranda is now head gardener at Lincolns Inn, an 11-acre garden in central London which is one of the four Inns of Court where barristers train and practise.

## AMANDA LE POER TRENCH

Amanda is a Volunteer Coordinator with responsibility for strategy, policy, and Human Resource (HR) function for Kew's 600 volunteers and her other responsibilities include overseeing Kew's '18+ Work Experience Programme'.



She spent her undergraduate days at Southampton University and postgraduate days at Kingston University Business School, and was Education development officer with Surrey County Council during the 1990s. Amanda's induction into HR career was through the Boots Company Graduate Trainee Scheme and she was Recruitment Manager for Kew's paid workforce from 2001 to 2006.

She was noted for volunteering as Personal Safety Trainer for the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, has been a Trustee of the Kew Guild since 2009, and is a Graduate Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

She has a love of the theatre and sometime volunteers at the Rose Theatre in Kingston, and also enjoys travel, entertaining, singing, cake baking/decorating and most importantly, volunteering! However she is never happier than when doting on her offspring – James, Hannah and Charles.

## MASAYA TATEBAYASHI

I came back to Tokyo, Japan in 2006 after finishing the Kew Diploma. It has been three years and it is such a privilege to be a Kew Guild Committee member, bridging England and Japan through Kew.

I worked for a bank for ten years in Tokyo after graduating from University. Then I decided to change my career from the banking business to horticulture and started by taking the National Certificate in Horticulture (NCH) at Askham Bryan College, York. I worked at the Cambridge University Botanic Garden as a trainee technician for two years and went back to the college to complete a Higher National Certificate in Horticulture in York. I was lucky enough to join the Kew



Diploma commencing in 2003, as a member of Course 41. I totally enjoyed all course works and learnt a lot from experts in the Gardens from the various sections. One of my main interests was Mistletoe and I put hundreds of seed berries onto the trees in the garden with the permission of Tony Kirkham, and one of them is established and still surviving in the garden. I am proud of it and I could be the first person who introduced Mistletoe intentionally in such a historic garden. I went to Jerusalem Botanic Garden for four weeks with my classmate Christopher Ryan and it was great experience. We travelled a lot searching for wild rare orchids and irises.

Now I am working as a freelance horticultural consultant based in Tokyo, offering any kind of horticultural services such as garden design, garden maintenance, garden construction, lectures, and article writing. Take a look at my website <http://hanasaka-engei.com/eng/index.html>

I appreciate all the precious experiences that I gained in England, and now I believe that it is time to share my experiences with anyone who needs them. It does not matter if it is with the young, old, able or disabled, from any nationality.

It would be great to stay in touch with all of you and please come and see me if you have the chance to come to Japan.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE KEW GUILD

by Kenwyn Pearson, Secretary

### The Minutes of the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Kew Guild held on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Notice of the meeting had been given in accordance with the rules of The Kew Guild.

#### Attendance

Bob Ivison – Vice President Chair meeting, Kenwyn Pearson – Honorary Secretary, Simon Owens – President Elect, Jennifer Alsop – Honorary Treasurer, John Sales, Colin Jones, Nigel Hepper, Granville Turley, Mike Wilkinson, Jean Grundy, David Barnes – Award Scheme Chair, Nick Boyes, Mike Clift, Richard Ward, Alexandra Ward – Journal Editor, Martin Staniforth, Wendy Staniforth, Max Roberts, Valerie Hindmarch, Brian Pitcher, Anthony Ross, Tricia Hanes, Harvey Groffman, Patrick Smallcombe, Charles Stirton, Stewart Henchie, David Hardman, Graham Burgess, Gillian Anderson, Martin Sands, Jonathan Rickards, Pamela Holt and Norman Robson.

**01-09**      **The Vice President Bob Ivison** welcomed everyone to the meeting, and reported that the President, **Sir Peter Crane**, was unable to attend and had sent his regards and apologies for not being present.

## 02-09 Apologies

**The Honorary Secretary** had circulated a list of apologies with the attendance signing register and said the full list would be placed in the minutes of the meeting and this was **accepted** by all present.

**Apologies** received from Mike Arnold Gilliatt, Charles Attwood, Bob Adams, Susyn Andrews, Phyllida Barker, Maurice Barren, Richard Baines, Jane Banney, Chris Baylis, Haydn Bell, Nick Biddle, H. Boddington, Ted Brown, Rebecca Bower, Frank Constable, Jill Cowley, Sir Peter Crane – **President**, Philip Cribb, Eric Curtis, David Cutler, Harold Dalby, Ray Desmond, Alex George, Alexander Dixon, Charlie Erskine, Trevor Elton, Hans Fleigner, Hugh Flower, Mark Fothergill, Paul Gooding, Patricia Gibbons, Cyril Giles, Mike Griffin, Judy Hancock, Harold Heywood, Steve Hopper – **Director, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew**, Stan Hitt, Roy Jones, Miranda Kimberley, Niall Kirkwood, Roy Lancaster, Sandra Leche, Mike Lycett, Brian Matthew, David Menzies, Cyril ‘Mitch’ Mitchelmore, Jim Mitchell, Kath Moss, Brendan Mowforth, Brian Nash, G T Naylor, Edward Neighbour, Charles Parsons, Anna Pavord, Leo Pemberton, Laura Ponsonby, Trevor Preston, Barbara Ravenscroft, Peter Richardson, Tom Risely, Paul Sadler, T Seager, Jamie Simpson, Paul Tompsett, Valentine Tynan, Amanda le Poer Trench, John Woodchats, Keith Woolliams.

## 03-09 Notice of Death of Members

**The Honorary Secretary** recorded the death of **Harry Parker 1952** since the previous Annual General Meeting. A period of silence was observed to his memory.

## 04-09 Minutes of 2008 AGM

**The Vice President presented the minutes of The Annual General Meeting** held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2008 as printed in the Journal and they were proposed for acceptance by **Nigel Hepper**, seconded by **Allan Hart** and accepted by all present at the meeting.

**05-09** There were no **Matters Arising**.

## 06-09 The Honorary Secretary’s Report

**The Secretary** reported that **The Kew Guild Medal** had been given to **Ray Desmond** by **Sir Peter Crane, President** following The Annual Dinner in 2009 and had been gratefully received and the **Secretary** confirmed that he had heard from **Ray Desmond** expressing gratitude and also to say he was better following his illness earlier in the year.

The Committee has met five times since the AGM in 2008, the Legacy and Strategy Sub Committee met once and the Award Scheme Committee twice. More on that later.

**Sir Peter Crane** indicated at the last AGM ‘I will be unable to join you at the first Committee meeting in October as I am on a teaching engagement, but we must continue as planned’.

The Kew Guild is very much in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and arrangements were made on two occasions for a telephone link to enable **Sir Peter** to join the discussions from his office in Chicago, with the Vice President **Bob Ivison** chairing the meetings. **Sir Peter** only missed one meeting and that being due to the fact he was receiving an **Honorary Doctorate at Cambridge University**.

A dominant theme this year has been finding ways of increasing and sustaining the membership. Others included: The Annual Dinner, venue and costs; Publicity for the Award Scheme; Visits; The Kew Guild Room in the Herbarium; Finances; The Kew Guild Medal; The website; Archives; and the placing of a **Blue Plaque** on The Director’s House by English Heritage to celebrate Joseph Hooker having lived there and subsequent Directors who continued to live there.

In the **Strategy Sub Committee** held in June this year the main discussion was the use for the remaining money from The Stella Ross-Craig legacy. The membership of The Kew Guild had previously been consulted with no definite proposals coming forward. Consideration was given to updating the **Award Scheme** rules and insurance requirements on websites to protect The Kew Guild.

The Kew Guild awarded **The Kew Guild Medal to Ray Desmond**.

There were two Honorary Fellowships granted during the year: **Richard Bisgrove** of Reading University and **Niall Kirkwood** from the USA who had hoped to be present at the AGM to receive the award, but this will now take place at the Dinner in 2010.

**The Honorary Secretary** was very pleased and honoured to receive **The George Brown Memorial Award**.

**The Honorary Secretary** reported that it had been a great privilege to join **Nigel Hepper**, his family and friends in celebration of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and the re-launch of his book ‘Pharaoh’s flowers the botanical treasures of Tutankhamun’. This work represented some of his work in retirement.

Many spoke including **The Director**, and **Nigel Hepper** reflected on his years at Kew and said how important **The Kew Guild** was and how important it had been to maintain links.

**Dr. Peter Green**’s daughter made contact just before Christmas 2008 to say her father’s health was failing and also his eyesight and memory, and it was with regret that he will resign from The Kew Guild and sever his connections with his botanical interests. Peter Green was a Past President in the early 1980s and a former Keeper of The Herbarium. The Honorary Secretary wrote sending him best wishes and expressing regret that he had come

to this decision. The committee decided to make him an honorary member and his daughter replied with gratitude.

In June this year it was good to read that **Alex Summers** had won the National Young Horticulturist of the Year run by the Institute of Horticulture. Alex Summers is a first year **Diploma Student** at Kew. **The Kew Guild** sent him a congratulatory letter and he has replied with thanks.

As indicated at an earlier meeting Trustees now sign a **Trustee Contract and Declaration of Interests** form and this year we are hoping to hold an induction session for new trustees immediately before the first Committee meeting in October.

The Committee invite the new students to join them after a committee meeting to find out about **The Kew Guild**, and this year we have included a letter encouraging Diploma graduates to remain members of The Kew Guild on finishing at Kew.

The Honorary Secretary is always pleased to receive communications from Kew Guild members and others about matters concerning The Kew Guild. He recorded his grateful thanks to members of the committee for their work and support.

The report was accepted by all present at the meeting.

#### **07-09            The Honorary Treasurers' Report**

**The Honorary Treasurer** spoke to the accounts printed in The Journal.

**Tony Ross** expressed concern at the apparent loss for the annual Dinner and urged the committee to look closely at this item in the future bearing in mind costs of tickets and the venue. In answer to a question **Richard Ward** said that the Journal costs were as previously agreed; and **Graham Burgess** was particularly pleased to note allocation of money to develop the website.

The report was proposed for acceptance by **Jean Griffin**, seconded by **Mike Wilkinson** and accepted by all present at the meeting.

The meeting confirmed acceptance of the proposal that £15 subscription rate to cover all categories of membership apart from student Concessionary and Journal membership which would remain at £6 and £20.

Turning to the use for **The Stella Ross-Craig legacy** the following proposal was put forward by the committee:

**'The committee felt that consideration should now be given to allocating interest from the fund to support UK Student placements, short term vocational**

**projects/internees that will enhance the student in development of study areas with particular emphasis on Plant Conservation.**

**The award, which would be advertised, would support applicants in travel and accommodation while experiencing the Kew Gardens Environment to improve their knowledge of a particular area of Kew's work, and seen as assisting Kew.'**

The proposal was discussed in detail by those present and **The Honorary Secretary** reported that he had received phone calls on this subject for and against the proposal but the majority were in support and some members had written on their AGM returns supporting the motion. Members of Kew Gardens staff had expressed delight in this award and could see the advantages to The Kew Guild and the Royal Botanic Gardens.

**John Sales** had expressed opinions previously on uses for the legacy and was delighted to see the proposal being put forward.

**Jennifer Alsop** proposed that the meeting accept the proposal and this was seconded by **Martin Sands** and accepted by all present at the meeting.

#### **08-09            The Membership Secretary's Report**

**The Membership Secretary** reported that there were currently 419 members comprising 27 Students, 14 Life members, 9 Honorary fellows and 4 Library members. The remainder were standard members. He confirmed he had many applications to be considered at the next committee meeting.

#### **09-09            The Events Officer's Report**

**The Vice President** reported that **Julie Bowers** had found it difficult to combine her demanding workload at Kew, particularly the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, with that of Events Officer for The Kew Guild and had therefore offered her resignation, and this was accepted with thanks for the work she had done over the previous twelve months.

**The Vice President** announced that in conjunction with **The Royal Parks Guild** the **Kew Guild** was planning a visit to the garden of **Lord Heseltine, Thenfield Arboretum**, to view autumn colour on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2009.

**The Vice President** was also pleased to note that **Paul Sadler**, a current trustee, was taking on the role of **Events Officer** from this AGM and looked forward to seeing the events programme developing.

#### **10-09            The Award Scheme Report**

**The Awards Scheme Chairman** reported that the Sub Committee had met twice during the year, 19<sup>th</sup> March and 16<sup>th</sup> July 2009. They had received **17** applications seeking a total

of **£11,761.24** and we were able to make 14 Awards totalling **£7,976.70**. They also made one award on hardship grounds to assist with attendance at the Annual Dinner.

There had been a healthy increase on the awards made last year (**10 applications for £4,677**) probably accounted for by the advert in the Journal, the website and internal staff bulletins. There is still scope within the funds to provide more awards and hopefully we can continue to build on the numbers of members submitting proposals and the Chairman encouraged members to make applications.

Where awards were NOT made, this was due to the proposals either being retrospective, which is not allowed for in the rules of the Scheme, or because of insufficient information given, and in those cases we advised the applicants to re-submit.

There have been two developments regarding the Awards Scheme:

- Firstly, the Sub Committee have decided that it is now time to use the money collected in the name of **Ian Leese**. The Sub Committee will be awarding the interest made off the capital which should raise in the region of **£400** per year, sufficient to assist an application. The '**Ian Leese Travel Scholarship**' will be awarded to a current Diploma Student to assist with their travel scholarship. The Sub Committee will be contacting Ian's wife both to inform her of this decision and to see if she would like to be involved with the selection of the award's recipient.
- Also in light of the increase in travel and other costs, the Sub Committee has now increased the maximum amount offered by the scheme to **£2,000**. This is to any single Guild member during a five-year period.

With that the Chairman thanked all the member of the Sub Committee for their time and efforts, especially Marcella Corcoran who supports the Sub Committee greatly in her role as Secretary, and would like to particularly thank Tim Stretton (3<sup>rd</sup> year student), Annabel Brown and Sylvia Crawford for their work over the previous years who are all unable to continue on the Sub Committee. A new student will be sought from the September intake and Annabel has been replaced by Christopher Weddell. The Sub Committee is actively seeking a replacement for Sylvia.

There was considerable discussion on publicity of The Award Scheme and encouraging members to apply. The meeting thanked **David Barnes** for his report.

**The Vice President** then informed the meeting that he had an important announcement to make which was of benefit to The Kew Guild membership and read the following:

'On behalf of Dennis McGlade, Honorary Fellow of the Kew Guild and Principal at **OLIN**, a landscape architecture practice located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, I would like to announce the first **OLIN Kew Guild Landscape Architecture Research Award**. The Award, in the sum of **£2,500.00**, will be given to a member of the Kew Guild

in recognition of botanic or horticultural research contributing to the practice of landscape architecture. At OLIN, research is at the core of all decisions relating to design, and the studio is committed to supporting research that advances the landscape architecture profession. The Award winner will spend a minimum of one week in Philadelphia, visiting local botanic and display gardens, and arboreta. This is a wonderful opportunity, and I would like to thank Dennis McGlade and the OLIN studio for their support of the Kew Guild. Please visit the Kew Gardens and Kew Guild websites beginning Monday, September 21<sup>st</sup> for information on how to apply for the **OLIN Kew Landscape Architecture Research Award.**'

The Kew Guild would promote the Award to its members through direct mail, the website and other notifications.

This announcement was welcomed by the meeting and OLIN were thanked and the proposal was proposed for acceptance by The Kew Guild by **Stewart Henchie**, seconded by **Allan Hart** and accepted by all present at the meeting.

#### **11-09            The Kew Guild Journal Editor's Report**

**The Advisory Editor** was asked to convey the thanks of the meeting to **Alexandra Ward** (present at the meeting) and her team for a successful production of the Journal. The costings were all as budgeted and it had been a success. **Nigel Hepper** proposed acceptance of the report and this was endorsed by all present at the meeting.

#### **12-09            Rule Amendment**

**The Honorary Secretary** introduced this topic as publicised in the Agenda notification:

6. d. Failure to renew a subscription by March of any year will result in the Membership terminating.

#### **Proposal to read:**

6. d. Failure to renew a subscription by 1<sup>st</sup> March of any year will result in the Membership terminating.

**The Honorary Membership Secretary** explained how this administration detail would be advantageous in ensuring that membership details were always current at the time of publication of the Journal and proposed its acceptance, being seconded by **Richard Ward** and this was accepted by all present at the meeting.

#### **13-09            New Website Proposals**

**David Hardman** used an online link to the current Kew Guild website ([www.kewguild.org.uk](http://www.kewguild.org.uk)) to demonstrate what had been developed several years ago by

**Christopher Weddell**, and to thank **Kevin Wah** who has taken on the role as web manager.

**David Hardman** also linked to the new site to show what it will look like and to demonstrate some of the new features, and especially the search facility for all the Journals.

The new site will go live shortly using the same website address ([www.kewguild.org.uk](http://www.kewguild.org.uk)).

Explaining how the new site had been initiated **David Hardman** referred to the Archives project he had completed about 2 years ago and how he had realised our major archive, and one of fascinating interest, was the Kew Guild Annual Journals. Whilst paper copies were available to a limited number of members it had only been possible for a few Journals to have been scanned by **Christopher Weddell** to the website.

In order to make this information more accessible to a greater audience **David Hardman** had investigated the time it would take to scan over 100 years of Journals manually (approx 12,000 pages) he quickly realised that this would need to be undertaken professionally if it was to be done at all.

In October 2008 the Trustees agreed that this would be a beneficial project and would be of great '**public benefit**' which is important for recognising the Guild's charitable status.

**David Hardman** was tasked to manage this project and find a company capable of doing the work and report back with costs and a plan of work. This was completed and **SomCom** were interviewed by **David Hardman** and **Rebecca Bower**, where an outline specification was established and the contract prepared with support from **Jennifer Alsop (Hon. Treasurer)** for final approval by the Trustees.

In December 2008 at a meeting in **SomCom**'s offices in Oxfordshire **David Hardman** and **Bob Ivison** finalised contract details of what they would produce:

A completely new website would be constructed to include all the existing aspects of the current site in addition to a fully searchable database where the Journals could be interrogated by both Guild members and public alike. Additional benefits would also be provided to include a **Content Management System (CMS)**, which would allow designated Guild Officers access to update and amend data in their areas of interest. This was demonstrated to members present by showing the News item concerning the announcement of the **OLIN** landscape award, only released the day previously. A new calendar feature will be developed as well as the opportunity for those members interested and able to develop the Kew Guild site as their home page.

**David Hardman** explained that this was just the beginning of the process and that with the support and enthusiasm of members much more was possible, but for it to succeed it needed members to really contribute with new information about themselves, their

interests and any range of topics that other members would find interesting. Without this input the site would soon look out of date!

A question about data security was raised and **David Hardman** explained that he was dealing with this but members should feel confident that this would not be an issue.

The meeting congratulated **David Hardman** and his colleagues for the progress on what was felt to be an important area of development of **The Kew Guild**.

#### **14-09 For The Retiring President**

**The Vice President** reflected on the achievements of the past year but in particular he had been please to announce **The OLIN Award**. He also thanked Jim Mitchell for his efforts in organising the very successful Kew Guild trip to Australia and looked forward to the planned trip to Turkey this next year. To conclude his report the **Vice President** extended his thanks to the Officers of the Kew Guild for their reports and thanked the committee for the work they carried out to support The Kew Guild.

#### **15-09 The Retiring Committee**

The Honorary Secretary reported the following members had retired from the committee: **Rebecca Bower** (and confirmed that she has been asked to become an advisor to The Kew Guild)

**Sandra Leche**

**Colin Clubbe**

It was confirmed that **Bob Ivison** and **Alex George** were remaining as Vice President and President Elect respectively.

#### **16-09 The Election of Officers**

**The Vice President** proposed the nominations, as detailed on the agenda, and this was seconded by **Jean Griffin** and agreed by all present at the meeting.

