

Exchanges across the Pond

In 1998 a remarkable interchange fellowship celebrates its 50th Anniversary. Nancy McLaren and Ann Farrell outline its origins, while fellowship students, past and present, précis its meaning for them.

The Institute of Horticulture Martin McLaren Horticultural Scholarship with the Garden Club of America Interchange Fellowship has undergone several metamorphoses in its 50-year history. Unchanging, however, is the place it holds in the lives of those who have benefited from it.

Nancy McLaren (who was Chairman from 1984–1995 and after whose late husband the memorial scholarship is named) outlines its beginnings.

The Institute of Horticulture Martin McLaren Horticultural Scholarship with The Garden Club of America Interchange Fellowship

It pleases me so much to try to write down a brief history of this really special fellowship, which has its 50th birthday this year. It was started in 1948 by Lady Heald CBE, who thought that after the war it would be such a lovely plan to foster the good relationships between America and Britain, by having a Horticultural Exchange Fellowship. Lady Heald arranged with the Hillsborough Garden Club in California for it to be the first club to host this plan. Dr Daphne Vince-Prue, who was to gain the first award in 1948, has written of her experiences. Lady Heald was given £700.00 for this, the first scholarship, funded by Fisons, the fertiliser firm, under the auspices of Notcutt's Nursery.

From then on an exchange has taken place every year. Daphne Heald, aged 93, is still doing all she can to encourage this exchange. Over so many years, and still to this day Americans – scholars, botanists, friends and their families are welcomed at her home, Chilworth Manor near Guildford. So many Fellows will have memories of her help and interest and hospitality. The garden at Chilworth has been an inspiration to them as well.

The next chairman was Lavinia Hamilton, wife of Sir Michael Hamilton who was Member of Parliament for Salisbury. Sir George Taylor, a great horticulturist, was then adviser to the Scholarship. During these years the Stanley Smith Foundation funded the Exchange.

There were so many exchanges of splendid Fellows before my time, and I hope so much that many of them may be able to come to our reunion celebration next year on 6th July 1999 at the RHS Hampton Court Flower Show.

I remember meeting Dr Laurence Skog who was the American Fellow in 1968. He is now Curator of Botany at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC. He told me how much he had both enjoyed



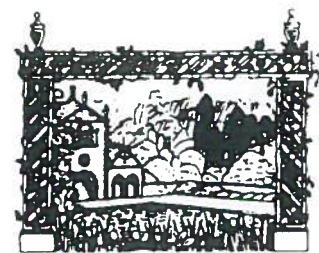
The late Martin McLaren for whom the present Scholarship is named.



Lady Daphne Heald, founder of the original Exchange Fellowship.

and profited from his time at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. James St John Wilson who is now one of the Institute of Horticulture advisors to the Exchange was the British Fellow in 1971.

In 1980 I was involved in the Exchange on the Council, but it was not until 1984 that I became Chairman. It was then that the name and arrangements were adopted by the Martin McLaren Trust. This was fitting for several reasons. My husband Martin was a good friend of America. He won the Henry Fellowship to Harvard in 1937. He studied American Constitutional Law which was a great help to him during his career in law and politics. He was the great nephew of Gertrude Jekyll. My mother-in-law, Barbara Jekyll, was the little girl seen at Munstead in many of Gertrude Jekyll's books. Martin's father, who was Francis McLaren, was killed flying in the 1914/18 war. He was the younger son of the first Lord and Lady Aberconway. Lady Aberconway, with the help of her eldest son, Henry (later President of the RHS), created the beautiful garden at Bodnant in North Wales. With this background of such keen and knowledgeable parents, Martin was always surrounded by people who loved gardens and all related interests, and was influenced by the gardens at Munstead and Bodnant. Therefore, I felt this scholarship would be a very fitting memorial to him. I was greatly assisted when setting up the scholarship by Lord Aberconway who helped me to invite the patrons and allowed me to use the drawing of the Pin Mill at Bodnant for our logo.



The Pin Mill logo.

