Urbs in Horto: City in a Garden

Libraries in a Garden and an Arboretum

by Stacy Stoldt
Reference Librarian
Lenhardt Library, Chicago Botanic Garden

Like many botanical garden libraries, both the Lenhardt Library of the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Sterling Morton Library of the Morton Arboretum are immersed in settings so idyllic you almost forget why you came. Patrons file into the Lenhardt Library commenting on how lucky we are to work in such lovely surroundings. And lovely they are. Although November through April is an enormous expanse we Midwesterners call winter, there’s a beauty to the cascading snow on the early days of December. A crisp, brisk walk through the garden witnessing undisturbed blankets of glistening white is like a holiday greeting containing warm wishes. And yet by the end of the season, somewhere between March and April the snow has long been bleak and grimy and all you can wish for is May. And with May comes the promise of better days, better weather and a chance to feel social and free again of the restraints of heavy hearts, winter coats, and the promise of CBHL!

Library in a Garden

Located in Glencoe, Illinois, 17 miles north of Chicago, the Lenhardt Library attracts visitors and researchers from all over the world. The Chicago Botanic Garden has combined initiatives with Northwestern University and the University of Illinois, to develop unique graduate programs emphasizing plant conservation biology. The Lenhardt Library serves students from both Master’s Degree programs as well as its joint Doctoral program with Northwestern. Besides utilizing the extensive collection, many students come to study our collection of primary sources.

The Woman’s Board of the Chicago Horticultural Society established the 584 volume Library in 1951. With the opening of the Chicago Botanic Garden and its Education Center in 1976, the Library’s growing collection of 6,000 books moved to a new facility to better meet the needs of its users.

Today the collections of the Lenhardt Library located in both the Regenstein Center and in the Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Plant Conservation Science Center, hold approximately 100,000 volumes or 31,000 titles including 27,000 monographs focusing on horticultural literature, botany, ecological restoration, plant conservation, garden design and landscape architecture. There are more than 350 currently received periodical titles; over 2,000 noncurrent and out-of-print periodical titles as well as videos and DVDs; slides; nursery catalogs; an amazing rare book and periodicals collection; and the archives of the Chicago Horticultural Society. The Plant Information Service answers over 35,000 plant-related questions annually. The Library provides its patrons, visitors and researchers excellent service; blended and balanced over-the-phone, in person and electronically.

Library in an Arboretum

To the west of Chicago, in suburban Lisle, is the 1,700 acre Morton Arboretum. Founded in 1922, the Arboretum’s plant collections represent one of the most comprehensive collections of woody plants in North America. Growing at the Arboretum are over 4,117 different kinds of trees, shrubs and other plants, represented by more than 182,000 specimens. These plants are arranged according to five groups: taxonomic collections, geographic collections, special habitats,
Dear Fellow Members,

As I write this, the snow is on the ground and 2011 has yet to begin. Looking back on 2010, it has been a rough year with the loss of Ruth Schaller and Barbara Pitched, continued fiscal restraints on our member institutions and the consequent forced retirement or hiatus in employment for a number of our members. On a brighter note, CBHL remains strong and active. A number of our members have been singularly honored for their activities: Barney Lipscomb received the Peter S. Raven Award from the American Society of Plant Taxonomists and the New York Botanical Garden was awarded the National Medal for Museum and Library Service by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The CBHL Board met in Chicago for their annual mid-year meeting where Leona, Rita, and Stacy gave us a preview of the exciting and educational annual meeting our organization has to look forward to in May. The Board also accomplished a great deal of business. We decided that funds sent as memorials to CBHL would be placed in the Founders Fund unless designated for the General Fund. We had previously donated to the Smithsonian book fund in Barbara’s memory and arranged to have a similar amount in books donated to the Strbying Arboretum in Barbara’s memory on behalf of CBHL.

For years we have offered a stipend to help one member each year attend the EBHL annual meeting on condition that they represent CBHL there and report back to the membership on the meeting. I am happy to announce that the Board has agreed to award similar stipends for acting on behalf of CBHL at the annual meetings of the Garden Writers of America and the American Public Gardens Association.