#### **17-09 Any other business**

**Graham Burgees** said that he had brought spare copies of his book **Alfred in Wonderland** and members were welcome to take a copy as they left the meeting.

#### **18-09 Installation of the President of the Kew Guild 2009/2010**

**The Vice President** installed **Professor Simon Owens** as the incoming President for 2009/2010. **Professor Owens** said it was a great honour to become President and he looked forward to serving The Kew Guild. He thanked everyone for attending and announced that **the next Annual General Meeting** would be held at Kew on **11<sup>th</sup> September 2010**. He then closed the meeting.



PLANTS PEOPLE  
POSSIBILITIES

## **School of Horticulture**

Horticulture and  
Public Education Department

### **Presentation of Kew Diplomas and Prizes 2009 Course 44**

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September

3.00 pm      **Introduction**

Professor Steve D Hopper FLS  
Director

### **Presentation of Kew Diplomas and Prizes, followed by the Travel Scholarships awards**

by Chris Beardshaw, Garden Designer and TV Presenter  
read by Emma Fox Dip Hort (Kew) (Hons)

### **Address by the Guest of Honour**

Chris Beardshaw, Garden Designer and TV Presenter

### **Vote of Thanks**

Lord Selborne KBE FRS  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

4.00 pm      Charlotte Case Dip Hort (Kew)  
**Afternoon tea in the School of Horticulture**

5.00 pm      **Kew Explorer tour**

Prize Day guests are invited to enjoy a tour of the gardens on the Kew Explorer. The tour of approx. 35 minutes will depart from and return to the Grass Garden.

## ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW SCHOOL OF HORTICULTURE

Introduction by Professor Steve Hopper, Director

In welcoming the guests, the Director, Professor Hopper, said that Kew goes from strength to strength and this year was the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of horticultural training at Kew, started by Sir Joseph Hooker, and the Director's garden was being refurbished this year. In a humorous aside, he mentioned that he had accompanied the students to their summer camp in Spain here he noticed that around 200 of the 1000 species of plants they looked at were weeds in Australia!

Emma Fox, Principal of the School of Horticulture, also welcomed all those present, thanked her staff at the School and wished all the outgoing students good luck in their new careers. Guest of Honour, Chris Beardshaw presented the prizes.

### The Kew Diploma

Honours	Alwyn Craven Emma Crawforth Craig Rudman Tim Stretton
Credit	David Alichia Joseph Atkin Lauren Carruthers Charlotte Case Christopher Cotterell Sam Crosfield Christopher Flynn Patrick Hayes Mei Leng Lim Tessa Mills Matti Niissalo

### Prizes

#### Final Year Prizes

The George Conrad Johnson Memorial Prize	Emma Crawforth
The Matilda Smith Memorial Prize	Emma Crawforth
The Fred Larkbey Cup	Chris Flynn
The Worshipful Company of Gardeners' Prizes	Joseph Atkin Sam Crosfield
The Alitex Glasshouse Award	Chris Flynn

The Kingdon-Ward Prize	Matti Niissalo
The F Nigel Hepper Cup	Matti Niissalo
The Prize for Ecology & Conservation	Alwyn Craven
The Donald Dring & Gilbert Memorial Prize	Lauren Carruthers
The Kew Gardener Arboriculture Prize	Emma Crawforth
The Lecturers Prize	Patrick Hayes
The Squires Garden Centre Prize	Emma Crawforth
The Drummer Memorial Prize	Patrick Hayes
The C P Raffill Prize	Emma Crawforth
The IPPSAward	Patrick Hayes
The Prize for the best vegetable plot	Emma Crawforth
The Kew Guild Individual Study Prize	Sam Crosfield
The Proudlock Prize	Emma Crawforth
The George Brown Prize	Craig Rudman
Students' Union Prize	Charlotte Case
	Lauren Carruthers

### General Prizes

The Institute of Horticulture Prize	Richard Greaves
The Metcalfe Cup	Mark Cox
The Tom Reynolds Prize for Plant Biochemistry & Physiology	Richard Greaves
The Rotary Club of Kew Gardens Prize	Craig Rudman
	Jess Evans
	Sara Miller
The Sir Joseph Hooker Prize	Graham Alderton
The Kew Mutual Improvement Society's Prize	Mark Cox
The Professor Keith Jones Cup	Mary Fear Hill

### Travel Scholarships

The Botanical Friends of Jerusalem Botanical Gardens Scholarship	Tim Stretton
The Ernest Thornton-Smith Travel Scholarship Award	Kate Blyth
The Stella Ross-Craig Travel Scholarship Awards	Mark Cox
	Patrick Keough
	Felix Merklinger
	Joe Robbins
	Neil Sleddon
	David Wallbridge
	Jon Wood

The John Scott-Marshall Travel Scholarship  
Awards

Noelia Alvarez  
Adam Clarke  
Lucy Hart  
Nick Johnson  
David Mann  
Bala Kompalli  
Marcelo Sellaro  
Scott Taylor

Guest of Honour Chris Beardshaw gave his thanks for the opportunity of coming to Kew and said how humbling an experience it was to be surrounded by so much horticultural knowledge, and to see so many gardeners looking uncomfortable wearing suits! There has never been a more critical time to graduate from Kew where students are entering the professional arena where the world is facing the challenge of sustainability.

Lord Selborne, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, thanked Chris Beardshaw.

Outgoing student Charlotte Case gave the vote of thanks on behalf of the students:

‘My lord, Lady Mayoress, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you all and especially our distinguished guests for helping us finish our last undertaking of the Kew Diploma.

The last three years have been a rollercoaster from botanising in the Sierra Nevada to searching for a clean coffee cup in the subterranean messrooms of the display houses.

The Kew Diploma is renowned for being an opportunity for learning and training with some of the most eminent botanists and horticultural specialists in the country, if not the world. However there were still a few surprises awaiting us on the course. There were so many different aspects and subjects to study though some were not as wide ranging as would first appear. Turf culture did not feature a single racehorse, taxonomy and systematics was not about abusing the Inland Revenue, and there was very little Spanish spoken on the Spanish field trip.

We have been given some fantastic opportunities for travelling near and far to look at plants both in the wild and in cultivation. At the beginning there was Clondeboyne in County Down as the guests of Lady Dufferin. Later, after first year exams, a trip to Mainau in Germany as the guests of Count Bjorn Bernadot.

The second year provided many of us with three weeks to go wherever we wanted so long as Kew agreed. There were trips to Kyrgyzstan, China, Mauritius, Chile, the United States, Tasmania, England and Wales.

There have also been independent botanical trips to Australia, New Zealand, Turkey and Finland. In the third we have enjoyed three fantastic trips. A week in North Wales as part of the ecology course – it rained and it rained but that didn't stop the plants growing or curb our enthusiasm inspired by Nigel Brown. During the first three months of 2009 we devoted our energies to our dissertations (well, all except Tim who abandoned us for five weeks in Jerusalem). When the deadline came we looked forward to two relaxing weeks in Spain.

Now Spain – for those of you who have not been on this trip – I can confirm the rumours are all true. It really is sun, sea and enough orchids to keep even Matti happy.

Our last holiday – sorry, trip – of the Course was a visit to see some of the finest gardens in Cornwall – Greg, thank you. In particular the helicopter trip to Tresco was the icing on the cake of this long weekend along with the visit to a lawnmower museum and learning how to play an early form of badminton known as slapcock. For all the amazing and wonderful plants seen we have been constantly reminded that they always grow bigger and better in Joe's mother's garden. There have been many highlights of our time at Kew, not just the plentiful and exotic botanical trips. But the Course would not have been the same without the company kept between a fairly disparate group of aspiring plantsmen and women who are my coursemates:

David – always with an unreasonably happy smile whether it is because the sun is shining or even at times of crisis such as when he is being bossed about by women. He really wants to learn as much as possible before heading back to Uganda – a man with a mission.

Joe – described by many as Welsh gold and a hit with the ladies, Joe is often found trying to right wrongs on behalf of others. He has been a great friend to many of us on the course, not least because he always suggesting it's time for a fry-up.

Lauren, the baby of the group. Well, her youth belies a maturity and focus that some of us twice her age are lacking. She has shown us oldies there is still time enough to party.

Chris Cotteral – sometimes called 'lemon' – straightforward, wonderful dry sense of humour, a keen interest in carnivorous plants though he is no sucker and certainly won't let the rowdier boys order him around. Which is probably the real reason that he was nicknamed 'lemon'.

Alwyn, our golden boy, thoughtful, kind, independent, swims like a fish – not one for pointless chatter but always prepared to tell it how it is, however uncomfortable. He definitely kept Emma and I in line during our management project.

Emma – focused, diligent, practically always right, so very difficult to have a disagreement with. She is probably the most sensible person in our class and tends to become an expert in anything she turns her hand to.

Sam – fun-loving and always keen to party but has a serious side. He usually figures out what is going on before the rest of us have, and his skills with computer presentations are the envy of the class.

Chris F. This Chris is mostly called Chris – the other names are just not repeatable here. Hilariously funny without trying to be and famous for his well kept hair. He says it's because he's worth it.

Patrick – a plant genius. This man is at his happiest halfway up a mountain looking at his beloved bulbs. I think it is fair to say that Mei and the rest of the course have mellowed his more solitary tendencies.

Mei loves trying to organise everyone and has used this well, keeping all the Gumley students in order as well. A fantastic cook – her sushi is always gobbled up straight away – though many lacked the nerve to try duck tongue.

Tess, beautiful pikey Tess, with a shocking sense of humour. Tess has proved that being six months pregnant is no hindrance to long hard walks and searching for plants in the mountains of Andalucía.

Matti – brilliant, kind, naughty, an orchid nut – his pink woolly waistcoat that has cheered us on a cold day. Matti is always there when the computer won't print your project.

Craig – clever, practical, and passionate about vegetables. He recently beat the Curator in a marrow growing contest. Where would we all be without him? Probably somewhere stuck on a motorway. Craig endlessly drove us around and about in the minibus – possibly because that way he got to choose the radio station.

Tim – definitely the class swot. He always seemed to finish his projects before they were set – I think this was so he didn't miss any of the football he so ardently followed. Beautiful manners and never says a bad word about anyone.

So that's us. I would like to add that the Kew Diploma has also seen romance blossom amongst more than half the class. So it's not just about the plants.

There are many both in this audience and not who have aided and abetted us in our quests for horticultural glory and we thank them wholeheartedly for their support and encouragement during the last three years. In particular the inmates of the School:

Mr Christopher Beardshaw and his partner Frances – thank you very much for taking the time out of a no doubt very busy schedule to join us here today.

Pam and Judy, whose ceaseless patience and unflinching cheerfulness have kept us buoyed in adversity and calm at those panicky final moments of project hand-ins. That is unless, of course, the kitchen and dishwasher are not gleaming.

Martin, for always having a sensible answer to an insensible question.

Emma – your encouragement, chastisement and rod of iron has meant we probably did a lot more work and caused a lot less trouble than we would have preferred.

And finally Greg – such brilliance with the word ‘no’ when faced with an outlandish student request and without whom we would never have appreciated that gnomes do make a garden.’

## COURSE 47



Rob Alcock  
4478

Pete Feilen  
4697

Liz Harbott  
4706

Tim Hickey  
4704



Rebecca Hilgenhof  
4702

Ben Houston  
4698

Alice Lumb  
4701

Crissy Mulrain  
4580



Steve O'Brien  
4703

Phil Ostley  
4705

Sam Phillips  
4554

Paul Rees  
4696



Lindsey Schuman  
4699

Saul Walker  
4700

The student year runs from September to September. Regrettably no Student Union report was forthcoming for the year ending September 2009. (Ed.)

## KEW GUILD ANNUAL DINNER, 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY

by Richard Ward

The Dinner took place in the Orangery, with a reception and welcome drink. Professor David Cutler proposed the toast to 'Our President', and noted that Peter had been his student and then conversely David worked under him when Sir Peter became Director.

Sir Peter Crane responded, adding that he had come into the Gardens earlier and taken in the atmosphere. He missed walking around the 350 acres. He noted the strength of the Kew Guild is in its continuity of volunteers, and was grateful and honoured to be this year's President. He proposed the toast to the Kew Guild and 'Our Guests' and introduced Dr Sandra Knapp who responded on behalf of the guests,

She felt somewhat intimidated and wondered how she could talk to people who know so much already! She touched on the fact that this year was the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Darwin's birth, on his 7 books, numerous papers and his great interest in horticulture. She talked about Darwin's bearded image on £10 notes, other famous men with beards – Wallace, Huxley, Hooker... Victorian naturalists all had beards! She ended by quoting, 1855, Hooker to Bentham (upon publication of *Flora Indica*) 'Hitherto Botany has been dull work for me, little pay; no quarrels; an utter disbelief in the stability of my own genera and species; no startling discoveries; no grand principles involved, and so I have a sort of wicked satisfaction in seeing the fuse burn that is I hope to spring a mine under the feet of my chers confrères, and though I expect a precious kick from the recoil and to get my face blackened too, I cannot help finding my little pleasure in the meanwhile'.

Men with beards were the same as us!

Joe Robbins introduced his fellow students and proposed the toast to absent friends.

Sir Peter presented the Past President scroll to Rebecca Bower, past Vice President scroll to David Hardman and then presented the George Brown Memorial Award and scroll to Guild Secretary Kenwyn Pearson, given annually to the Kewite who has done most to further the spirit of communication and diplomacy in the true spirit of the Kew Guild.

Kenwyn joined The Kew Guild on his commencement on the Kew Diploma Course in 1972. He has been a great supporter and promoter of The Kew Guild and is proud to be serving as Secretary for the second time. He has travelled the world in pursuit of Horticulture and used and visited Kew contacts in China, Australia and New Zealand, and made many new friends. He always encourages Kewites to join the Kew Guild and to take part in its activities and attend functions, and to keep in touch with one another. Contacts made through Kew remain friends and lead to other contacts in the profession. It was a great privilege to work for George Brown while a student at Kew and he is proud to receive the Award given in George's memory.

The Kew Guild medal was awarded in absentia by the Guild to Ray Desmond.

‘Ray has been driven to work tirelessly for the benefit of Kew and the Guild. During his tenure on the staff he helped place the Kew Library on a more secure foundation. He also established the Kew Archives as we know them today. All his many publications are excellent, well-researched, and of the highest possible calibre. They stand as lasting reference works of great value, and have been central to increasing interest of how Kew has developed over its 250 year history. His latest, the second edition of the history of Kew, is an especially valuable contribution to increasing public understanding of the mission of Kew.’

Richard Bisgrove was given an Honorary Fellowship – see page 416.

Past Presidents of the Guild stood up to be recognised, as were overseas guests (Dennis McGlade, USA; Jim and Val Mitchell, Australia; and Bill Bessler, Spain).

The student auction and raffle raised over £300 for the student travel fund.

The evening closed with Sir Peter presenting a bouquet to Dr Sandra Knapp, thanking Dinner organisers Jennifer Alsop and Richard Ward for their help, and the Editor for delivery of the 2008 Journals in time for the Dinner. The 2011 Annual Dinner will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> May subject to confirmation.

## **KEW GUILD AWARD SCHEME REPORT 2009**

by David Barnes

Another fruitful year in terms of applications to the Awards Scheme as you will see by the many reports in this Journal. It is an enjoyable task being able, as a committee, to support so many applications with considerable amounts of the Guild’s money and subsequently to read the accounts of those labours. There were 14 successful applications for funding with almost £8,000 in total being given to support the proposals.

It was also a pleasant task to give Kenwyn Pearson the George Brown Memorial Award, recognising his furthering communication and diplomacy in the true spirit of the Kew Guild. The Award was formally presented at the Kew Guild Dinner in May.

As always my thanks go to the members of the Awards Scheme Committee who give up their time to administer the Scheme so successfully.

### **APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE KEW GUILD AWARD SCHEME**

Kew Guild Awards are available to members of the Guild (except Trustees) to:

- assist purposeful travel (fares and subsistence)
- assist members’ further education

- assist in the purchase of books and equipment
- pay tuition or examination fees
- provide grants to aid publication of specialist books or papers
- provide financial assistance to enable attendance at Kew Guild and other horticultural events
- assist other projects which the Award Scheme finds acceptable.

The full rules of the Awards Scheme are available on the Kew Guild Website (<http://www.kewguild.org.uk/>). Application forms can either be downloaded from the Kew Guild Website or obtained from the Secretary of the Kew Guild Awards Scheme, The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond Surrey TW9 3AB.

The closing dates for receipt of completed application forms are 28<sup>th</sup> February and 30<sup>th</sup> June of each year. Applications are considered by the Awards Committee in March and July. This form must be clearly handwritten, typed or submitted electronically to [Awards@kewguild.org.uk](mailto:Awards@kewguild.org.uk). All supporting papers must be presented as A4 – unstapled and unbound. This should not exceed 4 sides of A4 as part of your application (additional papers may not be considered).

## **RAINFOREST RESTORATION TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP**

by Kate Blyth

When I was given the opportunity to undertake a travel scholarship I wanted to go somewhere I had never been – and would probably never otherwise go. I've always had a love for trees and a concern for tropical deforestation and found myself interested in restoration ecology – something I knew little about. After speaking to many different people I decided to visit the Philippines and Thailand to compare different rainforest restoration methods. Having never been further east than Greece, South East Asia seemed like an exotic and exciting choice so I was delighted when my proposal was accepted and I received funding from the Kew Guild to make my trip possible.



Kate with the seminar group collecting wild seedlings

The Philippines has suffered extensive forest loss, with a decline from about 70% forest cover in 1900 to only 20-25% today. This can be attributed to both logging (the country has many valuable timber species – particularly within the Dipterocarpaceae family) and to agriculture including ‘slash and burn’ subsistence farming. The country, made up of over 7000 islands, is also one of the world’s ‘biodiversity hotspots’ with a higher percentage endemism than Brazil!

I began my trip on Leyte Island, at the Visayan State University. Here I attended a seminar on ‘Rainforestation Farming’ – forest restoration with an agroforestry approach to provide a sustainable income for the local farmers and discourage unsustainable farming techniques. I joined a team of project leaders from around the Philippines on a field trip to collect wild seedlings (in torrential rain – which resulted in me sliding halfway down a muddy mountain on my backside!) and I learned about the importance of mycorrhizae in Dipterocarp propagation as we potted them up in the nursery. I gathered lots of photographs, literature and notes to take back to Kew and saw some amazing trees. I met many interesting people, most of who spoke perfect English much to my relief! Plus the food was outstanding.

My next visit was on the neighbouring island of Bohol, to a project run by the Bagong Pag-Asa Foundation using the Assisted Natural Regeneration method. Here they implement measures to overcome the natural regeneration of the degraded area with no additional tree planting. I was able to take photographs of a three-year-old site to compare with the other two projects. I learned about fire prevention methods and took a wonderful hike up one of the limestone ‘Chocolate Hills’ (so called because they turn brown in summer) where the view was breathtaking. Mind you, it was so hot that I nearly passed out after reaching the top and didn’t have much breath left to take!



I then took a flight over to Thailand where I stayed in Chiang Mai – a stunning city full of ancient temples and weird and wonderful street food (I ate insects...). I spent a week with the Forest Restoration and Research Unit of Chiang Mai University and the friendly team took me on various trips to study phenology and see their reforestation plots and research nursery amongst many other things. I gathered hundreds of images and have great memories of walking through old forests where I saw some huge trees such as *Dipterocarpus costatus* and a gigantic strangler fig (see photo left, with me beside the fig).

This once-in-a-lifetime trip was a complete success and I brought back lots of information for Kew, along with some unforgettable experiences. I would like to thank the Kew Guild for making it possible.

