



Markus Rauscher from
Tübingen Botanical Garden
on excursion in Brazil

Peak of Activities Marks Anniversary Year

Chile, China, England, Georgia, Germany, Namibia, Norway, South Africa, Sweden and the United States. Ten countries will participate in the International Gardeners Exchange programme in 2017, more than ever before. It is proof that our mission has been successfully implemented and that our foundation indeed is a very active one. But 2017 is a special year for still another reason. It is a year not of just one but of two anniversaries. Thirty years ago, in 1987, Loki Schmidt started the first project of what was to become the gardeners exchange programme; and fifteen years ago, in 2002, our present foundation was established.

The first exchange project was not an easy one. Michael Avishai, director of the Jerusalem garden, was looking for an expert to advise them on their new display greenhouse, and Loki Schmidt knew just the right person for this task at the Hamburg Botanical Garden. From the correspondence and newspaper clips kept in the archives of the Helmut und Loki Schmidt Foundation I got a vivid picture of what happened in those days in 1986 and 1987. Using her great natural charm, Loki enthralled celebrities,

administrators, politicians and newspaper people in order to get the exchange between the two gardens off the ground. Publisher Friede Springer provided finance and publicity, Hamburg's university president Fischer-Appelt helped to overcome administrative obstacles, and the mayor of Kassel Hans Eichel agreed to donate tropical plants from their municipal greenhouses. Hamburg gardener Peter Eggers arrived at Tel Aviv airport with numerous boxes of plants destined for the Jerusalem greenhouse. Even though equipped with proper phytosanitary documents, to his horror all plants were confiscated at once by the authorities. It took a personal telegram of the former chancellor Helmut Schmidt to foreign minister Shimon Perez to save at least some of the valuable material from being destroyed. As a side effect of this action, later on they installed a quarantine station for plants at the Tel Aviv airport in order to avoid similar problems in the future. Peter Eggers stayed for two months, and the warm friendship between the Hamburg and Jerusalem gardens is still alive. The first exchange project was a big success.

Soon other travel projects followed. Organized by Loki, a network began to form, with the gardens at Hamburg, Jerusalem, St. Petersburg and Mérida (Venezuela) being its first members. Later others gardens joined. At this stage, all travel project were financed by private means of Loki Schmidt, for instance from the royalties of the books she had written. Finally 15 years ago in 2002 our present foundation was established in order to continue the work of Loki Schmidt on a new financial basis.

So far as for the history. But what will future bring? Which will be the future role of botanical gardens in a globalized world? Certainly their core mission will remain unchanged, that is to cultivate plants from different climates and different parts of the world for various needs – for science, education, amenity and conservation. But since the extent and the accessibility of natural plant resources are still dramatically decreasing, botanical gardens must assume an increasing responsibility for the sustainable conservation of their collections, more than ever before. They will not be able to master this task without a highly expert horticultural staff, the promotion of which is the mission of our foundation.

At present most charitable foundations are facing severe problems due to the low interest rates. It is because of the financial commitment of friends and sponsors that our foundation still is able to support the projects of so many dedicated gardens. The donations are made for very different reasons. Some donors may want to foster further professional horticultural education or international understanding, others do it for the memory of the still much beloved, fabulous late Loki Schmidt. All are helping to promote the vital mission of botanical gardens. What about you? Why not join the friends and patrons of our foundation? It would be a great way to celebrate our double anniversary with us.

Hans-Helmut Poppendieck



2017

In 2016, our foundation funded the projects of 11 gardeners who visited 9 different countries.

Frederic Gilbert and Nils Kleissenberg were on a special mission when touring the Appalachian Mountains: "Our garden at Hamburg has already a large collection of plants from North America which we continue to develop and strengthen. We



Colour varieties in Trillium. Photo: F. Gilbert

are cultivating 22 of the 45 species of Trillium, so we wanted to expand our knowledge about the genus and especially see the species in flower in their natural habitats. We had received many plants as a gift from the South Carolina Botanical Garden at Clemso, and all of them have survived – probably because we had taken quite some time to prepare the rhizomes for export."

Harald Loose from Munich visited León in Nicaragua in continuation on the long-standing partnership between both gardens. "I spent a month at the León garden and worked mainly in their bosque húmedo in order to remove invasive plants and to make it more attractive. In addition,



A gardener from Munich at León. Photo: H. Loose

we made collecting trips to get new species for this part of the gardens. At El Bajo, we collected seeds of *Cupania dentata*, *Parmentiera truncifolia*, *Pseudogynax chenopodioides*, *Psychotria horizontalis* und *Triplaris melaenodendron*."

Two gardeners went abroad participating in student excursions organized by their universities.

Markus Rauscher took part in the excursion of Tübingen University to Brazil. Which was just "what he had" always looked for, because he is in charge of the tropical



Strangling fig attacking palm. Photo: M. Rauscher

collection at the Tübingen Botanical Garden. "It was fascinating to see the Urucuri palm *Attalea phalerata* being attacked and finally killed by strangler figs. We could see all stages of the process, from the germination of the fig in the axils of old leaves up to the dead standing tree... I felt very happy to see all the beautiful tropical plants and to make so many interesting discoveries."

Simon Momper from Bonn Botanical Garden joined student's field trip to Teneriffa and found the Mount Teide Bugloss flowering in the wild, a species which he is



Echium simplex in Teneriffa. Photo: S. Momper

cultivating in his collection: "Echium wildpretii of the Boraginaceae is a very special plant. This biennial species develops a rosette in its first year, from which in the second year an inflorescence up to three meters high arises; then it dies. At home at Bonn, I raise the plants from seeds each year. They have to be transplanted several times before they finally flower."