During the 1980s and 1990s, I have been greatly



Nancy McLaren (2nd left) with (left to right) Ann Bucknall, Ellie Lloyd, Dotty Cannon and Nancy Parry in Darrien, Connecticut at the home of Dotty Cannon. All were Chairmen of Garden Clubs of America during Nancy McLaren's Chairmanship in the UK.

privileged to get to know so many individuals who studied botany, horticulture and landscape architecture and have now gone on to careers in related fields. I feel we owe a great debt to the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Royal Botanic Garden Kew and the Royal Horticultural Society Garden Wisley for allowing our Exchange students to work and study in these great gardens with wonderful facilities and expert staff. I also wish to thank our advisors, Richard Bisgrove and James St John Wilson and I send a particular message of thanks to Angela Clarke and Pam Deakin of the Institute of Horticulture.

Nancy McLaren

Ann Farrell *takes up the tale across the Atlantic*

Fifty years ago it was 1948. World War II was finally over. This was the year Britain and the United States airlifted more than two million tons of supplies into Berlin over the Red blockaders.

It was also just three years after 50 nations signed the United Nations Charter. UNESCO, the Economic and Social Council, one of the UN's principal organs, had been formed to promote, among other things, international cultural and educational co-operation. As a result of attending a UNESCO meeting in San Francisco, members of the Hillsborough Garden Club, a Garden Club of America affiliated club in California, proposed the idea of supporting a British Exchange Student for a year. The intent was then – and still is – to foster British-American relations and the understanding of each other's cultures, as well as to promote horticultural studies.

The Hillsborough Club raised money with a house and garden tour, negotiated successfully with the University of California at Berkeley and the

English Speaking Union (London) Garden Committee, and created the "Hillsborough Garden Club Study Grant in Horticulture".

The first British student in 1948 was Dr Daphne Vince-Prue. Since that time, she has devoted her career to teaching and research in both horticulture and plant physiology and, as have so many others, written that the Fellowship had a profound influence on both her life and career. She is observing the anniversary by presenting lectures to several Garden Club of America (GCA) clubs on the east and west coasts – an exceptional treat for those American club members.

In 1950 the ESU offered a reciprocal Fellowship to an American student at the University of London, and in 1951 the Woodside-Atherton and Piedmont Garden Clubs (also in California) joined Hillsborough in sponsorship. GCA clubs voted in 1952 to make the Interchange Fellowship a permanent GCA international project in horticultural education, with sponsorship rotating among the GCA zones. Initially, the Fellowship was only open to women. Men were first allowed to apply in 1962

Chilworth Manor, Guildford, belongs to Lady Heald, and is familiar to Fellows past and present.





The Interchange Fellowship Reunion held in New York in autumn 1994 (left to right) Carleton Ward, Judith Zuk, Todd Lasseigne, Louise Wyman, Nancy McLaren, Pippa Seargeant, Tim Richley, Clare Biller and Rick Hansen.



Eve Rickenbaker (1998/99) was responsible for administering the Rainforest Expedition Programme at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

and the first man was accepted the following year.

The Garden Club of America, founded by 12 clubs in 1913, is now composed of 193 clubs with approximately 16,500 members in 40 states and Washington, DC. It is dedicated to stimulating the knowledge and love of gardening, sharing the advantages of association by means of educational meetings, conferences, correspondence, and publications, and restoring, improving, and protecting the quality of our environment through educational programmes and action in the fields of conservation and civic improvement. Scholarships are at the heart of its programme.

The British student's experience in America generally includes an academic year at a university, as well as travel. University enrolment is mandated by current visa requirements. Members of the GCA clubs have traditionally taken an active role in the enrichment programme by arranging visits to public and private gardens, hosting Fellows in their homes, and providing other special opportunities.

Prior to 1990, this particular Fellowship was overseen by the GCA's Interchange Fellowship Committee. During 1988–89, however, those intimately involved with GCA's various scholarships and fellowships began to gather them under one committee-umbrella in the interest of greater efficiency, a broader view of the educational world, and a greater awareness of the programme both within the GCA and in the educational community. The GCA Scholarship Committee was thus formed, and a year later the Interchange Fellowship was placed under its aegis.