## **SOUTH AFRICA – WHERE BEAUTY MEETS BEAST**

by Louise Bustard

We flew over Cape Town, out over the sea, then turned around and came into land from the south. It was then that I decided that Cape Town must be the most beautiful city in the world and I am still of that opinion. Feeling like a little child whose every Christmas wish had come true I was thrilled to the core to finally be in South Africa.

I had come to attend the **BGCI 7<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens** that was to run from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in Durban. First, however, I had come to Cape Town with sixteen other delegates for the pre-conference tour around the Cape.

I am immensely grateful to the Kew Guild Award Scheme and other supporters for enabling me to attend the congress in a country I have wanted to visit all my life.

During our four days in the Cape we visited: the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, The Karoo National Botanical Garden, The Harold Porter National Botanic Garden and, of course, Kirstenbosch. We were just a few weeks too late to see the Proteas in flower but the timing was perfect to see the vibrant colours of the ‘Pin Cushions’ *Leucospermum spp.* Large number of Pelargoniums were in flower, their colours luminous in the intense African sunlight. Numerous species of *Erythrina* (see photo, *Erythrina latissima*, taken at Kirstenbosch) were flowering and attracting birds that were equally vibrant in their plumage. It was also nice to meet up with old friends like the Aloes, the Crassulas, the Euphorbias and all members of the Aizoaceae or mesembs.



Then it was time to travel east to Durban in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

The conference was held in the relatively new and very remarkable International Conference Centre. I was particularly impressed by Stella Simiyu, the BGCI Global Conservation Strategy Officer in Kenya. Instead of lecturing us – as so many do – that we must do something about the environmental situation, she discussed practical ways, programmes etc., that we can all utilise in our gardens and environmental centres around the world.



A representative display at the Gardens of a muthi market – a Zulu medicinal herb market

I chaired an afternoon session of 3 workshops: (1) Esther Garcia Guillen talked about ‘Celebrating the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Linnaeus at The Royal Botanic Garden of Madrid, (2) Jonathan Foley talked on ‘Using Durban Botanic Gardens and satellite nurseries to enhance the teaching of ethnobotany in tertiary environmental education’ and (3) Leigh Morris from RBG Edinburgh and Dilan Bayindir from the Nezahat Gökyigit Botanic Garden in Turkey, discussed the ‘Practical Certificate in Horticulture Training Programme.’

One day was spent in Durban Botanic Gardens – the hosts and organisers of the conference. The staff, volunteers and Friends of Durban Botanic Gardens could not have been more welcoming or more helpful. .

Attending this conference were less than 150 delegates. This was, in fact, an ideal number as I believe that most delegates were able to meet all other delegates. I came away with some excellent ideas and saw some of nature's most exquisite works. I met Xhosas, Afrikaaners, Zulus and white South Africans and laughed with them all. It was truly an experience I'll treasure the rest of my life.

## **ASSISTING RBG KEW'S CONSERVATION WORK IN THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS**

by Mark Cox

My Travel Scholarship to the Turks and Caicos Islands began on the 25<sup>th</sup> April with a flight to Miami USA. I spent four days in Miami, visiting Fairchild Tropical Botanic Gardens and Miami Botanic Gardens. This was a great start to the trip, enabling me to see plants growing out in the open that I had only previously seen from herbarium specimens or growing under glass. The staff at Fairchild were wonderful, especially Lynka Woodbury, curator of the herbarium, who gave me a personal tour of her facility and introduced me to her team.



Working with rescued *Tillandsia* species at MCCC. © RBG Kew

A flight from Miami to Providenciales brought me to the Turks and Caicos Islands and my first ever experience of the Caribbean. I was met by Ethlyn Gibbs-Williams, Director of the Turks and Caicos National Trust, and a one-woman powerhouse of unstoppable determination. After a brief meet-and-greet of her administrative team, she whisked me to Cheshire Hall, a historic site of an old plantation house run and maintained by the National Trust. Within two hours of getting off the plane, Ms. Gibbs had persuaded me to design a planting scheme for the Cheshire Hall site using only native species!

The transfer to Middle Caicos Island involved a boat trip to North Caicos and road-journey across a rather sorry-looking causeway that had been practically washed away in last year's hurricane season. I was met by an ex-diploma student Bob McMeekin, Pine Recovery Project, Nursery manager for the Middle Caicos Conservation Centre (MCCC) who provided a tour of facilities.

I was soon joined by Marcella Corcoran, Programme Officer with the UK Overseas Territories Programme based at the RBG Kew Herbarium, and two Imperial College MSc students, Sophie Williams and Chloe Hardman. The remaining two and a half weeks provided a wealth of experiences and learning. Highlights included meeting local community members (including Mr. Higgs the Bush Doctor, and giving a presentation at a community meeting), working to remove invasive species such as *Leucaena leucocephala* – *Fabaceae* (Cowbush) from around the MCCC, assisting in plant rescue (from sites that had recently been bulldozed for development), seed collection, fire plot surveys in the pineyards, and visits to National Trust historic sites (Conch Bar Caves on Middle Caicos and Wades Green Plantation on North Caicos).

The third week of the travel scholarship was focused around giving something back to the National Trust and the community for all their help and support. The majority of the time was spent working at the MCCC undertaking hard landscaping work and lending assistance in the nursery. I helped to create a new bed for growing local crops and undertook cleaning, mounting and display of rescued plants in the grounds of the nursery. I was also able to participate in micropropagation of *Encyclia altissima* – *Orchidaceae*, and created a ‘*Tillandsia* Wall’ at the Nursery using rescued plants – *Tillandsia utriculata*, *T. flexuosa* and *T. circinnata*.

The travel scholarship provided me with the unique opportunity to observe a wide range of native species across both Middle and North Caicos Islands, and to see first-hand the impact of invasive species and the destruction of pristine habitats due to development, invasive pests and disaster.

I highly commend the work being undertaken by the RBG Kew UK Overseas Territories Programme and their work with partner agencies in their efforts to provide both in-situ and ex-situ conservation, and thank the Kew Guild for funding the scholarship. If this report has stimulated your enthusiasm, please come and volunteer on a Wednesday evening and help continue the vital work in the Turks and Caicos Islands and other UK Overseas Territories.

## PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE

by Jessica Evans

In June 2009 the Kew Guild kindly funded me to attend a two week Permaculture design course. The course was taught mainly by Patrick and Cathy Whitefield on Ragmans Lane Farm in Gloucestershire. Permaculture was started in the 1970s by David Holmgren and Bill Mollison when they realised that a natural ecosystem tends to be sustainable and with understanding of the way they work it could be possible to make the way people live more sustainable. The word permaculture comes from permanent-agriculture. When permaculture first started it was based quite strongly on imitating a natural ecosystem, as best as possible, to produce, for example, a forest garden where the trees and shrubs from natural woodlands are replaced by useful trees or trees with edible fruits or leaves, wild

fruits and vegetables. Permaculture has developed over time and now goes further than this to look into the principles on how natural ecosystems operate and apply them to buildings, gardens, farms and whole settlements. One of the key principles of natural ecosystems is diversity, but more importantly the diversity of beneficial relationships between plants, animals and fungi. In permaculture design a network of beneficial relationships, and where things are placed in relation to one another, is seen as important to increase the sustainability of an area. This may be as simple as organising a garden to ensure that the owners get the best use out of it.

The course ran for two weeks with the aim of us producing a design for an imaginary situation using all that we had learnt. Throughout the first week we were taught about the basic principles of permaculture, basic surveying skills, methods of building to be energy efficient, design skills and skills for use in the garden such as testing soils. The subjects during the second week were about woodland management and agroforestry, aquaculture and water in the garden, urban permaculture and tree identification. Throughout the two weeks we surveyed the area we were to design and produced a design in the last week. I worked with three other people to design a garden for an urban situation on a unlevel concrete area outside a building – part of the brief was that it had to be low cost using



A Willow structure

junk that could be found around the farm – the comparison to this in an urban situation would be from skips- and produce food most of the year round. Trips on the course were to an estate that is gardened biodynamically and to an eco-architect company. Thanks to the expertise of other people on the course we were able to have a go at willow weaving and attend a lecture on sea-fishing.

I enjoyed the course and found the principles and the inspiration that had set up permaculture interesting. Permaculture is difficult to define as it means different things to so many different people but I found it to be a largely common-sense practice. It has been a subject that has interested me for a while and I learnt on the course skills that can be useful when designing in the future.

## TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP TO KENYA

by Patrick Keough

I spent my first night in the New Palms Hotel in the searing heat and humidity of coastal downtown Mombasa, Kenya. I embarked on the journey to Gazi Bay to meet Dr. James Kairo of the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute. As we drove through the searing heat I could see the red clay of Africa and small roadside shacks bustling with commerce. No matter how I pictured Africa this was better than my wildest dreams.

Finally after nearly a year of planning and undying support from Kew staff I was ready to accomplish what I came here to do – observe the Mangrove Habitat. First on the list at the landward side of the habitat was a dense scrub thicket formed by *Avicennia marina* no more than 10 feet tall. In some places I even saw a group or a solitary *Lumnitzera racemosa* at the edge of the forest right before the tides ceased to reach and dry sand and grasses took over.

A little further in, *Bruguiera gymnorrhiza* with its small propagules, *Ceriops tagal* with its thin sword like propagules forming dense thickets that had small paths that you could walk free of pneumatophores. At the seaward side there was the mighty *Rhizophora mucronata* that had become a forest and no light was able to penetrate and the prop roots made travel by foot virtually impossible.

On the seaward side I observed a small plantation of *Sonneratia alba*. Due to beach erosion, the sand is retreating back to the sea and is drowning out most replanting efforts along the coast. But, in this small pocket *Sonneratia* seems to thrive. While on the coast I assisted the Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute and the Gazi Womens Group in the addition of a welcome centre to the Gazi Womens Boardwalk. The welcome centre is a platform under a coconut thatch roof that uses mangrove planked wood as a floor.

Mangroves were not the only plants I saw on my travels. I went north to the village of Kilifi where I met representatives from the Coastal Forest Conservation Unit. The CFCU took me to see five sites with remaining populations of endangered African violets (*Saintpaulia rupicola* var. *kacharoroni*). The sites were in privately owned lands nestled in limestone cliffs. The plants were growing on rock faces and are lessening in numbers due to population pressure. In the Kacharoni Hills, the CFCU are in the early stages of setting up ecotourism to support the conservation of these plants with the help and involvement of the landowners.

I have observed nine out of the ten mangrove species that I have hoped to observe in Kenya. I have gained a greater understanding of a mangrove habitat, and African violets and gained a great respect for the people of Kenya and their always positive attitudes.

As a student the opportunity to research and to observe such an amazing habitat has been one of the highlights of my life. I am very grateful to RBG Kew, the Kew Guild, and Stella Ross-Craig for this wonderful opportunity.

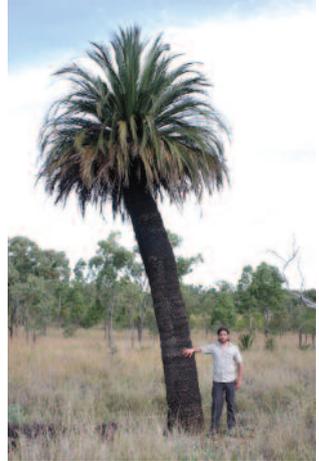
## TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP TO BRISBANE

by Felix Merklinger

Whilst working in the Palm House at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, from May 2006 until August 2007, I developed a passion for palms and cycads. Starting the Kew Diploma in September 2007 I had already set my mind on proposing a travel scholarship to a country to which cycads are native.

When in October 2008 I received a letter from the School of Horticulture, a ‘permission to travel’, I was thrilled! And on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2009 I found myself on an airplane towards Brisbane, Australia. Here I would spend four weeks studying the native flora, collecting seeds and herbarium specimen with partners of the MSB at Kew, spend time meeting some of the world’s experts on cycads and search the tropical rain forests of northern Queensland hoping to find *Lepidozamia hopei*.

I spent ten days on a field trip with Jason Halford. He is employed by the Brisbane State Herbarium to research and collect the material contributing to the Seeds for Life project. With him, I drove almost 4000km through Queensland, from Brisbane to Rockhampton, past Mt Archer, home of *Cycas ophiolitica* up to Mackay and just beyond, to Cathu State Forest, holding impressive stands of *Cycas media*; inland through Eungella National Park, south through Clermont, Emerald and down to Springsure, visiting the impressive *Macrozamia moorei* (see photo). The trip was ended in the depths of the Carnarvon Range, a rugged but beautiful place, not far from the Darling Downs, where the (also German) explorer Ludwig Leichardt disappeared mysteriously on his expedition in 1848.



Along the way we found 11 species of cycads, various species of palms and many other fascinating plants. We made 33 collections of rare and endangered, as well as rather common plants. We worked great as a team, exchanged much of our knowledge with each other and parted as friends.

Back in Brisbane, I hired a vehicle and drove to Caboolture where I met Louis and Tish Randall. Lou Randall was my main contact out in Australia during the planning stage of the trip and his knowledge of the country and everything in it – but especially his passion for plants made this trip a fantastic experience. Tish and Lou made me feel very welcome for the two days I stayed with them.

Lou had organised for me to also meet Roy Osborne and Wes Field. Together they showed me a stand of *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*.

I was extremely excited to be going to meet Professor Roy Osborne, the man who had written hundreds of articles on cycads, contributed to many books and was main-author of the *Cycads of Australia* book. And indeed, to see *Lepidozamia peroffskyana* and *Macrozamia lucida* in habitat in the company of him, Lou and Wes, made this a special event.

From Caboolture I drove north to Townsville where I met former Kew Diploma student Chris Cole and his family. Chris and his colleague Jason showed me the three gardens that

together form the Townsville Botanic Gardens: Queens Gardens, Anderson Gardens and the Townsville Palmetum, which is rated as one of the ten best in the world.

From Townsville I headed north, still. Passing by Mission Beach and the Licuala State Forest (a dense forest of *Licuala ramsayi* and the forest floor covered in *Bowenia spectabilis*), also home to the Cassowaries (dispersers of the seeds of many plants, including *Lepidozamia hopei*), I drove through the Atherton Tablelands towards Cairns. Here I spent a week around Flecker Botanic Gardens and the surrounding area of Cairns, travelling up north to Port Douglas, the Daintree and Cape Tribulation. Finally, on the very last two days of my scholarship I found *Lepidozamia hopei*, the tallest cycad on earth. It was awesome! Thank you to the Kew Guild for this opportunity.

## UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM CERTIFICATE IN BIOLOGICAL RECORDING AND SPECIES IDENTIFICATION

by Helen Marriage

The joy of working at Kew is being exposed to the incredible global diversity of plant life. However I had become aware of how little of my own native flora I was familiar with – a ridiculous situation!

The University of Birmingham Certificate looked like the answer. The course format (choosing six modules out of a possible forty) meant it could become truly personalized. The mandatory Biological Recording module would help me acquire essential field skills. For the other five I took into consideration both my personal wishes (I love woodland areas, and look after two at Kew), and noted that on the after- work field trips our team admires the beautiful, but generally unidentified grasses, and as for ‘the daisies’...

The courses generally ran as long weekends, Fri pm to Mon pm, 12+ hour days – mainly in the field, but evenings in the classroom. Assessment via an ident. test on the last afternoon, with a follow-up assignment usually consisting of preparing herbarium voucher specimens, discussing their ecology and constructing a dichotomous key. I studied at three centres: Preston Montford in Shropshire, Juniper Hall in Surrey, and Malham Tarn in the Yorkshire Dales. All had their highlights, which I hope you will enjoy sharing.

**Biological Recording** A thorough grounding in field skills, survey design and implementation, plus an overview of the role of national and local recording schemes, useful databases, and the value of historical data. We also prepared voucher specimens. The most classroom-based of all the modules, but we carried out surveys (mine on hedgerows) and had useful feedback sessions on their design, and the data presented. Other surveys carried out (snails/ birds/newts) were a good reflection of the diversity of interests within the group, some working for the Environment Agency, others for independent ecology consultancies. Assignments concerned reporting on setting up a local record centre, and writing up our survey.



**Woodland Plants** Comparing and contrasting the flora of both acid (The Ercall) and base rich (Benthall Edge) woodland, plus learning of Ancient Woodland Indicators-including *Sorbus torminalis*, *Paris quadrifolia* (see photo left), and the understated but charmingly named ‘Townhall Clock’ *Adoxa moschatellina*.

**Asteraceae** An introduction to ‘Baby Stace’ (1), and the nomenclature associated with this challenging family. A range of habitats were explored from the limestone quarry at Llanymynech to grass verges (luckily not the busiest of roads...) and the mysteries of thistles/daisies/dandelions started to be dispelled.

**Grasses, Sedges and Rushes** My hardest course – very ambitious to cover all this in one long weekend, but a very patient and enthused tutor helped enormously. Again varying habitats, both acid (Stapely Hill) and calcareous (Wenlock Edge) grasslands, long evenings learning the specific structures associated with these families, and much practice in keying out specimens.



**Conifers/Broad Leaved Trees** Two complementary short courses, we used the local environs, Bedgebury Pinetum and Bookham Common (a SSSI) for our field observations. An introductory game of ‘sort the cone’ (see photo left) helped enormously.

**Limestone Flora** Glorious countryside with habitats as diverse as limestone pavements, moors and woodlands. *Sesleria caerulea* dominated the moorlands, along with *Carex flacca*, and a tremendous range of ferns. Highlights included the Souther scales nature reserve, a limestone pavement area kept free of sheep, with a great range of plants, e.g. Brittle Bladder fern *Cystopteris fragilis*, and Grass Wood containing *Primula farinosa*, amongst the delights.

### Reflections and the future

Excellent tuition, in beautiful areas, complemented by the wide spectrum of friendly fellow students. To consolidate, I am joining the local Wildlife Trust, have started regularly visiting a locally lime-rich area (Brockham Limeworks), and am taking part in the Common Plant Survey for Plantlife. More FSC courses will surely follow. Heartfelt thanks to the Kew Guild for supporting me on this course.

### References

(1) Field Flora of The British Isles, Clive Stace, Cambridge University Press 1999.

# 17<sup>TH</sup> BRAZILIAN CONGRESS OF FLORICULTURE AND ORNAMENTAL PLANTS/ 4<sup>TH</sup> BRAZILIAN CONGRESS OF PLANT TISSUE CULTURE

by Renata Mazzini

‘Science, Innovation and Sustainability’ were the themes that characterised this event. The principal discussions were based around new technologies in flower cultivation and plant tissue culture. The aim was to deliver high quality products to the national market as well as for exportation.

Both events are held in conjunction with each other every two years. This year, it was from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2009, in Aracaju, Northeast Brazil. Aracaju city was created in 1885 to facilitate the trade in sugarcane from the plantations that had been established in that region. Located on the coast, its landscape consists of dunes, mangroves and beaches, all surrounded by palm and coconut trees. Nowadays, over five hundred and twenty thousand people live in Aracaju, and it is considered one of the safest and cleanest cities in Brazil.

These events have always attracted those involved with all aspects of ornamental plants and plant tissue culture from all over Brazil and other countries in Latin America. There were over 600 scientific abstracts presented at the congress as posters or as short lectures, and published on the congress annals. The subjects ranged from botany, propagation, plant breeding, genetic resources, harvest and post-harvest, marketing, landscape design and general cultivation. The most impressive of these were the quantity of research into the varieties of food plants used as ornamentals, such as pineapple, pepper, guarana, pumpkin and banana, among others. I personally presented a poster entitled ‘Vegetative propagation of Buddha’s Hand citron, a citrus variety with ornamental potential’; this subject was part of my studies during my MSc course. This is the primary reason why I am so interested in new uses for common food plants.

