

Extracts from Chester Zoo newsletter concerning the gardens

The following extracts from the Zoo newsletters provide information about the development of the gardens and the plants supplied, with some shrubs, trees and a great number of roses coming from Caldwell's Nurseries, though in the 1950's the Zoo developed its own nursery to supply shrubs as well as bedding plants.

Year	Garden development	'Our Zoo News' editions
1953	Decision to develop the ornamental gardens and the appointment of Phillip Gallup as Head Gardener	114
1953	Reference to the rose gardens being greatly admired, but that roses in front of the main building did not bloom so well primarily because the peacocks developed a liking for the rosebuds! The large bed at the north entrance "was planted in the Spring with.....Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Cotoneasters, Viburnums, Escallonias etc with standard Acers and Flowering Cherries."	115
1954	Reference to encroachment of the zoo development upon an old orchard, in part by construction of a nursery garden, and the clearance of old apple trees to create a new herbaceous border along a wide drive. Five or six apple trees were to be left in the Panda's enclosure for the animals to climb. A border on the south side of the Panda's enclosure is to display Hydrangeas. Ten new aviaries are to be constructed west of the Rose Garden. A new Rose Garden enclosed with a Cupressus hedge and devoted to floribunda varieties has been planted with Yellow Pinnochia, Anne Pulsen, Fashion, Orange Triumph, Salmon Perfection, Masquerade and Poulsen's Bedder.	116
1955	March and the gardeners are reported to be hard at work improving the ground between the cafeteria and bears enclosure. Clay "excavated in 1945 when the bear pens were constructed, is being moved, to make way for a garden, and the adjoining area will be levelled and converted into a tea garden, in the centre of which will be a bed containing a tulip tree." A planned 200 yard long herbaceous border along the north side of the waterway will have to wait till next year.	118
1955	The planting of Laurels under the trees near the cafeteria, and a planting of Laburnums and Lilacs bordered with rose bushes. Four beds associated with the Wallaby enclosure are to be planted with azaleas and roses, and rhododendron and evergreens planted along the banks of the canal. Reference to 30,000 bedding plants being prepared for planting in June.	119
1955	21 st Birthday Edition - "The botanical side of the Gardens had become renowned. The beds of roses, the neat and vast borders are a mass of vivid colour throughout the summer".	121
1955	Trouble with rabbits eating newly planted bedding!	122
1956	Severe weather in January and February spoilt the spring bedding. "An avenue of trees has been planted across the newly	124

	acquired farm land to the Liverpool Road.....130 trees.... American Oaks, Red Horse Chestnut, Norway Maple, Purple Sycamore, Mountain Ash etc” Also planted within the Zoo - Catalpas, Paulonias, Ginko Biloba and Ailanthus.	
1957	Reference to there being 4,000 rose bushes in the zoo	126
1958	“The whole of the front of the House near the main entrance has been altered..... Old borders which were overgrown with very old shrubs have been completely removed”, and in some cases replanted. The Riding School in the centre of the property has been acquired by the Zoo.	128
1960	The addition of the Fountain Restaurant on ground formerly belonging to a riding school, overlooked a fountain and flower gardens planted with 2,000 roses and seasonal bedding.	130
		Chester Zoo News
1962	The floribunda Rose Garden contains 2,250 bushes, 22 varieties and is now in its 3 rd year of flowering since planting. 80,000 plants grown for spring and summer bedding displays.	No. 9 September
1962	“Sixc hundred and thirty nine rose bushes in seventeen varieties are on order for the Floribunda Rose Garden in front of the Fountain Restaurant.”	No.10 October
1962	11,000 Tulips are to be planted in addition to the usual Polyanthus, Pansies, Wall flowers and For-get-me-nots etc. Further 500 floribunda roses on order. One of the beds to be renewed, planted with Superstar, “the new variety of H.T. Rose which has caused such a sensation in recent years.”	No.11 November
1962	12,000 feet of glasshouses being extended by 1600 sq ft, used for bedding and then to grow salad crops for the Zoo’s cafes as well as the animals.	No.4 December
1963	Gales in mid December blew down trees as well as damaging buildings, and snow storms at the end of the month damaged the aviaries.	No.1 January
1963	Very severe cold, night temperatures 14 - 20° F for more than a month but the deep snow is protecting the plants from frost.	No. 2 February
1963	Lawns and flower beds by the monkey enclosure, lawn extension by the Rainbow Cafe, and the new rockery beside the Polar Bear enclosure all completed. Nurseries currently contain 10,000 Begonias in variety, 5,000 Geraniums and 2,500 Heliotrope in pots; Antirrhinum, Verbena, Lobelia, Ageratum etc grown in boxes, plus tropical and sub tropical plants and an orchid house. With two outside nurseries with frames for shrub cuttings and seeds making a total of about 3 acres	No. 6 June
1963	‘Gardening notes’ responds to readers queries about plants and how to grow them with Lantana topping the list.	No 7 July
1963	“Chester Zoo’s Rose Gardens The H. T. Rose Garden was made and planted twelve years ago. Over the last few years three of the beds have been replanted	No. 8 August

