Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, in Richmond, Virginia, celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, and the Lora M. Robins Library has been a part of the garden since its inception. The nucleus of the collection was contributed by the Richmond Horticulture Society and the Richmond Council of Garden Clubs. This generous impulse has continued to the present day. Gifts, either in-kind or in funds for acquisitions, comprise 45 percent of the collection. In the early days of the garden, the library was located in Bloemendaal House, originally the residence of Miss Grace Arents, a Richmond philanthropist. In 1913 she purchased an abandoned Victorian structure known as the Lakeside Wheel Club and had it remodeled into a two-story Dutch colonial style house. Her intent was to have the house serve as a convalescent center for sick children, but in time this need was superseded. Miss Grace, as she was known, developed an interest in horticulture and traveled extensively, visiting botanical gardens around the world. She imported collections of rare trees and shrubs for her property. The immense ginkgo on the front lawn of Bloemendaal is just one example of the plantings from this time. Miss Arents’ will provided a trust fund to the city of Richmond for the establishment of a botanical garden on the property, named in honor of her uncle, Major Lewis Ginter. Initially the land was used as a nursery to produce trees for the city’s streets, but finally in March 1984, the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden was incorporated as a private nonprofit corporation.

Collection Development and Organization
The garden’s mission statement shows a clear emphasis on education:

“Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden provides education to the community about the plant world, promotes the best in horticulture and landscape design, and works toward the goal of being a leader in botanical and applied horticulture research.”

The library is part of the education department at the garden and the collection reflects the focus of the mission statement. About 10 percent of the 7,000 volumes in the library are children’s books. This includes some fiction as well as books for educators developing children’s programs. Children’s books are classed using the Dewey system, and the fiction receives a classification that matches the botanical subject of the story. For example, *A Busy Year*, Leo Lionni’s charming story about twin mice and a tree named Woody, is classed in 582.16 along with our nonfiction books on trees. This allows our education staff to easily collect all relevant children’s materials on a topic when they are planning a program. All books other than the children’s collection are classed using the Library of Congress system.

*Lora M. Robins Library Celebrates 25th Anniversary*

The Lora M. Robins Library has been part of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden since its inception in 1984.
Hello CBHL,

I always look forward to CBHL's annual meetings and this year is no exception. In celebration of Missouri Botanical Garden's 150th anniversary, we will visit beautiful gardens, the library’s research facilities, rare book collection, and much more. While the location of the CBHL annual meeting changes each year, what remains constant is the opportunity to network with like-minded subject specialists and reconnect with colleagues.

A great way to get to know CBHL members and the organization is to join a CBHL committee. For many of our committees, all it takes to join is to attend a committee meeting at the annual meeting. This year's committee meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, May 12. CBHL committees open to all members are: Publications Committee, Preservation and Access Committee, Public Relations Committee, Electronic Communications Committee, and Membership Committee. More information and descriptions of the committees are on the CBHL Web site, http://www.cbhl.net/about/comm.htm. If you won't be attending the annual meeting, let us know of your interest by sending an e-mail to the committee chair. CBHL committee work is not only rewarding; it also enhances our organization. Please consider joining one or more!

As good fortune and good planning will have it, CBHL doesn’t need a stimulus package. The CBHL board is starting a new initiative to fund committee projects that will benefit all members. Look for more details on this at the annual meeting. Have an idea for something great you’d like to see happen? Connect with a committee and start planning!

Although attendance at our annual meeting may be less than expected due to shrinking travel budgets, the CBHL Listserv, Newsletter, Web site, and wikis will keep CBHL members connected throughout the year.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as president in 2008–2009. It’s been my privilege to do the work of CBHL. Sheila Conner becomes our next President at the annual meeting in St. Louis. I wish her all the best and know she’ll do a great job in leading us forward.