I contributed two other posters, which I prepared especially for the congress: ‘Indolebutyric acid treatment on the rooting of chrysanthemum cuttings’ and ‘Landscape redesign of the library surroundings of the State University of Sao Paulo, campus of Jaboticabal city’ (see photo right). Closely related to this, my tutor gave a lecture on ‘Sustainable Landscaping’, to which all of her students had collaborated with ideas and suggestions.

The lectures and poster about plant tissue culture were also of interest to me, as I intend



to work with the micropropagation of woody plants during my Doctorate course. Unfortunately, the majority of these posters were about herbaceous plants and only a few of them about woody plants, such as the *Hancornia speciosa* (Apocynaceae) and *Tectona grandis* (Verbenaceae). One of the main problems that I might experience in my research is the explants browning. These posters did present different methods to overcome this issue.

During the congress week I also had the chance to take a short course which uncovered the ‘Standard selection of native plants for floriculture’. During this course we discussed the plant characteristics to be considered if a specific species has potential to be used in the flower trade or as an ornamental plant in landscaping. It also highlighted that it is important to conduct research into its post-harvest life, especially if it is to be used as a cut flower.

The opportunity to take part at these events was made possible mainly through support from The Kew Guild, so I am very grateful for their support.

## **HORTICULTURAL STANDARDS IN BOTANIC GARDENS OF WESTERN EUROPE**

by Joe Robbins

In June 2009 I undertook my travel scholarship to look at the horticultural standards of botanic gardens in Western Europe. Europe is rich with botanic gardens. I visited a selection of recommended gardens in France, Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany. The gardens have similar growing conditions to the UK, which allowed direct comparisons to be made between the gardens and our horticultural practice here at Kew.

The primary aim of the scholarship was to observe horticultural standards within gardens and compare them to the standards we achieve and maintain at Kew. Where possible I spoke to staff, students and volunteers at gardens to gain an understanding of how the standards are achieved regardless of whether they were high or low!

The first garden I visited was Jardin des Plantes in Paris, famous for its great Plane tree lined vista of the Natural History Museum. This is a large garden which in the UK would be considered as a park. Nestled in the garden is an alpine garden which displays a wide range of flora including many native species from French mountainous areas.

In Belgium I visited the National Botanic Garden of Belgium and the University of Gent Botanic Garden. Gent botanic garden is located on the outskirts of the city of Gent. It is entirely free to enter and offers a small, well-maintained garden. I was particularly impressed by the tropical glasshouse collections which had very few signs of any pest and disease damage, achieved through an effective bio control programme. The main feature of this garden is the systematic order beds that are used by University students for study.

The garden that I visited with the highest horticultural standards was *Hortus Botanicus* in Amsterdam. This garden has continuity between all its elements and encourages visitors to investigate all parts of the garden. It is maintained by a very small team of just 6 gardeners and 20 volunteers. I gained a lot from the curator of this garden who expressed his views on how horticultural volunteers can be utilised to get the best standards in a botanic garden.

On my scholarship I spent time in Germany. The highlight of this time was Berlin Botanic Garden where I visited the newly renovated glasshouse. It was interesting to see how they had managed to keep the entire collection alive whilst carrying out the restoration programme. The glasshouse now has some very innovative heating systems to save energy which were great to see. My scholarship was a great success and allowed me to broaden my knowledge and experience which I hope to be able to apply to my work at Kew and in the future – thank you to the Kew Guild for helping with this.

## **IX INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THYSANOPTERA AND TOSPOVIRUSES CONFERENCE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA**

by Alison Scott Brown

I would like to thank the Kew Guild for providing the financial assistance which made it possible for me to share and receive new information on thrips and associated tospoviruses with research groups from over 19 countries, at an event that occurs only once every four years. Attendance at the 2009 symposium enabled me to present my recent study of the chemistry of the foliage of six species of plants from among the glasshouse collections which were observed to be resistant to two economically important pest species of thrips: western flower thrips (*Frankliniella occidentalis*) and black-tea thrips (*Heliothrips haemorrhoidalis*). Results of this work showed that the mortality of thrips increased significantly when exposed to surfaces coated in residues of the leaf-extracts of these six species. The most active leaf-extracts against thrips were found to those from the leaves of *Sclerochiton harveyanus* (Acanthaceae) located in the Temperate House which, on undergoing further fractionation and compound isolation, yielded four new iridoids, recorded as sclerochitonosides, all with unique structures which were determined using nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy (NMR). Each of the four sclerochitonosides was found to be active against thrips when tested individually. Although the actual role of these iridoids in the host selection processes by thrips among the Kew glasshouse collections is still unclear, the aim is to add to the knowledge of the defence components of plants which successfully avoid attack from pest species such as thrips. Such studies can serve to increase the possibilities of developing future methods of controlling thrips, particularly in environments where the use of current control techniques are limited.

Investigations of thrips in the glasshouses at Kew has resulted in the identification of invasive species which are currently not established in the UK. Thrips are notoriously difficult to detect due to their minute size and cryptic nature yet the economic impact of accidentally introducing species such as *Thrips palmi* on the UK horticultural industry

would be catastrophic. During my time in Brisbane I spent several days with the thrips taxonomist at the Department of Primary Industries (DPI&F) laboratories in Brisbane studying the characteristics used to identify potentially invasive species of thrips, several of which are already established in northern Queensland. Identification of the thrips was only possible once the individuals were satisfactorily slide-mounted and observed under high magnification (x40). Expertise of a thrips taxonomist is required to detect the minute structural differences between species, and misinterpretation could potentially have a profound effect on the method and extent of the treatments which are undertaken to control outbreaks of thrips.

A further day was spent in the sclerophyll forests situated north-west of Brisbane observing the variety of trapping methods used by staff from DPI Queensland and researchers from University Utah, USA, to collect and record species of thrips from *Eucalyptus spp.* and *Macrozamia spp.* cycads.

### **POPULUS NIGRA subsp. BETULIFOLIA – NATIVE BLACK POPLAR – POLLARDING, PROPAGATION AND HABITAT**

by Jamie Simpson

Whether a maiden, pollard or coppice, young or old, on the banks of a forgotten stream or in the middle of a village green, their fluttering leaves, rugged burrs and form have been inspirational for artists, woodcutters and scientists over centuries.

Much has been written about Native Black Poplar in the last 20 years by many different people from local enthusiasts such as Noakes to well known botanists such as Rackham. Kew scientist Edgar Milne Redhead worked during the 1970's to bring the trees further attention to botanists, conservationists and the public. There has been debate as to whether the trees' status should be classified as native as with other tree species.

The Native Black Poplar has in some ways built up a following with various people and organisations working at local and national levels. The majority of work undertaken so far has been locating, verifying and recording mature and veteran trees across the country to determine numbers still present. This stands at around 7000 (Cooper et al. 2002) far more than first estimated in the 1980's, with surely more to be found as they continue to turn up, so potentially closer to 9000. DNA research has also been undertaken by the Forestry Commission towards the EUFORGEN project at present identifying 31 clones nationally.

Trees are being lost on an annual basis due to a variety of reasons. In another 30 years with an even more aged population and most reaching the end of their lifespan, where will the national total of trees stand? New trees are being planted but so far fall short of what is needed to maintain present national population figures into the future, with genetic diversity or genetic diversity or geographic distribution not always considered.

The traditional practice of pollarding has many benefits, regularly undertaken with this subspecies across the country, for a variety of reasons according to local needs and uses.

There are some counties with a majority of pollards e.g. Worcestershire, others with none e.g. Cheshire and some with incycle cutting e.g. Buckinghamshire, others long out of cycle e.g. Suffolk. Nearly all Native Black Poplars in the UK landscape have been planted. They have been used in the past for wet areas of land where it was difficult for other species to grow, vegetatively propagated using sets and truncheons. For this reason we have saved our subspecies although we are responsible for destroying the trees' natural habitat in the first place. Our Native Black Poplar is found at the banks of rivers, streams and ponds, ditches, hedgerows, water meadows and floodplains, all could be part of previous floodplain woodland. They are also found in parks, on village greens and streets planted for amenity and ornamental reasons.

During the summer of 2008 I made a journey around England generously part funded by the Kew Guild to study this subspecies with particular reference to pollarding, propagation and habitat. I visited various trees, sites, people, projects and organisations. A report 'Information for Conservation' containing findings and thoughts can be obtained by contacting me.

## **EXPEDITION TO NEW CALEDONIA TO STUDY NATIVE FLORA AND HABITATS**

by Neil Sleddon

New Caledonia, a French Overseas Department, is a mountainous island of around 18,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the South West Pacific. It is a fragment of the ancient continent of Gondwana. Separate from the Australian continent around 80 million years ago it has been in its current position for around 40 million years. This makes it a much greater age than most Pacific Islands, which are volcanic or coral in origin. It is likely that most, if not all, of the island was at one time submerged, evidenced by the ultramafic rocks which once covered the majority of the surface. These weather to create soils which are poor in major nutrients and rich in heavy metals, such as nickel and chromium, which would usually be toxic to plants. The great age combined with the unusual substrate has led to the evolution of a unique and intriguing flora of around 3200 species of which 76% are endemic.

The author had the opportunity to join a Kew expedition to the island in July and August of 2009. Ruth Clark of the herbarium legume team, working on a revision of the Leguminosae-Caesalpinioideae genus *Mezoneuron*, was to travel to collect specimens of the 4 species currently known from the island.

An itinerary was created from geo-referencing data derived from current herbarium specimens. Our programme was finally determined as an 11 day field trip exploring northwards along the west coast then heading to the east coast, 5 days either side of this would be used to visit sites within reach of the capital Nouméa. This would allow us to explore all the main habitat types. We were joined on our expedition by Laure Barrabé of the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), a French state funded scientific research unit based in Nouméa.

Mont Panié is the highest mountain on the island at 1629m. It has a covering of humid evergreen forest and its ascent is a guided two day expedition. Above 1100m is primary cloud forest dominated by *Agathis montana* (Fig 1). In general the flora has a primeval appearance.

Chutes des Madeleines is a Special Reserve and restoration projects of maquis on ultramafic soil. It has some of the island's 43 endemic conifers, including the rheophytic *Retrophyllum minor* (Fig 2).



Figure 1 *Agathis montana* in cloud forest on Mont Panié (All images – Author)



Figure 2 *Retrophyllum minor* growing in flowing water near to the waterfall 'Chutes des Madeleines'

At Pindai is one of the few remaining intact stands of tropical dry forest. There is a 2-hectare special reserve which has 53 species, 28 of which are endemic. The majority of this habitat is now dominated by large stands of *Acacia spirorbis* ('Gaiac').

Open cast nickel mining is the main source of income for the island and this has had a profound effect on the vegetation. Visible scars were observable at many sites along the west coast.

Specimens of all four species of *Mezoneuron* (*M. badouinni*, *M. deverdiana*, *M. montrouzeri* and *M. schlechteri*) were found and a total of 25 herbarium specimens collected. Thank you to the Kew Guild for their generosity.



*Mezoneuron badouinii*



*M. deverdiana*



*M. montrouzeri*



*M. schlechteri*

## THE KEW GUILD HONORARY FELLOWSHIP

by Allan Hart

This is the fourth year of the Honorary Fellowship, which is only available to those professionals and academics who are not eligible to become full members of the Guild. The Fellowship is awarded in recognition of those who are particularly distinguished in the careers of horticulture and the botanical sciences.

The 2009 nominations of Richard Bisgrove and Niall Kirkwood have been welcomed by the Kew Guild.

Richard is a garden/landscape historian, highly regarded for his academic research and most notably for his in-depth study of the gardens of Gertrude Jekyll.

Niall, born in Scotland, is a Professor of Landscape Architecture and Technology at the prestigious graduate School of Design, Harvard University, specialising in the very important fields of land reclamation, regeneration and sustainable development.

Current Fellows are: Elected 2006 – Derek Edwards, Roy Lancaster, John Melmoe, Tim Smit and Ed Wolf. Elected 2007 – Dennis McGlade and Anna Pavord. Elected 2008 – John Brookes.

### Richard Bisgrove



Richard Bisgrove gained a First Class Honours degree in Horticultural Science at Reading (1965) and a Master's in Landscape Architecture at the University of Michigan (1969) then worked briefly as a landscape architect in Florida before returning to the University of Reading to lecture in Amenity Horticulture. In 1986 he was responsible for the introduction, in the Centre for Horticulture and Landscape at Reading, of Britain's first degree course in Landscape Management. He retired from his position as Senior Lecturer and Course Director for Landscape Management in September 2009.

He is a Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture and served until 2009 on the Editorial Advisory Board of the Institute. For many years a member of the Council and Conservation Committee of the Garden History Society, he has also recently retired from a 19-year period on the Gardens Panel of the National Trust. He is a consultant on the restoration and management of historic gardens including currently the Royal Botanic Garden in Madrid and a private garden in California. He has lectured internationally, written six books on aspects of garden design and garden history, including *The National Trust Book*

of the *English Garden* (Viking 1990; Penguin 1992) and *The Gardens of Gertrude Jekyll* (Frances Lincoln 1992; University of California Press 2000). He co-authored, with Paul Hadley, *Gardening in the Global Greenhouse* (UKCIP, 2002) of which the National Trust and the Royal Horticultural Society were the main sponsors. His most recent book, *William Robinson – the wild gardener*, was published in September 2008.

In January 2004 he was awarded the Veitch Memorial Medal by the Royal Horticultural Society for “outstanding contribution to horticultural education, garden design and plant research”. He continues to give short courses on the History of Gardens and on Amenity Horticulture to Kew Diploma students, a link which he finds both stimulating and enjoyable.

### Niall Kirkwood FASLA

DSc, MLA (Penn), AB (Harvard),  
BArch, BA (Hons) Arch

Niall Kirkwood is Professor of Landscape Architecture and Technology of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University where he has been a faculty member since 1992. From July 2003 to June 2009, he was the Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture, the oldest such programme in North



America founded in 1901 by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and Arthur Shurcliff. In July 2005 he also assumed again the role of Director of Master in Landscape Architecture degree programs (MLA). He was formerly the Director between 1999 - 2003 and coordinator of the ‘Design and Environment’ track of the Master in Design Studies Program (MDes) between 1999 - 2003. He was appointed the Gerald O’Hare Visiting Professor at the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland in 2005. He is also the founder and Director of the Center for Environment and Technology, (CTE) a research, advisory and executive education initiative at Harvard University. Currently the Center focuses on reclamation, regeneration and sustainable development issues on sites in North America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

Published books include *The Art of Landscape Detail: Fundamentals, Practices and Case Studies* published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc (1998), *Motor City Landscape: The Detroit Riverfront* published by HDS Press, (2000), *Manufactured Sites: Rethinking the Post-Industrial Landscape* published by E&FN Spon, (2001), and *Weathering and Durability in Landscape Architecture* published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (2004). Forthcoming books include *Principles of Brownfield Regeneration: Remediation, Design and Reuse* to

be published by Island Press (2010), *Phyto: Site Remediation and Landscape Design* (2011) and *Mumbai Matters: The Book of Design for an Arduous Landscape* (2012).

Prior to joining the Harvard faculty, Kirkwood worked for fifteen years in private practice as a registered landscape architect (United Kingdom and the United States) urban designer and architect (United Kingdom) carrying out urban land reclamation and development projects in Europe, the Middle East and the USA. These included landfill reuse in the 1970s in the United Kingdom, the regeneration of the London, and Barcelona waterfronts in Europe in the 1980s and the reclamation of industrial sites in Mexico and the United States in the 1990s.

Professor Kirkwood is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and serves on the Editorial Board of *Landscape Journal*. He is currently on sabbatical as a visiting professor at Korea University, Seoul, Korea during Spring 2010.

## NEWS OF HONORARY FELLOWS

by Allan Hart

**Derek Edwards**, in a recent conversation, said that he had handed over the control and running of Inturf Ltd. which he founded, to his twin sons Alex and Stephen, who were both trained in turf and golf course management at Myerscough College.

Since his retirement Derek has pursued his hobbies of long distance walking, carpentry and promoting his (aging) rock band that has raised over £8,000 for Macmillan and Parkinsons Charities.

**John Brookes** has written to say that the recession has affected new projects in the UK but he has ongoing gardens in the United States – a large estate in upstate New York and one outside of Albany, awaiting planting, together with one recently completed in Chicago.

John still has his own Garden School in Argentina, run by two ex-Kew students, in addition to taking a tour group to Iran, where he used to live. In 2010 he will also visit Japan to re-view the Barrakura English Garden, which he created some twenty years ago. Examples of John's work can be viewed on his website [www.johnbrookes.com](http://www.johnbrookes.com)

**Dennis McGlade** – In the last year Dennis has been at the forefront of some of Olin's most exciting ventures. He led the studio's first project in Abu Dhabi – the Aflaj Al Foah master plan, a mixed-use neighbourhood that fuses the best in modern planning with the rich culture of the United Arab Emirates. He is also leading US projects of historic and environmental significance, such as the LEED-ND Gold certified Napa Pipe, a reclaimed brownfield site that is being transformed into a vibrant community that creatively reuses historic industrial artefacts, mediates stormwater and protects the local riverfront.

He has recently started work on two residential projects, one in Beverley Hills and the other in Aspen. Finally Dennis is currently teaching at the Southern California Institute of Architecture's first ever studio on landscape architecture in Los Angeles.

A keen supporter of the Guild, he regularly makes time to attend the Annual Dinner and AGM.

**John Melmoe.** 2009 has been a difficult year for the landscape industry, but the highlight of the year for John was the winning by his company – Willerby Landscapes – of the Grand Award presented by BALI for the high quality landscaped grounds of Chavasse Park, which is part of the Paradise Street project in Liverpool City Centre.

John was particularly appreciative of the judges' comments that the quality of both building materials and workmanship were second to none. Ground breaking developments for the Company, linked to complex engineering with innovative water harvesting from all paved surfaces, enabling it to be re-cycled for irrigation, has produced a superb new open space for Liverpool. Members can view this and other prize-winning projects on [www.willerby-landscapes.co.uk](http://www.willerby-landscapes.co.uk)

**Anna Pavord.** 2009 saw the publication of Anna's new book entitled 'Bulb' which was received with critical acclaim – 'a sumptuous book packed with fabulous pictures and a text that is both factual and entertaining'. It is a welcome companion to Anna's previous book 'The Tulip' published in 1999, which she describes as not a gardening book but rather the story of a flower that has made men mad. Anna is continuing the development of her garden in Dorset with the encouragement and support of her husband, Trevor Ware.

**Ed Wolf** – His colleagues at Indoor Garden Design have written to say that Ed still has a strong presence in the business and constantly keeps an eye on current trends and suppliers, both in the UK and the Netherlands. Ed's private collection of horticultural cartoons was recently used in the IGD calendar.

The European Federation of Interior Landscape Groups recently presented Ed with 'A Lifetime's Achievement Award' for services to the Industry. The Guild has passed on congratulations for this well deserved recognition.

**Roy Lancaster** continues to be occupied with travel, lectures and writing. Roy's highlights of the year were visits to Tenerife for a holiday and the North-West coast of America, to lecture in Seattle and Portland, enjoying the exotic plants in both locations. His account of both trips follows:

'My two highlights of 2009, as far as plants are concerned, both occurred in mountains. First, on the island of Tenerife in February, when my family and I celebrated my wife's special birthday with a week's holiday spent in two venues – on the east coast at Santa Cruz and in the Parador at Las Canados at 6,500ft on Mt. Teide. The apparent barren nature of Las Canados at that time of the year proved, on closer inspection, to be false.

Apart from the glorious groves of Canary Island Pine *P. canariensis*, which we explored in a curious shifting mist, the great crater itself, supports scattered populations of shrubs among which *Cytisus supranubius* stands out a mile with its close packed humps and mounds of blue-green leafless shoots. I first met this rare species at the Hillier Arboretum in the 1960s when its stems in June were flooded with small white pea flowers.

