Campaign Approaches a Successful Conclusion

Robert E. Cook, Director

Charles Sprague Sargent was a remarkable fundraiser in his time, and after. He died in 1927, leaving behind a fifty-four-year record of contributions from friends and supporters. Their generosity added to the original bequest of $100,000 that came from the estate of James Arnold in 1872. Those same friends and supporters conducted a campaign following Sargent’s death that raised over $1,000,000 for a memorial endowment. During the next thirty years, large bequests from the Case family and from Martha Dana Mercer continued to benefit the growing programs of the Arboretum; but no formal, broad-based fundraising campaign was mounted until the last decade of this century. In 1994 we set a goal of $8,250,000 which, at that time, was considered very ambitious for an institution with no recent history of such an organized effort.

I am pleased to report that, as of November 1 of this year, we have raised $7,950,000 in pledges and outright gifts. Many of these gifts are intended by their donors to be added to endowments to support our research and education programs in perpetuity. I am confident that, sometime early in the new millennium, we will achieve the goal set five years ago.

The success of our campaign was anchored by three major gifts from long-time friends of the Arboretum. The family of George Putnam established an endowment of over $1,000,000 to support the award of Katharine H. Putnam Fellowships at the Arnold Arboretum for research and related activities that use our exceptional collection of shrubs and trees. The extended Hunnewell family pledged to raise $1,000,000 to support the renovation of our main facility, the Hunnewell Building, built in 1892 through the generosity of Horatio Hollis Hunnewell. Finally, an anonymous donor bequeathed the Arboretum a gift of $1,000,000 to endow the Horticultural Library in Jamaica Plain, thereby ensuring the continuing strength of one of Boston’s finest collections of botanical books and journals.

For the first time, our campaign was conducted as part of Harvard’s university-wide effort. As such, perhaps our greatest accomplishment is a reaffirmation of the Arboretum’s traditional mission to increase our knowledge of woody plants and to disseminate that knowledge through education, including public education. In executing this mission in a magnificent landscape open to the public, we serve as one of the university’s most important contributions to the people of greater Boston and lovers of trees worldwide.

New Translation of Willow Monograph

Irina Kadis, Curatorial Assistant

Willows have long been known as a difficult genus. Few beacons cast light on the seas of confusion surrounding them. Since 1968, Russian-speaking readers could turn to an excellent review of the genus Salix by the authority on catkin-bearing plants, Alexei K. Skvortsov. The idea of translating this monograph, which describes 135 of the Eurasian willow species, many of which also occur in North America, captured me more than five years ago in the library of the Arnold Arboretum. I came

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across a copy of the book in the original Russian, so familiar to me, but useless to everyone else. I had no idea how long it would take me to translate the book; indeed, I would never have completed this project were it not for the enthusiasm and friendly support I found on both sides of the Atlantic.

From the very beginning (and the beginning was the most difficult!), I was encouraged and helped at the Arboretum and even granted a trip to Finland when the University of Joensuu agreed to publish the translation as a part of their Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences Report Series.

This was not just a matter of good luck. A group of scientists working in Finland under the leadership of Jorma Tahvanainen had long been studying the taxonomy and ecology of willow communities. From their perspective, the need for the book was urgent and obvious. A Canadian botanist, renowned specialist on the willows of the New World and an old friend of A. K. Skvortsov, George Argus helped with the scientific editing of the translation. Alexei Zinovjev, an entomologist from St. Petersburg Zoological Institute who studies willows as host plants of insects, coordinated all the work in both hemispheres and also undertook the technical part: compilation of computerized images of species distribution maps and layout of the entire manuscript. Luckily for me, Professor Skvortsov came from Moscow to Boston twice during these five years. Our discussions provided me with important insights.

Although some of the members of our international team never met, all the same, we worked efficiently. Thanks to the effort and commitment of Russian, American, Canadian, and Finnish scientists, Willows of Russia and Adjacent Countries is now available at University of Joensuu (mervi.kinnunen@joensuu.fi; ISBN 951-708-766-7).

Arboretum Council Fall Meeting

A visit to the site of the proposed Shrub and Vine Garden was one of the highlights of the annual fall meeting of the Arboretum Council, held on October 13, 1999. Council members discussed plans for the garden with Robert E. Cook, director, and Peter Del Tredici, director of living collections, as they reviewed the architect’s model and drawings. They then walked the site of the proposed garden. Other events of the day included a tour of Chinese Path and a presentation on the digitization of the Arboretum’s plant exploration records.

Staff Update

A series of recent staff changes and additions have occurred at the Arboretum. In the development department we have appointed Karen O’Connell, formerly membership coordinator, as development manager overseeing membership and the annual fund, as well as the finish of the capital campaign. We have asked Sheila Baskin, formerly secretary to several departments, to join the department as development assistant.

Sarah Carrier, who was hired in September to work at the front desk, has been asked to assist with the Institute for Cultural Landscape Studies one day a week as well. Sarah comes to the Arboretum from the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), where she helped conduct plant inventories for their historic sites. Sarah earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in environmental geography from Clark University.

In this photograph of the model of the proposed Shrub and Vine Garden, the Dana Greenhouses are above the garden and Centre Street is to the right.