Currently the GCA annually offers, in addition to the Interchange Fellowship, graduate grants and fellowships in tropical botany, medicinal botany, rare and endangered flora, and habitat-related issues that benefit threatened or endangered bird species. These are administered by co-operating

organisations that include (respectively) the World Wildlife Fund, Missouri Botanical Garden, the Center for Plant Conservation, and Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. The GCA also presents a Rome Prize Fellowship in Landscape Architecture through the American Academy in Rome each year. For college students, the Committee awards summer environmental studies scholarships and regional scholarships in horticulture and related fields.

Sir Kenneth Carlisle now oversees the programme for an American studying in the United Kingdom. He is the cousin of Nancy McLaren, who in 1988 arranged for permanent funding of the Martin McLaren Horticultural Scholarship for American students to study in the UK and who has hosted them so graciously for many years. Originally, financial sponsorship in the UK was provided by Fisons Ltd and was later assumed by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Foundation from 1973–82. In 1982/83 the Fellowship was supported by the

McLaren Trust, originally for three years and then extended. The Martin McLaren Horticultural Scholarship was then formally created in memory of Mrs McLaren's husband, and provides for a work/study year of enrichment, with non-credit practical experience in horticulture at universities and botanical gardens in the United Kingdom.

The GCA fully anticipates its participation in this extremely valuable student exchange for another half century. Our students are selected not only because of their achievements but also because they exhibit the potential to become leaders in their chosen fields. While they experience their year abroad, they are truly our ambassadors.



From Dr. Daphne Vince-Prue (1948/49)

"At that time, 50 years ago in 1948, I was a demonstrator in Amenity Horticulture at the University of Reading, having graduated in Horticulture two years earlier at Wye College. Britain was still very much in the post-war austerity period (both food and clothes rationing) and I had never yet had the opportunity to travel outside England. I think it would be hard for present day students to share the excitement and sense of opportunity that I experienced when I learned that I had been selected for the Fellowship. I elected to study at the University of California in Berkeley, since I had already embarked on a research programme in plant physiology at Reading and the University at Berkeley offered many courses in subjects that would be valuable for my research. The courses also gave me the opportunity to carry out experimental work in plant physiology as part of the Master of Science programme that I successfully undertook.

My journey to California involved a ten-day crossing of the Atlantic (including negotiating a hurricane!). Present day students travelling by air are unfortunately denied the excitement of arriving in New York harbour at night and tying up alongside the illuminated Manhattan skyline. After a short stop in New York, the second leg of my journey involved three days on a train giving me the chance to see the overwhelming variety of the American landscape as I travelled across the Great Plains, through the deserts and over the mountains, before finally reaching the Pacific Ocean.

I have already mentioned the professional side of my stay in California. My experience at UC Berkeley was an important factor in the development of my interest in plant physiology which, when I returned, I made my career. I was particularly lucky to be inspired by such famous researchers as Melvin Calvin (then developing the Calvin Cycle) and Dan Arnon (famous for his research in photosynthesis). My own mentor was Dennis Hoagland, of 'Hoagland's Solution' fame (a nutrient solution for plant water culture).

The other side of the coin was the wonderful hospitality of the Hillsborough Garden Club. I was entertained in their homes, taken to visit many fine gardens, and even lent a car on two occasions so that I could travel and see more of the west coast scenery. Friendships I made then have stayed with me and I still have many contacts in California. In the 1980s, I returned to UC Berkeley as a Visiting Professor, teaching Plant Physiology in the place where I had first studied it intensively. In November 1998 I plan to enjoy a reunion with the Hillsborough Garden Club, who were the original instigators of a Fellowship in Horticulture that has lasted for 50 years and continues to offer young horticulturists from Britain and USA the opportunity to study in and learn something of each

others countries."

From Shirley I. Hewett (1955/56)

"It is wonderful to think that the Interchange Scholarships have continued for over 50 years and that this opportunity is still being offered to today's young horticultural students.