Growing among the above, on steep rocky slopes, were the skeletal columns of *Echium wildpretii* long spent and bleached white by the sun and the wind. I have tried to grow this startling red flowered species twice in my garden on a well-drained Bagshot sand, each attempt failing with the first frosts. I have had the same experience with the Mexican *Eryngium proteiflorum*, another plant with volcanic associations which I once photographed apparently thriving on the rock garden at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh.

In September I found myself on America's N.W. Coast, having been invited to lecture in Seattle and Portland. My host in the last named city was Sean Hogan who runs a nursery there "Cistus" specialising in a wide range of plants from Mediterranean regions including Mexico and the S.W. United States. He had promised to take my wife and I on a trip to the Siskiyou Mountains, which straddle the Oregon-California border. We experienced three days of plants, plants and more plants in what has to be one of the temperate world's hot spots, hosting endemics such as *Darlingtonia californica* which flourished in scattered wet seepages in an otherwise steep and dry terrain. Several *Arctostaphylos* species were dominant, mixed with the dwarf *Quercus sadleriana* and the equally small and bushy *Lithocarpus densiflora* var. *echinoides*, both in fruit.

There were also an abundance of conifers from the well known and common Lawson Cypress and Douglas fir to the more exciting Incense Cedar *Calocedrus decurrens* and Sugar pine *Pinus lambertiana*, whose tall, slender crowns bore horizontal branches weighted at their extremities by the long cylindrical cones. Having attained the ridge of one mountain at 5,000ft I was thrilled to find one of my favourite conifers Brewer's spruce *Picea breweriana*. There were scattered groves and single trees with the characteristic weeping branchlets sharing the crags with Shasta fir *Abies magnifica* var. *shastensis* whose bold handsome glutinous cones crowned the upper branches. Beneath us lay wave upon wave of lesser ridges stretching away west to the Pacific Ocean, an occasional glint of which we enjoyed before dusk snuffed out the last of the light.'

## EVENTS AT KEW DURING 2009

Compiled by Miranda Kimberley

Thanks to Bronwen Davies, the editor of Kew's staff newsletter Vista, for permission to include news items considered to be of historical interest to Guild members.

It was a special year for Kew Gardens, being the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Princess Augusta founding the garden in 1759. Several major events were held, aiming to highlight how

important plants are to people, especially in the face of global climate change. The celebrations began on the very first day of the year, with free entry to the gardens, which 25,000 visitors enjoyed. The anniversary also coincided with the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, as well as the 150th anniversary of the publication of his landmark book, *On the Origin of Species*. This led to exhibitions and references to the great naturalist throughout the year.

Ongoing Kew projects such as the refurbishment of the Marianne North Gallery and the Herbarium and Library extension saw the buildings reopening to the public and staff, and the year ended on a high note with news that Kew scientists had managed to discover over 250 new plant and fungi species in the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, ushering in the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010.

### **January: Mozambique and mushrooms**

The year got off to an exciting start with the news that a Kew led expedition to northern Mozambique at the end of 2008 had discovered new species. Scientists on the first expedition to the previously unmapped Mount Mabu found an area of incredible biodiversity. Their discoveries included pygmy chameleons, Swynnerton's robin, butterflies such as the small striped swordtail and emperor swallowtail as well as three new species, a previously undiscovered species of adder and many exotic plants, including a rarely seen orchid.

The international team of 28 scientists and support staff from the UK, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Belgium and Switzerland was led by Kew botanist Jonathan Timberlake and funded by the Darwin Initiative. The expedition was part of Kew's ongoing work with Mozambique's government to identify priority areas for conservation in the face of rapid development.

Expedition leader Timberlake said "This is potentially the biggest area of medium-altitude forest I'm aware of in southern Africa. The phenomenal diversity is just mind-boggling; seeing how things are adapted to little niches, to me this is the incredible thing."

And more locally, the former Mycology building at Kew may have been demolished to make way for the Herbarium extension but the department studying fungi is stronger than ever following the merger of RBG Kew and CABI's fungal reference collections in January. Kew is now home to the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of fungi – over one million specimens including mushrooms, moulds and other microfungi.

Two senior research scientists from CABI joined RBG Kew's mycology team, increasing the number of senior scientists at Kew who are experts in fungal taxonomy and systematics to five. There are now fewer than 10 such mycologists, scientists who study fungi, in the United Kingdom. Defra supported the merger with a grant of £250,000.

## **February: Darwin and debates**

This year's Tropical Extravaganza in the Princess of Wales and the Waterlily House was a stunning display of orchids, bromeliads and anthuriums as ever. Kew is developing its behind-the-scenes tours so the public were able to experience the Tropical Nursery and got to meet the horticultural staff who work there. The Nash Conservatory housed the Darwin Now exhibition, which featured orchid specimens found by the great man on his famous HMS Beagle trip and some of his garden experiments.

During a special Kew Mutual Improvement Society lecture, organised by the second year Diploma students, four directors of the main botanic gardens in Britain met to debate the future of botanic gardens. The panel consisted of Kew director Professor Stephen Hopper, National Botanic Garden of Wales director Kevin Lamb, Dublin-based National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin director Dr Peter-Wyse Jackson and Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh director Professor Stephen Blackmore.

The discussion raised the role of botanic gardens in minimising climate change's acceleration, funding concerns, the success of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the public perceptions of botanic gardens. Stephen Hopper said that "We need political and economic will to change so that wild species and natural areas are perceived as valuable", along the lines of Prince Charles' Rainforests Project, which is aiming to "make the rainforests worth more alive than dead."

## **March: Volunteers welcomed**

For the first time Kew Guild membership was opened up to volunteers, recognising the contribution they make to Kew. Applicants can now join, after being 'introduced' by a current Guild member and approved by the Kew Guild Committee. There are now 430 volunteers fulfilling different roles at Kew Gardens, with 100 at Wakehurst Place.

It was a busy year for the volunteers at Kew as throughout 2009 volunteer guides led behind-the-scenes tours, including tours of the Alpine Nursery in April/May; the Jodrell Laboratories in June/July, the Herbarium in August/September; and the Economic Botany collection in October/November.

## **April: Seeds, sweat and tears**

The Banking on Life exhibition opened in the Nash Conservatory to highlight the work of the Millennium Seed Bank Project. It included Rob Kessler's hyper-coloured electron micrographs of seeds and specimens of some of the most bizarre seed structures known in the world. Visitors were also able to take part in seed handling sessions in the Secluded Glasshouse, and enjoy the Seed Walk along the mini Broadwalk, featuring ten huge willow sculptures by artist Tom Hare. Some of the largest sculptures were up to four metres high and five metres wide, depicting seeds such as the coco de mer, as well as a conker and a lotus seed head.

The Kew to Wisley Relay Race was reinstated and took place on 25 April. A team of staff competed against a team of students to get from Kew to Wisley's sports pavilion first. The route was roughly 21 miles long, and followed the River Thames and a canal. Each relay team consisted of 7 people running distances between 2 miles and 4.8 miles along the route. The winners were Wisley.

### **May: A right, royal victory**

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Kew on Tuesday 5 May to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration. The royal party visited the Banking Seeds for Life exhibition in the Nash Conservatory and a timeline charting the history of Kew Gardens since 1759. The Queen planted a Ginkgo, remarking to Tony Kirkham that she hoped it would grow, because she was not known for having green fingers! The Duke of Edinburgh also planted a Wollemi pine. They ended their visit by cutting a celebratory cake shaped like the Palm House and were given new rose variety 'Kew Gardens' before their departure.

Kew and the British Museum collaborated to design and install an Indian landscape in the forecourt of the British museum. Several habitats were represented including the dramatic, rocky environment of the Himalayan mountains, the tropical lushness of southern India and temperate woodland. Star plants linked with objects in the British Museum's exhibition Garden and Cosmos. They included the banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*), the sacred peepul tree (*Ficus religiosa*), coconut palm (*Cocos nucifera*), and mango (*Mangifera indica*). This followed the China Landscape created in 2008, and is the second of five planned partnerships.

May also saw first year Kew Diploma student, Alex Summers crowned the Institute of Horticulture's Young Horticulturist of the Year 2009. Heats that saw up to 1,500 horticultural students from across Britain and Ireland take part led to a final showdown at the National Botanic Garden of Wales, on Saturday 9 May 2009. Alex had been a finalist twice in the last three years and had missed out, but walked away victorious from this final. It consisted of a gruelling eight rounds of directed and first-to-the-buzzer questions, followed by three plant identification rounds. Despite some tough competition, Alex's broad horticultural knowledge meant he took a comfortable lead.

Alex was awarded a Percy Throver Trust £2,000 travel bursary, which he is planning to use to travel to Borneo and study the native flora of the region. Having previously studied zoology, Alex started his horticultural career at Broomfield College in Derbyshire. He then moved to Cambridge Botanic Gardens, before joining Kew's School of Horticulture in 2008.

### **June: Spectacular species**

The 'Suicide Palm' or *Tahina spectabilis* was named by American scientists as one of top 10 newly discovered species of 2008. It was Kew Honorary Research Fellow Dr John Dransfield, co-author of *The Palms of Madagascar*, who identified and named the palm,

along with his student Mijoro Rakaotoarinivo. The 18 metre tall palm with fan leaves is a totally new genus and species. It was discovered in Madagascar by island resident Xavier Metz. Local villagers are currently managing the habitat of the palm, seeds have been sent to botanic gardens and young palms are being grown at Kew.

### **July: Jurassics and judgement**

The oldest pot plant at Kew, *Encephalartos altensteinii*, was repotted by a team of five gardeners, led by Palm House Keeper, Wes Shaw. The cycad, which has pride of place in the Palm House was collected by Kew's first plant hunter Francis Masson, from the Eastern Cape region of South Africa in the early 1770s. Though it grows at an average rate of only 2.5cm a year, the old knobby trunk has grown to 4 metres 40 centimetres and its roots were forcing out of the pot. Never repotted before it took the horticultural team three months to plan. Because the plant weighs a staggering tonne, a huge 4 metre high lifting gantry was brought in to lift and support the large bulk. While the root ball was lifted, it was all hands on deck as a team of 5 Kew gardeners were on hand to support its outstretched trunk with stilts. The team worked quickly to pull out the old pot and quickly construct a new bespoke mahogany hardwood box around the lifted root ball.

Wes said: "Although it was hot and humid work, the repotting of the *Encephalartos altensteinii* went very well. The months of planning paid off as the team got the job done quickly and efficiently and most importantly without damaging this precious plant."

"When I think of how many gardeners have cared for this plant over the years, it gives me a real sense of the heritage and importance of the living collection that we are all responsible for here at Kew – and the incentive to ensure it keeps on thriving through my time in the Palm House. This year is Kew's 250th anniversary and it is quite fitting that we re-housed one of oldest residents in our anniversary year."

Defra started a review of Kew to assess the organisation of Kew's performance and funding. Resourcing and the effectiveness of income generation are being looked at, to see whether these arrangements remain the most cost effective means of achieving Kew's, and the government's, objectives. The review will decide if changes are needed to improve the quality, effectiveness and value for money of Kew's services, and address how best to ensure a sustainable financial future for Kew and its research.

The review is being led by Professor Sir Neil Chalmers, Warden of Wadham College, Oxford and former Director of the Natural History Museum and Dean of Science at the Open University. The review is expected to be completed by the end of January 2010.

Head of the Arboretum Tony Kirkham was awarded the RHS Associateship of Honour. The accolade is presented to British nationals who have rendered distinguished service to horticulture in the course of their working life. No more than one hundred people hold the honour at any single time.

### **August: Medal named after Kew's first curator**

The William Aiton Medal was introduced as a replacement for the Kew Medal, established in the 1980s. The award is to recognise exceptional service to Kew. All staff and volunteers at Kew and Wakehurst Place can be nominated, and staff are encouraged to make nominations. The decision to award the medal will be made by a committee composed of representatives from across Kew, and chaired by a trustee to ensure that the process is inclusive.

### **September: The future**

Kew Director Professor Steve Hopper gave a series of talks to staff outlining the future of Kew. He discussed how the Breathing Planet programme and its seven aims outline how Kew plans to address plant science and conservation in the coming decade. The Foundation have written a feasibility study for a major Breathing Planet fundraising campaign.

A Landscape Master Plan for the garden and IT and Digital Media strategy are also underway.

This month saw Kew Diploma course 44 students graduate, and Course 46 ushered in. Just before he left Course 44's Craig Rudman managed to scoop the prestigious honour of winning 'heaviest marrow' at the 65<sup>th</sup> Kew Horticulture Show, held on Kew Green on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August. But congratulations have to go to Kew curator Nigel Taylor, who was awarded 13 first prizes and 5 cups for a whole range of vegetables. I hope he's not been stealing off those first year vegetable plots!

### **October: New beginnings**

The Marianne North Gallery reopened after its refurbishment on a sunny 11 October. The Victorian Grade II listed Gallery underwent a dramatic renovation, using modern technology to help preserve the building. Many of the original features have been recreated from the slate and lead roof to the historic tiled floor, returning the Gallery to its original design. The Gallery has been fitted with a new air-conditioning and heating system, and a state-of-the-art lighting system has been installed, illuminating the pictures more effectively.

A day-long community celebration was held, to highlight some of the cultures Marianne North would have seen travelling through 17 countries painting plants and landscapes. Visitors were able to traditional Indian dances, taste different teas at a World Tea Party and sit in Mongolian yurts erected outside the gallery. The renovation of the artist's 833 paintings will continue until July 2010 with facsimiles in their place.

The Millennium Seed Bank celebrated collecting 10% of the world's wild plant species after banking its 24,200th species – a pink, wild banana from China which is an important staple for wild Asian elephants.

Dr Paul Smith, Head of Kew's Millennium Seed Bank partnership said: “Banking 10 per cent of the world's plants species on time and under budget is a major achievement and we have very good reason to be proud. However, there is much left to be done”.

“Kew’s Millennium Seed Bank is not a doomsday vault where seeds are stored under lock and key – our mission is to use these seeds to support conservation and improve people's lives. Most of the collections are available for research and over a third have a known use to people. This is very much what the next phase of Kew’s Millennium Seed Bank partnership is all about.”

The MSB now aims to collect and bank a quarter of the world's plants by 2020.

### **November: Trust in Trustees**

Marcus Agius was appointed as the new Chairman of RBG, Kew Trustees, replacing Lord Selbourne. He is Group Chairman of Barclays PLC and a Senior Independent Director of the BBC. Three trustees have also been appointed. Dr Geoffrey Hawtin is an expert in the conservation and utilisation of plant genetic resources and the founding director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust and currently the Trust’s Senior Advisor. Professor Nicola Spence is Chief Scientist at the Food and Environment Research Agency and was previously Head of Plant Health at the Central Science Laboratory. Sir Ferrers Vyvyan is owner and manager of Trelowarren Estate and Chairman of the Royal Institution of Cornwall (RIC), a Learned Society that owns and runs the Royal Cornwall Museum.

### **December: New science and species**

A new role leading Kew’s recently established restoration ecology section has been created. Dr Bruce Pavlik has been appointed Head of Restoration Ecology.

Restoration ecology is a relatively new science focussed on repairing and reinstating damaged or destroyed wild vegetation. Restoring the world's plant cover is critical for moderating climate change, reducing global warming and averting extinction of plants and animals. It is also vital for enhancing the future options and quality of human life.

Dr Pavlik is currently professor at Mills College, California and has an international reputation in restoration ecology. He visited the UK in November 2009 to initiate the new phase of restoration ecology at Kew, and will join the organisation fully in June 2010.

And the year was wrapped up neatly as Kew botanists announced they had discovered over 250 new species in the anniversary year. The species never described before included

giant rainforest trees, rare and beautiful orchids, spectacular palms, minute fungi, wild coffees and an ancient aquatic plant.

They were found in many different countries including Brazil, Cameroon, East Africa, Madagascar, Borneo and New Guinea. Nearly a third are believed to be in danger of extinction. Kew director Professor Stephen Hopper highlighted that this work has never been more relevant and pressing than in the current era of global climate change and unprecedented loss of biodiversity.

## WAKEHURST 2009 – AFTER THE CREDIT CRUNCH THE STAYCATION IS CREATED

by David Hardman

Reflecting over the last 12 months progress at Wakehurst I started by looking back over my previous report for 2008 which introduced readers to the term “credit crunch” following the disasters created in the world of banking and financial services. Added to this the wet season had seen visitor numbers decline so it appeared to have been a year when uncertainty was in the ascendency. I had left readers pondering what we might have to look forward to?

Now 12 months on 2009 was not all doom, gloom and disaster. In fact it was quite the opposite – many challenges were taken on, and we succeeded. The world has moved on and through the year we have celebrated the **250th Anniversary of Kew** and the success of achieving the **Millennium Seedbank Project (MSBP)** targets. In the garden several notable projects have been completed and we have made improvements in many areas so it was back to business as normal.

### Garden Development Projects

**A new yew hedge planted** (see photos right). On a cold and misty February morning staff from the Arboricultural and Logistics units joined up with the Gardens unit to set about the removal of the old yew and *Thuja* trees that made up the “hedge” on the south eastern side of the Mansion. Originally agreed as part of the Landscape plan in 1998, removal had been held off but the time had arrived for something needing to



From top: original yew hedge – before; during removal; new hedge planted – after.

be done. Within the day all the trees had been felled and the stumps ground out.

Interestingly once the position of the trunks could be clearly seen it became obvious that the yew trees had never been planted as a hedge but were a cluster of trees that had been shaped to give that impression. Paving to the west side was repaired and a windbreak fence installed. Finally a completely new yew hedge was planted, this will be carefully pruned over the coming years to allow it to fill out and reach the desired height, making access and maintenance easier in future. The ground works to create a new path on the east side were completed when a contractor installed the kerb and topcoat surface to the improved wider pathway.

### **Garden developments**

Below I am pleased to report on just some of the other major projects undertaken around the garden this year. At the Himalayan Glade viewpoint a new chestnut post and rail fence was installed to replace the old Francis Rose Reserve interpretation material. On the west side of the **Himalayan Glade** the *Berberis* was pruned so that a new post and rail fence could be erected to enclose a new viewing area. Once opened, visitors were provided with new views of Westwood Valley. To complete the project nearby a rotten stump was removed and steps rebuilt near the viewpoint to allow visitors easier and safer access into the Glade area.

The **Monocot border** project continued with debris excavated and removed, compost was then incorporated into the bed base then re-soiled to eliminate the invasive *Alstroemeria* that had invaded this bed. Close by some 5,000 *Cyclamen hederifolium* were planted in the **Kangaroo Pen** amongst the replanted National *Skimmia* collection.

The **Yew Tree bed** was replanted in August with New Zealand plants, greatly improving our displays for this region and a protective post and rail fence installed around the yew tree in the Southern Hemisphere Garden. The pruning of this large tree has captured the imagination as the branches pose an interesting shape for visitors to enjoy.

Restoration continued on the **Rock Walk** in the Wakehurst and Chiddingly Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest which is a nationally important refuge for rare mosses and ferns. Invasive rhododendrons are being removed from the walk by the Woodland unit, allowing more light to get through to enable the rare plants to flourish as part of an ongoing Wildlife Enhancement Scheme agreed by Natural England.

My desire to recreate the “feeling” of being in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales came closer to being realised when we planted a grove of Wollemi pines (*Wollemia nobilis*) in Coates Wood. I look forward to watching them develop into an interesting analogue of their habitat set against the sandstone outcrops at Wakehurst.

A **new hedge** of *Carpinus betulus* was planted to the east of the Visitor centre and a post and rail fence erected at the base of the slope near the garden entrance picnic site. To hold the attention of children and adults several outdoor children’s games were purchased for

trial here and on the Chapel lawn. Evaluation of these games found them to be a successful and useful addition to the Wakehurst visit.

