

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Edinburgh Friends Committee

Annual Report 2015/16

Committee:

Convener: Shiona Mackie
Vice-Convener: Ewan Crawford
Secretary: Fiona Smart

Committee Members:

David Binnie
Heike Campbell
Irene Paterson
Deborah Russell
Kate Dick
Neiria McClure
Neil Woodcock (co-opted)
Joan Battersby (co-opted)
Liz Leith (co-opted)
Susannah Kerr (co-opted)
Kim Hamilton
Catherine McMillan

Alison Rankin
David Simpson (until end of January 2016)
Kirsten Waller
Tristan Cruz (from March 2016)

1. The Committee

2015/16 has been another busy year for the Edinburgh Friends RBGE Committee. With a number of new members joining the Committee, prior to the 2015/16 programme of activities commencing, Heike Campbell and her family kindly hosted a barbeque in July to enable new and old committee members to get to know each other in the relaxed setting of her garden and conservatory.

Fiona Smart agreed to be co-opted on to the committee again as secretary. The committee was grateful for her continuing contribution to the committee until the beginning of 2016, and were sorry that she had to stand down at that point. The Convener was very grateful to Margaret Stevenson, a former committee member, for covering the three months leading up to the AGM.

Heike Campbell took over the Potters from Hilary Fleming and with her team has built up an increased supply of enticing plants (see section 2.5)

Unfortunately for the committee, it has not been possible to recruit a new member to take over the organisation of the plant sale. However, stepping into the breach, Tish Alderson and her family have agreed to run the plant sale again in 2016 for which, the committee is most grateful.

New members, Irene Paterson and Deborah Russell have integrated with the events/lecture team, resulting in a successful series of events throughout the year. Neiria McClure is standing down from the committee but will join Kim as an associate member – providing help and support at events and the plant sale.

Joan Battersby, aided by Susannah Kerr, and Neil Woodcock planned and ran the day tours, the four day Dumfries and Galloway and the South Wales tours (see section 2.3) Susannah Kerr will be standing down at the AGM. Ewan Crawford once again ran a successful photography competition and prizegiving (see section 2.7) Catherine McMillan and family ensured that the Silent Movie evening in December ran smoothly.

With Inger Kristianson's departure, Alison Rankin took over as the definitive Membership Office Manager in May 2015. David Simpson left the Membership Office after approximately five years as administrator. He has been replaced by Tristan Cruz. Emily Chandler was the Friends' Events Co-ordinator until August 2016 at which point, Kirsten Waller took over.

So a year of change in the team, but throughout it all, there is a strong sense of commitment and boundless energy! The committee is grateful for the support of the Membership Office without whom, it could not deliver such a wide range of events and activities throughout the year.

2. Programme of Events

2.1. Lecture/Events

Organisers: Deborah Russell, Irene Paterson and Liz Leith

The Lecture/Event series commenced on 24th September 2015 when Will Hinchliffe, arborist at the RBGE, gave a presentation entitled '**My Favourite Tree in the Garden**'. Trees form the backbone of RBGE, from the exotic monkey puzzle to the majestic oak. Every tree has its own personality and the Friends committee conducted a poll to find out which trees in the Garden are most loved by the visitors. Between May and August, Friends and visitors to RBGE were invited to take a photo of their favourite tree in the gardens of the RBGE and send it to a dedicated e-mail address with the name of the tree in the subject line, if possible.

The five most popular trees which emerged from this poll were then subject of the talk. Will explained the botany, origin and conservation significance of the tree, stories about who collected and planted it, the botany of the tree and how it is cared for. He told many noteworthy stories connected with the tree. William did dig deeply into the archives of RBGE to reveal the most interesting photos connected with the trees.

Winner of the 28 entrants was one of the oldest trees in the collection, the magnificent *Betula pendula tristis* next to the Caledonian Hall, followed by the 4 *Metasequoias glyptostroboides* next to the Palmhouse. Rank 3 and 4 were shared by the bulky Wingnut trees, *Pterocarya macroptera* var. *delavayi* and *Pterocarya fraxinifolia* on the lawn next to the pond and last, but not least came *Acer griseum* with its beautiful russet, flaking bark. William did also reveal his own favourite tree, which is *Koelreuteria paniculata*.

