



# NEWS SHOOTS

From the FRIENDS of THE BOTANICAL GARDENS SHEFFIELD

## Feedback Welcome

Do you enjoy News Shoots?  
Are there different articles or  
images you'd like to see?  
Please send comments and  
ideas to our Chair Carolyn or  
[chair.fobs@gmail.com](mailto:chair.fobs@gmail.com).

## Plant of the Month

After the South Lodge was  
restored in 2003, this lovely  
*Chaenomeles speciosa*  
'Moerloosii' was planted.



The delicately-coloured  
flowers appear on bare stems  
in spring and continue  
blooming profusely for many  
weeks.

In autumn small, apple-like  
fruits appear. Being rich in  
pectin they can be added to  
jams.



## Message from our Chair

Dear Friends

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to another edition of News Shoots. Thank you to all our contributors and the Friends team who have pulled it all together. The Friends have been as busy as ever, making a positive contribution to maintaining the Gardens, raising our profile, and informing people about their historical and horticultural importance.

I would particularly like to thank my marvellous Executive team, who give so much time voluntarily to ensure our organisation runs so professionally in numerous ways.

We're organising a gala day to celebrate the Friends ruby anniversary on Sunday 4th August from 11am to 3pm. It'll be an opportunity for as many Friends as possible to celebrate our achievements and to engage with the public. We're planning a picnic, brass band, Pollen Market, plant sale and various other stalls, including our new merchandise, refreshments, the Marnock exhibition, tours and children's activities. **Please put the date in your diary!**

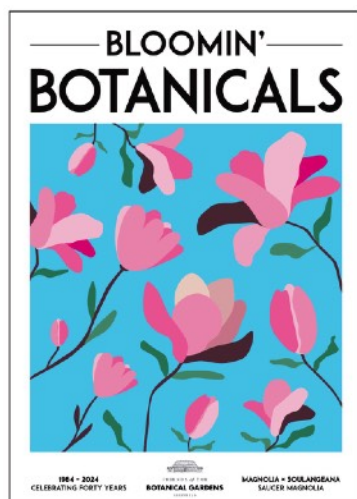
Here's to another 40 years of gardening, propagating, raising funds, trips, tours, lectures, sales, socials, refreshments, Zooms, archiving, history-telling, library-keeping, networking, publicity and volunteering!

To ALL Friends of the Botanical Gardens, we are very thankful for all your support. You are making a difference.

  
**Carolyn Clark**

## New Merchandise

We're delighted to be adding to our range of merchandise with a new selection of coasters, fridge magnets, badges, seeded paper cards and postcards. Designed for us by Jam Artworks, they are part of our 40th anniversary celebrations.



The merchandise will be available at our events and talks, at Joni's in the Gardens, and the cards will also be in our online shop.

## May Merchandise and Plant Sales

Over the May Bank Holiday weekend (4-6 May) from 10am to 4pm, we will be holding a merchandise stall and second-hand book sale alongside the Hallam Art Group exhibition in the Dorothy Fox Centre.

There will also be a sale of plants propagated from the Gardens on Sunday only, from 11am-1pm. We do hope you can come and support us.

We'll be at Pollen Market on 19 May selling a range of items and spreading the word about our wonderful Gardens.

## Thanks to Laura

The Friends want to express our delight and admiration for the work that the Gardens' Education & Engagement Officer has achieved over the past two years. Laura Alston has been an inspiration, bringing so many new people into the Gardens and helping them appreciate the importance of horticulture and heritage. We joined a review meeting recently with a representative from the Heritage Fund and she was highly impressed with the scope and scale of what Laura has achieved.

Although the two-year project is coming to an end, Laura will be staying with us for at least the next few months and we look forward to continuing to work with her.

## Heritage Lottery Project

*By Laura Alston, Education and Engagement Officer*

In May the Education & Engagement Project will come to an end. It has been a fantastic two years developing programmes for schools and adults, and building the profile of the Gardens as a centre for horticultural excellence.

Key achievements include an education programme for schools across the region and a varied adult programme in partnership with many providers, including formal horticulture qualifications with Sheffield College.

We've established important networks and relationships with higher education organisations and botanical gardens to provide research, experiences and greater recognition of the site. We've supported and grown our brilliant volunteer community and provided training.

We've hosted community and high-profile events such as Celebrating Marnock, bringing lots of new audiences to the Gardens. You'll also notice new signs appearing in April.



We're planning a celebration event for the Project when these are all in place.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved; it was only possible with your support, commitment and expertise.

# News from the Trust

*By Miles Stevenson, SGBT Chair*

I am pleased to report that the Trust is in a strong financial position which enables it to support a variety of capital projects in the Gardens. We work closely with Sheffield City Council on projects which the Trust and the Council can jointly fund. At a time of financial pressure for the Council, having the Trust's support ensures that projects can actually happen. In 2023, the Trust received a very generous legacy from the late Dr Jill Thompson and we are now liaising with a local solicitor concerning another bequest. Legacies like these are invested to generate regular income whilst maintaining the capital sum. There are always projects in the Gardens requiring grants and we are very grateful for all donations that we receive, especially the donations from the Friends.

The Trust recently agreed the following grants: a blue plaque to commemorate Robert Marnock which was 'unveiled' on 18th March 2024; a grant of £9,500 towards six garden refurbishment projects co-ordinated by the Council; a grant of just over £50,000 for the new Volunteer Centre; £5,000 towards the costs of a new corridor for the Education Centre.



