Background

The Harris Garden was once the home paddock of ‘The Wilderness’, a Victorian house which was built in the remains of a famous landscape garden created at White Knights by George, Marquis of Blandford (later 5th Duke of Marlborough) between 1798 and 1819.

A small botanic garden which covers approximately 5 hectares was established in the 1970’s and extended over the coming years as a teaching resource in the 1980’s and 1990’s.

In 2010 the responsibility for the garden transferred to the University’s Facilities Management Directorate (FMD). The garden is open to all with recreation and conservation being its primary function.

The Grounds department have been working in conjunction with the Friends of the Harris Garden and the School of Biological Sciences and over the winter of 2010/11 the garden has undergone many changes. We hope you will enjoy and perhaps contribute towards its development over the coming years.

Celebrating the Harris Garden

Join us for a special event on Sunday 22 May 2011, to mark the re-launch of the Garden at the University of Reading. Free, all welcome. For more information: events@reading.ac.uk

Open days

The gardens are open to the public daily from 9am – dusk. Monthly fund-raising open days are 2pm until 5.30pm on the following days:

- Sunday 22 May  The Harris Garden Re-launch
- Sunday 12 June  Reading University Pre-school Playgroup
- Sunday 10 July  St John Ambulance Brigade
- Sunday 14 August  British Red Cross
- Sunday 11 September  Hardy Plant Society/ Friends of the Harris Garden

Directions and parking

Please visit our website for comprehensive maps and parking on campus: www.reading.ac.uk/grounds

Sat nav

Please note: If you are using a ‘sat nav’ or ‘GPS’ system, use RG6 6UR to navigate to Whiteknights campus.

The Harris Garden is the private property of The University of Reading. Permissive access is granted to the Harris Garden and The University reserves the right to prohibit pedestrian access. Visitors must adhere to University rules and regulations which are in operation throughout the University’s privately owned land.

In general

- Please keep to the paths or mown areas
- Do not leave any litter
- No fires or BBQ
- Do not disturb wildlife or pick flowers
- The lake is not suitable for water sports and activities
- No cycling
- No dogs allowed
- Please ensure children are supervised around the ponds and streams
- Access may be restricted or permission withdrawn at any time.

www.reading.ac.uk/grounds
www.friendsoftheharrisgarden.org.uk
Blog  www.friendsoftheharrisgarden.org.uk/blog

Harris Garden

For more information, please contact:

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Friends of the Harris Garden

Secretary Ann Derbyshire
Tel (0118) 983 2413

Membership secretary David Hewitt
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### Enjoying the Harris Garden

1. **Woodland planting** has recently been cleared of the laurel and replanted with large drifts of *Epimedium*, Winter Aconite and bluebells along with a number of tender shrubs which will benefit from the shelter of the established trees.

2. **The Winter Garden** contains a range of plants providing stem colour, form and flowers between November and March.

3. **The Orchard** contains a collection of ornamental crab-apples (*Malus*) in addition to their spring flowers many of the trees have good autumn foliage and attractive fruit. A carpet of bulbs and wild flowers beneath the trees provide spring and summer interest.

4. The **Pond** with the huge *Alnus subcordata* (a champion tree) has a circulatory pump which runs the stream and ditch beds opposite planted with *Primula*, *Iris*, *Hosta* and other associated plants.

5. **The Autumn Border** has tree shrubs and herbaceous plants chosen for their autumn foliage or flowers. This year a long flowering annual mix will be sown before the area is renovated in the winter of 2011/12.

6. **The Cherry Bowl** is a collection of twenty different Japanese flowering cherries arranged around a circular clearing under planted with bulbs to coincide with the cherry blossom.

7. **The Flower Meadow** replaces the redundant trials area and gives the garden a fantastic sense of space covering approximately 1 hectare. The area has been sown with mainly native meadow species and is divided by mown paths. The meadow has been over planted with 50,000 bulbs! Including *Narcissus 'Pheasant Eye'* and *'Thalia' Camassia* and *Allium 'Purple Sensation'*.

8. **The Conifer Circle** was planted in April 2002. It contains a collection of nearly thirty of the tall-growing cultivars of Lawson’s Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), ranging around the circle from dark green to golden to bright green to blue/grey and back to dark green.

9. **The Late Flowering Perennial Borders** These are a mix of later flowering perennial grasses some of which are selections from Prairie plants and mainly all grown for their long period of interest or autumn colours. The hedges have been sculpted into a wave style pattern to reflect the movement the grasses and the perennials will give the border.

10. **The Woodland Garden** Among the drifts of bluebell, wood anemone, celandine and other native woodland plants there are beds devoted to North American and Himalayan plants, bamboos and other plants. The small valley adjacent to the road (and open to it for the benefit of passers-by), has been planted as a 'Jungle Garden', using bamboos, palms and other bold but mainly hardy plants to create an exotic atmosphere.