In October, Lucinda Byatt, a literary translator and historian with a special interest in Italian Renaissance and Art gave a talk on the '**Gardens of the Savoy Residences in the Piedmont**'. She has researched extensively the Reggia of Venaria Reale, built by the Savoy ruler, Carlo Emanuele II, in the mid seventeenth century around Turin. These innovations placed them firmly on the map of the 17th and 18th Grand Tours of Europe. The audience was treated to a fascinating illustrated talk showing the

remaining fountains, parterres and architecture of the period. Later in October, the Friends Committee held an event focussing of welcoming New Friends of the Garden. It coincided with the exhibition '**Painting the Woods and Forests of Chile**'. Both new and old Friends enjoyed a delightful evening commencing with an overview of the RBGE and its work from Simon Milne, followed by an exuberant talk from two of the artists involved with the project – Isik Guner and Jacqui Pestell. There was also ample time to view the exhibition and purchase prints of the botanical paintings.

The **Photography Competition Prizegiving** took place in November. A short talk from the Convener of the Edinburgh Friends led into to a truly inspirational presentation given by Colin Prior, a distinguished Scottish photographer. He then kindly awarded the prizes to the winners of the 2015 competition. (see section 2.7)

In December 2014, the Friends committee organised a silent movie screening with accompanying live music which proved to be very popular. The Committee decided to repeat the format in December 2015, and therefore, once again Jane Gardner (composer, piano), Roddy Lang (violin) and Hazel Morrison (percussion) returned to the Lecture Theatre to perform the accompanying music to '**The Black Pirate**'. Although not so well attended as the previous year, the audience enjoyed the heroics displayed on screen by Douglas Fairbanks, Snr. and the superb score provided by Jane and her colleagues.

To dispel January blues, the Committee had invited George Anderson (ex-RBGE and currently, Beechgrove presenter) to act as Quiz Master at the **Friends Quiz Night**. Once again it proved to be very popular with approximately 50 participants. The Committee had learnt from previous experience that a table of Garden Guides could form a formidable team. Consequently, on this occasion their expertise was shared out across all tables! The winners received potted Primula plants, and the losing team, took home packets of seeds!

February 18th had Martin Gardiner and Sabina Knees sharing their experiences of the wonderful tour which they had led in October/November.

Finally in March, at the joint meeting with SGLH (Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage), Marilyn Brown gave a fascinating talk entitled '**Fish Ponds, Fountains, Cascades and Canals – Reflections on Scotlands's Water Gardens**'. She outlined the social, cultural and practical purposes of water in gardens in the past.

2.2. Coffee Mornings and Walks

Organiser: David Binnie

It has been another successful year for these informal morning talks held in the David Douglas Room at the John Hope Gateway. Most, though not all, of the speakers were members of RBGE staff.

The series commenced in April with a talk from Andrew Watson, a writer and teacher who told the story of James Duncan, a remarkable Victorian who did much to develop the Benmore Garden. In May there were three events: Pamela Black and David Binnie led an early morning birdwalk; Robert Unwin gave a talk on the history of the famous Edinburgh rock garden; and the following week Robert kindly returned to give a guided tour to see the collection of endangered Scottish plants, part of RBGE's conservation work. In June, Louise Galloway and Sadie Barber gave a talk

about their plant collecting trip to the Eastern Arc Mountains of Tanzania. In September Sophie Neale and Alan Forrest talked about their work in the Middle East sharing RBGE skills, thus enabling local botanists to carry out conservation work in their own countries. In October, Michael Tooley, a writer and lecturer, gave a fascinating talk on the contrasting gardens of Gertrude Jekyll at Munstead and Claude Monet at Giverny. This was followed in November by Toby Pennington talking about the importance of Dry Forests, a unique and threatened habitat. The January coffee morning, as always, was devoted to launching the 2016 day and five day tours. In February, the coffee mornings returned to the David Douglas Room with Gunnar Ovstebo talking about his speciality, desert plants, and his fern collecting trip to the Chihuahuah Desert of Texas. March saw two events: Fiona Inches gave an informative talk on last year's big Amorpophallus event in 'A Titan at Edinburgh'; and finally Simon Allan led a tour of the Temperate and Tropical Palm Houses, highlighting the collection of palms, many of them rare and unusual.

Once again our grateful thanks goes to all of these for the time and enthusiasm they put into their invariably excellent talks and walks.