	<p>with newer varieties. One was planted with the variety Sultane, which is a fragrant vermilion, orange and gold bi-colour. Bi-colours have become increasingly popular during the last few years and the second of the three remade beds has been planted with another - Gail Borden. This variety is deep peach to salmon rose in colour, with pale gold reverse. It is a strong grower with large fragrant flowers. The bed was planted during the winter of 1961-62.</p> <p>Last winter the third bed was planted with the new Super Star variety, which first caused such a sensation and received so much publicity when first introduced. It is the perfect rose. The colouring which is pure vermilion, does not fade with age and flowers are of perfect form. Again, Super Star has good lasting qualities and is fragrant.”</p> <p>The article goes on to say that while the H. T. Rose Garden will be retained, it is the Floribunda roses which are most suited to the Zoo because of their continuity and mass of flower. There are currently 45 varieties in separate beds, 39 of them in the Fountain Restaurant area, with 300 Queen Elizabeth planted on the bank beside the canal bridge.</p> <p>A Fuchsia border situated at the bottom of the H.T. rose garden and there are fuchsias in most parts of the zoo as standards or in hanging baskets.</p>	
1963	The planting of the Monkey House has been completed with exotic plants grown in the Zoo's own nurseries.	No. 9 September
1963	The Zoo's orchid collection numbers 600 plants	No 12 Dec
1964	New rose planting complete, varieties of H. T. Roses being Josephine Bruce, Picadilly, Silver Lining, Monique, Peace, Wendy Cussons, Christian Dior, Rose Gaujard, Buccaneer and Prima Ballerina. This completed the replacement of the beds carried out over the past 3 years.	No 1 January
1964	36 standard lime trees have been planted to form an avenue at the rear of the Monkey House, to be under planted with laurels from the Zoo's own nurseries.	No 2 February
1964	The herbaceous border is improved and at the back of the Rhinoceros House a new border planted with shrubs grown at the Zoo. Climbers planted along the walls include Ceanothus varieties dentatus, veitchianus and Gloire de Versailles; Clematis jackmanii superb, Honeysuckle Late Red, Honeysuckle flexuosa and Hydrangea petiolaris. A mixed collection of floribunda roses will be planted alongside the picnic lawn by the cafe replacing laurels.	No 12 December
1965	300 shrubs have been planted by the new Cats enclosure, “and with the exception of twenty-four new varieties brought in to increase and vary our collections, they have all come from our own nurseries.” 500 floribunda roses have been planted beside the Monkey House, increasing the roses to 10,000. Vitis coignetiae and Polygonum baldschuanicum had been	No 4 April