*Education officer Laura Alston, head gardener Andrea Jones, Alison Hunter and Jill Sinclair from the Friends and Councillor Richard Williams with the new blue plaque for Robert Marnock.*

## Talks Programme

We're offering in-person talks on the 2nd Monday evening and 4th Tuesday morning of each month. We have several talks looking at growing produce plus one on growing for dyeing. We'll hear about the restoration of the Victorian gardens at Brodsworth Hall and the challenges of managing the heritage garden at Gunby in Lincolnshire.

Closer to home, we will hear about a rather unusual Sheffield Garden in July and then on 12th August we are holding a special event to celebrate our 40th year, at Sheffield General Cemetery, with a talk/visit to the Psalm 27 garden. Do come along and join us - it's surprising what you may learn and who you may meet!

## Membership News

We are a thriving group and have over 500 members. A very warm welcome to the 26 new Friends who have joined since our last edition; Bridget, Ruth, John and Leslie, Susan, Rena, Christine, Katherine, Sarah, Jo, George, Ian, Helen, Katie, Mary, Louise, Alison, Natalia, Anne, Geoffrey, Rob, Philip, John, Janet, Russell and Margaret. We do hope that you enjoy your membership. Sadly, Brian Perkins has died.

**Member Benefits** - among the many benefits of being a Friend we have 10% discount at all branches of Joni cafes, New Leaf Nursery, Rhyme and Reason bookshop and now at Dore Moor Garden Centre. Please ensure you have your valid membership card with you.

Thanks to everyone for their continued support and enthusiasm. Irene May  
[fobs.members@gmail.com](mailto:fobs.members@gmail.com).

## New Members' Event

Twenty-three new Friends enjoyed seeing the Gardens on a beautiful April morning at our annual new members' event. It was an informal get-together, giving people a chance to meet some committee members, hear about the many benefits of being a Friend and the variety of volunteering activities that are available.

Coffee and homemade cake were enjoyed before a tour of the gardens was given by Trish and Peter Kohn. Many thanks to everyone who helped to make it a most friendly and successful event.



## National Plant Collections Update



*Sarcococca ruscifolia* var. *chinensis* L713 (top) and *Weigela* 'Conquete'. Photos by Rod Egglestone.

The Gardens hold three National Plant Collections - *Diervilla*, *Sarcococca* and *Weigela* - and the Friends have long been involved in their management.

Lloyd Snellgrove is investigating the *Sarcococca* collection, adding information to our website at [www.fobssheffield.co.uk/national-collections](http://www.fobssheffield.co.uk/national-collections), and checking the location of each species and cultivar.

We're also reviewing the information we hold on the large *Weigela* collection and adding categories and photographs to our website. When the shrubs are in flower this summer, we hope to confirm the attribution and location of many of the cultivars, with the help of James Miller, the Gardens' Plants Records Officer.

## The Friends' Library

By Anne Brady

Anne Whitworth and I have recently taken over the running of our library, situated in the Dorothy Fox Centre. We have been giving it a bit of a refurb and updating the catalogue. It is still very much work in progress and it is taking a little longer than expected, so please bear with us!

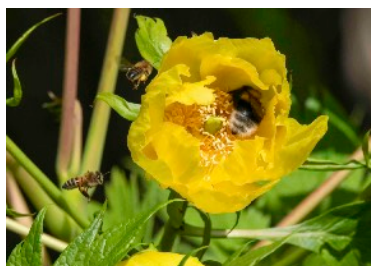
We have a wide range of horticulture and gardening-related books; categories include Alpines, Bulbs, Perennials, Garden Writers, Gardens, Wild Flowers, Water Gardening, Plant Hunters, Pruning, Pests and Diseases, Trees, Shrubs, Wellbeing as well as many useful Reference Books and RHS Leaflets.

One of us will be present at the talks on a Tuesday morning and Monday evening. The two glass fronted cabinets will be open at these meetings; please feel free to browse and, if you wish to take books out on loan, please enter your details in the Borrowers book. We suggest a borrow period of a month. If you can't find what you're looking for, we will do our best to help, or suggest alternatives. We also welcome recommendations for new additions to the library as well as interesting book donations, although as you will see space is somewhat limited! We look forward to seeing you soon.

## Show Garden Success

Friends Marko Yau, Saachi Parasrampurua and James Miller, Plants Records Officer at the Gardens, have co-designed a Resilient Pocket Planting Garden for this summer's RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival. Called Winds of Change, the garden is sponsored by Galloper Wind Farm Ltd. It will be relocated to the Jaywick Community and Resource Centre with the help of Tendring District Council.

The theme is to create a coastal atmosphere, with *Eryngium* and *Echinops* blues and grey-green foliage; *Limonium*, *Crambe*, sea poppy, and *Silene* to evoke colours and textures of the sea. Succulents *Delosperma* and *Yucca* give climate resilience, while *Miscanthus* and *Stipa* represent the movement of the wind.



April photos from the Gardens: bees enjoying two peonies (above) and (front cover) *Rhododendron* 'Loderi King George' near the bear pit. See 'What's Looking Good' on our website for more seasonal interest. Send your photos to [fobs.photos@gmail.com](mailto:fobs.photos@gmail.com) to add to the collection.