Most importantly we will be asking you to vote to approve a small but significant change in the Bylaws which basically removes the statement of how many individuals are covered by an institutional membership from the Bylaws and moves that part of the statement to the Procedures Manual. The Procedures Manual will still provide for two representatives per institution for the Institutional rate of $105, but will allow institutions to add additional representatives at $50 each. Each of these additional representatives will be entitled to vote and receive the newsletter and directory. Although they can each opt out of receiving the hard copy version, their affiliation will also be listed in the directory. Although we know we will be meeting in Chicago in 2011, Montreal in 2012, and Fort Worth in 2013, the Board would like to encourage both institutional and individual members to consider hosting future CBHL annual meetings. Many of you may not realize it, but CBHL provides the seed money for each annual meeting and pays any overruns so there is no cost to any sponsor. There are also an annual meeting manual, the results of the previous annual meeting survey, and the expert knowledge of the Board and past hosts for potential hosts to draw on. In addition the Board is establishing an ad hoc committee to help future hosts develop programming for the conference composed of the Past-President as Board liaison, the past host, future host and possibly several members at large.

Finally, I continue to ask your help in building our membership. I am asking that if, in the course of your day-to-day work, you encounter individuals or institutions whom you think might benefit from CBHL membership, you tell them about our organization and the benefits of belonging to it. If you provide me with contact names and details I will be happy to write a follow-up letter encouraging them to join.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Chicago when the current snows are a thing of the past.

Stan Johnston
February 2011

Grown from Seed: Robert Becker Memorial Library

Bill Musser, Librarian
Seed Savers Exchange
Decorah, Iowa

Backyard garden beginnings

When Kent Whealy and Diane Ott Whealy started the “True Seed Exchange” in 1975, they were far more preoccupied with gardening and seeds than libraries and books. What became Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) shortly thereafter was a national network of gardeners dedicated to saving and sharing heirloom seeds.

Today SSE is a national board-governed, member-supported nonprofit organization that saves and shares the heirloom seeds of the nation’s garden heritage, forming a living legacy that can be passed down through generations. The Seed Savers campus is located outside scenic Decorah, Iowa, on the 89-acre Heritage Farm among wooded limestone bluffs skirted by a trout stream. The mission of Seed Savers Exchange is “to save North America’s diverse, but endangered, garden heritage for future generations by building a network of people committed to collecting, conserving and sharing heirloom seeds and plants, while educating people about the value of genetic and cultural diversity.”

Throughout the 35 years of SSE’s existence, the original seed sharing network developed into a national organization of over 13,000 members. Membership in Seed Savers has extended well beyond the original growers network to include those who simply want to support the vital mission of the organization to safeguard the future of the nation’s food resources.

Every seed tells a story; SSE preserves not only seeds but also those unique personal stories of human/plant interaction that reflect the intimate relationship between gardens and those who grow them—and who pass them on to future generations. Since SSE’s inception, members have passed on about a million samples of rare garden seeds to other gardeners.

Organically grown: nurturing a collection

Along with several thousand vegetable varieties preserved by regular grow-outs at Heritage Farm and other garden locations, something else has been growing in the “intellectual gardens” of SSE through the years. Beginning as the private library of the Whealys, a collection of books and journals evolved over time into an institutional reference collection as materials were acquired, largely through member donations or organizational exchanges, for research and publication purposes.

The collection included publications on such topics as sustainable agriculture, organic gardening, genetic diversity and the international food supply, seed saving efforts and germplasm preservation organizations around the world. After several moves, these items found a home in the new administrative building where a library space was included in 1995.

The SSE library was maintained for years by staff members who had other primary responsibilities. Nothing was cataloged; an Access database was used to create an inventory list, including searchable fields for basic bibliographic description. Books were placed on the shelves in alphabetical order by author’s last name. Many items remained in boxes. Current issues of periodicals were placed on a shelf. Serials and back issues were collected and stored.

It was not until 1998 that the library was dedicated to the memory of the late Robert Becker, a professor at Cornell University and the Vegetable Extension Specialist at the New York Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva. Becker collected many important contemporary and historical works related to botany, olericulture, horticulture and agriculture. After his death in 1996, Becker’s family donated his 650 volume collection to SSE, to honor his memory as an active seed saver and longtime supporter of the organization. SSE Board member Keith Crotz, botanical antiquarian, owner of American Botanist Booksellers, and friend of Robert Becker, helped to facilitate the gift of the Robert Becker collection and engaged his fellow Board members in thinking more creatively about the library’s future. He cultivated donors and used his encyclopedic knowledge of botanical literature to begin making significant acquisitions on the library’s behalf. The depth and quality of the collection have significantly improved in recent years with the work of this ardent library advocate on the Board.

