



José Dent z"l, founder and Chair of the Friends of Jerusalem Botanical Gardens
26 November 1930 - 25 February 2015
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News from Israel

The Friends sponsor Lilliput

A cheque for £100,000 from the UK Friends of JBG was presented to Oren Ben-Yosef, JBG CEO, in sponsorship of the Lilliput Garden section of the new Children's Discovery Trail.

Together with Trustee, Aaron Bertelsen, Friends' organiser, Barbara Sherling, visited briefly in February, to be brought up-to-date with developments and to see how much of the new Trail had been completed.

Oren also showed them the expanded layout for the Dworsky Tropical Conservatory. The new foundations are finished and head gardener Eli Becker and assistant head gardener Piers Burdekin outlined the planting plans. With help from our interns, they are sourcing seeds from around the world to raise new plants for this new space.



Interns join in the fun ...

Our current interns joined the Gardens' staff in dressing up for the festival of Purim. **Hans Mackrodt** (second left, with fetching plaits), continues to work hard with the rare plant collection and in the nursery.

James Miller (third from left and dressed as Ali G), is on our curator-track internship for 4 months. A keen photographer, he's taking every opportunity to seek out rare and native plants, photos of which are being tweeted to the online gardening world.

Our third intern, **Oren Rabinowitz** (far left, dressed as a conifer), has spent three months on the curator-track and he leaves at the end of March to take up a placement at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens.



José Dent z”l



The news that our founder and Chair, José Dent, passed away on 25 February 2015 came as a terrible shock. An energetic, sociable, charming and determined person, José, despite her physical frailty, led the Friends for almost 35 years.

During the 1970s, she chaired Hampstead Horticultural Society and was introduced in 1979 to Dr Michael Avishai, then Director of the JBG. Impressed by his vision, José offered to help him and set up the Friends, deciding the best way was to provide extra trained help.

The intern scheme was organised and the first award made in 1983. Since then, a remarkable 125 qualified horticulturists have received awards and experienced life and work in Israel. José also established strong links with Kew’s School of Horticulture.

José loved meeting people, whether new friends or old, and members have seen some beautiful private gardens through her contacts. She had a special talent for mentoring and introducing people to one another. She delighted in her continued contact with alumni, meeting their children and a highlight of her year was a lunch each summer with former interns (photo above right, 2006).

Our Patron, Della Worms, said *‘José was a most dear friend of long-standing who enthused me with her love of the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens’.*

Dr Michael Avishai writes: *“For each of us José was a beloved person. Her way to find the words and the charm that bridged the gap between a noble project and the poor reality soon became critical in the efforts to promote the case of the Jerusalem Botanical Garden when few believed it was feasible.*

“Today the Garden is a fact, recognised under the Israeli Parliament’s Botanical Gardens Bill - a hub of activity in many directions, familiar meeting point of children and adults from all groups in the community. The Garden will be an excellent monument to her aspirations. May she rest in peace and her life be an inspiration and source of brilliance in all ways.”

Tributes have poured into the Office and also to the online Memorial Fund page:

“José, your determination gave many the opportunity to fall in love with the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens”

“I just want to say that José completely changed my life by allowing me to go to Jerusalem. Without her I would be in a very different place now. She altered the course of so many lives. She’ll be truly missed.”

“I first nervously met José at an interview in the School of Horticulture, Kew. What amazing fortune and what great friendship and support José shared over the intervening years. RBG, Kew and the horticultural world have lost a passionate and great supporter.”

José’s death leaves us sad and we will miss her direct speech, sense of humour and positive outlook. However, the Friends are stronger now than for some time; an independent charity, with a broad, engaging programme of events that is bringing new members to our group. She saw her dream realised and we are working hard to meet our aims.