The less ornament but no less important “unseen” essential heavier work saw the Garden and Logistics team repair the culvert in **Tunis bay** so water flowing through the Slips should be continuous, unless, of course, there is a power cut to the pump house! In the Water garden additional drainage and path resurfacing was also completed. Finally the long-term leak on the water system between the Black Pond and Iris Dell was fixed and a repair made to the silt trap by the Ditch Beds.

Whilst on the subject of drainage work some of the **wartime relics** found during the Top Pond excavations last year attracted great interest with Dave Marchant regaling stories of his boyhood memories which provided some excellent media coverage.

### **Visitor numbers**

Out of the gloom of 2008 I am pleased to report that visitor numbers during 2009 were the second highest ever recorded, up 3% on 2008 with 456,260 people enjoying the beauty and diversity of the botanic gardens. Other interesting statistics showed April was the 2<sup>nd</sup> busiest month ever, other record breaking months included August (47,316) and October (47,655) thanks in part to the impact of the ‘staycation’ with more people holidaying at home, a series of special events to mark Kew’s 250th anniversary, and visits to enjoy autumn colours. We also received excellent results for **visitor satisfaction** measured by the National Trust surveys with **Very Enjoyable at 80%** this is a significant improvement on last year and is 11% ahead of the national average.

### **Meadows exhibition**

An exhibition, held to mark Kew’s 250th anniversary, highlighted the role of Wakehurst staff in helping to preserve wildflower meadows. A programme of special events linked to this exhibition so that visitors enjoyed seeing heavy horses on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August in action in Bloomers Valley for the first time in half a century. The Central Sussex Beekeeping Association provided opportunities to talk to their experts and learn all about keeping bees; in July the Spinners Guild demonstrated traditional spinning and dyeing techniques using fleece from the Wakehurst sheep, and then see how we make hay at Wakehurst Place and learn why haymaking is such a vital process in managing flower rich meadows.

### **Events in the garden**

The traditional range of events were again held including the Spring and Autumn Colour weekends with their associated walks and tours, the popular Big Draw and a new initiative in the garden saw the first Thinking Walk - Plant Spy tested out.

The first International Garden Photographer exhibition above the Slips opened in 2008 and closed on February 22<sup>nd</sup> it was considered to have been successful and attracted a lot of interest. A new display was installed in October to run until February 2010.

Wakehurst's Learning Team helped to inspire 10,000 children on school visits. They were also instrumental in Kew developing a national science project to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, which saw a treasure chest containing a mini seed bank sent to every state primary school in the UK. Called the Great Plant Hunt it proved to be a great success.

### **A premises licence**

This was granted to Wakehurst by Mid Sussex District Council. This licence transfers the responsibility for the sale of alcohol from Co. of Cooks to Wakehurst's Dedicated Premises Supervisor. The licence covers all public entertainment at Wakehurst and grants permission for up to 6 major outdoor events – subject to the approval of a noise management plan for each event (the carol concert is exempt from a noise management plan). The licence is site-based and covers all of the major buildings, the parkland and the upper part of the gardens. Planning commenced for a 3 day concert series at Wakehurst in June 2010.

### **Chilean expedition**

Jo Wenham (Nursery Manager) and Chris Stubbings (Gardens unit horticulturist) returned from a successful expedition to Chile collecting 95 different accessions of which 30 were for the MSBP. Collections included *Araucaria araucana*, *Fitzroya cupressoides*, *Crinodendron hookerianum*, *Prumnopitys andina*, *Podocarpus nubigenus*, *Amomyrtus meli*, *Luma* and the very rare and unusual yellow form of the Chilean fire bush, *Embothrium coccineum* var. *luteum*.

Over 150 Monkey puzzle trees (*Araucaria araucana*) were sown in the Nursery – ready for the next grove! The first seeds germinated 2 months after sowing.

### **Environmental Stewardship**

A great deal of research was completed to find out whether Wakehurst could apply for Environmental Stewardship funding and what might be considered appropriate. Defra approved our eligibility for funding via the National Trust and the Consultative Panel agreed the recommendations including a Conservation Management Plan for the Mansion and an application for Environmental Stewardship.

### **Millennium Seed Bank target achieved**

A huge achievement was marked in October when Kew's Millennium Seed Bank Project celebrated collecting, banking and conserving 10% of the world's wild plant species. Representatives from partner organisations around the world took part in a ceremony as the 24,200th species was banked. A large celebratory 10% figure was mown out in the meadow next to the Seedbank by the Horticultural team; this could be seen on a monitor showing live pictures of the area. Now the Seed Bank is aiming to conserve a quarter of the world's plant species by 2020 – a further 45,000 species – to use for the benefit of people and the environment.

## Research

Wakehurst was requested to be one of only two research sites for Project 2 of the University of Sussex Plan for Bee Health and Well Being – decoding the waggle dance. This should prove to be an exciting project which will enable us to promote and inform visitors about the complexities and challenges in the life of a bee.

## Kew Review

The Defra review team, chaired by Sir Neil Chalmers, visited as part of its fact-finding programme, the initial feedback about the work and achievements of Wakehurst and the MSBP was positive. We now wait to receive the results which will be placed before parliament early in 2010.

## Adverse weather

Our winter challenge as ever is keeping the garden open, we achieved this every day except on one occasion in February and then in December we had to admit defeat and cancel the Carol concert around our giant Christmas tree due to deep snow and black ice across all areas of the site. All was not lost though as we featured well on BBC Countryfile which gave an excellent profile about lighting the Christmas tree and the work of the MSBP.

In conclusion 2009 has been very successful we saw our visitor numbers recover, we learnt the new word “staycation” and the credit crunch had impact on everybody in some way but our “bank” achieved all its goals and Kew’s 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated at Wakehurst. The Horticultural team ensured that the garden continued to flourish with new things to see and do.

We now start preparing for 2010 the United Nations **International Year of Biodiversity**, Wakehurst will be supporting this with an exhibition celebrating and promoting biodiversity.



This is what it was like at Kew !

© Richard Ward

## Weather at Wakehurst Place, January to December 2009

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals Cal. year
<b>Month's total rainfall (mm)</b>	<b>123.0</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>65.1</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>230.1</b>	<b>136.3</b>	<b>960.2</b>
Comp 2008	129.5	28.6	112.7	74.0	93.0	47.2	99.2	95.5	74.4	80.7	127.2	67.3	1029.3
2007	80.3	126.4	59.1	5.8	96.3	122.5	125.9	59.7	31.1	49.9	82.9	78.5	918.4
2006	23.9	67.4	65.9	68.7	112.8	23.9	22.9	73.4	73.2	142.5	87.5	142.5	904.6
2005	49.6	29	57.5	36.8	37.4	18.1	72.2	53.6	30.6	109.6	63.6	53.6	611.6
2004	125.8	33	44.3	81.7	44.8	28.6	61.3	97.9	26	145.2	34.9	67.3	790.8
2003	114.1	37.6	18.9	37.3	54.3	38.0	87.0	47.9	6.6	51.8	141.1	94.0	728.6
2002	102.9	109.9	56.8	41.3	139.3	61.1	83.6	47.4	39.3	83.0	186.2	168.7	1120
2001	129.9	123.5	119.8	85.0	32.4	15.6	53.1	99.9	102.5	159.3	40.7	28.3	989.5
2000	35.9	83.0	22.5	123.9	120.1	14.9	47.5	38.6	137.3	288.7	222.0	202.5	1336.9
<b>Rainiest day (mm)</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> 20.6	9 <sup>th</sup> 36.4	3 <sup>rd</sup> 19.2	17 <sup>th</sup> 11.9	14 <sup>th</sup> 25.7	5 <sup>th</sup> 0.8	16 <sup>th</sup> 17.3	6 <sup>th</sup> 15	2 <sup>nd</sup> 14.3	7 <sup>th</sup> 28.0	12 <sup>th</sup> 35.1	5 <sup>th</sup> 17.8	
<b>Rainless days</b>	8	8	15	13	18	21	8	17	21	8	1	5	
<b>Highest Max Temp</b>	9.9°C 26 <sup>th</sup>	15.0°C 27 <sup>th</sup>	18.6°C 18 <sup>th</sup>	22.7°C 15 <sup>th</sup>	27.8°C 24 <sup>th</sup>	33.4°C 30 <sup>th</sup>	32.4°C 2 <sup>nd</sup>	31.9°C 6 <sup>th</sup>	25.5°C 19 <sup>th</sup>	18.9°C 29 <sup>th</sup>	14.4°C 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.9°C 9 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>Lowest Max Temp:</b>	-0.2°C 4 <sup>th</sup>	-1°C 2 <sup>nd</sup>	6.9°C 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9.5°C 17 <sup>th</sup>	12.6°C 7 <sup>th</sup>	16.7°C 5 <sup>th</sup>	17.2°C 19 <sup>th</sup>	17.5°C 30 <sup>th</sup>	15.4°C 13 <sup>th</sup>	9.6°C 17 <sup>th</sup>	4.4°C 30 <sup>th</sup>	-0.4°C 18 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>Highest Min Temp:</b>	5.6°C 13 <sup>th</sup>	6.0°C 25 <sup>th</sup>	6.7°C 12 <sup>th</sup>	9.1°C 12 <sup>th</sup>	10.3°C 31 <sup>st</sup>	14.5°C 29 <sup>th</sup>	15.6°C 3 <sup>rd</sup>	15.3°C 6 <sup>th</sup>	15.1°C 8 <sup>th</sup>	12.4°C 7 <sup>th</sup>	10.1°C 19 <sup>th</sup> &20 <sup>th</sup>	7.2°C 6 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>Lowest Min Temp</b>	-10.0°C 10 <sup>th</sup>	-4.8°C 2 <sup>nd</sup>	-2.5°C 29 <sup>th</sup>	1.2°C 28 <sup>th</sup>	1.1°C 4 <sup>th</sup>	4.3°C 8 <sup>th</sup>	7.5°C 10 <sup>th</sup>	6.6°C 29 <sup>th</sup>	6.7°C 10 <sup>th</sup>	1.0°C 18 <sup>th</sup>	-0.2°C 10 <sup>th</sup>	-6.3°C 16 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>Nights – air temp below freezing</b>	17	14	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	18	
<b>Windiest day</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> SW 28mph	10 <sup>th</sup> NW 22mph	4 <sup>th</sup> NW 29mph	2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 <sup>th</sup> NNE W 19mph	18 <sup>th</sup> SW 25mph	1 <sup>st</sup> NNE 16mph	20 <sup>th</sup> WSW 19mph	29 <sup>th</sup> W 20mph	3 <sup>rd</sup> NNW 22mph	4 <sup>th</sup> NNW 26 <sup>th</sup> 15mph	15 <sup>th</sup> SSW 26mph	15 <sup>th</sup> SSW 26mph	

## KATHERINE OF ARAGON

by Graham Burgess

It was nineteen years since I decided to have a go at the first Hampton Court Palace International Flower Show. I had done the Sunday Times Garden at Chelsea the year before and knew there might be some risk to my doing Chelsea as the Hampton Court show was initiated by Adrian Boyd, not the RHS.

I was located a spot in the centre of one of the main avenues and started my research for my symbolic garden of The Devas. It was then I discovered that Hampton Court's Long Water is positioned according to the sunrise at the summer solstice. The next year I asked to do another and requested a position on the line that equally divides the two key avenues and there I built another symbolic garden this time celebrating the Sun. Richard Ward helped on that one. None of these earned money but then I had plenty. Christian Aid then collared me and my 1992 garden there was seen by 1 billion people worldwide. Then began years of doing show gardens for them everywhere, back to Chelsea, Hampton Court and Birmingham.

Finally I gave up on the shows until in 2009 the RHS invited me to do one of the Six Wives of Henry VIII, the Katharine of Aragon Garden. It turned out to be a magical project and all arising from my seeking to plug into Katharine as a client. She was a highly intelligent and educated woman so the garden was full of the sorts of symbolism extant at that time amongst the thinking classes. I discovered exciting things about the railings around Hampton Court. The garden got high TV coverage yet it was designed to be a garden that showed various things one could do with various landscape materials without being a Show Garden. Our residual waste was one bucketful, yet the many skips at the show were full of perfectly good re-useable materials. We are in a time when sustainability is important and the amount that this country buries in waste tips is massive compared with some of our continental neighbours.

I handed out 9960 special cards and we appeared on TV and my next door neighbour who did Anne Boleyn did similar promotions. Due to the pressing economic climate neither of us has had a single enquiry. My objective was again not to make a monetary profit as it was a symbolic journey. My client was an earlier Queen and I have had a really nice letter from our current Queen.

As ever one researches and one very interesting new possibility emerged, there was an alignment of the inner planets on the day of her death. I believe she chose that fortuitous day in the same way a similar alignment was celebrated when Decimus Burton did his work designing the Palm House layout. Our garden was exactly on the eastern alignment.

An ancient Greek concept *rematio* (returning) refers to one being able to learn new things by returning. Churchill said "The further you look back, the further forward you can see".

A more recent project has caused me to return to Decimus and a rather weird thought has arisen. This is that Decimus had a plan for the Palm House before Turner's plan proposed by Curator Smith arrived and caused him to have a re-think. Rather than throw the plan away I suspect the powers-that-be said "We will build it Decimus, but we will call it The Temperate House". So that rather large building with a ground plan almost identical to that of The Palm House was placed in a very un-symbolic location, unlike The Palm House, part way down the Pagoda Vista some years later.

Everything is connected.

If you want to see a bit more of the garden, look at the website  
[www.artscapesdesign.co.uk](http://www.artscapesdesign.co.uk)

## PLANT COLLECTING FOR KEW

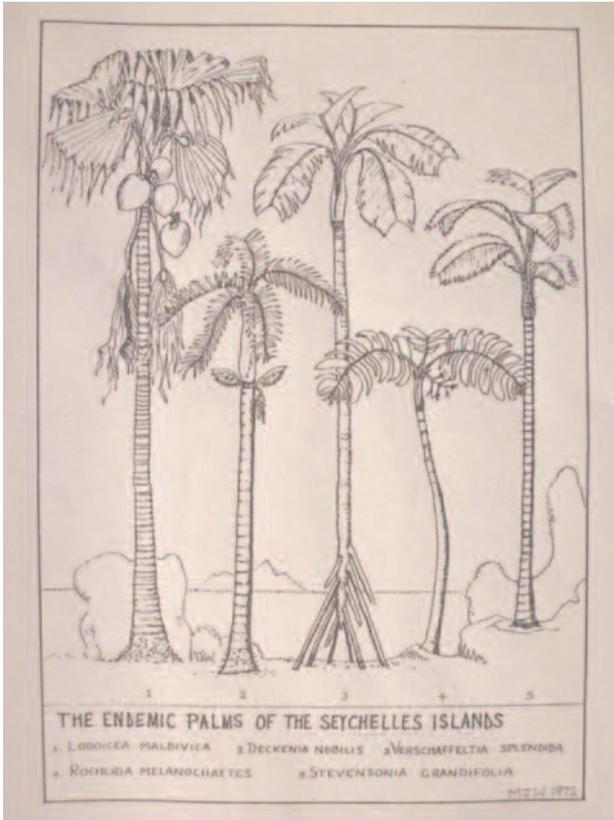
by M John Whitehead

The 250 historical botanical years of Kew were celebrated in 2009 and for me now, marks 40 years since 1969, when man walked on the moon, the jumbo jet, and supersonic concord first flew, and I landed at Kew with an arboreal background and a nickname of 'Log'.

Kew soon became my botanical launch pad, fuelled by instant access where the wealth of the World's Flora was available in one place and the fascination of information on plant labelling and the intrigue into their potential stories. Resulting from a number of travel awards and a collector's licence, many of my MJW or WHHD labelled natural source trees and especially the conifers have now grown up like green rocket ships in prominent areas at Kew.

During my first year I collected an interesting succulent sub shrubby composite *Othonna cheirifolia* in Tunisia. In 1970, fellow student David Trevan and I won the first Alpine Garden Society Travel Award of £40. We had advice on a potential study area from Oleg Polunin and our helpful herbarium heroes, Brian Mathew, David Philcox and Christopher Grey-Wilson. Bravely we drove in my little Hillman Imp all the way to Macedonia. Our favourite mountain was Mt Pelister, home of the Macedonian Pine and we found *Bruckenthalia spiculifolia* in flower (now included in *Erica*).

Tropical travel was inspired by exotic plant lectures from John Simmons and Kew Mutual Improvement Society speakers of note, such as Nigel Hepper, on his adventurous botanical journey by hovercraft across Lake Chad. Visiting International speakers included the renowned Brazilian tropical landscape designer Roberto Burle Marx. In 1972 the award of the Ernest Thornton-Smith Travel Scholarship paved the way for me, in collecting four seeds which cost £90 to send back to Kew from the Seychelles. They were the world's botanical heavyweight seed, the endemic double coconut (see John's sketch, page 435). Malcolm Leppard from the Zimbabwe Botanic Garden joined part of my



adventure which included using the Kew Gardens Toyota Land cruiser, based in Nairobi Botanic Garden. Virtually on the equator, we drove up through the ever changing amazing vegetation zones on Mt Kenya, the distant view of the snow clad peak gave way to fog and numerous tall silhouettes of dendroid alpinines and perhaps the occasional visiting leopard, when we finally realised that we should have had a compass and hire a local guide. On the way down I strapped an impressive fungus in the plant press, only to find the next day that it had gone, leaving just an outline of the toadstool and a mass of maggots on the paper!

On reaching Chile in 1973 the experience of bullets zinging through the streets of

Santiago and the untimely death of President Allende necessitated an escape over the Andes by train (the track now abandoned), helped by Professor Carlos Munoz and the evolutionist from California, Professor Ledyard Stebbins (who was researching the genus *Colliguaja*). My collection of the evergreen Chilean Soapbark tree *Quillaja saponaria*, growing in the Temperate House at Kew, is an example of where visitors may glance at a label on a specimen and be unaware of the often dramatic stories associated with the plant's introduction.

In 1977 the seed of a Himalayan Pine collected from the forest below Namche Bazar on route to Mt Everest now grows near the rock garden at Kew. At Easter time in 1978 a visit to China provided an opportunity to collect *Forsythia suspensa* near the Ming Tombs and *Koelreuteria* from the wooded hill above the lake of the Summer Palace. During my return via Iran I was able to select an interesting ivy which I named 'Persian Carpet', the name having similarities with the plant which was very hairy and covered the ground and a wall in a public park in Tehran. I had raised 'Lombardy Gold' a golden clone of the Lombardy Poplar which blew over in the colour clump at Kew during the hurricane force winds of 1987. After a desperate phone call, I drove a minibus full of arboricultural

students from Merrist Wood to Kew and we triple staked and strapped the poplar upright. We followed that by a monster job in Hampshire winching back the Selborne Yew tree and taking clonal cuttings. An expedition in 1979 to the Central Asian areas of the old USSR included the introduction of the Tadjick Juniper and *Betula tianchanica*, the latter of which can be found growing in the Betula collection. Arboricultivators, namely Stewart Henchie and Tony Kirkham have, over the years, managed the tree collections at Kew, and by keeping an arborists eye on my trees, have resulted in many fine specimens. Impressive cedars can be found near the Palm House and Orangery. Specimens of the Turkish Cedar, the *stenocoma* (narrow) form, grow on a site near the elm collection. The rare Moroccan Fir is situated opposite the entrance of the Princess of Wales glasshouse. Located between the Palm House and Victoria Gate is the Algerian Fir (similar to the specimen below at Surrey University with Eric Leigh in 2008, photographed by Noelle



Leigh), which Barry Phillips and I collected on Mt Barbor. The seeds were easily spotted, spread like confetti on a fresh layer of snow, where possibly Nutcracker birds or Barbary Apes had dislodged the seed from disintegrating cones high up in the crowns of the firs and cedars.