2.3. Tours and Garden Visits

Organisers: Joan Battersby, Rhona Henderson, Neil Woodcock,

2.3.1. Mount Stuart

On May 27th 2015, Joan Battersby led a party of Friends on a visit to Mount Stuart. Following an early departure from the John Hope Gateway, the group arrived at Wemyss Bay on time to catch the ferry across to Bute. Refreshments were provided on arrival. The party was divided into two groups for tours of the magnificent house. After lunch, unfortunately, heavy rain descended. Those who did not wish to join the Head Gardener on a tour of the garden in the torrential rain, were able to explore the house again. Despite the inclement weather, the party enjoyed what was a long day and appreciated the hospitality provided at Mount Stuart.

2.3.2. Northumberland

On 14th July 2015, Neil Woodcock led a day tour to Northumberland – arriving at Howick Hall, one time home of Earl Grey (of tea fame) for a much needed coffee and shortbread after an early start from the John Hope Gateway. We were then free to wander round the extensive gardens, where we learnt about the links with the RBGE through plant collecting expeditions. Following an excellent lunch, the group then headed for Seaton Delaval – the northernmost example of the architect, Sir John Vanburgh, one of the masters of English Baroque architecture. The house and garden have recently been taken over by the National Trust. A guided tour of the house and garden was provided. The gardens are in the process of being regenerated – a very exciting project. Following afternoon tea, the group headed back to Edinburgh. Another long day, but the weather had been kind to the group and they much appreciated the opportunity to visit these wonderful gardens.

2.3.3. Dumfries and Galloway

In May 2015, Joan Battersby, accompanied by Alison Rankin, MO manager, led a tour to Dumfries and Galloway. On the way to the Cally Palace Hotel in Gatehouse of Fleet which was to be the base for the three day tour, the party visited The Garden of Cosmic Speculation at Portrack House, north of Dumfries. This garden was created

by Charles Jencks and his late wife Maggie and is inspired by modern cosmology. The first day was completed by an after dinner talk from Richard Baines, the Curator of Logan Botanic Garden entitled 'Logan Through The Seasons'.

The following day, the tour party travelled via Newton Stewart to Luce Bay and Glenwhan Garden, the first garden visit of the day. Mrs Knott led a guided tour of her garden. Thereafter, it was on to Logan House where after a delicious lunch, there was a tour of the Victorian woodland garden with pathways that meander through ancient shrubberies and a majestic monkey puzzle avenue. A short stroll through the grounds to Logan Botanic Gardens where Richard Baines showed the Friends around the garden. On the final day, the Friends visited firstly, Elizabeth MacGregor's Nursery at Ellenbank – a wonderful nursery full of cottage garden perennials which are sent to keen gardeners all over the UK and abroad. In addition to the sales area, the half acre formal garden, with its high curved wall provides a showcase for plants in their mature form. The next stop was Broughton House situated in the heart of Kircudbright. The Friends were able to tour the house, the former home of Scottish painter EA Hornel, one of the Glasgow Boys. It has been painstakingly preserved and recreated and contains many of Hornel's paintings. There was also an attractive garden which runs down to the estuary of the Dee. Following lunch the Friends had a final garden visit to Corsock House lying beside the River Urr to the north of Castle Douglas. This is a stunning woodland garden known for its rhododendrons and azaleas with temples, water gardens and loch. The party returned to Edinburgh mid-evening after a happy few days.

2.3.4. South West Wales

In June 2015, Neil Woodcock, assisted by Shiona Mackie, led a party of Friends through the gardens of West Wales. Less than an hour after landing at Cardiff airport the group were enjoying the magnificent trees and formal gardens at Dyffryn House in Glamorgan before moving on to Tony Ridler's garden in Swansea - a magical mix of vistas, trompe-l'oeil and inspired design, all within one third of an acre. The group were based at the family owned and managed Beggar's Reach Hotel, near Pembroke.

On day two, the group visited Picton Castle in the morning, where we learned about the history of the house and its inhabitants before a fascinating tour of the garden by Roddy Milne (an RBGE alumnus). After lunch the group headed to Upton Castle, a private garden lovingly cared for by owners Prue and Stephen Barlow on the sides of a wooded valley. Their collection includes a range of species Rhododendrons and Magnolias.

