

EDUCATION



Education Officer Kathryn Hardaker has been visiting local schools as part of the arboretum's outreach programme. Her travelling workshop featured an array of activities and themes including composting and recycling, how to make a mini wormery, and minibeast identification games. The latter proved particularly popular with the students at Tang Hall Primary School!

Kathryn also met hundreds of students in assemblies at Wigginton and Huntington schools and explored growth and life cycles using samples of buds, catkins, roots and toy animals.

TONY KIRKHAM HONOURED

Tony Kirkham, Yorkshire Arboretum Trustee and Head of Arboretum, Garden and Horticultural Services at Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, has been awarded the Victoria Medal of Honour by the Royal Horticultural Society. The VMH is the highest honour in British horticulture, for those who have made an outstanding contribution to the profession. The award is limited to 63 recipients at any time, being the number of years of Queen Victoria's reign. We offer our hearty congratulations to Tony and thank him for his long and continuing involvement with the Yorkshire Arboretum.

Our founding Curator, James Russell, and later Honorary Curator John Simmons were both awarded the VMH for their huge contributions to horticulture.



ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, continues to offer free access to all Yorkshire Arboretum members, staff and volunteers. We hope that many will take advantage of this generous benefit.

VOLUNTEERS FROM DEFRA HELP US OUT

On 10th April a party of 14 volunteers from Defra, led by Prof Nicola Spence (Chief Plant Health Scientist at Defra and an arboretum trustee), joined us to help plant over 100 deciduous azaleas around the lake.

This was a huge job, and we look forward to a spectacular show of flowers in future years. Many thanks to all involved for plunging in so willingly.



INSPIRATION EDUCATION CONSERVATION
THE YORKSHIRE ARBORETUM

Castle Howard, York
YO60 7BY

t: 01653 648598
e: visit@yorkshirearboretum.org
w: www.yorkshirearboretum.org

The Yorkshire Arboretum is indebted to the many talented photographers whose work illustrates these pages.

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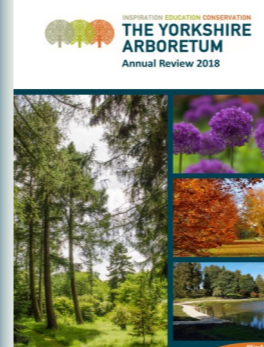
NEWSLETTER

May 2019

LITERATURE

Our new What's On and Open Gardens guides are now available with copies enclosed.

The 2018 Annual Review can be downloaded by visiting the **Background** page of our website.



HEALTHY TREES FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

We are delighted to announce that following a successful application to the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership, and match-funding from the Peter Sowerby Foundation and The Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund, plans will go ahead to build the Tree Health Centre at the Yorkshire Arboretum.

Designed in partnership with SALT Architects, who were commissioned to prepare plans for the building, the Tree Health Centre will be a single storey, purpose-built facility for teaching professionals and members of the public about the risks, challenges and practicalities of managing all aspects of tree health.

The centre is a realisation of the arboretum's core strategy and values. It is a chance for us to create strong links with tree health experts in a professional capacity, and raise awareness to all visitors and members of the importance of healthy trees and threats posed by an increasing range of pests and diseases.

The new building will be situated adjacent to the Visitor Centre, with work expected to begin in the summer. The arboretum and café will remain open throughout the construction period.



Artist's impression of the Tree Health Centre by SALT Architects



HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND



LOTTERY FUNDED

The arboretum's Development Phase (funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund) of our 'If Trees Could Talk' project came to an end in March. The work and activities undertaken have been hugely beneficial to the arboretum, and have enabled us to assess our options for better public engagement with a wider range of visitors, and a programme of summer activities and the creation of new tree trails began that process. We will roll out elements of the project over the next few months and years.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are delighted to be at last able to tell you about our Tree Health Centre project, which we have been quietly working on for several years. It's an extremely exciting project, using the site, facilities and staff of the arboretum to promote the message of the need for maintaining a healthy treescape, without which all our lives will be diminished. The Tree Health Centre is a major element in our development plans for the arboretum, and we're extremely grateful to the sponsors who are making it possible.

It seemed as if Spring came and went in February, and as I write just before Easter we are all hoping for the weather to warm up soon. Even more, we are hoping for rain to moisten the parched ground and let the hundreds of trees and shrubs planted in the past few months get established. This has been a huge effort by our volunteers and staff and some really interesting things have gone in. On the Sandbanks we're creating a Mediterranean feel with plants from California, Australia and the Mediterranean basin. Several olive trees have appeared thanks to generous members, and John Short and Helen Wood gave us an Australian mimosa (*Acacia dealbata*). It was always James Russell's philosophy that this arboretum should be experimental and we're happy to continue that tradition forty years on, in a very different climate. It may be we lose a lot in the first hard winter that comes along, but that's part of the process.