My involvement in 1977 with conservation of *Juniperus bermudiana* in Bermuda was priority work with Barry Phillips (Kew student 1969) and his former wife Christine Phillips-Watlington, a botanical artist who had worked at Kew, has designed tropical stamps, and illustrated the whole flora in her aptly named book Bermuda's Botanical Wonderland, published in 1996. For seven years in the 1980's, during our summer months, I was leading trekking groups in the Andes. Compiling habitat notes was

difficult at high altitude due to lack of oxygen, and the survival of collected plants and seeds were subjected in transit to Antarctic nights and tropical days in the high passes of the world's highest tropical mountains of Peru. I was lucky in collecting the seeds of the monocarpic gigantic alpine *Puya raimondii*. Brian Halliwell and his propagators at Kew had a difficult time growing the Giant Buttercup *Laccopatalum giganteum* and the limited time factor tested the skills of the botanical artist Jenny Brasier when she successfully completed an illustration of the large fleshy herbarium specimen, before I took the plant in a black bin bag to be accessioned by Jim Keesing where it became possibly the first plant exposed to microwave treatment at Kew. The half hardy shrub *Ferreyranthus excelsus* from the foothills of the Andes, still after many trials, has not survived growing outside in our garden during the winters in North Wales.

The Oleg Polunin Award and a number of Iris Darnton Foundation scholarships partly funded more expeditions until stopping in the 1990's with global changes in permits and ethics of collecting wild plants. Botanical travel continued with adventurous exploration and one kitbag of essential sketch book, measuring tape, camera, video and a hobby of

drawing plant cartoons on postcards and sending them from far flung places with posh stamps. David Ridgway, a fellow lecturer from Merrist Wood College near Guildford, often joined me in visiting many exotic sounding destinations such as Djibouti and Socotra. David, and a life long friend Margaret Davis, shared an amazing experience when we saw the giant *Rafflesia* in flower in Sabah. The summit of Mt Kinabalu was first climbed by my namesake, the naturalist John Whitehead in 1888 and we celebrated 100 years later by climbing to the top of that mountain in 1988.

## **BLUE PLAQUE**

by Allan Hart

Talking to our neighbours Joan and Dr. Harold Lambert, who have been volunteers in the Herbarium for some years, they said that they had carried out research as to the whereabouts of William Hooker's first dwelling in Kew when he arrived in 1841, and which became the original home of the Kew Herbarium. The location of the house 'West Hall' is close to West Park Avenue. (It is hoped to publish a full account of the Lamberts' search in the next edition of the Journal).

This find prompted me to contact English Heritage to see if this historic connection would warrant commemoration with a Blue Plaque. It transpired that Sir William had already been proposed and that he was on a short list. NB – People have to be dead for a minimum of twenty years, so why the delay with Sir William?! It was suggested that Sir Joseph Hooker should also be commemorated, but English Heritage seemed to know little about him.

At the AGM Sir Peter Crane undertook to send full details of Sir Joseph's career to English Heritage and as a result it was decided that it would be more appropriate to include him with Sir William and to locate a Blue Plaque to them both on the Director's house at Kew – a more public place than West Hall. The wheels are in motion and we await a date for the installation and unveiling.

## **A 'BOY' AT KEW IN WAR-TIME**

by Eric Curtis

It was friends of my family who put me on to the idea of going to work at Kew when I left school. They knew William Dallimore, a founder of the Kew Guild and noted for his book on 'The Pruning of Trees and Shrubs'. I credit him for the inspiration although I never met him. However, years later, when I was editing the Kew Guild Journal, the Curator, William 'Big Bill' Campbell, handed me a large folder of Dallimore's memoirs, proposing that I edit them for publishing in the Journal. Two parts of these duly appeared, and when I then left to take on the job of Curator of Glasgow Botanic Gardens, I did correspond with him.

During my last year at school the need to settle on an idea of a career came to the fore. Around me in suburban London it was the norm to work in an office 'up in town'. Gents with bowler hats and rolled umbrellas walked to the nearby station and travelled by train to work. The idea did not appeal! I kept my own allotment to 'Dig for Victory' and had started a 'nature club' at school. My thoughts were that I should go to the Colonies and work for the people of our great Empire, perhaps becoming the curator of a tropical botanic garden. Kew was then *the* place to go to train for this.

The next step was to go with my father one Saturday morning for an interview with the Curator. Mr Campbell strongly discouraged me, saying he would not let a son of his start his career as a 'boy' at Kew. However, if I persisted, he would be able to take me on as a garden boy when I left school in the summer. The idea would be to stay at Kew until I was called up for military service and then after that look out for another post for a couple of years before applying to return to Kew as a Student Gardener.

As work started at 6.30am I needed to get 'digs' near-by. There seemed to be very few places then except for an advert in a newsagent offering accommodation 'for a business gentleman'. This did not seem to be my 'category' but we followed it up. Mrs Marsh, at 41 Gloucester Road, was willing to stretch the point. To maintain the illusion she always called me 'Mr Curtis' which quite delighted me! The terms were: bed, breakfast and evening meal at 30/- (£1.50) a week. I thought this very expensive as it would take up almost all my pay, so my father gave me £1 a week. (During my 13 months at Kew a wage increase allowed me to stand on my own two feet).

I started in late August, just before my 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. I was to work in the Tropical Pits, but as Mr Lou Stenning, the Assistant Curator in charge of the Tropical Department, was away that day I was taken to the Orchid department. John Blowers (later editor of the Orchid Review) was in charge. He set me on scrubbing algae off the pots; I was horrified when a small piece fell off a *Dendrobium kingeanum*, but was relieved when he suggested I take it home – I kept it for many years.

The next day I met Mr Stenning who took me to the Tropical Pits. His office was attached to the potting shed. After Harry Ruck, the store man and packer, had issued me with the traditional clogs and apron I started work. Each day for 6.30am we entered the 'Melon Yard' gate and took our numbered brass disc from a large board and threw it into the box to 'clock on'. The board was taken down at 6.30am after which you would have to report as being late.

The Tropical Pits, which serviced the show houses, were a very interesting place to start. They consisted of a large double-sided glasshouse which included a concrete fish tank for water lilies, a long lean-to hot house divided into four sections and two smaller separate glasshouses, each of two sections. Mr Zobel, the foreman, looked after one half of the main glasshouse. A Miss Thompson looked after the other half, while Miss Holyoak took charge of the long lean-to – they were both members of the Women's Land Army. Hugh Hack, who became a good friend, was responsible for the other glasshouses.

My day started with scrubbing terracotta plant pots which had been stacked during the previous day in a large concrete tank. The water was cold, but in the winter I was allowed to take a couple of watering cans full of hot water from a tank in one of the hot houses to take a bit of the chill off. It was quite a rough job on the hands and sometimes drew blood!

One day while I was hard at scrubbing, George Pring – then visiting from the Missouri Botanic Gardens as the President of the Kew Guild – came by and reminisced with me of his days in the Tropical Pits. Little did I realise then that I would become one of his successors in the Guild!

I usually finished the pot scrubbing by 8am when I dashed off to Gloucester Road for breakfast, returning for 8.30am.

On Mondays, when there were no pots to scrub, I prepared ‘crocks’ for the potting of the week ahead. Broken pots were crushed with a beater and passed through a half-inch sieve, and a fine sieve removed the dust. Crocking pots was then regarded as essential; a large piece placed over the drainage hole was followed by a good covering of this specially prepared material. Monday was also the day to get any stores needed from Harry Ruck; any wooden handled tools were then branded with ‘PP’, standing for Propagating Pits.

I then checked whether the bins under the potting benches needed replenishing with loam, peat or sand. One day when collecting sand from near the Curator’s Office, Mr Campbell passed by and said that I should point the barrow in the direction I would be going before filling it – a bit of thought saves energy!

I would spend the rest of the day serving Mr Zobell. He made this interesting for me so that I took cuttings, potted on and mixed compost, as well as watering plants, damping down, attending to the propagating frames and ventilating his section; all under his eagle eye. The day ended with tidying the potting shed, everyone had to make sure their own bench was tidy.

The Tropical Pits serviced the T-Range (now replaced by the Princess of Wales Conservatory) and I carted the plants there in a four-wheeled trolley with a canvas covering. I recall one snowy day sliding merrily along when I had my only encounter with Mr Raffill, Assistant Curator of the Temperate House, a well-known disciplinarian: he shouted across to me “Pick up those feet laddy”. On another occasion I passed Archbishop Lang, then retired and in a wheelchair, and I remember his friendly smile and his fresh pink complexion. Another time, when returning from No 1 (Aroid House) with a plant in one hand and a watering can in the other, Queen Mary passed by and gave me a real royal wave – somewhat surprised and unable to wave back, I gave her a nod. She used to visit Kew every spring to see the bluebells.

A winter’s job I really disliked was collecting leaf-mould from the far end of the Gardens. I took the trolley with a large laundry basket and sieved the leaves on the spot – a nasty job with cold hands. I never understood why this couldn’t be done in the comfort of the potting shed. Much preferable was the trek to the Old Deer Park to collect sheep’s droppings – fine manure for our tropical plants!

On Saturday mornings there was a special ritual. Scrubbing was popular in those days, so the long wooden bench we all sat on to change into our clogs had to be scrubbed with ‘Clensel’ (soft soap and ammonia) each week, along with the lino on the potting shed table which was used to paint the wooden labels prior to writing on them – any paint had first to be scraped off with a pen knife. Mr Stenning’s office had to be cleaned and polished. This is where I learnt the best tip for cleaning windows – using newspaper. At 11.30 Mr Zobell took charge as we all foregathered and set to, scrubbing the floor while

he directed the hose. This practice continued and indeed I carried it on when I became foreman many years later. Another routine scrubbing ritual using 'Clensel' was the winter cleaning of the glasshouses. For this task I was designated to help Hugh Hack. Scrubbing astragals and washing gravel gave ample chance for deep discussions on wide ranging subjects from plants to politics and religion. His charge included the collection of Begonias and my life-long interest in these started there. Today Glasgow Botanic Gardens has the National Collection of Begonias and I am involved as 'trustee for life' with a trust promoting this collection and in post-graduate research scholarships into the genus.

During the winter 1944/45 I studied for the R.H.S. Junior Certificate, either in the Gardens' Library in Descanso House next to the Curator's Office, or in my bedroom in Gloucester Road. The later was most unhealthy as it was heated by a portable gas fire from which the fumes passed into the bedroom.

This was the last year of the war; austerity continued but Lord Woolton, as Minister for Food, had ensured that we all survived on a rationed but healthy and balanced diet. The Nazis still had the power to inflict damage and when one day in the Gardens we heard a big explosion we guessed it was their work. However, at first the rumour was that it was an explosion of a gasometer on the other side of the River Thames, but it later turned out to be the first of Hitler's new 'secret weapon' – the V2 rocket.

I was lucky that the war had ended by the time I reached my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, but as conscription continued I was called up to the R.A.F. and left Kew in October 1945.

## NEWS FROM THE HIMALAYAS 2009

by Udai C. Pradhan

Dear friends old and new, here in the Darjeeling Himalayas it has been a bumpy year with the Gorkhaland agitation for a separate state of Gorkhaland within the Indian Union intensifying to a pitch ([www.darjeelingtimes.com](http://www.darjeelingtimes.com)). Over 10 million Gorkhas living in India have been asking for a state of their own for over a century to identify with and also seek better opportunities in India for the upcoming generations. Life for us has not been quite so easy!

In April 2009 an informal visit by four students, Ben Stokes, Luke Lucas, Luke Barnes and Luke Shackleton of Writhlington High School along with their school master, Simon Pugh Jones and Dr. Lauren Gardiner from Kew as a part of their Sikkim tour for a day to see our Orchid collection was a memorable occasion. The students saw a number of species in bloom – among them flowering specimens of *Paphiopedilum druryi* and *Paphiopedilum hirsutissimum* growing almost naturally on stone walls. Tej (my wife) and Upashana (my daughter-in-law) cooked lunch for them at our Relli nursery and we talked Orchids. Lauren also kindly carried the heavy *Genera Orchidacearum* Part 3 for our library.

Hemlata, after a successful exhibition at the Fine Arts Gallery in Kathmandu, Nepal, went on to be invited to exhibit her works of Indian orchids and other plants at the British

Museum as a part of the Museum's Indian Summer programme. She conducted two successful workshops on botanical illustration which was very well received by the participants. Some of the comments were very touching. During her visit she was also able to present her ideas on her upcoming Himalayan Institute of Natural History Art to members of the Rotary Club of Kew Gardens. She is now preparing for her next exhibition at the newly opened Serindia Gallery in Bangkok ([www.serindiagallery.com](http://www.serindiagallery.com)) towards the end of this year.

In June we lost India's Cactus Surgeon, Tek Bahadur Pradhan, my cousin, at 83, a lifelong friend and mentor, who devised a simple method of grafting Cactii, using bamboo sticks during the early 1950s and helped my parents popularize Cactii and other succulent growing in India. We grew up learning names of this highly interesting group of plants that they helped to propagate and introduce. Tek Bahadur Daju (Daju's elder brother in Nepali/Gorkhali), though not formally educated, was a record angler, an extremely good naturalist and a plantsman par excellence. Besides Cactii and other succulents he could identify nearly all the Himalayan species of Orchids which number some 500 species. He had a wonderful memory till recently and when I jokingly asked him what could be the longest botanical name amongst the Cactii he knew – he promptly replied with an *Echinofossulocactus zacatecasensis* (now *Stenocactus zacatacasensis*)! We will miss him for a long time to come.

The blue colour in flowers has always fascinated human beings – perhaps it is our connection with the eternal sky and the life giving ocean! I still recall my father and Tek Bahadur Daju trying to grow the Blue Amaryllis (*Worsleya rayneri*) in late 1950's – the seeds germinated but failed to do well, much to their disappointment. This remained in the back of my mind and later after returning back from Kew, I once again approached the excellent German seed dealer, Robert Blossfeld of Lubeck, Germany. He was able to send me some seeds in late 1970s along with his growing instructions. The seeds germinated well for us but shifting to new permanent premises in 1982 took its toll. By the time we shifted to Abhijit Villa, we had some 15 plants that were already 3 years old.



In our new premises I found out a corner that looked and felt like its Brazilian home. The corner is a part of a huge rock outcrop with a sizeable place to hold some soil and river pea shingles. The plant simply loved the location, the mild Kalimpong weather and the rather heavy monsoons. Unlike in its home, Brazil, this species flowers with us during June-July, our midsummer. From three plants that were planted



two grew exceedingly well and today forms a magnificent specimen with many babies around it. A picture of the two specimens blooming last July has been an unforgettable experience (see photos on page 441). Introduced to horticulture one and a half century ago by Frances Libon, an intrepid French Orchid collector, the Empress of Brazil as this species is called, has found a permanent home in the Himalayas.

The Amaryllis Family has always fascinated us and like the Cactii and other succulents and Orchids – my early life was intimately woven around those very majestic Royal Dutch Amaryllis Hybrids which my father and cousin helped introduce and commercialise. In fact even before the Orchids, I had made the first inter-generic hybrid between *Hippeastrum* and *Sprekelia formosissima* (The Orchid Amaryllis, Aztec Lily or Jacobean Lily, then considered incompatible) while still in school and when it flowered reported it in the *American Plant Life Magazine* (Vol. Page 26:117 1970 Fig.27). Today it forms a base for breeding Orchid flowered Amaryllis (*Hippeastrelia*) and is becoming widely popular in horticulture for its unique orchid-shaped flowers and vigour.

Conservation of plants in the modern world that we have created must centre around efforts of plant lovers, hunters, and growers everywhere. With the changing climate and problems associated with it, still imperceptible in its magnitude to us, we are losing our plant heritage faster than we can imagine. Every little conservation effort, therefore, wherever it may be, contributes to the whole when we share information and materials.

Aachuk, my grandson, now 10 years old, loves Pleiones and Paphiopedilums and is presently acquiring knowledge of other plants that grow around us together with Liz. Liz the 8 year old Lepcha girl from a remote village in Kalimpong, whom we are sponsoring, goes to the Kalimpong Girl's High School – one of the oldest Scottish Mission Schools in Kalimpong and stood first in her class results for 2009. She is applying herself diligently and learning about plants, improving her English and becoming a very responsible girl.

As the world awakens to the hopefully improving economic situation, may the New Year bring all of you at Kew and the world at large, unforeseen and exciting opportunities in the plant world. May this fascination inspire and lead us to discoveries that can bring about positive changes in our environment and guide human beings towards the common goal of saving our magnificent Planet. If you find time please go through Edward Wilson's *The Future of Life* and invent and rejuvenate yourself with Ekanath Eswaran's *The Undiscovered Country*.

Do continue to spend some hours every week in contemplation and to go within yourselves and experience the peace therein. Tej and all members in the family join me in sending everyone of you in the Kew Guild our profound regards and best wishes. May we get to meet somewhere, sometime in the New Year.

(The Pradhan empire has now established a nursery in Angus, Scotland – see [www.himalayangardens.com](http://www.himalayangardens.com). Ed.)

Photos clockwise from bottom left: Udai with *Worsleya rayneri*, in Kalimpong; Aachuk, Tek Bahadur, Liz and Udai back in their orchid greenhouse; Students studying orchids with Kew's Dr. Lauren Gardiner and Udai in the Himalayas; Hemlata conducting a workshop in botanical art at the British Museum; *Sprekelia formosissima* – The Orchid Amaryllis; Aachuk showing his flowering Pleione hybrid to Udai.



## NEWS OF KEWITES AT HOME AND ABROAD IN 2009

Compiled by F. Nigel Hepper

**Susyn Andrews** and David Mabberley have been appointed honorary Trustees of the National Botanic Garden of Wales.

**Sally Bidgood** has retired and will be sorely missed from regional sorts in the Herbarium as she worked for many years on the African flora of which she acquired a vast knowledge. Sally accompanied numerous collection expeditions in Ethiopia with Ib Friis, and in East Africa with Kaj Vollesen.

**Matthew Biggs** (as well as Ann Swithinbank who also trained at Kew), celebrated Kew's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Gardeners' Question Time on Radio 4 broadcast on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> April 2009.

**Sir Peter Crane**, former Director, during his Kew Guild Presidential year 2008-2009 managed to attend several Guild meetings including the annual dinner, in spite of now living near Chicago. He is as busy as ever and in great demand. In 2009 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Science by the University of Cambridge.

**Jim Emerton** (1973) writes 'I have enjoyed much of the year as feature writer for a magazine and as internet panel 'expert'. One of my initiatives is to launch the Personality of the Decade and my 'racing for beginners' column. For Mensa Magazine one of my abstract concepts is published (that foxed them). I have treasured lovely letters from Robin Bletsoe, quirky and humorous letters from Barry Phillips and graphics from the artistic 'Log' Whitehead. For more see Jim Emerton Pigeons on Google – you will be amazed!'

**Cyril Giles** (1962) has rejoined the Guild and sent a lot of interesting information about himself since he left Kew. He worked in Nyasaland (now Malawi), Sabah (North Borneo), Aden (now Yemen), Malta, Gibraltar and Spain. In Nyasaland he worked with John Foster (ex-Kew student) in a government experimental station and then with African farmers. In preparation for the Queen Mother's visit he had to refurbish a large 10-acre garden for the VIP's garden party. As there was no water available he had to bring 10-gallon drums in by bullock cart in order to water the new plantings. It turned out to be a great success. In Sabah he met another Kewite, Jimmy Comber (who passed away in 2005, the son of the famous plant collector Harold F. Comber who visited Sabah at that time). While he was there working with various tropical fruits in a rubber plantation, Mr Stenning asked him to collect species orchids and *Nepenthes*, together with Keith Woolliams, also of Kew. He also collected a special dwarf coconut with yellow fruits.