Day three started with a short drive north through Fishguard to Dyffryn Fernant. Christina Shand and her partner David have transformed a wilderness into a wonderful series of garden rooms. Christina's son, Michael Dunn also works in the garden having recently completed a degree in Horticulture at RBGE. the group had a delightful morning wondering around the extensive garden, marvelling at the wonderful planting arrangements. Christina and her family provided a beautiful lunch for us, after which the group headed into Ceredigion (Cardiganshire) to visit Cae Hir - a delightful landscaped garden on a hillside with impressive trees (e.g. Cornus kousa) and borders.

Day four focused first on the National Botanic Garden of Wales, where the largest single span glasshouse in the world contains a marvellous mix of temperate planting from the northern and southern hemispheres. Outside there is a delightful and extensive herbaceous garden, and the group had time to explore the grounds individually before travelling the short distance to Aberglasney. This house and garden have been transformed from a wreck over the past twenty years and the work put in by the young and energetic horticultural team lead by Joseph Atkin has to be

seen to be appreciated. On the final day (the only day that the rain appeared!) the party visited Dylan Thomas's Laugharne, where the group had the opportunity to see the shed where he wrote, explore his boathouse, and walk through the small town before having lunch at the Cors preceded by a tour of Nick Priestland's delightful bog garden

2.3.4. Snowdrop Day 2016

The bus departed from the John Hope Gateway in wonderful sunshine on a chilly February morning. The tour commenced with a visit to St Andrews Botanic Garden, where following coffee, the party were taken on guided tours of the glasshouses and the garden. An excellent lunch was provided at the St Andrews Cheese Company. A short drive took the party to Cambo where everyone was able to enjoy the banks of snowdrops and other Spring flowers. Following a warming cup of tea in the café and an opportunity to purchase plants, the bus headed back to Edinburgh.

2.3.5. Chile

At the end of October 2015, 27 Friends embarked on a botanizing tour of Chile and a brief stay in Argentina. The tour was led by Sabina Knees and Martin Gardner, RBGE botanists, who have long links with Chile, and have been there many times. They set out with the idea of sharing their love of Chile with others.

Flying to Santiago, the group moved north to Zapallar from which they visited La Campana National Park and Los Molles – the latter was a rare survival of Mediterranean coastal vegetation and the colour and variety of low shrubs, herbs and bulbous plants made a wonderful display.

The party then flew south to Temuco, from where the party were taken to ancient Monkey puzzle forests. The trees were quite fantastic. Martin has worked for many years on the conservation of the monkey puzzle which is native to Southern Chile. There were very large ancient trees, one labelled The Milenaria, known to be 1,000 years old, but some probably older. The forests also had huge Nothofagus, or southern beech trees, of various types.

Travelling south to the Lake District, the party stayed at Puerto Varas on Lake Llanquihue. The hotel had a wonderful view over the lake with a perfectly conical volcano in the distance.

Much of this area had been covered in forest, but had been cleared for settlements and agriculture. The party were fortunate to be able to visit another National park where another endangered tree which used to form part of the forest is the conifer, *Fitzroya cupressoides* (Fitzroy was captain of the *Beagle* for Darwin's voyage to this area). A recently created reserve was visited, the only place where these trees grow in any quantity, where there were extremely tall, ancient specimens. The oldest in this area has been found to be 3,600 years old.

From Puerto Varas, the party crossed the Andes into Argentina on a route discovered by Teddy Roosevelt in 1913. It went through very remote areas and involved 3 ferries across lakes, a lovely walk and a couple of bus rides. From the different boats, once the low cloud had cleared, there were wonderful views of the snow covered mountains and the Valdivian Rainforest which covered their lower slopes.

In Bariloche, Argentina, a chairlift enabled the party to get a spectacular all-round view of the lakes and mountains. From Bariloche the party flew to Buenos Aires where a visit to the Botanic Garden completed a most wonderful South American experience.

2.4. Open Gardens

Organiser: Kate Dick

The Friends Committee was grateful to Anna Guest for hosting The Open Garden for 2015. Her garden is a young maturing garden with many unusual plants, shrubs and trees. In addition, there are several water features adding to the tranquillity of the garden. The Potters provided plants to sell, and refreshments were available. Despite being a blustery, wet morning, about 61 people came to see the garden.

2.5. Potters

Organiser: Heike Campbell

The Potter's Corner is filling up with as many plants as never before - nearly 5000 plants in pots and the 2 nursery beds will be ready for the 2016 Plant Sale in May, produced and nurtured by the tremendously enthusiastic and weatherproof group - the Potters.