We send condolences to her husband David and children Jonathan, Carey and Louisa who suggested we set up a fund in Jose’s memory. Donations can be sent by cheque to the Friends’ office or made online at <https://mydonate.bt.com/events/Jose>

Diary of events 2015

We are delighted that there are so many events coming up over the next few months. There isn't room to describe them fully in the newsletter, so please see the separate sheet that gives you all the details. In particular we are very excited about the 'Planting for the Future - a celebration of gardening and co-operation' that starts on Wednesday, 8 July at the LJCC in Golders Green with a private viewing of a photographic exhibition of images from Jerusalem. Our new diary of events has proved very popular. Book early to avoid disappointment.

Recent events



Gardeners' Question Time

We had a full house for our Gardeners' Question Time event in January and were made very welcome by hosts Hanna & Robin Klein.

Our fantastic panel comprised three alumni - Wolfgang Bopp, Chris Warren and the evening's Chair, Friends' President Andy Jackson were joined by Stephen Crisp of Winfield House. They were tested by a host of questions ranging from the best way of dealing with Japanese knotweed to advising on how to grow fatter carrots!



Bringing Spring Colour into your Winter Home

On Sunday 15 February we enjoyed delicious butternut squash soup and bagels before the talented **Sue Eldridge** entertained us with stories of the events and places for which she had created floral arrangements. She gave advice on preparing and keeping flowers longer and dispelled a number of myths! Sue's career has taken her to Japan and South Korea and for several years she was Director of Creative Studies at the famous Constance Spry Flower School. Sue effortlessly created half-a-dozen differently styled arrangements which were then raffled. The photo above right shows three of the lucky winners - Jean Segal, Margaret Ben-Nathan and Adina Kohn.



The A-Z of Growing Vegetables

Friends' Trustee **Aaron Bertelsen** exhorted us to try to grow new vegetables and shared where he obtains seeds for his most successful efforts. Speaking to a packed room (and with thanks to hosts Jill Kowal and Bill Benjamin), he told us humorous stories of growing plants in Mrs-Next-Door's greenhouse! We also had a tantalising look at what awaits us when Aaron delivers his 'From the Plot to the Plate' cooking demo on 15th July (see separate sheet).

Chelsea Fringe arrives in Israel



A team of amazing young students, who volunteer as part of the Green Team project, came to the Gardens to help create an eco plant bench which will feature as part of the 2015 Chelsea Fringe alternative gardening festival. Together with members of three different departments in the Gardens, plus Aaron Bertelsen and Barbara Sherling representing the UK Friends, the bench was completed in just over a day. It is situated in the therapeutic garden, adjacent to the schools' garden. We look forward to linking up with Jerusalem on 26 May when their bench will be featured alongside the one built in London. At the LJCC we will enjoy tea, cake and a discussion. There are more details about the launch on the diary sheet. The purpose of the bench project is to demonstrate that plants, whether edible or decorative, can be grown anywhere and that gardening brings people together.

Legacies

In recent months, the Friends have benefited from two bequests left to us by former members. These make an enormous difference to the support we are able to offer the JBG. We have been able to reassure the Gardens that the UK Friends can continue the internship scheme, something that had seemed doubtful. The skills and knowledge which our interns bring to the Gardens are hugely important and so are the new things they learn while in Israel.

If you need any information about how to nominate the Friends of JBG in your Will, please contact the Office.

We have registered with Easyfundraising.org.uk and will receive a percentage of your shopping spend (with no knowledge of what you purchase) and at no additional cost to you.

It takes a minute or two to register. Once you've registered, just log in to Easyfundraising to do your online shopping.

There are hundreds of retailers including Amazon, John Lewis, M&S, Selfridges and many more. Register with Easyfundraising.org.uk

How to help

Just a reminder that you can pay online for your membership and order gift memberships for those friends who have everything else at www.friendsjbg.org.uk.

You can also make a donation to support our work or mark a special occasion by paying directly into our bank, using our details which are:

Bank: Barclays

A/c name: Friends of Jerusalem Botanical Gardens

Sort code: 20-29-41 Account no: 83187926

or via

www.mydonate.bt.com/charities/friendsofjbg

If you are sending a cheque or charity voucher to the office (address below) please make it payable to 'Friends of JBG'.

**We send best wishes to all our Friends
and their families for a good
Passover and Easter**