Best regards,
Leora

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**CBHL Board of Directors 2008–2009**

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<th>President</th>
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<td>Leora Siegel</td>
<td>Stanley Johnston</td>
<td>Brian Thompson</td>
<td>Elisabeth C. Miller</td>
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<td>Director, Lenhardt Library</td>
<td>Second Vice-President</td>
<td>Library Manager</td>
<td>University of Washington</td>
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<td>Chicago Botanic Garden</td>
<td>7226 Grant Street</td>
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<td>1000 Lake Cook Road</td>
<td>Mentor, Ohio 44060</td>
<td>P.O. Box 51116</td>
<td>Washington 98115-1116</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glencoe, Illinois 60022</td>
<td><a href="mailto:stanley177@aol.com">stanley177@aol.com</a></td>
<td>Seattle, Washington</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bthomp@u.washington.edu">bthomp@u.washington.edu</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:lsiegel@chicagobotanic.org">lsiegel@chicagobotanic.org</a></td>
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<td>Sheila Connor, First Vice-President</td>
<td>Gayle Bradbeer, Secretary</td>
<td>Katherine Allen, Past President</td>
<td>Andersen Horticultural Library</td>
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<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>3675 Arboretum Drive</td>
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<td>Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts 02130-3500</td>
<td>Denver, Colorado 80204-2095</td>
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<td>Chaska, Minnesota 55318</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:sconnor@arnarb.harvard.edu">sconnor@arnarb.harvard.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:gayle.bradbeer@auraria.edu">gayle.bradbeer@auraria.edu</a></td>
<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kallen@umn.edu">kallen@umn.edu</a></td>
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<td>617-524-1718, Ext. 111</td>
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Editorial

Justifying Our Existence

I can see from the threads of discussion on the e-mail distribution list that we will all have to justify our existences in the near future. The need to do this has been a constant over the course of my career. I don’t know how other people work without having to do it. I’ve kept statistics for 20 years now. Every public interaction has been recorded. Even staff interactions are counted when they become requests for library materials, help, etc. I don’t think anyone else at my institutions kept track of all their public interactions—well, except maybe the information desk folks at Grand Canyon National Park. Even our admissions folks count only their interactions that involve fees or determining membership status.

It is interesting that even though we are in a “recession” and the baby boomers are getting out of the range of years in which they want to garden, my visitors are still growing exponentially. I do count them differently than I did at the beginning of my career. At the beginning of my career I didn’t have any “virtual” customers to count. Now I count visits to the online catalog as well as recipients of my e-mail newsletter. I’m slowly coming to the realization that I need to take a “clicker” to all the special events at which I perform instead of estimating my contacts. When I determinedly use the “clicker” I always talk to more people than I estimate. It has something to do with my internal classification of my interactions. I’m always reluctant to label an interaction as “library related” if I have an established relationship with the person. That reluctance goes away when I have a “clicker” in my hand.

I love to say my customers are growing “exponentially.” I couldn’t say that without my cumulated statistics. I also have gotten better at justifying my budget. I just return to the visceral reality that libraries are good and so are plants. That’s the condensed version. The following is how I flesh it out for the broader audience.

Botanical gardens have had a long history of having a library as a part of the botanic garden. In the past the libraries supported the staff, because the botanists needed to have easy access to the literature of botany in order to move their work forward. In order for a new plant to be named the botanist has to compare it to ones already named. Those plants were recorded in the botanical literature.

Now botanical garden libraries act more broadly. I don’t think most botanical gardens could justify a library that was used only for staff. We now serve a major educational function for the public. Plants give us oxygen, food, clothing, medicine, shelter, fuel, solace, and beauty, so it behooves us to help the public understand plants at whatever level they can. Libraries are good at that, because the materials librarians select can consciously reach all levels of entry. We can appeal to children, adults just learning about plants, those with advanced interests, and those who didn’t even know until today that they might want to understand their relationship to the plant world a little better. We even reach those who don’t know they are interested in plants but enjoy cooking, basketry, or fiction. Libraries are lifelong learning opportunities with a myriad of entry points.

Plants and botanical garden libraries also relate to culturally diverse audiences. Every culture has relationships with plants. The botanical or horticultural library is a good place to explore that. The library is also a place where language does not need to be a barrier. Those items about plants from other places may well be published in the native language of the place. A botanic garden library probably has more materials in foreign languages than a typical public library.

My final point about libraries is that in times of economic hardship we need them even more. They are an excellent example of the broad benefit derived from the appropriate use of public monies. They are a paradigm of how civilization develops a greater good for a community rather than every person having to gather individual resources. While botanical garden libraries don’t carry materials on how to improve your résumé, interviewing skills, or car repair, we freely collect and share materials regarding subjects on which everyone relies. Given our dependence on plants in a shrinking world, I predict that knowledge about the plant world will become a coveted area of expertise in the next 10 to 20 years.

Feel free to use and adapt any of this for your situation.