During the summer there were two 'cuttings' and one seed sowing workshops in January 2016, organised and run by Heike Campbell, resulting in a large number and variety of young plants that should be ready for future plant sales.

The second phase of the building work for the new glasshouses in the nursery commenced on 1st February 2016, practically fencing in the Potters Corner.

Consequently, access has become more difficult, but alternative parking opportunities are in place and the Potters, with the help of maps and detailed access instructions, are finding their way with their customary good humour.

Transport of plants from the Potters Corner to the Plant Sale will be much more difficult this year and good planning ahead as well as many helping hands are essential. These are provided amongst others by the 12 new Potters who have joined the group at the beginning of the year and who have been warmly welcomed.

Without the patient Nursery staff the Potters could simply not function. They are always there to provide superb practical help and advice. The Potters and their needs are clearly always kept in mind and every effort is made to overcome the difficulties caused by the building work.

The weather has not always been kind and potting had to be postponed twice due to strong winds, but the temporary, bright yellow builder's portacabins next to our plot are providing not only a cheerful background, but also shelter from wind for now. Still, we are looking forward for everything going back to normal with the anticipated completion of the building work in July 2016.

2.6. Plant Sale

Organiser: Tish Alderson

The Plant Sale was held on Sunday, 10th May 2015. Once again, volunteers supplemented the regular Potters to assist in the preparations in the week leading up to the Sale. The Saturday morning preceding the sale is particularly frenetic with plants being laid out systematically on the tables, pricing and names being clarified and marquees being erected for the check-outs and bakery stall. Tish Alderson and her family were on hand on the Sunday, providing a sandwich lunch to the workers with grandchildren acting as plant porters. The Friends are grateful to Macplants, Binnie Plants, Kevock Plants and the Secret Herb Garden for supporting the Plant Sale. The weather remained dry – crowds began to gather early afternoon on Inverleith Ave South – and two hours later, the tables were virtually bare, and the

serious business of counting the monies began. Numbers attending were slightly down on previous year - . And income also marginally down, but nevertheless, £12,000 in two hours is once again a superb effort on the part of all who made the Sale a success again.

2.7. Photography Competition

Organiser: Ewan Crawford

The Edinburgh Friends Committee, when reviewing the 2014 Competition decided that the Competition should run for a longer period of time (November 2014 to September 2015) and additional categories should be introduced. Lothian Council Education departments were contacted and undertook to distribute information to their schools. Information was also sent to all the private schools in Scotland. The Scottish Association of Photography Clubs was also asked to distribute information about the Competition. Social media was used to advertise both the Competition and the Prizegiving. A number of entrants had heard about the Competition through the 'Meeting Up' website.

The committee had agreed to offer cash prizes for the first time. The changes to the format and cash prizes resulted in an increased number of entrants 94(63) and 402 (311) photographs.

Judging was carried out by Liz Cole, Lynsey Wilson and Ewan Crawford. The exhibition ran from 18th November to 2nd December in the Real Life Science Studio in the John Hope Gateway. The exhibition then transferred to Logan Botanic Garden from 16th March 2016 till 30th April 2016, followed by Dawyck in May and June and Benmore in July.

Winners in each category were as follows:

Garden View and Overall Winner: Alan Pottinger **Abstract:** Mark Beautyman

Plant Portrait: Helen Lunden

Wildlife: Marcy Ford

Young Photographer: Emily Hutton

Scotland's Flora:
Rod Hanchard-Goodwin

The Prizegiving took place in the Lecture Theatre in November. Following a brief introduction from the Convener, Shiona Mackie highlighting the work of the Friends Committees, Colin Prior delivered an inspirational talk on how he began to follow a career in photography and highlighting a number of projects with which he has been involved. He subsequently presented the prizes.

The Photography Competition relies very much on the support of the Membership Office, and the Vice Convener, Ewan Crawford, who leads this initiative and the team in the office must be commended on the successful running of the competition, the exhibitions and the prizegiving event.