In contrast to the humid tropics Cyril worked in the Aden (Yemen) desert for nearly two years, which was a great challenge. The salt came to the surface and the wind would burn the plants, but he actually established a lawn from sheep droppings! Then to Malta which was extremely short of trees. He became a founder member of The Men of the Trees,

Malta G.C., for which he was awarded a gold medal. During a recent visit to Malta he was gratified to be able to walk into a small wood – best of all he found that the local people were planting more trees. Likewise in Gibraltar there was a shortage of water and trees. He invited a lot of local children to see trees in his nursery garden and to explain their importance.

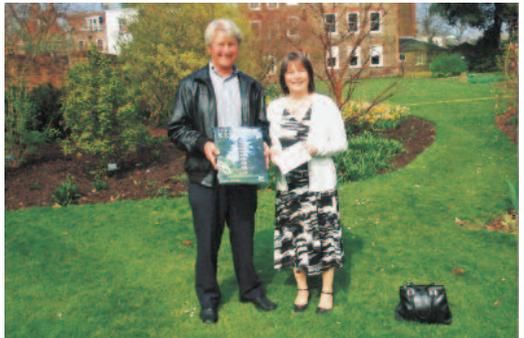
Back home, Cyril has been with two Chelsea gold medal exhibits, and four large gold medal exhibits at Portsmouth and Southern Show; he now judges for Alton Horticultural Society and in the south west.

**Aljos Farjohn**, retired Herbarium taxonomist specializing on conifers, has now published *A Natural History of Conifers* (Timber Press) aimed at a general readership. With no more than 630 species worldwide, conifers nevertheless inhabit all terrestrial ecosystems except salt marshes. Richly illustrated with photographs, this book is a good introduction to conifers around the world.

**Peter Green**, former Keeper of the Herbarium, has published with D. Miller, *The Genus Jasminum in Cultivation* (Kew Publishing) as the latest Botanical Magazine Monograph. It details the cultural and horticultural uses of jasmine, its role in perfumery and medicine, cultivation in temperate and tropical gardens, and taxonomy including a key to the cultivated species.

**Allan Hart** (1958) is currently implementing a minimalist design for a garden surrounding a modern house in Richmond, Surrey, on which he is liaising with Tom Wood (1960) for the supply of all the plant material from Oakover Nurseries. Allan spent a considerable amount of time trying to find and re-establish contact with Bob Adams (1959) who had been taken into hospital after suffering a bad fall and had to give up his house due to frailty. Bureaucracy would not give out personal information, as it had to protect the patient's rights of privacy! A paper trail to his good friend David Tomlinson (a former student but not a Guild member) in Canada, finally revealed Bob's new address and telephone number. Bob is well but rather limited in his movements and would welcome letters and calls from fellow Kewites.

Allan presented to Jennifer Alsop, Treasurer of the Kew Guild, a signed copy of Allen Paterson's new book 'The Gardens at Kew' (see photo). This took place in the summer in the Director's newly planted garden and was in appreciation, by the tour members, of her sterling efforts to produce the final accounts for the 2006 USA Kew Guild tour – a considerable achievement from the amount of complicated



documentation. The account for the 2008 Australian tour was, by comparison, a simple matter after the meticulous preparation by Jim and Val Mitchell.

**Stewart Henchie**, Head of Hardy Display Section, Horticulture and Public Experience Department, has been awarded the William Aiton Medal. Mary Gregory of the Jodrell Laboratory was similarly honoured. This is a new medal for exceptional service and the first time it has been awarded.

**Nigel Hepper** celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in the Pat Brenan Suit of the Herbarium, thanks to the Keeper, Prof David Mabberley who kindly welcomed everyone. Some sixty former colleagues and several Kew Guild members arrived following an open invitation. However Alan Titchmarsh said he would have loved to be present, sent his greetings and typically commented “if I don’t want to believe he is 80 I don’t have to!” The Director, Prof. Steve



Nigel and Helen Hepper with former director Ghillean Prance and the present Keeper of the Herbarium, David Mabberley (rt.)

Hopper, introduced the occasion and since he was the seventh director since Nigel was appointed to the Herbarium staff in 1950, Steve had only recently met him and relied on some notes (see photo below). Since Nigel’s retirement twenty years ago to the day, he has published seven books, such as *Plant Hunting for Kew*, *James Bruce and Balugani’s travels in Ethiopia*, *Pehr Forsskal’s collections in Yemen*, *Solanaceae of Egypt*, *Scrophulariaceae of East Africa*, *Bible plants and the Cedar of Lebanon*, as well as floristic reports on Cameroon



The Director, Steve Hopper, left; David Mabberley on his left. Nigel and Helen Hepper, right.

Mountain, Alpes-Maritimes, Bethlehem, and Petersham and East Sheen Commons. His latest publication, however, was launched that morning by the Head of Kew Publishing, Gina Fullalove: it was the second, hard-back edition of *Pharaoh’s Flowers: the botanical treasures of Tutankhamun*, in association with KWS Publishing.

It is impossible to detail the numerous itineraries of the Director, **Professor Stephen Hopper** during 2009. Suffice it to say that in this year of Kew's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary he was very active welcoming many special visitors to Kew, including Her Majesty the Queen on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh have visited Kew on countless occasions over the years but staff still get excited and want to share their passion for plant science, horticulture and conservation with them. A *Ginkgo biloba* was planted by the Queen to mark this special year. VISTA issue 184 published colour pictures of their visit, as well as re-printing an account of their visit (on p. 7) in 1959 to celebrate Kew's Bicentenary, including a photograph of young Sally Brown, George Brown's daughter, presenting a bouquet to her Majesty, with the then Director, Dr George Taylor, looking on.

**Tony Kirkham**, Head of Arboretum and Horticultural Services, who became a TV personality during the BBC programmes on Kew and its trees, has now been awarded one of the Royal Horticultural Society's highest accolades, the RHS Associate of Honour. The AH represents British nationals who have rendered distinguished service to horticulture in the course of their working life. As no more than one hundred people hold the honour at any one time, Tony and his fellow recipients have joined an elite club. Tony became Head of the Arboretum in 2001 and regularly gives lectures and leads seminars. He is an active plant collector, travelling all over the world to collect specimens. He has written several books and updated George E. Brown's classic textbook: *The Pruning of Trees, Shrubs and Conifers*. In his recently published book, *Wilson's China: a Century On*, Tony and co-author Mark Flanagan, retrace the footsteps of the famous plant-collector Ernest 'China' Wilson.

**Barry Phillips** (1973) writes that 2009 has seen a number of 'new doors' opening for international travel. What started as a relaxing sojourn on the beautiful islands of Croatia sailing, swimming and eating evolved into a month-long session of management meetings preparing 4m olives and date palms for transplanting. Sampling the fine Croatian wines they had been joined by a local entrepreneur and two others they agreed to meet the following day. After a stunning sunrise over Zadar they met for lunch and Barry was offered the opportunity of a last major international landscape challenge. He agreed to demonstrate his transplanting skills to a group of assembled Croatian dignitaries, including the mayor, the very next day. What of the relaxing holiday? Anyone who knows Barry well knows that he does not do relaxation. A quick call to UK to his guru or favourite Mensa man **Jim Emerson** it was agreed that they would meet again in Croatia in 2010 with a feasibility plan to assist the development of the new marina and hotel complex. This would involve potential student training programmes in conservation, landscape design and arboriculture, plus the very exciting prospect of developing a new botanical garden on the islands. Barry requests any Kewite who has worked, studied in the Balkans, or indeed has contacts, to get in touch with him on 01647 61515 or bazademon@yahoo.co.uk

**Dr Roger Polhill and Diana** retired several years ago from the Herbarium and moved to Aylsham, Norfolk. **Dr Gerald Wickens and Susan**, both formerly of the Herbarium and

Library, had already retired to Aylsham, but owing to age and ill health they have been admitted recently to local care homes and Roger and Diana have been clearing their house during 2009. They are also dealing with the large collection of zoological books in the possession of **Dr Bernard Verdcourt** who has also entered a care home.

**Nigel Sinnott**, writing to Richard Ward from ‘sizzling Melbourne’, says he has been very busy as a mycologist scanning and reformatting old publications (including Kew Bulletin) containing protologues of new species of fungi described from Australia (and occasionally from New Zealand and New Guinea). The items are out of copyright and are being added to the website of the RBG Melbourne so that the text can be available (for free!) to any mycologist who has an internet connection –

“So, for example, if you want to look up *Corticium cinnabarinum* Masee 1890, described from NSW by the head of mycology at Kew, you will find I have scanned and reformatted the full written description, *including measurements*. One embarrassing detail: when, some decades later, the New Zealander G H Cunningham examined the type specimen of this colourful species of alleged basidiomycete, he found that it was “a daub of red paint”. I’ll take a punt on its being a surveyor’s mark. Masee was rather fond of various hostelries on Kew Green which might explain why he found (and measured) spores on a dab of paint!”

**John (Log) Whitehead** (1972) writes ‘In 2009 we have had five successful visits to far off botanic gardens and hunting for big trees with camera, sketch book and a well worn measuring tape. Luckily our credit cards are now clear after January in Cuba, April in the Caribbean, July in the Black Sea by ship and down through Eastern Europe from Estonia to Istanbul by train during October. The biggest trunk Bren and I measured was 45m around the base of a Silk Cotton tree in Cape Verde Islands in November.’

**Volunteers** can now join the Kew Guild. There was a half-page announcement in VISTA issue 182 dated 31 March 2009 which set out the aims of the Guild, as well as the reasons for joining it. Future issues of this Journal may therefore include some notes on new volunteer members. Further information on how to join please see: [www.kewguild.org.uk/index.htm](http://www.kewguild.org.uk/index.htm)

**Richard Ward** (1963) Journal Advisory Editor, avoided his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday ‘celebrations’ (13<sup>th</sup> December) by flying to Australia for a 2-month holiday in mid-November! Having flown into Cairns he visited the main centres of Darwin, Alice Springs, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. He was joined by his wife Wiena and daughter Sparkle shortly before Christmas in Melbourne and they derived great pleasure in meeting up, and staying, with Julie and Clive Popham, both students at Kew 1961-63, excellent supporters of the Guild tour of Australia in 2008, and exceedingly hospitable to the Wards in December. The final days were spent staying with Val and Jim Mitchell in Manly, North of Sydney (1966) – who were the principal organisers of that Guild tour – and who gave Richard and his family a great welcome shortly after Christmas and a great send-off early in the new year. Kew Guild Fellowship in Australia is thriving!

**John Woodhams** (1995) was awarded Honorary Membership of the British Pteridological Society and received this honour at the Society's AGM held at the University of Manchester last April.

## OBITUARIES

by Graham Burgess

### HORACE EATON

Horace entered Kew as a student on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 1938 leaving a place called Borrowash near Derby. There is still a nursery there. He left Kew in September in 1946 but many of the six years when he was recorded as being at Kew a sign against his name in the records actually showed he was on military service. He was in the Royal Air Force during the war.

On leaving Kew he took up a post at The Royal Horticultural Society's Garden at Wisley in Surrey.

He obviously acquired a high standard of knowledge as we see he was appointed Director at Rosewarne Experimental Station in Cornwall 1<sup>st</sup> January 1962. Rosewarne had a very wide agenda ranging from studies on various cultivars of agricultural and horticultural crops to pesticides and herbicides.

After retirement he stayed in Cornwall for sometime and eventually moved north to Scotland.

He was a Life member of The Guild.

**HARRY H. PARKER** Dip Hort Kew, Dip Hort Notts, NDH, Dip IPRA  
28<sup>th</sup> April 1925 – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009

Harry was born in Nelson and started his career in Horticulture as an apprentice in Blackpool Park Dept. from whence he moved to The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew as a Student Gardener. His 3-year Diploma Course was interrupted by service as RAF crew in WW2. He served with RAF Bomber Command during the Second World War as a warrant officer flying Lancasters. He later transferred to Transport Command flying Dakotas in the Far East.

This was followed by a 2 year Diploma Course at Nottingham University, after which he completed the original course at Kew.

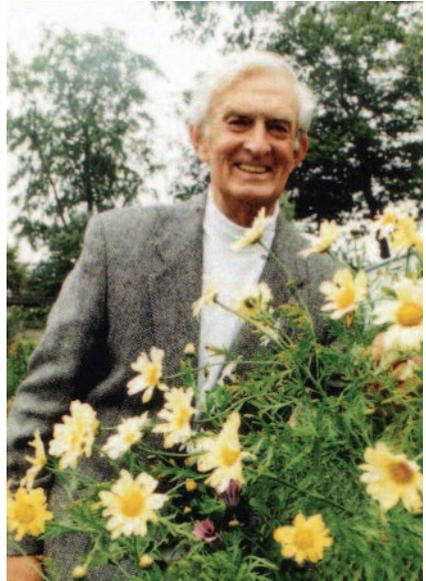
His first step into gainful employment in his chosen career was as Deputy in Clacton-on-Sea to Frank Simmonds, a notable ex-Kewite. During this time he met and married

Muriel. They spent a happy fifty-six years together, having 3 children and 9 grandchildren.

In 1957 they journeyed to Nassau, Bahamas for 3 years. As an Estate manager, Harry gained vast tropical experience and from travels in Jamaica, Mexico, Canada and the USA he gained further knowledge of plants and systems employed.

After returning to the UK Harry spent 3 years in Uxbridge from where, in 1963, he made his final career move to Swansea. Swansea and Wales were to reap the benefit of his extensive knowledge, experience, skill and talents and in the following 42 years; his achievements were endless.

Harry was the founder member of Swansea-in-Bloom and the Swansea Flower Show. He helped establish The Wales-in-Bloom Foundation, for all of which he was a conscientious committee member and judge. He also initiated a successful Apprenticeship Scheme to help maintain both efficient input and continuity. Harry had a strong sense of fair play and staff involvement and was well respected and liked. He re-landscaped and improved artistically an Education Garden, achieving an honoured upgrading to Botanic Gardens. Another area he was particularly proud of was his landscaping of the derelict railway lines from Swansea to Mumbles, replacing them with 3 miles of a beautiful sea-front walk. There was not a green space or park that had not been touched by his creative hand. His talents lay in other areas too: designing a water garden and special railings in Cwmdonkin (the Dylan Thomas Park), children's play equipment, crazy golf courses etc.



His energetic example to create a more beautiful city overflowed and enthused his staff and Swansea won the Wales-in-Bloom City Trophy 12 times in succession as well as many other awards. In 1983 he won the much-prized Britain-in-Bloom City Trophy and, in this year also, appeared on Gardeners' World on BBC2 in Singleton's Botanic Gardens. Harry had put Swansea on the map which resulted in increased tourism. His success inspired other classes of competitors in Wales and to heed his advice and constructive criticism and aim for success, particularly in the Britain-in-Bloom competitions which helped the Principality to numerous well-earned achievements.

Harry was also a well-known and highly respected judge for many years both nationally and internationally. He enjoyed all this time-consuming and demanding voluntary work

and the continuing horticultural link and camaraderie with old Kew student friends and like-minded people right through his years of retirement until he gave most of it up aged 80 due to health problems. Harry received many awards but treasured most the Commendation in the Queen Mother's Birthday Honours List for his outstanding services to Horticulture and the Environment.

He is well remembered and was always referred to affectionately in the local press as 'Green Fingered Harry, the man who made the city bloom'. A Wollemi Pine has been planted in Singleton Botanic Gardens in his memory with a name-slate bearing the words 'The Best'.

Harry was a man of many talents: painting, pottery, geology, golf, tennis, piano and cookery. He had a great sense of humour and was a popular friend, well-loved Husband, Father and Bampi; he is very greatly missed by all and will never be forgotten.

Obituary prepared by Muriel Parker.

### TOM RISELY

Stop Press: We regret to advise that past Guild President Tom Risely passed away on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010. A full obituary will be printed in the next Journal.

## THE KEW GUILD STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	Note	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	ENDOWMENT	TOTAL	TOTAL
		FUNDS	FUNDS	FUNDS	2009	2008
		£	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>						
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>						
Voluntary income:						
Donations and legacies	2	5			5	15
Membership subscriptions		5,685			5,685	5,583
Investment income and deposit interest	3	6,472	6,068		12,540	26,272
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>						
<i>Advancement of horticultural and botanical knowledge</i>						
Events and other membership activities:						
Annual Dinner		3,341			3,341	1,625
AGM Soiree		410			410	117
Other events and income		14			14	-
<i>Encouragement of horticultural and botanical education</i>						
Awards and prizes:						
Donations and legacies	4		1,307		1,307	1,215
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>15,927</b>	<b>7,375</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>23,302</b>	<b>34,827</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>						
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
<i>Advancement of horticultural and botanical knowledge</i>						
Events and membership activities:						
Website project		25,329			25,329	2,082
Archiving project		-			-	-
Journal of The Kew Guild		5,063			5,063	4,730
Annual Dinner		4,012			4,012	2,103
AGM Soiree		232			232	-
Presidents' name bars		-			-	270
Presidents' medals		-			-	-
Other events and membership activities		-			-	5
<i>Encouragement of horticultural and botanical education</i>						
Award making: Awards	5	1,150	6,527		7,677	4,309
Prizes	5	605	16		621	621
Student fellowship		36	-		36	123
Diploma Student Cup		129			129	-
Kew Guild Garden		-			-	11,116
Kew Guild Medal		366			366	365
Governance costs		1,264			1,264	1,017
<b>Total resources expended</b>	6	<b>38,186</b>	<b>6,543</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44,729</b>	<b>26,741</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses</b>						
		(22,259)	832	-	(21,427)	8,086
Other recognised gains and losses:						
Unrealised movements on investment assets	8	1,459	3,646	7,009	12,114	(58,375)
<b>Net movement in funds for the year</b>		<b>(20,800)</b>	<b>4,478</b>	<b>7,009</b>	<b>(9,313)</b>	<b>(50,289)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward as restated	12	361,168	65,334	79,407	505,909	556,198
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	12	<b>340,368</b>	<b>69,812</b>	<b>86,416</b>	<b>496,596</b>	<b>505,909</b>

**THE KEW GUILD BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2009**

	Note	2009		2008	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Investments	8		420,782		168,668
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stock of Kew Guild medals		2,872		3,231	
Debtors	9	3,367		6,474	
Cash at bank and in hand	10	70,872		330,495	
		77,111		340,200	
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	11	(1,297)		(2,959)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			75,814		337,241
<b>Net assets</b>			496,596		505,909
<b>Funds and reserves as restated</b>					
Unrestricted general fund	12		94,995		88,375
Unrestricted designated funds	12		245,373		272,793
Restricted funds	12		69,812		65,334
Endowment funds	12		86,416		79,407
<b>Total funds</b>			496,596		505,909

The financial statements will be approved by The Committee on 19 February 2010 following the completion of the independent examination. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the Guild's financial affairs. For further information the full Annual Report and Financial Statements, including the Auditor's Report, should be consulted. Copies of these can be obtained from Jennifer Alsop, Honorary Treasurer, The Kew Guild, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 3AB.

**RBG STUDENT MEMBERS OF THE KEW GUILD**  
(as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010)

RBG Student	Course Number
Alcock, Robert	47
Allen, Emma	46
Baker, Kelly E.	46
Bancroft, Neil	46
Blyth, Kate	45
Chapman, Alison E.	46
Cox, Mark D.	45
Evans, Jessica C.	45
Feilen, Peter R. R.	47
Haines, Stephen J.	46
Hickey, Timothy P.	47
Hilgenhof, Rebecca	47
Lumb, Alice	47
Merklinger, Felix	45
Miller, Sara L. B.	46
Moore, Guy	46
O'Brien, Stephen, D.	47
Ostley, Philip M.	47
Rees, Paul E. J.	47
Robbins, Joe	45
Rostek, Anne	46
Schuman, Lindsay C.	47
Sleddon, Neil L.	45
Summers, Alexander	46
Walker, Saul P.	47
Williams, Craig E.	46
Wood, Jonathan	45