I look back on my time in Athens, Georgia with immense pleasure. Not only did it give me the experience of attending an American University for a year but I was able to pursue a course in Landscape design which was not offered in this country at that time. Because of the enormous generosity of the Garden Club of America I was able to travel widely, visiting the various Clubs and staying as a guest in some unique homes especially in the southern States. I remember with gratitude my host family, the Players, in Atlanta, Georgia, with whom I kept in touch for many years. I am still in contact with the American Student who followed me to England, Shirley Cooper-Carter. She and her husband Barry, remain my good friends and visit England from time to time. My year in the USA widened my horizons, made me aware of a culture in a very different country and gave me lasting memories and experiences which have proved of enormous value throughout my life.

Now, in retirement I am active in running the Somerset County Gardens Trust and keeping my own garden in order."

From Rethna Flaxman (1963/64)

"I attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison for the year 1963/64. While at the university I was able to follow a variety of courses, with excellent tuition, which all helped with my career when I returned to England.

During the vacations I travelled extensively and enjoyed marvellous hospitality, staying with interesting and delightful Garden Club families. We visited many gardens and houses which I would never have seen otherwise.

Now I work as a Landscape & Garden Consultant with my husband. Our work consists mostly of designing private gardens and some work with restoration of large historic gardens in this country and Ireland."

From Dr M R Shipway (1965/66)

"When I graduated from Wye College in 1965, I had no set career in mind. It was therefore very fortunate that I had the opportunity to study for a further year at the University of Massachusetts, USA, under the auspices of the Garden Club of America. During this time I enjoyed marvellous hospitality and developed many close friendships. Technically, I took a keen interest in post-harvest biology which ultimately led to a PhD. This influenced the future direction of my career.

On my return to England, I took up a post at Kirton EHS where I spent 10 years working on the storage of vegetables, with particular emphasis on onions. I then moved into management, spending the last seven years of my career as Horticultural Development Director and Head of Station, Efford at HRI. I retired in 1997."

From Dr Laurence Skog (1968/69)

"The Interchange Scholarship allowed me to work at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, and undertake taxonomic and horticultural research on the neotropical relatives of African Violets (Gesneriaceae). Being based in Edinburgh during that year, I was able to visit many botanical gardens and museums in the UK and on the Continent, whose plant collections provided a basis for my thesis research that resulted in my receiving a PhD from Cornell University in 1972. Soon after I came to the US National Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, where I am employed as a curator and research scientist. I am still doing research in the same plant group, but throughout the world where the plants grow."

From James St J Wilson (1971/72)

"On a very hot September day in 1971 I arrived at Kennedy Airport bound for two years at the State University of New York in Syracuse. Despite an average of 3.5 metres of snow, 'high' temperatures in an Upstate New York winter of -34°C and a deluge of 30cm of rain in 12 hours whilst Hurricane Agnes passed through during the summer of 1972, I had two tremendously enjoyable and unforgettable years for which I am eternally grateful to the Garden Club of America. I completed my Master of Landscape Architecture degree in 1973 and have been working and lecturing in this field since then, specialising in the horticultural aspects of the subject. Notwithstanding the chaos caused within the Garden Club while I was in the States, the ESU were brave enough to invite me to join their selection panel. I have much enjoyed being part of the continuation of the scholarship; the selection of the UK candidates and involvement with the programmes for the American scholars. I am so glad that Mrs McLaren has enabled this excellent scholarship to continue, long may it do so."

From Peter Cummin (1973/74)

"Receiving the Fellowship was the beginning of what has become my life's work and also my vocation - landscape architecture and gardening. I continue to support the GCA, which was the distinguished American sponsor, through speaking engagements and lectures with much gratitude and appreciation.

I was awarded the GCA/Interchange Fellowship in 1973/74 as I was finishing my Bachelor of Science in Horticulture at the University of Bath. The Fellowship enabled me to attend the University of Georgia School of Environmental Design where I completed my Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture. After training for several years in design offices in Cambridge, Massachusetts, I founded my own landscape architectural firm, Cummin Associates, Inc. in 1985. I specialise in the design of gardens for large private homes and estates. We are

now based in Stonington, Connecticut and have completed designs in 25 states. The contacts made from my year as an Interchange Fellow have continued to help me throughout my career.