2.8 Gardening Scotland 2015

Organiser: Shiona Mackie

Gardening Scotland took place on the weekend of the 29th to 31st May 2015. The Edinburgh Friends RBGE ran the two Plant Creches. The weather was mixed, memorable for the hail storm on one day, and the torrential rain and

extreme wind which affected, in particular, the west facing Plant Creche adjacent to the Floral Hall. Use of the Plant Creches appeared to be decreased – perhaps as a result of visitors bringing their own bags and/or the presence of a stall selling wheelie boxes! The reduced usage resulted in a fall in income but the donations received are welcome and it remains an enjoyable experience for all participants. The Convener is most grateful to all the good humoured volunteers who helped out over the course of the three days. The system for running the Creches has been in place for three years and works well. Any minor problems have been ironed out. The Friends Committee has been asked again to run the crèches at Gardening Scotland in 2016.

3. Benmore and Dawyck

Conveners: Shian Carlow and Tricia Kennedy

3.1. Benmore

Benmore Garden closes for the winter months, so it is important for the Friends Committee to give Friends value for their membership fee during these months. An event is organised each month, sometimes a talk, sometimes a walk and, of course, a Christmas party. The support received from Friends makes it a pleasure to organise these events and the Committee is a well oiled machine when it comes to who does what to make each event a success!

There were two garden visits in 2015, the first in May to Brodick Castle on Arran where the newly appointed Head Gardener took the party on a tour and spoke of his plans for the rejuvenation of some of the wilder areas of the Estate. Lunch was in the Castle cafe, followed by a Guided tour of the Castle. The sun shone and the Ferry crossing both ways was smooth.

In June two private gardens were visited. Drs. Judy and Peter Semple at High Lunderston, Inverkip showed the party round their extensive garden, with wonderful views over the Clyde, clematis scrambling through the high trees, beautiful scented azaleas and a mass of colourful rhododendrons. Then on to Duchal House in Kilmacolm, home to Lord and Lady Mclay. With a well established five acre walled garden full of fruit and vegetables, beds of lavender, roses, herbaceous borders and a mix of unusual trees - it was the perfect contrast.

The most exciting development at Benmore is the plan to renovate the Walled Garden. In the James Duncan era, this four acre site had glasshouses against three of the walls. These were demolished in the sixties after being severely damaged by gale force winds. Old age and disease have now taken their toll on the conifers planted within the walls and as they are removed, the site is getting ready for a whole new chapter in its life.

The principal event during the year was the Open Day, held at the end of May 2015, with the plant sale being the main attraction. Entry to the Garden is free, so as well as raising funds, the aim is to attract visitors, both local and further afield who might not have visited the Garden before. Although the day dawned wet, thankfully it dried up for the critical four hours. Attendance was approximately nine hundred visitors, raising £3,000 for RBGE.

September brought the retirement of Ian Potts, who had worked at Benmore for 49 years, outlasting many of the tractors he drove over that time!
In February 2016, Peter Baxter was awarded the highest accolade by the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, the Scottish Horticultural Medal. A well deserved honour for his dedication to Benmore.

3.2 Dawyck

The Friends of Dawyck had four early morning bird walks in the spring, led by Mike Betts in addition to the biennial dawn chorus led by Damion Willcock. We had two guided garden tours a month and completed the training of three more Garden Guides. A very successful Midsummer Yoga event was organised. The weather was appalling for our May Plant Sale, but our new Autumn Plant Sale in October did well and is set to become an annual feature in our calendar. The next instalment of the Data Capture was completed, funded by the Small Projects Fund.

4. Publications and Use of Social Media

The Friends Committees contribution to the Botanics has increased in 2015 with a page of articles, an aide memoire for forthcoming events, and eye-catching advertisements. Following a questionnaire sent out to all Friends, a decision has been made to reduce the frequency of the magazine to three a year and the Friends pages will continue as previously. In addition, the Membership Office continues to distribute e-newsletters once a month. Good use is now being made of Facebook. However, the Committee have still to get to grips with Twitter!

5. Revenue Generation

The RBGE Friends Committees have raised £47,248 this year. With the deduction of expenditure of £11,596, by the 31st March 2016, there is a surplus of £ 35,652 to which must be added the sum carried forward from last year of £14,741. At the end of the year (31st March 2016) the Friends have £50,393 in their account. (See Appendix 1 and 2 for detail) With an underspend of £720.71 in the Small Project Fund, £29,094.21 will be transferred to fund the projects which the Friends are supporting this year.

6. Small Projects Fund

6.1. Small Project Fund Applications 2016/17

16 applications were received, seeking funding of £34,713.33. 11 proposals will be fully funded, a further three projects are being part-funded. The total funding to be provided will be £29,763.33. (See Appendix 3). There is, however, a small underspend from a number of the 2015/16 projects (£669.12). Therefore, £29,042.62 will be transferred into the SPF account. There will be a further allocation of funds during the course of the year to be made from the residual surplus in the Friends RBGE account.