Enclosed with this newsletter are our events programme for the year and the leaflet about our open gardens scheme. Friar's Hill Sinnington will be first, opening for us on 27th April. It is always a treat, but just the first of a series of fascinating gardens opening for us this year. The 'Celebrating Our Oaks' exhibition outside the Visitor Centre is on until 6th May and is well worth a look. It was opened by Sir William Worsley, the national Tree Champion, who said 'The stunning images in this exhibition demonstrate why oaks are so vital to us, and what we stand to lose if they are not properly cared for.' And that brings us back to our slogan for the Tree Health Centre, and one of our core values: 'Healthy trees for a healthy future.'

John Grimshaw



Left to right: Sir William Worsley, Dr John Grimshaw, Sarah Jeffery (Action Oak), Prof Alastair Fitter

40 YEARS OF THE YORKSHIRE ARBORETUM

This year marks the 40th anniversary of planting at what would become The Yorkshire Arboretum. Thanks to the diligent archiving of materials from the time, we have been able to use James Russell's handwritten notes to bring its origins to life. The enthusiasm and partnership between James and George Howard (Lord Howard of Henderskelfe) first led to the creation of the woodland garden in Ray Wood - James having moved to Castle Howard in 1968 - before they turned their attention to the arboretum.

In James's own words "The arboretum began with a message from George Howard about Wednesday 8th November 1978, He had been talking to a member of the Countryside Commission who had said why didn't people in his position make more use of the Commission's grants? They had a considerable surplus of money this year and if it wasn't used up, it would have to be returned to the government in March 1979."

One of the arboretum's original staff, Ken Cherry, has also kindly offered his insights into the site's foundation, adding: "James was just the man for job, sourcing an astonishingly large amount of capital to fund it from his contacts. His friends in the trade saw him coming and took the opportunity to offload a huge amount of rare tree stock that had been propagated to within an inch of its life, so this arboretum was to be their retirement home.

Trees arrived all in a clatter and had to be stored temporarily with their roots in deep straw. The weather did not cooperate much. It was one of the tougher winters, so it was not unusual to be planting in a near blizzard. Conditions were tough enough to witness sights like a barn owl attacking a kestrel. It was all hands to the pump, the full gardens team and a few more besides...."

A scan of a handwritten note on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and reads: "It was impossible to start planting until March and then it was frequently interrupted by further snow. Due to a remarkable effort by Paul Sivall and Ken Cherry, to gether with help from the gardeners, the last trees went in by Day 18th 1979."

A scan of James Russell's original notes, referencing planting conditions and acknowledging the help of Ken Cherry and Paul Sivall.

OPEN GARDENS & PLANT SALE

Tickets are now available for our 2019 Open Gardens programme. These can be purchased at the Visitor Centre, online, or at the gardens when open. Please note that as this is a fundraising scheme (supporting our planting programme) there is no discount for Members.

Our annual plant sale will be on Sunday 2nd June, from 10am-3.30pm. You can support us by growing plants for sale, coming to pick up some treasures—or both! Last year we were given an amazing range of specimens and hope for the same this year. Plants for the sale may be left at the Visitor Centre from Monday 27th May.



RAY WOOD

Our satellite garden Ray Wood is maintained by a dedicated group of volunteers, led by arboretum Collection Manager Jonathan Burton. Over 2,200 trees of 605 species and varieties make up the Ray Wood collection, and Jonathan and team have been extremely busy as winter turns to spring.

"Winter has not been as cold this year, although any lack of snow was counterbalanced by punishing high winds brought by Storm Gareth during March. We were fortunate to receive support from Castle Howard, bringing in arborists to clear up the damaged canopies. This work has enabled thinning of some trees to encourage light to the plants below the canopy, particularly providing growing space for the Handkerchief Trees and Japanese Katsura. Encouraging vigorous growth will mean these trees remain healthy for longer and, with careful cultivation, will become part of the canopy themselves.

The Ray Wood volunteers have worked hard to utilise the materials from the tree work for new path edging, wood chip for the walkways and mulch to suppress weeds around new plants. The collective effort of all parties involved has greatly

improved conditions for both the collection and the people who come to enjoy it."

Jonathan Burton, Collection Manager

*Member tours of Ray Wood run Sun 28 and Tue 30 April, and Sun 20 and Tue 22 October.