The Fellowship was not only a turning point in my professional career but in my personal life as well. I met my wife, a fellow landscape architecture student, at university. We have been married 21 years and have three children."

From Dr Mary Deasy Collins (1975/76)

"...The year I spent in England was a very wonderful time for me. At no other point in my life before was I really able to see time as a component in all things. Being surrounded by reminders of the past, both architectural and horticultural, was a remarkable experience and one which has influenced my vision of life ever since.

Also, I experienced much warm hospitality during my year, and will never forget meeting Prince Phillip at a reception a few weeks before I returned to America.

These days I work at Duke Divinity School, where I have been since 1989."

From Judith D Zuk (1976/77)

"The Martin McLaren Horticultural Scholarship together with the Garden Club of America Interchange Fellowship provide one of the greatest learning opportunities for young horticulturists in the US and UK. For me the scholarship provided the chance to strengthen my 'hands-on' experience of gardening at Kew and Wisley, while deepening my background in plants and garden history at Reading. I made friends for life during my year as a Fellow, and I call constantly upon the things I learned in my current position as President of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden."

From Barbara Moth (1976/77)

"I was based at the University of Delaware. Study along-side graduates of the Longwood Programme opened my eyes to an enormous range of plant material, provided an alternative, dynamic, Burle-Marx approach to planting design and introduced me to the concept of interpretation. The generosity of my GCA guardians ensured that every opportunity for fulfilling the dual role of student and ambassador was grasped and that I travelled and visited gardens across the United States. Snow-capped mountains as a backdrop to drifts of blue camassia on Vancouver Island and the fragrance of freesias filling the conservatories at Longwood Gardens, are but two vivid memories.

Now I am Landscape Architect in private practice and am currently undertaking the part-time post graduate course in the Conservation of Historic Landscapes, Parks and Gardens at the Architectural Association."

From Pat Alexander (1979/80)

"I spent my year in ZONE X - Ohio, studying at Ohio State University on the first year of the Masters Degree in Landscape Architecture.

My year in the USA was, and remains to this day, a major influence on my life:

- To be welcomed into the homes of the families of

the GCA and to be shown their country through their horticultural eyes has left me with strong images of beautiful landscapes.

- To travel for four months throughout the USA made me realise what a vast country it is!
- To study in an American University which was the size of a small town was an experience in itself!
- To study (and to teach – I taught several undergraduate classes) with American students who had such a different range of skills and different landscape vocabulary challenged me every day I was there. I often think I should have returned to complete the second year of the Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture. And to be taught by Professor Larry Walquist – who always made us laugh while we worked!
- But after travelling through the vast countryside of the US I craved for the intimacy of the British landscape, and its dry stone dykes, and its small green fields.... and so I came home!

I moved to Scotland upon my return to the UK and worked for five years for the Countryside Commission for Scotland, followed by a ten-year period of running my own native tree nursery. I am now employed by South Ayrshire Council and have responsibility for the Parks and Green Space of South Ayrshire."

From Gerald Luckhurst (1981/82)

"The Scholarship enabled me to obtain my Masters degree in Landscape Architecture. This, in effect, has shaped my whole career. As a Horticulturist and a Landscape Architect, I am simultaneously Nurseryman/Designer/Builder. This approach I learned in the US. I thoroughly believe it is the best way to create beautiful gardens. Many close friendships were forged during the three years, perhaps the best legacy of all.

I continue to enjoy close ties with the United States – although I have not had the opportunity to return. This year I led two tours of my gardens in Sintra, Portugal and Funchal, Madeira. One for the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the other for *Horticulture Magazine*. On the second tour I met a lady who had been with me at the GCA annual meeting at Rochester NY, in 1982. I have met Daphne Vince-Prue several times over the last few years, chiefly in Madeira.

I set up a new business landscape construction company (Jardin Formoso) two years ago. Currently we are working on the restoration of two Unesco World Heritage Classified gardens, namely Monserrate and Pena, both in Sintra near Lisbon. Our design office is staffed by three landscape architects and has over a million pounds worth of projects on the drawing board – that's an awful lot of landscape for Portugal. Ten years have passed since I came to Portugal, I can't believe how quickly things have changed here."

