



Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

Feb. 26, 1973

Dear Howard:

I hope that when you're here to give the lecture for the Museum you'll have some time to talk about computing systems. I'd like to have you for dinner, at some time that won't interfere with schedules the Museum people have arranged.

See what you can do.

Sincerely,

David J. Rogers

August 3, 1972

Dr. Howard Irwin
The New York Botanical Garden
Bronx, New York 10458

Dear Howard:

This is a sort of rambling type of letter, without very much substance, but one I've wanted to write for some time.

First, it was a pleasure to have Ian Prance (I don't remember the right combination of letters to spell his first name properly) at the same meetings with me in England, both at the Workshop on data systems for a world gene bank network, and later at Kew, where he and I shared the seminar in the Keeper's room. I feel that he may have learned something at the Workshop which will be profitable for NYBG in the long run, if not immediately, and he certainly gave more prestige to my presentation on TAXIR at Kew not only because he is a bona fide Oxonian English botanist, but also a member in good standing in botanical garden circles.

Hesslop-Harrison seems to be moving things in a more rapid manner than did his predecessor towards modernity at Kew, but he and his staff are still in a very early stage, and probably won't move as fast as you can, at least as far as various EDP procedures are concerned. Their bureaucracy make keep them using English computing machines even though there are several more powerful US machines available in London. That will hold them back, if they don't want to spend money converting such computer programs as ours to their own hardware.

While I was working down in Mississippi, I discovered that a number of the larger contractors to NASA, such as Lockheed, are employing botanists to help them get "ground-truth" for satellite and high-flying airplane pictures of the earth. The contractors seem not to have any idea about what kind of botanist they really should have, and some of the people they have hired are, at best, second-best. There is no knowledge amongst the engineers of these companies that botanic gardens contain the most precise knowledge and skills for getting "ground-truth" data to check out their sensory devices. I made a little headway with one engineering, who took my place down at Mississippi. My feeble attempt to do this is contained in the enclosed writing which was to be used in one of the reports of GURC to NASA. This one guy was receptive, probably because I gave him quite a few drinks of Scotch in advance, and because I worked with him for a few weeks before leaving. I somehow feel that botanic institutions should try to get connected through contract or subcontract to the NASA contractors for work on determining just exactly what they see on the ground. Even if the BGs don't get involved, these engineering types are going to go ahead on their own, which will be money very poorly spent.

I don't know exactly how botanic gardens could work with such contracting types. I do know that most botanists are reluctant to work under any contracting agreement, where they must guarantee some sort of result. But if botanic gardens and botanists want to have their influence felt in decision-making, somehow they must get to where the action is, and this is one route that I suggest.

I am really looking forward to Ian's report on his findings for NYBG, and hope that you can share it with me. I, and the people at GURC, could stand an objective look at our systems, and it is clear that we cannot be objective about our own systems. For that matter, it is difficult for us to be objective about other, competing systems. There is so much jargon and salesmanship associated with the systems that it is difficult to slice through to the real value of one system or another. I am sure you have encountered this, and we appreciated the chance to tell Ian about our systems for this, amongst other reasons. Maybe he will see the systems in their true light.

Now that I have finished the generic monograph of Manihot, and have written a pretty thorough study of the one cultivated species, I have one more large publication to make before I call it quits on Manihot. The one more large publication is a general book on M. esculenta, in the style of the World Crop Series. I am already into that work in collaboration with two others, Bill Jones of Stanford Food Research Institute, and Pat Coursey of the Tropical Products Institute in London. When this work is done--we project its completion in about a year's time--I will be looking about for another economic group to tackle from the taxonomic point of view. I am just a bit tired of tropical type crops, and am casting about for an interesting temperate zone group. At the moment, I'm sort of interested in the Vitaceae. What do you think of that family from the standpoint of taxonomic problems? I think the product of the vine would be more desirable to sample than a starchy root.

The family is coming along--how well remains to be seen. The two oldest are through with their bachelor's degrees, and the youngest will finish high school this coming year. The older boy, John, is getting married on the 19th of this month, and probably will go on for graduate work. Marilyn is working in San Francisco, and seems to belong to the women's lib group, as far as marriage is concerned. At least, she hasn't shown too much interest in marriage yet, but I refuse to predict when that attitude will change. Richard, the youngest, has been away in Europe on a camping trip all summer, so Connie and I have had respite from children type problems for some time. I must admit that it's rather nice, at least for a while.

Best regard to you and family.