Jeanette Zimmermann - from Leipzig to Edinburgh. After having finished her vocational training as a gardener at the Leipzig University Garden, Jeanette Zimmermann joined the staff of the Edinburgh Botanical Garden for four months in summer. "At the RBGE they



Winter protection the easy way. Photo J. Zimmermann

STIFTUNG INTERNATIONALER GÄRTNERAUSTAUSCH

International Exchange Project of Gardeners between Botanical Gardens



The "landscape house" at Wisley. Photo: A. Schulz

have some impressive specimens of *Gunnera manicata*. As a rule, they give only little winter protection for plants at Edinburgh. We at Leipzig spend much time and effort to build mesh wire cages filled with dead leaves to protect our Gunneras, but at Edinburgh they just cut the large leaves of the plant and place them over the terminal bud."

Anne Schulz - from Bonn to Wisley. Anne worked with the bulb collection there and learned many tricks regarding their cultivation. "All geophytes are grown in pots on desks filled with sand so high that only they rims remain visible, and this is a very successful way to cultivate them."

Silke Höppner und Pia Schulz from Kiel explored the tropical vegetation of Costa Rica on a grant of our young gardener's scheme: "We saw Eichhornias on a lake but they did not flower yet. Costa Rica has many fine national parks for nature conservation, but on the other hand there are huge areas covered by plantations of Pineapples and Bananas, which are monocultures with a high pesticide load."



Hands-on experience of a tree giant. Photo: P. Schulz

Still serving his apprenticeship at Hamburg, Don Tengeler visited the Botanical Garden at Cali in Colombia. Gardening in the tropics is quite different, as he found out. Instead of pots they use plastic bags, which is cheaper but takes more time. It makes one think seriously about the costs of material and labour costs in different countries.



Using plastic bags instead of pots. Photo: D. Tengeler



On Tour in India. Photo: A.- L. Tack

For her Kew Diploma course, German gardener Anna-Lena Tack served an internship and visited Botanical Institutions in India. Her aim was to expand her knowledge about medicinal plants, including cultivation, uses and conservation. "I learned that many people still rely a lot on a small scale horticulture, which could be seen in all the fields we found in the Himalayas and driving through the cities, as every little bit of land was used to grow crops such as for example rice."

The reports given to us by our scholarship holders are highly interesting, offer excellent reading and show that our money has been well spent. Thank you very much for your reports, folks!



**In 2017, our foundation
will award some 16.000 Euro
for the following projects:**

Munich - Tromsø and Tromsø - Munich.

The Botanical Garden at München-Nymphenburg will establish a partnership with the Arctic-Alpine Botanical Garden at Tromsø in Norway which will be part of the network of alpine and arctic network of botanical gardens.

South Africa - Hamburg. Neil MacDonald from South Africa is specializing on cultivation succulents and will visit the Hamburg Gardens and its famous collection of Mesembryanthema.

Joint field trip to Namibia of succulent specialists from German botanical gardens.

A very special event which helps to deepen their knowledge of succulents in the field and to strengthen the personal bonds within the succulent gardener's network.

Bremen - Seattle, USA. Martin Monthofer is gardener at the Rhododendron-Park at Bremen. He will travel to the United States in order to study modern methods of propagation of Rhododendrons at the Rhododendron Species Foundation at Seattle.

Munich - Batumi, Georgia. Another project focussing on alpine plants. The colleagues from Batumi Botanical Garden want to create an alpine satellite garden at 2000 meter altitude near the Goderzi Pass in the Lesser Caucasus. The Botanical Garden of München-Nymphenburg has managed an alpine garden for more than 100 years and will make available its expertise.

Talca, Chile - Dresden. There is a long-standing and very consistent partnership between both gardens. It will be activated once more this year by gardener Miguel Tapeia from Chile visiting the Dresden garden.

Hamburg - Gothenburg. A short trip of a group of gardeners from Hamburg to Sweden in order to exchange ideas and to strengthen the partnership between both gardens.

Shanghai - Hamburg. Yun Jiang and Li Shao will visit the Hamburg Botanical Garden for two months in summer. Hamburg and Shanghai are twin cities, and the partnership between their botanical gardens has a long and very fertile and cordial tradition.

Hamburg - Shanghai: Don Tengeler from Hamburg is working in the subtropical department of the garden and wants to make use of the existing partnership in order to learn more about cultivating plants from China.

Berlin - Kew Gardens: Constanze Ludwig is working at the Botanical Garden Berlin-Dahlem in the conservation department and in the seedbank. Visiting Kew Gardens appears to be a good choice, since gardens at Kew and Berlin have always played similar roles in their respective countries.

Young gardeners in 2017: Young gardeners may apply any time.

Applications for 2018

Are open until September 15th, 2017. Young gardeners may apply any time for travel funds up to 500 Euro. For applications from outside Germany, a partner garden in Germany is required.

Contact and information

Stiftung Internationaler Gärtneraustausch c/o Loki Schmidt Stiftung
Steintorweg 8, D-20099 Hamburg
Please contact the executive board
hans-helmut.poppndieck@web.de
or gisela_bertram@gmx.de.
For additional information,
please visit our homepage at
<http://www.gaertneraustausch.de>.

Our bank account

HypoVereinsbank IBAN:
DE74 2003 0000 0000 4288 88
BIC: HYVEDEMM300



Temperate rain forest in India. Photo: A.-L. Tack



Teneriffa excursion. Photo S. Momper



Ravenala – the traveler's tree. Photo: S. Höppner



Actinoccephalus in Brazil. Photo: M. Rauscher



*Nursery greenhouse at Edinburgh.
Photo: J. Zimmermann*