From Philippa Sergeant (1987/88)

"Even if I had been asked to plan an ideal course, tailor-made to my own particular interests and direction, it would have been difficult enough. Yet my year in America with the Longwood Graduate Programme not only fulfilled but surpassed all

hopes, expectations and dreams.

In 1987 I joined the Longwood Graduate Programme of the University of Delaware. The course focused on producing professionals with a broad understanding and commitment to public horticulture, emphasising the management and administration of botanic gardens, horticultural societies and related institutions, their role and function.

The Programme embraced not only horticultural topics, but also museum studies, and management courses (financial, physical plant, personnel). These may well seem a little diverse but each has a role in the successful functioning of a public institution. Although Britain is always recognised as a nation of gardeners, there is still much to learn about the way horticulture interfaces with people.

On returning to England, I joined the Shows Department of the Royal Horticultural Society. The Department is responsible for the organisation of their Society's flower shows including such events as the Chelsea and Hampton Court Palace Flower Shows. The RHS sees its shows not only as a very important vehicle by which to bring horticulture to its members and the public at large nationwide, but also to present a showcase for the best of the profession. Their organisation involves and brings together many of the skills I learnt in America over and above pure horticulture.

Lastly, but by no means least, perhaps the one thing that I have benefited from most is an attribute that is not mentioned in any curriculum or programme. I believe it is one that would be experienced by any Exchange Fellow, past or present, and it is the American attitude – their tremendous zest for life, energy and positiveness – everything is possible! An essential outlook to have when there has been three consecutive weeks of rain, the ground is under 5 m of water, you are standing in the middle of a quagmire alongside one of several mud-bound 40 ton lorries, the marquee poles are creaking like a tea-cutter in the Westerlies and the flower show opens the following day."

From Nigel Dunnett (1989/90)

"For me, winning the Scholarship was a truly life-changing experience. Although I was based in the Department of Horticulture at North Carolina State University, I took full advantage of the travelling opportunities provided by the GCA and visited gardens and natural areas throughout the eastern States, from New England down to Florida. I immersed myself in the exciting US native plant and natural landscape movement and this provided me with much inspiration for what I do now. The contacts and friendships I made through conferences, visits and working at the dynamic J C Raulston Arboretum remain with me today.

I am currently a lecturer in landscape ecology and ecological design in the Department of Landscape, University of Sheffield, with a particular interest in ecologically-inspired or nature-like planting design."

From Kym M Jones (née Upton) (1991/92)

"I enrolled on the Masters in Landscape Architecture programme at the Ohio State University. The year turned into nearly three (only one of which was funded by the Scholarship) during which time I

had the opportunity to eat, drink, sleep (occasionally), study, teach, talk, work, travel, play, landscape and live the American way – far beyond any expectations and dreams. I saw landscapes of all shapes and sizes, from the prized possessions of welcoming GCA members, to urban scapes and parks in such places as New York and Baltimore, all the way through to the immense escapes of the National Parks – including Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, and a working summer in Redwoods, California.

On my return to the UK I forced myself to settle into studies, completing a Diploma at Sheffield University. I recently gained my 'professional status' and am currently employed as a Chartered Landscape Architect at a private practice called Barry Chinn Associates, based near Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. We are involved in an exciting range of predominantly commercial projects including the new Rover Engine plant, a series of PFI Mental Health Units, and Supermarkets and Retail Developments, including Bluewater Park (soon to be the largest shopping and leisure experience in Europe). The garden, its design and development remains a hobby and a light relief from the commercial world.

The Scholarship not only provided me with valuable landscape-related skills and an insight into the application of technology in the profession, it also led me down a path full of challenges and new experiences which were surrounded by 'strange' and welcoming faces – amongst which strong friendships have been forged, lifelong memories have been created and a foundation for the future has been laid."

From Louise Wyman (1993/94)

"The Martin McLaren Scholarship shaped my life in ways I could not have imagined when it was awarded to me in 1993. At that time I was working as a Chartered Surveyor in Prague, but had decided my real interest lay in pursuing a career in Landscape Architecture. Winning the Scholarship enabled me to begin studying for a Masters Degree in Landscape Architecture at Harvard University.