In 2009, SSE hired a part-time librarian who, in the space two months, helped to bring the library into the digital age with a subscription to the ILS services of Library World. When she decided to accept a full time position elsewhere, Crotz encouraged then-Executive Director George DeVault to seek the advice of a professional library consultant before filling the vacant position. Leora Siegel of the Chicago Botanic Garden was invited to review the state of the library and make recommendations on both general and detailed matters of library administration. After receiving her comprehensive report, DeVault and the Board made the decision to hire a professional cataloging librarian.

In January 2010 Bill Musser was appointed to the position, beginning on a part time basis and going to full time four months later. Musser has continued to download bibliographic records into Library World and has been cataloging items using the LC classification system. About 700 titles of the total 4,000 volumes are cataloged in Library World to date. The online catalog, dubbed “Roscoe” in memory of a beloved farm dog at Heritage Farm, is available on the Web at http://opac.libraryseed.org/opac/sgin7?dbname=seed_savers.

RBML strives to serve staff patrons and guest researchers by making accessible high quality information resources on subjects related to: the diverse, but endangered, garden heritage of North America; conserving and sharing heirloom seeds and plants; and the value of genetic and cultural diversity. The library exists to promote thoughtful approaches to treatment of the earth, production of food, and diversity in human, plant, and animal realms. That translates into collecting materials ranging from Native American ethnobotany, D. M. Ferry seed catalogs, and Wendell Berry poems to HortClouds, protocols for potato tissue culture, and A cornucopia of possibilities: the collection becomes a library

With one librarian managing all public and technical services and facets of library administration at SSE, the transformation of RBML from a collection of books to a working library means taking small but steady steps forward.

There have been some large strides, however—perhaps even great leaps. In dramatic contrast to the 2010 library operating budget which was slightly less than $10,000, the 2011 operating budget is over $75,000, a decision reflecting the priorities of SSE’s Board, chaired by notable garden writer Amy F. Goldman, whose support of the library has been unwavering. With Crotz’s friendly fundraising cajoling, Goldman’s commitment and generosity, strong backing by the Board, a healthy general operating fund, and a librarian with experience in grant-writing and fundraising, the financial future of Robert Becker Memorial Library appears bright.

Though the librarian is currently the sole paid staff person in RBML, a library volunteer responding to an ad in local media in early 2010, donated 77 hours of her time during the year. Offering quiet wisdom, constant encouragement, and sometimes raucous humor, she has made even relatively onerous jobs enjoyable. A more concerted effort is being made to recruit additional volunteers via the SSE website (www.seedsavers.org) and local newspaper advertising in 2011.

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Robert Becker Memorial Library appears bright.
Rare varieties: special collections grow

In 2010, with the help of a generous special projects donation, Seed Savers purchased from a private collector about 500 historically important (many rare) books and ephemera published in Great Britain and the U.S., dating as far back as 1586, all in the subject areas collected by Robert Becker. An additional purchase of about 500 serial volumes from the same collector in January 2011 brought even more significant and rare resources for scholarly research.

As bibliographical records for the new collections and also for the materials in the Robert Becker collection are added to the online catalog, SSE will increase its efforts to promote the use of its special collections as well, especially as resources for resurrecting and reintroducing practical information on growing and preparing food using sustainable, organic methods. Though such terms are relatively new in common parlance, the concepts behind them have existed for centuries and are richly recorded in early works on horticulture, ediculture, and agriculture.

What will the Robert Becker Memorial Library look like in five years? While the current library has much aesthetic appeal, the SSE Board has had conversations about the need for new facilities to house the library, given the current challenges of limited space and environmental control issues. Expansion or relocation is quite simply inevitable. With this step, additional staff may be required as well. An incipient institutional archive exists at SSE and will continue to grow as the librarian works through the files of publications, letters, records of events, photos, etc. The archive will include documentation for the seed preservation collection as well. An archived collection of the human stories that accompany the heirloom seeds in SSE’s preservation collection will be a valuable resource for cultural historians and gardeners alike.

For now, the librarian’s top priority is to successfully complete the cataloging of all currently backlogged material, making the rich resources of the Robert Becker Memorial Library accessible both within and beyond the posts and pegs of a library grown from seed.
Announcing: Natural California
Essay Competition for The Pitschel Prize

The Pitschel Prize for Excellence in Environmental Writing is an essay contest to commemorate the late Barbara Pitschel, librarian of the Helen Crocker Russell Library at San Francisco Botanical Garden for 30 years.