—Susan C. Eubank
Arboretum Librarian
Los Angeles County Arboretum &
Botanic Garden
Arcadia, California

May-blooming western dogwood (Cornus nuttallii) in the southern Sierra Nevada mountains in California.
An extensive selection of adult education programs is offered, including basic courses in gardening, floral design, botanical illustration, and specialty subjects such as beekeeping. The garden also partners with the University of Richmond’s School of Continuing Studies to offer a professional certificate program in landscape design. Book purchases are focused in the areas of these course offerings and in the areas of our signature gardens, particularly the newly expanded Rose Garden, the Asian Valley, the Children’s Garden, the Flagler Perennial Garden, and the orchid and tropical plant collections in the Conservatory. The library also has a strong collection of books on herbal medicine and medicinal plants to support appreciation of the plant collection in the Healing Garden. The core of this collection was a bequest of Eldridge Longest in 2001. He also established an endowment to allow the library to continue to collect in this area and to upgrade the library’s technology. The Longest Library Endowment permitted us to migrate the catalog from a DOS system to Inmagic®’s DB/Text® product. At that time the collection was barcoded, allowing the circulation system to be automated. Serials records were added as well, allowing for electronic check-in of current issues and automatic monitoring for missing issues. In late 2008 the online catalog was moved to the Web-based Inmagic® Genie software. At that time the library’s catalog and two ancillary databases (Plant & Seed Catalogs, and Artbase) became available on the garden’s Web site, www.lewisginter.org.

Staffing
The library is open seven days a week, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Use of the library is free to members and to all other visitors with garden admission. With the exception of a small rare book collection (226 volumes), some basic reference materials (581 volumes), and a tiny group of large format works (84 volumes), the books circulate to members and staff. In 2008, 1454 loans were recorded. Initially, the library was staffed completely by volunteers. Currently the librarian’s position is part time (20 hours per week). Twenty-four volunteers provide additional staffing to keep the library open on the weekends and to help with all aspects of library work. The garden employs a full time volunteer coordinator who recruits and interviews for all open volunteer positions.

Catherine Smith, a retired science librarian and leader of the initial volunteer group, had the foresight to create an online catalog from the beginning, thereby eliminating the need for the time-consuming conversion projects faced by our colleagues at longer established institutions. Having an online catalog also facilitates the creation of custom bibliographies for the courses being offered through the adult education programs. It is customary for a reading list to be produced for all adult course offerings. The books are then put on display in the classroom or in the library, depending upon the instructor’s preference. The new Web site allows posting of reading lists and reviews as PDF files. We have just begun to take advantage of this feature.

Physical Space
In the fall of 2002, the library was moved from its cramped quarters in Bloemendaal House to a beautiful new home in the Education and Library Complex. The library occupies the central section of this building, flanked by the education offices and classrooms on one side and an auditorium on the other. The large, light-filled main room has a barrel-vaulted ceiling that suggests the architect’s reference to a cathedral of learning. The library contains a cozy reading room with a fireplace and comfortable club chairs. The new space also includes display shelves for current issues of journal subscriptions (79) and provides ample shelf space for increasing the collection. The current configuration allows space for about 10,000 volumes, with vertical expansion possible to double that number. Rare books, archives, and back issues of journals are shelved in the basement of the complex.

Reference
The library is the central point for all gardening questions. The “Hort Helpline” promoted on our Web site is a service of the library. The librarian and volunteers respond to phone, e-mail, and in-person requests. Many requests are
routine questions about pruning, growing conditions, and propagation that can be answered the same day. Some complex questions and plant identifications require more time, especially if the horticulture staff needs to be consulted. Questions about the location of particular plants in the garden are also answered in the library. The Plant Records database is under the administration of the librarian and a dedicated volunteer who inputs new records and engravels labels for the plants. An Excel spreadsheet of plant names and locations is updated weekly and exported to a folder that is accessible garden wide. Because Virginia has an excellent network of agricultural extension agents, the Hort Helpline refers most pest and disease questions to this service.

Non-Book Collections
The library houses 2,500 original watercolor botanical drawings by the artist Alexandre Descubes. This collection was donated by Lora M. Robins. Each piece is approximately 17.5 x 10.5 inches, drawn in pencil and painted in watercolor. Most are signed “A. Descubes” in ink. Thirty-six are dated, with dates ranging from 1875 to 1919. There is extensive botanical information on each sheet. The plants depicted are mostly natives of or were cultivated on the Indian subcontinent in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Artbase database contains basic information for each drawing. The database has a field for digital image files, but at present only 40 of the pieces have been digitized. Based on the research presented at CBHL in June 2007, an entry for Descubes was published in the Dictionary of Mauritian Biography. Research on this artist and collection is continuing.