Looking back, my first year at Harvard was incredible for many reasons not least the way my perception of landscape expanded, the design skills I began to acquire and for the people I met, both classmates and the immensely generous and supportive members of the GCA. After the year was over I decided to stay on to complete the Masters programme: I graduate in June 1998.

Studying at Harvard has given me opportunities to travel to Japan, Mexico and Argentina, to develop writing skills and acquire a strong grounding in Landscape Architecture. I am currently working for Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, a Landscape Architecture practice in Cambridge, and I am writing a book on the contemporary city, with colleagues and the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas."

From Peter Clements (1996/97)

"I spent the first three months in California at the University of California Berkeley Botanical Garden, working under the supervision of Assistant Curator Holly Forbes. This time allowed me to get used to the Californian lifestyle. My work consisted mainly of removing the backlog of requests from garden

staff. These included producing several hundred plant labels, many plant collection information data sheets, but most importantly for the garden, producing an accurate up-to-date map of it on a small enough piece of paper, suitable for incorporation into the new garden brochure. Whilst at Berkeley, I was introduced to miniature orchids, many that thrive in cool conditions similar to the conditions at home, hence I have now started collecting orchids of the Pleurothallid alliance to grow in my little greenhouse.

In early December, I moved 80 kilometres north of San Francisco to Sonoma and began working at Quarryhill Botanical Garden, a garden still very much in its infancy but already one of the premier collections of Asian plants outside of their native countries. Quarryhill is an eight-hectare garden in Glen Ellen, set back and hidden from the highway in a sun-baked, westerly facing valley.

Again part of my work included a mapping project, though very different in its aims. This project aimed to pinpoint all the trees and shrubs planted in the garden on a map. My partner for this work was Liam McNamara. We knocked in posts we would use for strings and had a surveyor in to place them accurately on an AutoCad map. From these posts we laid measuring tapes and measured every plant for its x and y co-ordinates. Liam then overlaid each set of co-ordinates onto the master map. The results was 8 hectares fully mapped with all trees and shrubs pinpointed, numbered and named. At the conclusion of the job we were both surprised to find we'd mapped 5,322 angiosperm and gymnosperm trees and shrubs. It surprised us because for an eight-hectare garden this number seemed exceptionally high. The map now allows visitors (guests and researchers) to find plants easily and it also provides the staff with the positions of similar plants so that new planting schemes can be developed. For pruning and removal purposes, also for pesticide purposes, all plants can be found quickly and treated, again without walking round the whole garden wasting time looking for them.

This year provided me with knowledge in the only sector of the industry that I didn't have prior knowledge, botanical garden management. I worked closely with Bill McNamara, I listened to what he said, I took notes on how to effectively manage the people, money and the earth. I'm not brash enough to say I could run a botanical garden now, however I do feel as though I am in an excellent position to take what I have learnt, find my niche and work in the area of botanical work and garden management."

From Elwyn A Gladstone (1997/98)

"Every second of my stay in California has been fascinating. Perhaps the most satisfying part has been working with the professors. The interest that they show in my previous studies has made all the work I put into my undergraduate degree worthwhile. Of particular interest has been the hands-on approach to teaching – a perfect mix of practical and theoretical, all taken to the highest possible standard. I am doing my research on grapevines at the University of California Agricultural Centre with the extension vineyard adviser. This involves assisting with advisory work and a lot of work in the vineyard, carrying out research trials. I hope to

be able to bring back some of what I have learned to the UK."

From Eve Rickenbaker (1998/99)

"...approximately 18 months ago, I was interviewed by the Garden Club of America for this opportunity and I remember quoting to the Selection Committee a particular programme that I thought sounded tremendous. This programme was the Rainforest Expedition at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. I read in a Botanic Gardens Conservation International publication that the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh offered school children the 'rainforest' experience by boarding a small Botanic's chartered flight that would take them out of the cold and grey Scottish climate and into a hot, steamy tropical paradise for plants. I had no idea I would actually be made responsible for administering the programme less than a year later, but that is what I have been doing during the last eight months in Edinburgh. Graduating from the University of Georgia with a degree in Horticulture, I knew I wanted a career in botanic gardens. I had never really thought much about conservation because our main focus in school was the mass production of horticultural crops from petunias to poinsettias. However, after leading school classes (8–12 year-olds) for two hours around the glasshouses pretending the whole time I was their pilot and experienced guide to the rainforest, I have discovered for the first time just how precious and necessary are our rapidly disappearing rainforests.