The competition is open to all students enrolled in the City of San Francisco High Schools during 2010 and 2011 school years. Entrants will submit, electronically, an original essay no longer than 1000 words. Up to three original images, drawn or photographic, may be submitted with the essay and must be created by the entrant and not obtained from the Internet.

Essay Subjects
- California plants, wild or cultivated
- California gardens; public or private, including school gardens
- Natural habitats in the Bay area
- Plant or garden topics that are relevant to California

Essay Criteria
- Clarity of writing
- Original observation
- Evidence of enthusiasm and commitment to the subject

Entries must be submitted by March 31, 2011. Winners will be announced on May 31, 2011. Awards will be presented June 15, 2011.

Three Prizes will be Awarded
- FIRST PRIZE: $500
  Publication by Pacific Horticulture and San Francisco Botanical Garden Society
- SECOND PRIZE: $300
  Recognition in Pacific Horticulture and by San Francisco Botanical Garden Society
- THIRD PRIZE: $200
  Recognition in Pacific Horticulture and by San Francisco Botanical Garden Society

THE PITSCHEL PRIZE
2011 Essay Competition for San Francisco High School Students

Pitschel Prize endorsers include: California Horticultural Society | The Garden Conservancy | Pacific Horticulture | San Francisco Botanical Garden Society | The San Francisco Garden Club | Yerba Buena Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. Email: info@pitschelprize.org. pitschelprize.org

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botanist John Bartram's garden helped the delegates of the Constitutional Congress to break their deadlock; and why James Madison is the forgotten father of American environmentalism. Taken together, these and other stories are a revelation of a guiding, but previously overlooked ideology of the American Revolution.

This event is sponsored by The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. and the Cherokee Garden Library of the Atlanta History Center. The event is a fundraiser for The Garden Club of Georgia’s Historic Landscape and Garden Grant Fund.

Admission is $30 per person; $50 per couple. Reservations are required. Please make checks payable to the Garden Club of Georgia and mail directly to Lee Dunn, 8050 Nesbit Ferry Road, Atlanta, GA 30350. Include your name, address, and email contact with your order. For more information, call Lee Dunn at (770) 394-2834.

Lucille Dressler
Herb Society, New England Unit
Belmont, Massachusetts

After many years, several moves, one flood and many, many donations, the library of the New England Unit of The Herb Society of America is finally online. We have made an agreement with the Massachusetts Horticultural Society at Elm Bank in Wellesley, Massachusetts for our collection to be cataloged with www.masshort.org under their home page. The largest donation we have received came from Mrs. Dorothy Brown daughter of Mrs. Laurence Brown who was one of the founders of the Herb Society. This is a special collection with many rare horticultural books. Most of the books are in separate bookcases in the Massachusetts Horticultural Society’s library and our rare books are in our Archive Room which is only open upon request. CBHL is special to us because Elisabeth Woodburn was an honorary member and we have correspondence between her and Mrs. Frances Williams about books that should be in an herb library. Whenever your members are in Boston, please call me and I would be pleased to show you our books.
—Lucille Dressler (617) 484-4890.

Charlotte Tancin
Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation at Carnegie Mellon University presents a new exhibition, March 25 – June 30, 2011. Flora’s Lexicon explores the 19th-century European and American phenomenon of The Language of Flowers, the common understanding that plants and blooms were charged with sentiment and meaning and held the potential to express emotion or to communicate privileged messages within the strict confines of social etiquette. Flower associations made their way into Victorian language from various sources, including Japanese, Middle Eastern, Turkish, Greek and Roman cultures, religions and mythology, as well as the literature of Shakespeare and the still-life painting of 17th-century Dutch artists. The result was a fashionable system of floral connotations that blossomed during a time of burgeoning public interest in botany and its scientific importance. Flora’s Lexicon presents books from the Hunt Institute’s Library and botanical portraits from the Art Department in an examination of the scope of The Language of Flowers phenomenon, from the influences on its beginning to its continued presence in 21st-century publishing.

