Quarryhill’s 20th Anniversary

It’s hard to believe, but this year Quarryhill will be 20 years old. It was in the spring of 1987 that Jane Davenport Jansen hired Salvador Calderon to oversee the thinning and clearing of the almost impenetrable forest of madrones, California bays, knobcone pines, and oaks that dominated the site. That year turned out to be a busy one for the garden. Garden designer Roger Warner was already working with Jane on the layout and design of the would-be garden, as well as planning seed collecting expeditions. Tractor operator Dick Crain was busy building the ponds and making the roads. During that summer Jane made a journey to England to visit gardens and meet with John Simmons, the Curator of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and Lord Charles Howick of the Howick Arboretum to discuss the possibility of a joint expedition to China in 1988. In the meantime, an expedition to Japan in the fall of 1987 was being planned. Although the garden was not yet known as “Quarryhill”, that fall Bill McNamara joined Roger Warner and Lord Howick for the garden’s first seed collecting expedition. They spent six weeks in Hokkaido and northern Honshu searching the mountainous terrain for viable seeds from naturally occurring plants. Their fieldwork was well documented with field notes and herbarium specimens that were later deposited at Kew Gardens. Shortly after the Japan expedition, Bill McNamara was hired to manage the development of the garden. By the end of 1987, Jane had decided to name the garden Quarryhill Botanical Garden. As there was not yet a nursery at Quarryhill, staff at UC Berkeley Botanical Garden assisted with the initial seeding, and Dorothy Nickolai and her mother Jo, now 102 years old, became the garden’s first volunteers.

Now after 20 years and more than 20 seed collecting expeditions throughout East Asia and North America, Quarryhill has grown to 11 employees, more than 30 volunteers, increased in acreage, created a membership program, started a newsletter, established a lecture and workshop series, and built a new greenhouse.

When Jane Davenport Jansen started Quarryhill’s 20th Anniversary the garden Quarryhill Botanical Garden is to advance the conservation, study and cultivation of the temperate Flora of Asia

Greenhouse Blossoms in Mid-Winter

After almost five years of planning, designing, redesigning and, finally, construction, a glorious new greenhouse has suddenly appeared. Thanks to the generosity of many wonderful supporters, Quarryhill is proud to present - and especially use - a 2500 square foot Nexus Corporation Greenhouse, built by U.S. Greenhouse Construction of Colorado.

Builder Mark Rens and his crew of one, David Marshall, joined forces with local project manager Stephen Bates and Stanley Miller of B&B Construction to erect, in little more than a month, this wonderful state-of-the-art and energy-efficient structure. Its features include: three separate rooms designated for vegetative propagation, seedling culture, and headhouse activities (seeding, transplanting, soil mixing, etc.) to be performed by Quarryhill's illustrious propagation volunteers and Nursery Manager Meenal Harankhedkar; fully automated roof and side-wall vents which will preclude the need for messy and expensive cooling pads in summer; an automated shade cloth system positioned above all growing areas; and three high-efficiency propane heaters for occasional winter use. Appliances in each area are independently operated

(Continued on page 5)
In early October, I was in the field with Dr. Yang Hanqi and Sun Maosheng from the Southwest Forestry University in Kunming, Yunnan. We worked in two areas in Northeast Yunnan, one northwest of Zhaotong and another northeast of Zhaotong. Both areas were very rich in species, although it was not a very good seed year, the weather was wet, and the accommodations were poor to miserable. I was told that the weather had been abnormally cold in the spring and that the summer rains that should have ended before my visit were continuing much longer than normal. This made the search for seeds frustrating, and hiking in the steep mountains very difficult, if not treacherous, especially with the nasty snakes and abundant leeches. Despite all this, we did make some good collections of seeds and herbarium specimens, including Magnolia sargentiana, Rhododendron araiophyllum, Rhododendron argyrophyllum, Rhododendron delavayi, Sorbus wilsoniana, and Tetracentron sinense.

The latter half of October and into November, I was in Sichuan with Dr. Mark Roh of the US Department of Agriculture and Joanna Welti, along to lend a helping hand, working on the Acer pentaphyllum conservation project. To our dismay, despite having visited all three known sites last year and having had meetings with local administrators and forestry officials about the possibility of this species going extinct in the near future, no steps had been taken to protect the rare trees. In fact, the one population that we considered the most secure had been devastated by the construction of a switchback road directly through the population, killing perhaps half of the trees and leaving the rest with a dubious future. Our guide, Dr. Yin Kaipu, who had discovered this population in 1987, was visibly distressed and immediately contacted local officials. This time they promised to work with the forestry department to protect the remaining few trees. There were no visible changes to the other two populations, though we were able to confirm that there are still plans to build dams that would put most, if not all, of the trees under water. We collected seeds for ex situ conservation and leaf samples for DNA analysis to better understand the relationship between the three populations. We also unsuccessfully searched areas south of the three populations for any undiscovered populations near where Joseph Rock made the initial discovery in 1929. At meetings with local administrators and forestry officials, we were given pledges that attempts would be made to officially declare the species endangered, collect seeds for ex situ conservation, search for undiscovered populations, and work with villagers in the vicinity of the trees to educate them about the rarity and importance of protecting the remaining trees. We also learned that the Chengdu Institute of Biology has applied for a large grant from the government to fund these activities and that they hope to continue to work with Quarryhill on this project. We also discussed the importance of moving on to protecting other endangered species once substantial progress has been made with the Acer pentaphyllum. Despite our initial frustration, we are beginning to make real progress.
A Tribute to Samuel Douglas

Samuel Douglas passed away on November 19, 2006. A dedicated Quarryhill docent for the last three years, Sam brought to the garden his vast knowledge of horticulture. A long-time Bonsai enthusiast, Sam was very active in the Redwood Empire Bonsai Society and a hands-on Master Gardener that really knew his plants. Sam was also a very talented organ player, performing weekly for many years at the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Mill Valley. Sam joined Quarryhill’s first docent training class in the spring of 2004 and diligently memorized the details of the garden’s history, its mission, and its plants. To the delight of visitors to the garden, Sam, with his soft voice and a twinkle in his eye, was always quick to tell some interesting fact or story about particular plants.