The Rainforest Expedition Programme begins by welcoming the children to the Rainforest Theatre in the education building of the botanic garden. We begin by talking of where the tropical rainforests are located and how to prepare (anti-malarial precautions, proper clothing, etc) before actually going to the rainforests. The ages of 8–12 are very willing to pretend with me as I tell them I am their pilot 'receiving clearance' to take-off from our runway.

Throughout the programme I stop in all the tropical glasshouses to explain such things as the 'layers' of the rainforest, the importance of biodiversity to the genetic integrity of the foods we eat daily, and the fascinating means by which scientists and explorers have discovered many of our medicines, such as the cure for childhood leukaemia, from indigenous people. Two-thirds of the way through our programme the plane crashes in the forest, at which point the tour turns into a game of survival for the children. During this challenge in the Tropical Aquatic House, the children are always amazed by the *Victoria amazonica* and, of course,

the cocoa tree. Since our plane has crashed, we pretend to swim back to our Rainforest Theatre and discuss again the importance of biodiversity and its relevance to all of us. The goal of the programme is to make plants seem as valuable as the soft and cuddly animals that all the children want to save. Ultimately the hope is to encourage careers in horticulture, botany and plant exploration, as well as to make all the participants informed voters and world citizens.

I have enjoyed this unique experience immensely and am currently pursuing the available opportunities to work in the tropical rainforest with children in educational programmes offered by various research centres in Ecuador and Peru. In addition to exposure to the native flora in an ecological environment, I hope to adopt and share teaching practices and experiences to excite future generations of children as they landscape the world. However, without this Fellowship, I would not have had the motivation to learn more about the plants we are so dependent upon for our daily bread and modern medicines. I have learned also to have a greater appreciation of the cultures which so often have provided us, in the West, with invaluable information for future crops and medicinal plants.

Not only have I learned how to work with children in a glasshouse setting for rainforest educational programmes, but I have also observed the extremely successful Rainforest Road Show aimed at primary school children students that the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh conducts each year for approximately five weeks. All the programmes that I was involved with reach out to children, exciting them about the wonders of plants. The Scottish Trees programme is unfortunately not as popular, because most teachers are interested in doing the rainforest. However, it is an excellent way to teach children to appreciate what is in their own backyard. It is suitable for primary school children and uses folklore to teach traditional and modern uses to make the native trees of Scotland 'come to life'. This would be a great programme to do in America, but instead of dressing up like an ancient Celtic druid, Native American dress would be ideal. Through the months, I have also assisted with several secondary programmes which included garden/glasshouse tours and laboratory settings dealing with plant adaptations and basic botanical knowledge. I also led rainforest programmes for secondary scholars which focused more on options for managing the rainforest in a non-destructive manner."

■ **Nancy McLaren** (Chairman 1984–95/96) established the Martin McLaren Trust in 1982 in memory of her husband, who was the great nephew of Gertrude Jekyll on his mother's side. His father was the younger son of Lord and Lady Aberconway of Bodnant in North Wales.

■ **Ann Farrell** has been a member of The Garden Club of America since 1977. She was editor of the GCA Bulletin, and served on the Scholarship Committee as an Advisor and Vice Chairman for six years prior to becoming Chairman in July 1997.

- British applicants for the Interchange Fellowship may contact Angela Clarke, The Institute of Horticulture, 14/15 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PS.
- American applicants for the McLaren Scholarship may contact Shelly Burch, The Garden Club of America, 14 East 60th Street, New York, NY 10022 (Tel: 212/753-8287, Fax: 212/753-0134) for further information and applications forms. Or see the GCA Website – www.gcamerica.org

Application deadline November 10th. Selection and administration by the GCA Scholarship Committee.