Members’ News West

Compiled by Beth Brand, Librarian
Schilling Library, Desert Botanical Garden
Phoenix, Arizona

New Exhibition of Watercolor Paintings and Drawings

Brandy Kuhl, Head Librarian
San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arbore-
um, Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture, San Francisco, California

From January through April, the library will host Rose Studies, an exhibition of watercolors and drawings by Maria Cecilia Freeman.
Well Celebrated: Kate O. Sessions
(November 8, 1857 - March 24, 1940)

Nancy Carol Carter
San Diego Floral Association
San Diego, California

Lemonade flowed on a sunny day in November at Marston House Museum and Gardens just as the chocolate birthday cake was served. San Diegans were gathered on the north side of Balboa Park to mark the 153rd anniversary of Kate Sessions' birth within sight of her statue, presented a bouquet of birthday flowers. Friends of Balboa Park sponsored a talk on the importance of San Diego's urban forest by nursery owner Fausto Palafax who led bus tours highlighting historic specimen trees in and near Balboa Park. Friends of Balboa Park and the Save Our Heritage Organization joined the San Diego Floral Association in sponsoring its third annual celebration of Kate Sessions' birthday.

Extraordinary News for the Arboretum Library

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

"Shall an ordinance be adopted to validate and reduce Los Angeles County's existing utility users tax from 5 percent to 4.5 percent; to continue funding essential services, including sheriff's deputies, parks, libraries, street repairs, and other general fund services; update definitions to require equal treatment of taxpayers regardless of technology used; provide public review of expenditure and independent audits, and continue the low-income senior exemption?"

This proposition was adopted in Los Angeles County in 2008. As you see from the language, it is intended to support both parks and libraries among other things. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors designated 5 million dollars for improvements at the Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden and 1.25 million of that money has been further designated to be spent on the Arboretum Library. The money for the Arboretum Library is intended to address "deferred maintenance" issues. When we were crafting the language for how the money would be spent, I pushed to include a cataloging component to solve cataloging backlog issues as well as library building renovation.

My vision for the building renovation is to open up the space to create a more convivial space where the customers are surrounded by and can engage in enjoying the collections. The ceiling was discovered to be color and detail with "botanical accuracy." She portrays the roses in watercolor portraits, accompanied by annotated graphite drawings and color samples. Together these presentations invite the viewer into the botanical study of each rose as well as the artistic process behind the painting.

"Rose Studies" was presented as a solo exhibit at the Horticultural Society of New York in June 2010. Maria Cecilia Freeman's art has appeared in numerous exhibits across the U.S., and is published in several books.

SLOBG Receives IMLS Grant

Mary Lou Wilhelm, Librarian Volunteer
San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden
San Luis Obispo, California

San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden recently received a $147,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. It will be used for a full-time Director of Volunteers and an archivist consultant. Currently there is a staff of 2.5 full time employees and 210 volunteers. SLOBG is located midway between San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay. Visit www.slobg.org for further information.

Retirement News

Compiled by Judy Reed
New York Botanical Garden, Retired

Carolyn Dodson (University of New Mexico) writes, "The highlight of my years as a trip to Western Australia to see my brother, a visiting lecturer at the University of Perth, and his wife. Reading about the unique flora of that part of the continent hardly prepared me for the magnificent display of spring
wildflowers. Yellow acacias dominated the landscape, interspersed with basins, orchids, kangeroo paws, fields of pink to violet flowers. I made the acquaintance of creepy eucalyptus trees. And of course the colorful flowers attracted colorful exotic birds. I met the president of their Native Plant Society and we have been corresponding with news of our respective organizations, especially promoting the value of landscaping with natives.”

From Barbara Fox (Van Dusen Botanical Garden) we learned that several law students from the Toronto law school got up-to-date on the horticulture while using my library. We received a guest visit from Judy Reed (New York Botanical Garden) once again spent a few days in Minneapolis with Richard Isaacson (Anderson Horticultural Library, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum). Judy and I returned our lovely day at the Vasa Gardens 13 chapel toiled away, helping with the Library’s Annual Book Sale. The Reed’s had a wonderful autumn stroll through the Arboretum with Andersen Library’s librarian Kathy Allen.

Book Reviews

Stephen Sinon
Head of Information Services & Archives
The LuEsther T. Mertz Library
The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York


Once in a while a book comes along which is so beautiful, comprehensive, well written and designed that you simply have to own it. Jardins Botanicos do Brasil is one of those. Published with support from the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and Bayer Crop Science (part of the mega-conglomerate known for their aspirin) this is a comprehensive, visually appealing record of 34 of our Brazilian counterparts.