Going Forward
All of our goals going forward are related to improving the quality of the library experience for our users. For the most part, library displays relate to course offerings or seasonal blooms, but we are hoping to move these in the direction of exhibits that provide more information and connect the garden’s plant and non-plant holdings with current issues in the larger community. We are working toward learning to use our new Web presence to effectively display the extent and variety of the materials that the library offers. We hope to create a set of “best answers/best sources” for the most frequently sought information, so that every Hort Helpline request can be answered more efficiently and with a uniform standard of quality.

As Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and the Lora M. Robins library moves into its second quarter-century, we invite CBHL members to “Come Grow With Us.”

—Maggie Southwick, Librarian
Lora M. Robins Library
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
Richmond, Virginia

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Calendar of Upcoming Events


Book Review


If we needed to mark a pivotal moment in American botany’s coming of age, 1891 would be a reasonable choice. On April 28 of that year, the New York Botanical Garden came into existence, due in large part to the efforts of one man, the first director of NYBG, Nathaniel Lord Britton.

As the story goes, the inspiration came from Britton’s wife, Elizabeth Gertrude Knight Britton. During their honeymoon visit to Kew Gardens in 1888, she asked him: “Why couldn’t we have something like this in New York?” In this meticulously researched and detailed account, historian and scholar Peter Mickulas skillfully chronicles their struggles and achievements over the next several decades as the Brittons worked to turn their idea into reality. That the birth of NYBG mirrors the maturing of American botanical science and development of NYBG within the context of this larger environment: as the era of social, scientific, and political transformation that was the Gilded Age inevitably shaped the Garden as both institution and concept.

The 1890s were a time of great upheaval. The United States was finding a national identity and was beginning to assert itself in world politics. Waves of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, as well as the rise of the middle class, were changing the face of America. Likewise, the increasing presence of women outside traditional spheres was having a profound influence on society. Botany itself was evolving from a discipline dominated by description and classification to an experimental science emphasizing physiology, pathology, and genetics. Britton saw these changes and, for the most part, capitalized on them, which says much about the man. Although a true product of the 19th century with its sensibilities and values, he was well aware that he needed to embrace the future in order for his project to succeed. Of course, this path was not without its share of friction and controversy. That a public garden was the setting for personal and professional rivalries, academic turf wars, class struggle, political maneuvering, and even battles over aesthetics adds a touch of irony to the tale as Britton performed a deft balancing act between old and new. He accomplished this in troubled economic times, which gives the story a particularly fitting relevance. It is this glimpse into the world at the beginning of the 20th century, through the lens of what would become an American botanical icon, that makes Britton’s Botanical Empire a fascinating read.

Using a multitude of sources and including extensive footnotes, Mickulas provides an in-depth account of the careers of the Brittons and their colleagues as we watch a tract of city parkland in the Bronx evolve into a “world class botanical garden.” Although Mickulas’ exhaustive detailing of “A Botanical Monroe Doctrine” (Chapter 5), examining Britton’s role in a dispute over taxonomical nomenclature that raged over four decades, will most likely be overwhelming to the general reader, it is an important chapter in the development of the life sciences and cannot be ignored as it was a key phase in Britton’s career.

Nathaniel Lord Britton was the right man at the right time. That he was described even by his friends as a “difficult” man does not take away from the enormity of his accomplishments. And while the New York Botanical Garden was certainly not his achievement alone, Britton’s unwavering pursuit of his vision made it happen. In the end, this is mainly Britton’s story.

Peter Mickulas’ history of Britton and his “Botanical Empire” is well worth reading and is of course an essential addition to the libraries of American botanic gardens. It will also do well in larger public libraries and academic libraries with collections in the history of science, botany, horticulture, and American history.