6.2. Small Project Fund Applications 2013/14/15/16

18 projects were funded last year – 16 at the time of the AGM. There was residual funding available, and a further two projects were funded (£3,600) later in the year. (See appendix 4 for detail). In addition, there were five projects carried over from the previous year. Sixteen of these projects have been completed. Eight projects will have their funding carried forward into this financial year. Last year, in total, £27,537 was transferred into the Small Project Fund.

7. Conclusion

2015 -16 has flown by, as the Friends' year has progressed from the Plant Sale, through the summer tours, to the winter season of events/talks and coffee mornings. Once again it has been a privilege to have been leading such a committed team and I must thank them again for all their support, resulting in a very successful year.

They can take time to reflect on their achievements – the Potters and other volunteers who contributed to making the Plant Sale another resounding success. Heike Campbell is now Lead Potter and has brought fresh ideas which will ensure the future success of the sale.

The Event/Talks have attracted varying audience numbers, but overall have improved on last year. The Coffee mornings go from strength to strength. I must thank all the speakers and performers who have given of their time for us.

The tours were well subscribed – Neil Woodcock and Joan Battersby were both excellent leaders. The Chile tour was also a resounding success – the weather was kind, the leaders (Martin Gardiner and Sabina Knees) were superb, and the participants had opportunities to see plants in their natural habitat – indeed many threatened by the encroachment of local development/industry.

While it has been decided to “rest” the photography competition in 2016, I do believe we have yet to fulfil the potential of the Competition as a fund raising event as I am not convinced the various elements of what would be required for a truly successful event have ever been optimised. I hope that the Edinburgh Friends Committee will be able to resurrect the Competition and make it even more successful in the future. Reflecting on the past year, we have much to celebrate and the three Committees will be handing over to the RBGE, the sum of £29,763.33 to support a number of projects over the coming year. The Edinburgh and Dawyck Committees regrettably have not been able to find replacement Conveners. In the meantime, in Edinburgh, the Vice Convener, Ewan Crawford will take on the mantle of Convener for six months during which time it is to be hoped that someone will emerge who will be interested and willing to take on the role. In the meantime, planning is well underway for the forthcoming year. The programme will include two special events in September and October to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the RBGE Friends organisation.

So, I come to the end of my final report as Convener. It has been quite an extraordinary five years for me. When I accepted the offer to take on the role, I was not sure where it would lead me. It has been a pleasure to make new friends here, learn more about the Garden and its work both in Scotland and internationally, and improve my botanical knowledge at the same time! I look forward to supporting the garden in a different capacity in the future.

Shiona Mackie
Convener. Edinburgh Friends Committee
April 2016

Appendix 1

Edinburgh Friends RBGE

Financial report for year ending 31st March 2016

	£	£
	2015/16	2014/15
Income		
Plant Sale	11,794	13,259
Tours & visits	22,021	18,565
Open Gardens	503	2,107
Coffee mornings & walks	1,831	733
Talks/Events	1,936	5,992
Benmore	3,464	2,583
Dawyck	2,491	1,986
Photographic competition	1,428	1,024
Gardening Scotland	1,780	2,251
Total Income	47,248	48,500
Expenditure		
Plant Sale	2,641	2,922
Tours & visits	6,183	9,560
Open Gardens	23	51
Coffee mornings & walks	591	224
Talks/Events	1,257	2,159
Photographic competition	360	0
Dawyck	325	233
Benmore	195	154
Gardening Scotland	22	20
Other Expenditure		
Total Expenditure	11,596	15,322
Net surplus for year	35,652	33,178

Appendix 2

Edinburgh Friends RBGE

Statement of Balances at 31 March 2016

	2015/16 £	2014/15 £
Balance available for Small Projects		
At 1 April	14,741	9,100
Surplus for year	<u>35,652</u>	<u>33,178</u>
At 31 March	<u>50,393</u>	<u>42,278</u>
Anticipated disposition of funds		
Transfers to Small Projects	29,764	27,537
Accruals for Tours Payments	10,000	9,500
Float	2000	2,000
Unallocated funds	<u>8,629</u>	<u>3,241</u>
Closing balance	<u>50,393</u>	<u>42,278</u>