Last year when Sam became ill, he surprised us all by telling us that he was going to leave his entire estate to Quarryhill. While thanking him for his generosity last summer, I asked him why he had decided to do this. He answered, “I care deeply about Quarryhill and I hope that what I am doing might be an inspiration for others to consider doing something similar for the garden.” When I think of Sam, three words come immediately to mind: kind, gentle, and humble. He was a dear friend of everyone at Quarryhill and someone we will always remember.

2007 Workshops and Events

March 24th (Saturday)
5:00 pm
Acer pentaphyllum Conservation, slide lecture by William A. McNamara
$25.00

April 22nd (Sunday)
9:30 am
Corsage, Boutonniere, and Wedding Bouquets with Gaius Robinson
$45.00 includes materials

April 22nd (Sunday)
10:00 am
Members Bring a Friend Day
Free for members and guests

June 2nd (Saturday)
9:30 am
Quarryhill 20th Anniversary Celebration
$35.00/person non-members, $25.00/person members

July 8th (Sunday)
12:00 noon
Butterfly Walk with Dr. Don Maboney
$40.00 includes lunch

July 29th (Sunday)
10:00 am
Plant Propagation with Nursery Manager Meenal Harandekedkar
$25.00 includes some materials

Sign up now for 2007 Workshops and Events! Members receive a 10% discount for all workshops. Space is limited, so reserve today. For more information, or reservations, contact the garden office at (707) 996-3166, or email info@quarryhillbg.org.
A Special Thank You to Our Members:

**EXPEDITION CIRCLE $2,500+**
Elizabeth H. Bechtel
Vicomte Philippe de Spoeberch
Richard & Dana Dirickson
Joel & Carol Farkas
J. Wylie Hartman
Lord Charles Howick
Willa & Ned Mundell
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Helen & Beau Breck
Alan Brubaker
Sharon Christoph & Christopher Davidson
Richard & Kaye Heafey
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David Welti
Tyler Welti
Annette & Richard Wilber

**Grants Received in 2006**
Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust $4,350
Franklinia Foundation $10,000
National Geographic Society $14,500
S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation $10,000
through Wadsworth Control Systems, skillfully installed along with all electrical components by Bernie Fitzpatrick and his crew at Fitzpatrick Electric.

Quarryhill would also like to thank Mark Petersen for grading and site preparation, Ron Church for concrete work, and Joel Claros for plumbing and gas services. Finally, Quarryhill is grateful to Greg Ellis of Nexus Corporation for his 1½ years of tireless and detailed greenhouse design work, to garden member and landscape architect Don MacNair for his site planning and guidance, and most enthusiastically to project manager Stephen Bates at B&B Construction who directed and coordinated all facets of the permitting and building process with optimism, good faith, and constant vigilance.

Thank you Steve and thanks to those donors that have so unselfishly provided for Quarryhill's future growth and, ultimately, for the health and vigor of their own Asian woodland.

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A Greenhouse Grows

October 2005 rendering of the proposed greenhouse, by Al Forster

Grading the pad for the greenhouse, November 2006

Framing the big room of the greenhouse, December 2006

Completed Greenhouse, January 2007

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Quarryhill's 20th Anniversary, cont., from pg 1

Quarryhill Botanical Garden in 1987, she realized that the conservation of endangered plant species was not receiving enough attention. She worked tirelessly to that end until her death in 2000 and personally funded the entire operation of Quarryhill, including generously supporting fifteen plant exploration expeditions in partnership with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and the Howick Arboretum. Through her guidance and inspiration, Quarryhill has grown into a world-renowned botanical institution. Plants from Quarryhill sponsored expeditions are now found in botanic gardens and arboreta throughout North America, providing researchers, conservationists, students, and the public with living examples of the rich, yet threatened, temperate flora of Asia.

To honor this occasion, we are planning a celebration for Saturday June 2, 2007. Please join us for what will be a memorable day that will include a dedication of our new greenhouse, tours of the garden, notable speakers, and lunch, all to celebrate the legacy of Jane Davenport Jansen and our first 20 years.
A stop by the Quarryhill offices on Thursday afternoon, December 7th would have found a very quiet place. Staff and volunteers alike were cozied under heat lamps on the beautiful boundary of the garden enjoying the festivities of the annual Quarryhill Botanical Garden staff and volunteer Holiday Party.

As they do every year, Wild Thyme Catering from Sonoma created a tasty meal, and garden staff and volunteers alike enjoyed a rousing, fun-filled exchange of White Elephant Gifts, in which we saw some old favorites (the Singing Sea Bass made it back into the game, for the third year in a row!) along with some new favorites (everyone needs a box full of items from someone else’s junk drawer!).

Fun was had by all, and it was a wonderful way to celebrate the volunteers and staff and to show them how much their hard work and dedication to Quarryhill is appreciated.

—Chinese Proverb