—Carol Traveny
Technical Services Librarian
Swedenborg Library
Bryn Athyn College
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania
Board News

The Board met by conference call two weeks before the mid-year Board meeting to determine the agenda for that meeting in St. Louis on October 25, 2008, at the Missouri Botanical Garden. On Saturday, October 25, the Board began business at breakfast in the conference hotel. The meeting continued all day with breaks for lunch and to travel to the Garden for a brisk walk through the closest portion of the Garden. (For pictures of St. Louis and the Garden, go to http://www.flickr.com/photos/cbhl2005.) The evening before the meeting the Board and friends had tried out the proposed banquet venue and were impressed. It should be a memorable banquet. In February 2009, the Board again met by conference call specifically to discuss the election mailing and the wording of the two Board proposals to the membership for discussion and vote at the 2009 annual meeting. The results of that meeting were mailed to the membership on March 9, 2009. The Board also met by conference call with the Steering Committee in February 2009. The Board then conferred again on March 18, 2009, by conference call, primarily to address issues not resolved at the mid-year meeting. The next meeting of the Board will be by conference call immediately before the annual meeting.

Mid-year Board meeting. The first half of the morning was a day-by-day report on the upcoming annual meeting arrangements from the hosts at Missouri Botanical Garden, Doug Holland and Lucy Fisher. They are doing a fabulous job and the plans can be found at http://cbhl2009.wikispaces.com/. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to Board business. The Treasurer reported that the 2008 annual meeting made a profit, which was put into the Founders Fund per tradition. Shelly should be congratulated for running a tight ship. The financial model used for the 2008 meeting requires that an additional tax form be filed. The Board decided that for this first year CBHL should hire an accountant to file the form. Other officers reported that their efforts were focused on meeting preparation.

Highlights from the mid-year Committee reports. The Steering Committee had a very productive meeting by conference call on September 10, 2008, and will have another meeting before the annual meeting. The Nominating Committee has been formed (Barney Lipscomb, Donna Herendeen, and Kathy Allen). The Membership Committee reported on the directory and the renewal mailing. The Audit Committee reported that the 2007–08 books are in order. The Archives Committee is looking at creating a wiki page. The Public Relations Committee has sent the CBHL brochure for placement on the CBHL Web page. The Board conferred with Doug Holland (in person) as Electronic Communications Committee chair and with Robin Everly (by phone) as Publications Committee chair about several issues, including editing the Web site and publishing in color. The Board determined there is enough money for two Founders Fund awards this year and information will go out with the Annual Meeting information with the winners to be determined by a drawing supervised by the Secretary. The Annual Literature award deadline for application was December 15. The Preservation and Access Committee has new members and has been busy. Among other things, a new database of non-book collections in CBHL libraries will soon be available online from Brooklyn Botanic Garden. They have been coordinating with people working on the latest International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants to give them information on CBHL library holdings of seed and nursery catalogs.

Other issues discussed at the mid-year meeting. The Board began to create a form and guidelines for assessing proposals to request CBHL funds. The Board directed the Electronic Communications Committee to renew the CBHL.net domain name for five years. The Board agreed that an EBHL affiliation fee ($20) is for an individual. When institutional members purchase one EBHL affiliation it will be assigned to the primary contact unless otherwise specified. The Board agreed to recommend that the Bylaws be amended in two ways: 1. To change the Preservation and Access Committee status from an ad hoc to a standing committee; and 2. To allow notification of the CBHL membership of official matters by other mechanisms than by mail. The conference call on February 13 was devoted to that issue.

March 18 Board meeting. The Board spent two more hours attending to CBHL business. The Treasurer reported that the treasury is healthy and that we will not need to fill out the U.S. Income Tax long form this year so we do not need to hire an accountant. The excellent election slate was chosen by the very efficient Nominating Committee at the beginning of the year. The Secretary mailed out, in three waves, the election ballots, the meeting proxies, and the notification of the recommended Bylaws revisions that will be discussed at the Annual Meeting in St. Louis. The Membership Manager reports 86 members have not yet renewed. The final renewal deadline in order to be included in the 2009 membership directory, on the e-list, and to receive the Newsletter is the Annual Meeting. The e-list will be purged of all non-current members immediately after the meeting. Back issues of the six CBHL Bibliographies will be offered to the membership on the e-list. Also the Board invites potential hosts for meetings beyond 2011 to contact Leora if you are interested. Because of recent changes in the way CBHL finances meetings, the hosts no longer need to front the meeting cost, clearing the way for more institutions to act as hosts.

Please mark your calendars!