Sincerely,

- Taxonomy Laboratory

October 17, 1966

Dr. William C. Steere
The New York Botanical Garden
Bronx Park
Bronx, New York 10458

Dear Bill:

I expect to be in New York on Thursday the 27th and would like
to see you then. I hope you can make it.

Sincerely,

David J. Rogers
Professor of Botany

DJR:ch

- Taxonomy Laboratory

June 20, 1966

Dr. William C. Steere
New York Botanical Garden
Bronx Park
Bronx, N. Y. 10458

Dear Bill:

With reference to your suggestion that I become a member of the National Academy of Sciences National Research Committee on the Use of Computers in the Life Sciences, I have the following report of activities going on. Bob Johnson on the staff here is a friend of John Olive. Bob asked John to see what he could do to help in this direction. John spoke to Russell Stevens of the National Academy and Russell Stevens seems to be aware of what I am doing. It may be possible that Russell will make the suggestion that I get on the committee, but it might not hurt a bit if sometime you could drop a word for me there too. I wrote Phyllis Parkins recently and asked her if she would mind putting a word in the right places at the same time. This may be possible, then, to push it from several angles.

I have looked at the outfit that you recommended to me, namely the Institute in Technical Industrial Communications to be held here. Most of the people it seems in this outfit are newspaper types or English types, and whether or not they have any suggestions in this connection or influence, I do not know. We will follow through on it.

Sincerely,

David J. Rogers
Professor of Botany

DJR:ch

computer course

Taxonomy Lab.
April 21, 1966

Dr. William C. Steere
The New York Botanical Garden
Bronx, New York

Dear Bill:


Perhaps the generalities in the enclosed paper will be grist for the mill. I put it together as an opening wedge for a grant to do some work, but there may be something useful in it for you.

I was glad to have a chance to hear of your meeting, and further developments on information retrieval on a national level. It was also pleasing to know of Mr. Harding's interest in this type of thing.

The ride out to the airport was much appreciated. Hope you and Dorothy can stop by to see us. We'd love to have you.

Sincerely,

David J. Rogers
Professor of Botany

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN
BRONX • NEW YORK 10458  LU 4-8500

April 14, 1966

APR 15 1966

Dr. David J. Rogers
Department of Botany
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Dear Dave:

It was good to see you yesterday and to get your point of view on how the new National Academy of Sciences-- National Research Council Committee on Scientific and Technological Communications can make proper use of your ideas--and vice versa. Under any circumstances, I will keep in mind your ideas and what you are doing so that if an appropriate moment arises in which to introduce them, I can do so.

In accordance with my promise, here is a citation for the three parts of "Recommendations for National Document Handling Systems in Science and Technology," produced by the Committee on Scientific and Technical Information (COSATI) for the Federal Council for Science and Technology which functions under the leadership of Donald F. Hornig. The first part of this publication is a report by Dr. William T. Knox, Chairman of COSATI, and the other two consist of a background study made for COSATI by the System Development Corporation in Santa Monica, California. This is probably the best background study of communications problems and developments in science yet made, and is to be obtained from Clearing House for Federal Scientific and Technical Information, National Bureau of Standards, U. S. Department of Commerce, Springfield, Virginia 22151. The price is \$3.50.

Sincerely yours,



William C. Steere
Director

WCS/gd


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No. 789132

SENT TO <i>Dr Richard Klein</i>		POSTMARK OR DATE
STREET AND NO.		<i>15 Dec 66</i>
P. O., STATE, AND ZIP CODE <i>Bronx, n y 10458</i>		
EXTRA SERVICES FOR ADDITIONAL FEES		
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<input type="checkbox"/> 10¢ fee	<input type="checkbox"/> 35¢ fee	<input type="checkbox"/> 50¢ fee

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THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN
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13 January 1967

Dear Dave,

I received today the letter from Dean Nelson telling me that Dick Ward was offered and accepted the Chairmanship of your department.

In my brief talks with him, I felt that he had the interests of the department very much in mind and would have been most interested in becoming chairman. I think that he will do a good job. I think that I could have done a better job, but as you know, I'm a real egotist.

Please accept my deepest personal thanks for your efforts in my behalf.

Sincerely

Dick

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Fee \$ *7.5* Ret. receipt fee \$

Surcharge \$ Rest. del'y fee \$

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Postmaster, By

From *D. S. Rogers*
C. S. U.

To *Richard M. Klein*
Brent Park
Brent, N.Y.

POD Form 3806—May 1964

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Postmaster, By *DM*

From *Dr. David Rogers*
Dept. of Botany, C.S.U.

To *Dr. Richard M. Klein*
W. J. Bolander Garden
Brent Park, Brent, N.Y.