Appendix 3

SPF Applications 2016/17

	Applicant Name	Application Title	Garden (pertinent to all/single gardens)	Division	Proposed Agreed Funding
1	Thomas Gifford	Data Capture and Mapping Project - Dawyck	Dawyck	Horticulture	2000.00
2	Kathryn Herschell	BSL Course Levels One to Three	All	Enterprise	1050.00
3	Graham Stewart	Chainsaw Tree Sculpture	Dawyck	Horticulture	1500.00
4	Elsbeth Haston/Louise Olley	William Lauder Collection	All	Science	663.00
5	Peter Wilkie	Flora Malesiana		Science	3000.00
6	Jacqui Pestell	Nepal Expedition	All	Education	2900.00
7	Hannah Atkins	Imaging of Gesneriaceae	All	Science	2622.00
8	Elsbeth Mackintosh	Alpine Interpretation Panels	Edinburgh	Horticulture	1000.00
9	Richard Baines	Enhancing Conservatory surround	Logan	Horticulture	1149.60
10	Claire Banks	East India Company NH Drawings	All	Science/ Education	2350.00
11	Rebecca Yahr	Expanding Lichen Interpretation	Edinburgh	Science	2964.73
12	Aline Finger	Genetic Rescue of <i>Woodsia ilvensis</i>	All	Science	2650.00
13	Peter Baxter	Squirrel Hide	Benmore	Horticulture	2914.00
14	Peter Hollingsworth	Rhododendron Photography	All	Science	3000.00
					29,763.33

Appendix 4

Small Project Fund Awards 2014/15/16

Applicant Name	Application Title	Amount £	Garden (pertinent to all/single gardens)	Division	
Stephen Heffer	Molecular Exploration of Coleosporium in Europe	695.28	All	Science	Carry forward
Colin Pendry	Mobilising Data in Kathmandu Herbarium	£1200	All	Science	Completed
Alan Bennell	Children's Glasshouse Trail	£3000	Edinburgh	Horticulture	Completed
Peter Baxter	Direction Posts	£2886	Benmore	Horticulture	In progress
Lorna Mitchell	Conservation of Nursery Catalogues	£1350	All	Science	Carry forward
Susie Kelpie and Cath Evans	GPS Equipment for upper primary and secondary schools programme	1173.45	Edinburgh	Education	Completed
John Mitchell	Interpretation for Rock Garden and Woodland Garden	1500.00	Edinburgh	Horticulture	Completed and carry forward
Moira Adam	BSL training for Visitor Welcome Team	700.00	Edinburgh	Enterprise	Completed
Richard Baines	Promoting the value of Bees at Logan Botanic Gardens	650.00	Logan	Horticulture	Completed
Sutherland Forsyth	Garden Dementia Socials	2500.00	Edinburgh	Horticulture	On-going
Robert Mill	Moth Trapping at RBGE	350.00	Edinburgh	Science	Completed
Hannah Atkins, Sally King and Robyn Drinkwater	Imaging of Gesneriaceae Herbarium Specimens	2515.73	All	Science	Completed
Leslie Scott and Hannah Atkins	Curation of Gesneriaceae Spirit Collection	2515.73	All	Science	Completed
Peter Baxter	Courtyard Gallery Exhibition Lights	2958.00	Benmore	Horticulture	Carry forward
Laura Gallagher	Nursery Conservation Propagation Cold Store Facility	650.00	All	Horticulture	Completed
Elspeth Haston	Specimap: using a georeferencing tool to build a dataset for phenology and	1677.15	All	Science	Completed

	climate change research				
Elspeth Haston	Collecting and preparing herbarium specimens field booklet	1316.00	All	Science	Carry forward
Alan Forrest	A pipeline for an Afghanistan Biodiversity Portal	1500.00	All	Science	Carry forward
Alan Forrest	Images of the Flora of Socotra	2400.00	All	Science	Completed
Thomas Gifford	Data Capture and Mapping Project - Dawyck	2000.00	Dawyck	Horticulture	Completed
Graham Stewart	Cryptogamic Area Interpretation	1500.00	Dawyck	Horticulture	Completed
Richard Baines	Upgrade to display case	600.00	Logan	Horticulture	Completed
Peter Hollingsworth	Rhododendron photography	3000.00	All	Science	Completed
TOTAL		38,637.34			