Deadline for submissions to the next issue of the CBHL Newsletter is June 15, 2009
Members’ News West

Barbara M. Pitschel, Head Librarian
Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture
San Francisco Botanical Garden
at Strybing Arboretum
San Francisco, California

Photographs of Birds’ Nests Exhibition

From April through June 2009, the library will host an exhibition by photographer Sharon Beals of beautiful, detailed studies of birds’ nests from the collections of the California Academy of Sciences, the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, and the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. If you happen to be in San Francisco this spring, don’t miss this spectacular show. If you don’t have the opportunity to visit us, you can enjoy Sharon’s work in the March-April 2008 issue of Audubon magazine or on the Audubon Web site at http://www.audubonmagazine.org/issuearchives/issue0803.html. Sharon’s photographs of birds’ nests illustrate an article and appear on the cover.

Library Recognized by Mayor Gavin Newsom

I’m not publicizing this to toot my own horn. I just think it’s important to share instances when our libraries are recognized by the greater community.

As mentioned in the last issue, on February 12 we hosted an art reception for our exhibition of watercolors commemorating Charles Darwin’s 200th birthday. That day was also Abraham Lincoln’s 200th birthday, and it happened to also be my 70th. I was delightfully surprised when, during the portion of the evening set aside for brief talks about the art, I was presented with a Certificate of Honor from the City and County of San Francisco signed and sealed by Mayor Gavin Newsom. I was so pleased to see the library and our important conservation organizations recognized that I feel impelled to share it:

“Whereas, on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, I am pleased to recognize and honor Barbara Pitschel. I commend you for your 28 years of outstanding service to the Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture and to the Strybing Arboretum and San Francisco Botanical Garden Societies. Your dedication to the preservation of California Native Plants and your stewardship and collaboration with your husband Roland Pitschel on the Bernal Hilltop Native Grassland Restoration Project have left an indelible mark on the landscape of our City. Congratulations on your 70th birthday and best wishes for all your future endeavors!”

Susan C. Eubank, Arboretum Librarian
Arboretum Library
Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden
Arcadia, California

The Arboretum Library on the Road and New Library Classes

I’ve been building my constituency through the last couple of months. The Arboretum Library sold duplicate donations and handed out library brochures at the Garden Conservancy seminar in late February. That day we had 106 contacts, of which many were landscape architects and garden designers, learning about the Library. The Los Angeles Environmental Fair took place in March. The Arboretum collaborated with 10 planning partners such as the Department of Public Works, the Forestry Division, and the Girl Scouts. We also invited 40 other environmental exhibitors, such as the Los Angeles Zoo and Aquarium on Wheels. The event lawn and our exhibition hall were filled with ideas about the environment for adults, school
to benefit the Elisabeth C. Miller Library. *The Explorer’s Garden: Shrubs and Vines from the Four Corners of the World* demonstrates that modern botanizing is alive and well, with the intrepid Hinkley sharing his enthusiasm for garden-worthy plants not yet widely known. The festive evening included a silent auction, a lecture by the author, book sales, and signing.

This spring the Miller Library held exhibits of botanical art by the American Society of Botanical Artists, Pacific Northwest Chapter, and of current research by the graduate students associated with the University of Washington Botanic Gardens.

—Compiled by Laurie Hannah, Librarian
Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Restoration
University of Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, California

Members’ News East

Gary Esmonde, Librarian
Eleanor Squire Library
Cleveland Botanical Garden
Cleveland, Ohio

The Eleanor Squire Library is named in honor of the late Eleanor Seymour Squire, whose personal collection of gardening books inspired the founding of the Garden Center of Greater Cleveland in 1930, the first urban garden center in the country. The books were first housed at the Cleveland Art Museum and then moved to an unused brick boathouse in the fine arts garden when the Garden Center was formed. Some of those books are still in our collection.

In 1966, the new building of the Garden Center of Greater Cleveland included plans for a large library, with funds for construction and decoration given by the Shaker Lakes Garden Club. The library’s collection is located in two rooms: the Garden Room, where the main entrance to the library and the circulation desk are located, and the Main Room, which also holds storage and rare book collections. Economic hardships forced the library to move all of its collection into the Main Room on March 30, 2009.

The library’s collection has expanded to more than 22,000 volumes and is one of the largest circulating horticultural libraries in the country today. Its resources include general gardening, horticulture, herbs, flowers, and landscape design. Additionally, there is a children’s section, a collection of Madagascar and Costa Rica books, teacher resources, a horticulture information line, and a rare book collection.