	planted in large troughs on top of the service passage of the Cat accommodation, and between them plantings of Vitis brandt, Vitis purpurea, Vitis henryana and Golden Hop to cover the whole area of wire.	
1965	The Rockery beside the Polar Bear enclosure is now fully planted	No 5 May
1966	<p>Bedding in the border round the Elephant enclosure is replaced with H.T Roses, 520 in two rows, all scented varieties - "Fragrant Cloud - a wonderful Rose of recent introduction, vermilion scarlet in colour and very fragrant, Kings Ransom, Mischief, Message, Colour Wonder, Grandpa Dickson, Papa Meiland, Mdme. Louise Laperriere, My Choice, Gold Crown, Dame de Coeur and Helen Traubel."</p> <p>A border of floribunda roses has replaced a hedge at the bottom of the lawn near the Rainbow Cafe - 320 bushes of 18 varieties, 40 of each - Paddy McGredy, Zambra, Charlotte Elizabeth, Violet Carson, Vagabond, Honeymoon, Evelyn Fison and Elizabeth of Glamis.</p> <p>A tree and shrub bed at the back of the North Entrance had been planted with small growing shrubs "and with the exception of a few evergreen Azaleas, 3 Ceratostigma Willmottiana, 3 Caryopteris Clandonensis and 3 Daphne mezereum was planted with shrubs from our nursery."</p> <p>A circular bed in front of the Oakfield Nursery has been planted with summer flowering heathers - Vagan's Cream, Vagan's Lyonesse, Vulgaris H. E. Beale, Vulgaris Golden Haze, Vulgaris Mair's Variety - interspersed with groups of Hypericum Gracile, Hypericum calycinum and Potentilla Tangerine.</p> <p>Confirmation that the Zoo does train young gardeners taking on two school leavers a year. Upon completion the students decide whether to stay or go elsewhere to further their experience.</p>	No 12 December
1968	A new rock garden has been constructed by the Main Entrance using soil removed from the Zebra enclosure. a fine Turkish Oak tree was retained. The area of 1500sq. yds includes two waterfalls, pathways and plantings of camellias, 25 varieties of heathers and other plants such as Mesembryanthemums and Gazanias grown in the Zoo nurseries.	No 5 May
1971	Mention of 20,000 roses in flower at the Zoo	No 7 July
1971	Further accounts of the Rock Garden which included plantings of various Chamaecyparis, golden yews and two specimen Metasequoia glyptostroboides, 3,000 alpine plants and alpine bulbs	No 9 September
1973	<p>The pool in the middle of the Hybrid Tea Rose Garden has been emptied, filled with soil and planted with 3 dozen each of Red Planet, Whisky Mac, Blessings and Akebone, with five standard roses also planted - Fragrant Cloud, Ernest H. Morse, King's Ransom, Mr Lincoln and Summer Holiday.</p> <p>"one bed in the Floribunda Rose Garden near the Tropical House was in need of replanting. This garden was made eighteen</p>	No 2 February