There are a few dozen Mertz Library collections written about Brazil’s major botanical garden, the Jardim Botanico do Rio de Janeiro. The oldest of these was published in 1894 and the vast majority of them date from the past two decades however this stunning 350 page volume covering all of the major botanical gardens in Brazil has no equal in botanical and horticultural literature. The nearly 300 illustrations themselves (many by nature photographer Colombini) are very informative and include historical images as well as contemporary views of herbaria, conservatories and yes, even a few libraries. The text covers each garden’s history, programming and collection statistics providing uniform, updated information. The bibliography includes many web links and at the end of the Portuguese text is a complete English translation.

The English translation included in this book will certainly appeal to a broad many American readers. It is unfortunate that this well thought out work does not include a general index. In addition to the historical background given for each garden, there is an interesting introductory essay on the botanical exploration and establishment of botanical gardens within Brazil. A quick glance at this title is enough to capture the attention of any reader whose interests lie in the tropics and to remind us of the incredible biodiversity found there.

Suzi Tegtmeyer
Agribulture and Botany Librarian
Michigan State University Libraries
Clayton, Martin, Luigi Guerini and Alejandro de Avila.


Flora: The Aztec Herbal has many aspects. It’s a well-written account of a seventeenth century art collector, the exploration and study of natural science of the time, and an exhibition and use of an exhibition of a sixteenth century herbal from South America.

The first quarter of the volume is a concise biography of Italian art patron Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588-1657) and the role of natural history reproductions of the time. After being educated in law, Cassiano settled in Rome in 1614 where he formed a scientific society in Europe, and in doing so established connections with some of the greatest scientific and artistic minds. He, with his younger brother Carlo Antonio, commissioned and commissioned pieces of art, hiring artists to create reproductions from all aspects of Roman civilization such as architectural drawings, paintings, and drawings, but especially pieces depicting natural history including plants, animals, fossils, birds, and fungi. They also commissioned new natural history works, drawn with attention to detail and to exact specifications using engravings to accurately represent the object. This was contrary to other pieces at the time in which many included aspects of fantastic monsters and the supernatural were included. This collection of all of the reproductions and original works evolved into the Museo Cartaceo, or Paper Museum.

Cassiano purchased the art collection of Federico Cesi, founder of the Accademia dei Lincei, apothecary to the king of Spain. Despite this, the work is of great value as a depiction of medieval medicinal herbs as plates and varying page images are lacking. However, the Flora’s authors include historical context on its use by the Accademia dei Lincei and its value to the botanists of the time through extensive endnotes. For the reader and scholar, the authors describe the differences between it and a related but more monumental work of the sixteenth century, Tractatus Historiae Plantarum of the Accademia dei Lincei, apothecary to the king of Spain (1515-1587). There is a detailed description of the physical properties of the original work and suggestions on how the Codex can be used in the future. The Flora includes the image reproductions, the authors provide the original Nahuatl plant names and side-by-side original Latin and new English translations. For the botanist, the authors also created indices to plant names in Nahuatl (p. 243-247) and a collection of nahuatl terms (p. 248-249).

Flora: The Aztec Herbal will appeal to many audiences: the botanist as it provides primary descriptions of plants of the New World—now Mexico; the herbalist and ethnobotanist as it addresses how the native population used plants to address ailments; the artist historian as it examines botanical illustration techniques of the sixteenth century and it teaches them how other artists and art collectors contributed to the knowledge of the world. In all, it’s a worthy tome for a botanical library collection.
On the Web: Some Search Engines, Reference Sites, and Heritage Fruit

Stanley Johnston, Mentor, Ohio

Pdflfact <www.pdflfact.com> purports to be a site to find free downloadable pdfs. Unfortunately the search engine does not seem to work and the available pdfs seem to be confined to the group listed at the bottom of the page. Somewhat more promising is Blekko <blekko.com> a new search engine currently in beta which allows the user to narrow his search by qualifying his initial query with one or more tags following the slash sign. Be sure to check out the instructional videos on its use and its other features.

Library Directory—Online Libraries of the World <www.librarydir.org> is just what it says: a directory of links to over 6000 online libraries. Their links are organized by continent, country, and varying lower geographic subdivisions.