The original collection of rare books grew significantly in the 1960s, when Warren Corning donated a major portion of his collection of horticultural classics to the botanical garden. More recently, the library received 900 rare wildflower books from Thomas Urban, in December 2006. The rare book collection now consists of 2,000 volumes from 1491 to the 1970s in a climate-controlled environment. The collection includes botanical art prints and an 1817 edition of *Les Roses* by Pierre

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teachers, and children. The Arboretum Library booth had a couple of tables showing off our environmentally themed books and we educated 132 people about the Library that day.

I’ve been doing new member tours once a month on Saturdays. The participants come up to the Library after they’ve had their tram tour and I tell them all about the wonders of their member privileges at the Library. Generally we average about 25 people for those tours. After thinking about those orientations, I decided to offer the orientation as a regular class in our education program. I have the first ones scheduled in April and May. One class is for beginners. The other is about advanced research in the Library. The classes are free with Arboretum admission. Wish me luck!

Tracy Mehlin, Information Technology Librarian
Elisabeth C. Miller Library
Center for Urban Horticulture
University of Washington
Botanic Garden
Seattle, Washington

Recent Events at the Miller Library

The long-awaited second book in Dan Hinkley’s *Explorer’s Garden* series had its debut on May 27 at a book launch party hosted by the Northwest Horticultural Society. The Arboretum Library on the road at the Los Angeles Environmental Education Fair.
Members’ News East

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Joseph Redouté. An appraisal completed in the summer of 2008 valued the rare books at around $3.5 million. The collection has recently been updated to an online catalog (LibraryWorld) to which the rare books are currently being added. Future plans include interlibrary loan, digitization, and creating an archives/rare book room.

Lu Anne Schwarz, Librarian
Atlanta Botanical Garden
Atlanta, Georgia

This spring, the Atlanta Botanical Garden launches a new era with the show Time Magazine called one of the “Top 10 Museum Exhibitions of 2008”: Moore in America. This is the final destination of the tour, and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see 20 of Henry Moore’s monumental sculptures in a single exhibition.

Horticultural intensity makes this venue unique: “In Atlanta, it’s all about the flowers,” says Henry Moore Foundation Exhibition Director David Mitchinson. Given the intimate layout of the Garden, the works will appear especially massive, and visitors will be able to view them up close from all sides.

Check out updates and pictures on our new blog:
http://mooreinamerica.blogspot.com/

On April 26 we presented Día del Niño—Children’s Day in the Children’s Garden. Families enjoyed music and stories in Spanish, piñatas and more. We read books in Spanish from the library’s juvenile collection to celebrate the day that also promotes reading and literacy.

And finally, a big day for ABG! The Garden’s Green Expansion opened May 1, 2009, and includes Southern Seasons garden, Visitor Center with Green Roof, and Parking Facility.

— Compiled by Shelly Kilroy, Librarian
Peter M. Wege Library
Frederik Meijer Gardens
Grand Rapids, Michigan

CBHL Lite

How It All Began

At the last annual meeting, at the banquet in the Michillinda Lodge, we exchanged stories to celebrate the 40th anniversary of CBHL. My somewhat belated contribution, which follows, is the story of how I got started in giving reports on the lighter side. Please feel free to send feedback in any format to me at david.lane@unh.edu.

I had just been elected to the Board back in 1997 and I was very worried. It was the job of the second vice-president at that time to report at the annual business meeting the number of current members (membership renewals). As a 2nd veep I didn’t know anything about how CBHL worked, so it took me a while to figure out who to ask for the number.

Earlier that year I had been to a horticultural meeting where the president of the organization had analyzed membership renewals over several years and graphically demonstrated that. While some old members dropped out and a few new members joined, the result was a very stable overall membership number over many years. So I thought to myself, I could do that! Rummaging through my old newsletters I came up with the numbers and plotted them out. I made an overhead transparency and when my turn came at the business meeting at the Arnold Arboretum, I walked to the projector to show my graph.

Well, the trend was basically a horizontal line with a big squiggle like a heartbeat in the middle (see illustration). So I nervously said: “It’s important not to overanalyze the results.” Everyone laughed. It was reported in the July 1998 newsletter as: “David presented a graph depicting membership as reported in CBHL newsletters for the past 15 years; the graph showed minor fluctuation in types of members, with an overall pattern of ‘sustainability.’”

The rest, as they say, is another story for another time.