POD Form 3806—May 1964

10458

e48-16-70493-6

- Taxonomy Laboratory

October 17, 1966

Dr. Richard M. Klein
The New York Botanical Garden
Bronx Park
Bronx, New York 10458

Dear Dick:

I expect to be in New York on Thursday the 27th and would like to see you then. I hope you can make it.

Sincerely,

David J. Rogers
Professor of Botany

DJR:ch

- Taxonomy Laboratory

June 14, 1966

Dr. Richard Klein
New York Botanical Garden
Bronx Park
Bronx, N.Y. 10458

Dear Dick:

I like Gentile's manuscript very much and pretty much as is. I can see that the suggestions you have made are worth his consideration, but I frankly would go slow in making any major changes. I think that what we want in these books is pretty much what Art has furnished, and that while he may not have completely covered the water front, he surely has done it in a style which is readable and fascinating.

I think that in contrast Frank Salisbury tried to cover too much ground because he wanted to be sure that the story was complete. In so doing, he made the manuscript so long that it might be that a reader would say to himself, "I don't want to know that much about the flowering process," and not read through it. Gentile has left some unexplained facets to be sure, but in our audience is this a critical element?

Now I am getting to the monster written by a couple of characters by the name of Klein. The size of it is almost enough to make me a little afraid to get at it, but I will.

The latest thing on the chairmanship is that the three people so far looked at have turned the job down, and the administration has decided that they will look farther but let the problem lie for the summer. The other day I had a chance to put in another word for you "where the action is," so hang on if you can.

Best regards,

David J. Rogers
Professor of Botany

DJR:ch

21

October 21, 1965

Dr. Richard M. Klein
The New York Botanical Garden
Bronx, New York 10458

Dear Dick,

In answer to yours of the 14th October, I am afraid I haven't got any real hot news for you concerning the possibility of a seminar here. We have just had a blow-up in the department, and I think you may recall something about the undercurrents that I mentioned to you concerning the head of the department. The Head has now been voted out, or so I hear. Everything comes to me in a very indirect sort of way, and I'm not "in" as far as the machinations within the department are concerned. As soon as the dust settles, I will let you know more about it. It is pretty certain that there will be "room at the top", and just what this indicates I have no idea -- yet. There will probably be an interim head, but whether the interim head will be invited to accept the job on a permanent basis is a moot question.

How do you feel about the administrative job? I can tell you that whoever does this job is going to be "out" as far as research is concerned. He is going to have to spend an awful lot of time getting a smooth running, cooperative department. They have a pretty big staff here, and it would seem to me that anybody who takes the job ought to know in advance that he is not going to be able to continue as a researcher.

I have on my desk, and am working slowly at, Wellman's manuscript. It is long past the time when I should have turned it over to you. The other day I saw Frank Salisbury, and he again promised me that along about Christmastime he ought to have a rough draft of his book. With Frank's move and so forth, I don't know whether he is really serious about that deadline or not. I sort of doubt it.

Letter to R.M. Klein
October 21, 1965

Page 2.

We are slowly getting ourselves established in this institution. We now have an old building pretty much to ourselves, although we still haven't gotten rid of a couple of the former occupants who are supposed to move into another building as soon as it's done. I suppose a place like this where you've got a small sized city operating, can't be expected to get things done as fast as they ought to. It certainly is true that I would have moved a lot faster here if things had been settled in the department; but I think that altogether things will be a much better operation in the future. Let me know how you feel about an administrative type position, and then I will be guided by your reactions.

Sincerely,

David G. Rogers
Professor of Botany

DGR/ec

14 October 1965

Dear Dave,

Many thanks for your letter of 27 September. I just haven't answered it because I'm on july duty and still trying to run my lab in the evening and still trying to get more done with Deanaon our book. Incidentally, all is well with the series with several other potential authors.

The information on Frank Salisbury is exciting but not surprising. Frank as, I gather, wanted to return to Utah for some time.

As for the possibility of my moving to Ft. Collins - it would indeed be wonderful. I really don't know how to proceed at this point since you asked me to keep the information under my hat. I am fairly sure that I could take the travel out of my grant if I were to be asked to come out to give one or more seminars. My work on near-UV radiation, etc. is not out of line with topics of interest in the mountains and other work is also of interest. I guess that I will leave the possibility of giving a seminar up to you and Richard Ward. Incidentally, Ross is a good man (personally, I think that his work is somewhat plodding but it is solid) and his interests background, and training would not conflict at all with mine.

Things at Ye Olde Garden are as usual. It is almost to my nose but I'm still breathing.

Regards to Connie and the kids.

Sincerely,