	<p>years ago and all the beds are original plantings. The variety cleared was Salmon Perfection which is no longer listed in catalogues, the old soil has been replaced with new and the variety Franklin Engelman planted. The same procedure has been carried out with one bed in the Fountain Restaurant Rose Garden where the variety Megiddo has been planted in place of Karen Poulsen.”</p> <p>Also mention of moving trees and shrubs from the Green End Nursery near the Lecture Hall where there are perennial weed problems, to the Demage Farm nursery.</p>	
1973	<p>Replanting of one of the rose beds with H. T. Mr Lincoln and standard Whisky Mac replacing Josephine Bruce. Another bed is being planted with H. T. Cheshire Life, a recent introduction and standards of Diorama. The third bed for replanting is in the Fountain Rose Garden where the variety Countess of Dalkieth is being replaced with Korbell.</p> <p>Other shrub planting being undertaken with plants from the Zoo nursery.</p>	No 12 December
1974	Percy Thrower and the BBC Gardener's World team record two programmes at the Zoo in August	No 9 September
1975	New beds are being planted with Zoo grown shrubs. Roses are not deterring children trying to feed the baboons so they are to be replaced with Berberis wilsonii. One rose bed in the Fountain Restaurant Garden is to be replanted with floribunda rose Southampton and 4 standard Megiddo.	No 1 January
1976	Mention of several specimens of Paulownia Imperialis	No 6 June
1976	Record of Mr Gallup's retirement in April	No 7 July
1976	Comment that 1976 has been one of the driest summers on record	No 10 October
1977	Mention that Prunus cerasus Kanzan is planted throughout the zoo. Also an avenue of Prunus amygdalus, Prunus Kanzan double pink Prunus Fugenzo (H.J. Veitch), and Laburnum vosii, all planted in 1962. Opposite the Monkey House is a picnic lawn where a holly hedge and standard scarlet flowering hawthorns were planted, also in 1962.	No 5 May
1977	A sunken garden constructed in 1973 has been named the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Garden. It was opened by Lady Tollemache on Saturday 11 th June 1977.	No 6 June
1977	6 Ginko biloba trees were planted about 20 years ago near the Tropical House. In the same area are 3 Catalpa bignonioides.	No 7 July
1977	Dutch elm disease first noticed in the Zoo 3 years ago and the tree felled	No 9 September
1978	Replacement roses include H. T. Rose Red Devil and Floribunda Arthur Bell, Glenfiddich and Moonmaiden	No 1 January
1978	A large group of 250 Rhododendrons situated at the end of the Monkey House include: Lord Roberts, Pink Pearl, Brittania, John Walter, Pink Perfection, Purple Splendour. In the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Garden varieties include Bagshot Ruby, Cynthia, Louis Pasteur, Hugh Koster, Mrs G. W. Leak, Mrs R. S	No 5 May highlighted ones n C Cat 1972/3 description similar

	Holford and Fastuosum flore pleno.	green 77/78
1979	Among roses planted 20 years ago are a popular standard Rose is, Ballerina, a hybrid musk and Frensham an old variety planted. An old bush Floribunda which still floweres well is Poulsen's bedder. More up to date varieties of Floribunda roses in the zoo are Queen Elizabeth, Southampton, English Miss, Orange Sensation, Rhumba, Manx Queen, Glenfiddich, Megiddo, Iceberg, Dam ef Sark, English Holiday, Paddy McCredy; H.T. varieties are Blessings, Manuela, Peace, Diorama, Pascali, Read Devil, Cheshire Life, Fragrant Cloud, Whisky Mac.	No 8 August
1980	Two new varieties of H. T. Rose - Typhoon replacing Tenerife and Alpine Sunset replacing Bettina. In the Fountain Roase Garden, Floribunda City of Belfast replaced Ama, Arthur Bell replaced Dearest and All Gold replaced Sir Lancelot. Anne Cocker replace Paddy McCredy in the border round one of the Rainbow Picnic Lawns	No 1 January
1980	A new South American Garden created containing two Araucaria imbricate and pampas grass along the ridge with Escallonia	No 4 April
1981	(Zoo News in new format) Large bed opposite the Beaver Pool planted with 50 shrub roses including: Hybrid Musk: Ballerina and Conelia Modern Shrub: Fountain, Fred Loads, Golden Wings, Joseph's Coat and Marguerite Hilling. Also R Canarybird, moyesii, rubiginosa and Mma. Isaac Periere, Roserie de l'Hay. New floribunda in Fountain Restaurant garden - Korresia.	No 3
1981	Piece by the Director Dr M R Brambell about felling trees in the ZOO - elm, crack willow and Lombardy Poplar	no 4
1983	4 editions per year Article on Dawn Redwoods 8 in gardens	3 Autumn Chez Nous

After this the format of the news changed again and no longer included reports about the gardens.