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AABGA Visits the Arboretum

Ellen Bennett, Manager of Horticultural Information

Regional meetings of public garden professionals serve as important sources of practical information and as opportunities to network with peers. On October 28 and 29, the Northeast Region of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA) held its 1999 meeting. The first day of the conference was hosted by the Arnold, as 95 participants descended upon the site for a day of presentations on curation and landscape change. Speakers hailed from throughout, and beyond, the Northeast, including representation from the Connecticut College Arboretum, the Holden Arboretum, New York Botanical Garden, and the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation as well as this arboretum. After lunch in the Rose Garden, Arboretum staff led participants on tours of the grounds and gave demonstrations in the curation department and the Dana Greenhouses. The day ended with a wonderful reception at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline.

The second day was hosted by Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge. The focus of the day was master planning in the public garden realm, with speakers from Mount Auburn, Cornell Plantations, the Holden Arboretum, and Tower Hill Botanic Garden. Again, participants were treated to tours of Mount Auburn’s grounds, and a tour of Harvard Yard. After a marvelous closing reception in Harvard Yard, all agreed that the meeting had been a resounding success.

New Funding for School Programs

The education department has been awarded two new grants for the coming year to explore how the Arboretum might help schools create school-based, student-documented arboreta that would enable elementary students to use the trees in their schoolyards for long-term, inquiry-oriented studies. Our plan is to explore the issues related to such an endeavor during this school year in order to articulate and secure funding for a model program that could be used by schools nationwide. A planning grant from the Boston Schoolyard Initiative (a public-private partnership that is supporting the redesign and construction of the schoolyards of Boston schools) will permit us to explore these teaching and learning issues in partnership with the Hale School. Our work with teachers at the Hale School will center on ways that a schoolyard arboretum—specifically, the initial selection, placement, and documentation of a collection of trees—can become part of the science curriculum. We anticipate that our National Science Foundation-funded project, Seasonal Investigations, can then be used in subsequent years to support continued observation and documentation of those trees.

A planning grant from the National Science Foundation will help us leverage this pilot study by allowing us to create two prototype technology tools designed to support tasks related to the creation and documentation of an arboretum. The first tool will help students to make informed decisions about trees to include in their schoolyard arboretum by allowing them to search out specific variables, such as drought tolerance or bloom schedule. The second tool will help them organize their data about each tree and allow them to keep detailed records that can be used by subsequent groups of students over time.

We believe that these efforts will help us develop a model for the creation and documentation of a schoolyard arboretum that can become useful for schools across the country. We look forward to the new challenge that this idea offers. For more information about this project, please contact Candace Julyan at 617/524-1718 x 109.
During Peter Del Tredici's six-month sabbatical at Harvard Forest, Tom Ward, greenhouse manager and plant propagator, is serving as interim director of living collections. In addition, with a number of major projects on the grounds coming up, we have opened a new position for a landscape project manager and have appointed Laura Tenny Brogna, who was a Putnam Fellow, to that position. Laura will also be working on projects for the Institute for Cultural Landscape Studies. Finally, we have asked Irina Kadis, curatorial assistant, to increase her hours to provide additional time working in the herbarium at the Arboretum.

Staff additions in Cambridge include a new Putnam Fellow, Dr. Lisa Schulthies who will arrive in January from Berkeley to work in the laboratory of Michael Donoghue, using the living collections here, specifically, the genus *Ribes*. A Mercer Fellow, Dr. Hans-Joachim Esser will be arriving from Germany in March to conduct systematic studies and collecting expeditions. We are also adding a new staff member, Dr. David Middleton, as tropical plant systematist, in November.

Recent Construction Improves Neighborhood Conditions

Laura Tenny Brogna, Landscape Project Manager

Representatives of regional and local water agencies and their construction crews were in abundance on the Arboretum grounds in recent months. The best evidence is the new stormwater collection system designed and constructed by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) and Feeney Brothers Excavation Corporation of Dorchester.

Improvements were directed by the City of Boston to correct inadequate drain systems that have been overloaded in heavy storms, contributing to past flooding in the neighborhood of Archdale Road, near Peters Hill. The low-lying houses and roads were built on filled wetlands in the 19th century; that plus the confluence of several regional and local wastewater pipe systems have made the area highly vulnerable to flooding.

The work was simple in concept, difficult in execution. First came the excavation of a large, crescent-shaped, earthen basin for collection of stormwater runoff from Peters Hill. Then two pipes, 30 inches in diameter, were installed at the low end of the basin to divert water from the Archdale Road neighborhood. Instead, it carries water under South Street and releases it into the low-lying land by the railroad bed (in the area known informally as the South Street Tract of the Arboretum). About 300 feet of 36-inch concrete piping was required to help the water over and beyond a rise in the land in the South Street Tract.

A plus for the Arboretum in this operation was the removal of several truckloads of rubble that were deposited there in the 1980s during construction of the Forest Hills MBTA station. The construction also gave us the opportunity to rebuild the stone wall at the base of Peters Hill; some of the large granite blocks were salvaged from work on the Big Dig. In the process, stone steps were placed in the wall to accommodate neighborhood residents who previously had to scale it to enter Peters Hill. Structural repairs are now complete and regrading and other clean-up work should be finished shortly.

Just as construction was finished, tropical storm Floyd blew in to test the system. BWSC and Arboretum staffs were pleased to see it operating well during and after the storm; several feet of water collected in the South Street Tract.