—David M. Lane
Biological Sciences Librarian
University of New Hampshire
Durham, New Hampshire
On the Web

Global Biodiversity Information, a Banana Controversy, a Celebration of Stumps, and Unusual Uses for Duct Tape

Global Biodiversity Information Facility (http://www.gbif.org) is a huge free database of species occurrence records for both plants and animals that also provides information on both scientific and common species names. Unfortunately it is somewhat cumbersome to understand how to use it—see http://www.data.gbif.org/tutorial/tutorial.

Banana: The Fate of the Fruit that Changed the World (http://www.bananabook.org) is the highly informative, if somewhat controversial, blog of Dan Koeppel, the author of Banana: The Fruit that Changed the World. A central premise of his book and Web site is that the banana we have all grown to know and love is on the verge of extinction due to the Panama fungus disease. The current banana of choice is the Cavendish, but it is itself a replacement for the Gros Michel, the banana commonly found in U.S. grocery stores until the 1960s, when it was wiped out by another strain of the same disease. But the site covers much more: from the ongoing fight to save the current banana and the alternative quest to find a disease-resistant successor of similar appeal, to banana history, banana sites, banana news, and information on the banana industry. It also mentions a painting in which the banana appears as the fruit in the Garden of Eden, but the author apparently is unaware that Linnaeus had first suggested this. In all, a fascinating, well-written, and well-constructed site.

For another opinion on the threat to bananas, Snopes.com (http://www.snopes.com), a site devoted to debunking urban legends, notes that the controversy dates back to 2003, and that the fungus has had the greatest impact in Asia. According to Snopes, there are plentiful alternatives to our current banana of choice, but this site is not as up to date as Koeppel’s site. Using the Snopes search engine, you can also find their take on other common concerns about various plants.

A disease of a different sort is addressed by StopBadware.org (http://www.stopbadware.org) which provides information and warnings concerning spyware, malware, and deceptive adware. It includes a searchable database of problem sites and warnings about deceptive downloads, including the latest editions of Real Player.

If a tree is diseased, and all else fails, you end up with a stump—the subject matter of The Stump Online (http://www.thestumponline.com). Here one finds images of stumps, stumps in art, an account of a drinking game involving hammering nails into a stump, stump removal equipment, and a spiffy musical video of early tree cutting.

HortClassifieds.com (http://www.hortclassifieds.com) is a place where one can place classified ads dealing with horticulture for free. The problem is that since not many people know about it, the ad is unlikely to attract readers unless picked up through a Google search. It also carries a few news stories from environmental and agricultural sources.

Equally frustrating is Online Gardener (http://www.onlinegardener.com), which appears to be a webhosting site aimed at nurserymen and horticultural organizations. This site has an extensive proprietary library of digital gardening resources and images including “the world’s largest digital plant encyclopedia … as well as hundreds of popular gardening tutorials, gardening FAQs, and pocket garden guides,” all of which are viewable at My Garden Guide (http://mygardenguide.com). The problem is that when you attempt to look for information on their webhosting, the page provides a static image of their standard hosting package (implying that there is at least one other package) but no information on cost or how to sign up for it.

On a more positive note, Disneynature (www.disney.go.com/disneynature) brings news of the return of the Disney organization to the nature film business—albeit seemingly mainly through independent productions. The site includes a clip of Walt Disney discussing his True Life Adventure series.

Born On This Day.Info (http://www.bornonthisday.info) is a site aimed at providing information on what happened on one’s birthday, although in fact, it will provide links to information on not only what happened on a specific date, but who was born on it, who died on it, what saint’s day it is, and what events or holidays may be celebrated on the date. The site itself is composed primarily of a form on which you enter the day and month of the year. This then brings up a list of up to 15 other sites that provide the actual information for that day. This site’s main advantage is not having to bookmark all the other sites in order to check them for information on that day.

Finally, there is Top Ten Uses of Duct Tape (www.ducttapeguys.com/topten/index.html), covering a wide range of creative uses of everyone’s material of last resort, from apparel to canoe repair.

— Stanley Johnston
Mentor, Ohio
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**Return to:**

Brian Thompson, CBHL Treasurer  
P.O. Box 51116  
Seattle, WA  98115-1116

**Questions ?**

Contact CBHL Membership Manager Suzi Teghtmeyer,  
suzirt@gmail.com

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Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries, Inc.  
Auraria Library  
1100 Lawrence Street  
Denver, Colorado  80204-2095

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