

THE HAMPSHIRE GARDENS TRUST LIBRARY

History

An Advisory Panel was set up in 1983 to consider the establishment of a Reference Library to assist research into Hampshire gardens. The practical problem was to provide suitable housing and administrative back-up. After various unsuccessful approaches to local public libraries Southampton University Library offered to help. At a meeting of the HGT and the University Librarian on 27 July 1984 it was formally decided that the HGT Library would be housed and serviced by the University. Each party agreed to contribute £500 towards buying a basic collection of books recommended by a panel of HGT members. It was to be situated in the Special Collections Division of the Hartley Library. HGT was to finance future annual purchases of books and the University was to arrange for their ordering, indexing and cataloguing. The aim was to collect literature of lasting reference and research value complementing that already available in local Public Libraries and the open shelves of the University Library.

To ensure the smooth working of the scheme it was decided to appoint an Honorary Librarian. No one was forthcoming until 1988 and it was hardly surprising that during this initial period the situation became somewhat confused as keen researchers for HGT, HCC and the University were all ordering books. In July 1988 Professor Stan Hutton was appointed Honorary Librarian. His first task requested by the Executive Committee was to provide a clear statement of accounts and of books purchased. By January 1989 the new system was running smoothly, all book purchases being channelled through the Honorary Librarian and thence to the University Library for processing. The HGT Executive Committee allocates an annual grant to purchase books. Professor Hutton resigned as Honorary Librarian in 2007 and his place was taken by Leila Beale, a member of the HGT Research Group.

The Collection

The library is growing steadily and now comprises 300 books and two complementary runs of the periodicals *The Journal of the Garden History Society* and *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*. It is noteworthy that about one third of our books have been donated by members. For example we received twenty-four classic books from Gillian Bauer's collection and Susan Campbell has given us a copy of her book *A History of Kitchen Gardening*.

HGT Library policy is to concentrate on the history and design of gardens and parks and to leave horticultural aspects to other organisations such as RHS. Even so we do have some books on horticulture, for example Ray Desmond on *British and Irish Botanists and Horticulturalists* and John Harvey on *Availability of Hardy Plants of the late 18th century*. Our collection concentrates on gardens in the British Isles from the sixteenth century onwards and the lives and achievements of their designers. There is an emphasis on Hampshire gardens as far as is possible. We do have books on European gardens by writers such as Geoffrey Jellicoe and John Dixon Hunt and some biographies of eminent American gardeners such as Edith Wharton and Beatrix Farrand. British social developments in public parks, allotments, housing estates and city squares are covered and also special features such as grottoes, shell houses, sculpture, ornaments and follies.

Unique items, such as a Victorian Hampshire pressed flower collection, are held in the Archives Collection while facsimiles of important historic works can be found on the shelves. They range from the oldest, K. Tusser's *500 Points of Good Husbandry*, 1582, to perhaps the best known, Humphry Repton's *Observations of the theory and practice of landscape gardening*, 1803 which illustrates his 'red book' technique.

Using the collection

The HGT collection is sited very conveniently in the Special Collections Division on Level 4 in the Hartley Library, adjacent to the Cope Collection and the Archives. Enquiries may be addressed to the librarian on 023 8059 8733 or personally in the Special Collections Division office, Level 4.

All books, papers and periodicals are listed in WebCat, the University Library computer catalogue which is available on www-lib.soton.ac.uk. A few of our books are for reference only but the rest may be borrowed. Books may be borrowed for three weeks from the HGT library and the open shelves. If a particular book is required it is advisable to check the Webcat first to see if it is available. To renew a book either phone 023 8059 3452 or email: loanhart@soton.ac.uk. Books may be returned to Winchester College of Art if this is more convenient. To become an external borrower a Smart Card is needed to pass through the security turnstiles. This can be obtained from the Reception Desk facing the main entrance to the library on production of a HGT membership card and an item of personal identification.

Outside the turnstiles is a cafeteria which is open 10.00-19.00 hours on weekdays and 10.00-20.00 on Saturdays. The HGT library is open weekdays from 7.30 to midnight and at weekends from 9.00 to midnight. On Sundays it opens during term-time but is closed in vacations. It is also closed at Christmas, Easter and August Bank Holiday.

The Highfield Campus is served by UNILink buses which operate a shuttle service around the campuses and include Southampton Central and Parkway Railway stations. Car parking is freely available in the evenings and daily on Saturdays and Sundays. During the week parking is limited by heavy demand. There is 2 hour parking in surrounding residential roads and there is a public car park on the corner of University Road and University Crescent, charging £1.00 per hour.