The Medical Heritage Library <www.medicalheritage.org> is a digital curation collaborative among the National Library of Medicine, The Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, The Cushing/Whitney Medical Library at Yale, The Augustus C. Long School of Health Library at Columbia, and the New York Public Library. The main page contains articles based on the work being done in the collections while the digitized books currently available from the project can be accessed via <www.archive.org/details/medicalheritage>. Turning to individual online reference works, Online Encyclopedia <encyclopedia.jrank.org> features the complete searchable text of the classic 1911 edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica augmented by the 1889 edition, the 21st Century Webster’s Family Encyclopedia, the complete searchable text of the classic 1911 edition Online Encyclopedia <encyclopedia.jrank.org> provides free searchable access to the 1997 edition of Chambers Biographical Dictionary, as well as Chambers 21st Century Dictionary and Chambers Thesaurus.

The National Biological Information Infrastructure <www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedserver.pl?community=ncbi_hum&z=36> is a broad collaborative program to provide increased access to data and information from United States biological resources through biological databases, information products, and analytical tools maintained by NIH and its partners.

LandscapingNetwork.com <www.landscaping-network.com> is a site designed to provide landscaping information to the homeowner as well as providing information on local landscape companies. Google URL Shortener <goo.gl> is another service provided by Google in which the user can paste in a long URL which google will create a shortened shortcut form of which can be copied and pasted into space limited devices such as Twitter.

While glancing through the CBHL 2010 Member- ship Directory under the state listings I came across the name of Katy Rawdon, whom I did not know. On looking at her entry I found that she is a Historian and Archivist of The Barnes Foundation <www.barnesfoundation.org/argled_a_garden.html> which I was equally unfamiliar with. A combination of art collection and arboretum, I have provided the link to the arboretum page from which you can backtrack and learn more about this Pennsylvania institution where one of our members works.

The Garden Museum <www.museumgardenhistory.org> is the revamped website of the equally revamped British organization previously known as the Museum of Garden History.

The final items of this issue’s column were all derived in conjunction with discussions that have occurred over the past few months on the Ex Libris electronic list which centers on rare books and printing history. One recent discussion centered on the unusual fruit found in some of the early works which seem to be no longer extant. In the ensuing discussion several websites dealing with the subject were cited. The Heritage Fruits Society <www.vegetarian.org/index.html> is an Australian organization dedicated to preserving heritage fruits which site includes a list of the fruits currently preserved in their collection. Also mentioned was the much more extensive site of the University of California at Riverside Citrus Variety Collection <www.citrusvariety.ucr.edu> which, while not a heritage collection per se, is concerned with conserving and evaluating true-to-type citrus, providing a resource of citrus genetic diversity for research, and extending knowledge about citrus diversity. The site includes an alphabetical list of the citrus varieties included, many of which are linked to lengthy discussions of the species, supplemented by photographs, a list of citrus varieties with fruit quality evaluation data, a list of citrus varieties by category, links to articles, references and other citrus information, and information on the research being carried out there.

CBHL Lite Journal Abbreviations

David M. Lane
Biological Sciences Librarian
University of New Hampshire
Durham, New Hampshire

I’m sure you will agree that one of the banes of biology is the style of citation that uses abbreviated journal titles. The practice has been around for more than a hundred years and uses an inordinate amount of time coding and decoding various shortened versions of the full title of biological journals. It would be faster to have some common abbreviations designated as keys on the keyboard (see illustration).

Fortunately for the botanical and horticultural literature we have Gavin Bridson’s excellent work BPH Botanico-Periodico-Huntianum and BPH-2 (Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation). I think of this work as sort of a misspelling dictionary that has collected all possible ways to abbreviate a journal title and points to the best way. After all, “journ” itself can be abbreviated as “j”, “jour”, “jrnl”, etc. Single letter abbreviations are probably the least. So I thought that I’d give BPH a little test and look up JIR, the Journal of Irreproducible Results which was followed by AIR, the Annals of Improvable Research. I have a couple of “Best of “ books for each of these journal titles. Examples of plant-related articles: “Branching and Sprouting: Effects of Sunlight Deprivation” about how the growth of trees and plants is enhanced by deprivation of sunlight and “Cyclic Variations in Grass Growth” about how the average height of grass blades varies every 7 to 10 days unlike any other known plant.

I looked up JIR and AIR in BPH and found nothing. So the next time you see JIR or AIR as the journal title in a citation, you can probably ignore it.

Please feel free to send feedback in any format to me at: david.lane@unh.edu.
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