

THOMAS BRUMBLOW

I'm writing you today to thank the Vic & Margaret Ball Internship foundation and the Ball family for granting me this once in a lifetime opportunity, for their direct contribution to my education, and for the good friends and memories I made along the way.

During my Summer internship at Heronswood I was exposed to many techniques, terms, tools, and methods that I assuredly would have not otherwise. Often my days were split, I would either spend my time working in the greenhouses potting, seeding, up-sizing, and watering and the other times

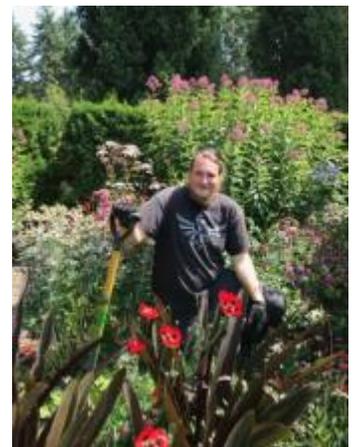


I could be found outside amongst the luscious Washington foliage, either in the dapple deep green shade of the forest gardens or in one of the numerous fluorescent flower borders and perennial beds. I was even put in charge of reclaiming an older greenhouse; it was previously used for storage and had been let go to "seed" but now it's a fully functioning greenhouse with organized pots and growing space. However, the most spectacular aspect of Heronswood is what can be found within these greenhouses and beds. Plants from almost every continent absolutely comprise the shape, style, and architecture of this horticultural marvel. One of my favorite things about this internship was the never-ending opportunity to learn new and exciting things and do new tasks. I've found myself atop an orchard ladder, up a step stool, bent over short greenhouse benches, kneeling at the base of trees, and positively had my chest to earth all for the sake of placing and planting the most pristine rare flowering annuals and perennials in the perfect place.

However, it definitely goes beyond just the getting the plant into the ground aspect of getting a garden planted. Every aspect of the environment that the plant is going to be placed in was considered. From sun requirements, soil condition, amendment/fertilizers needed, preparing the root-ball, facing of the plant, planting depth and post-planting watering. Also, other tasks that aren't often thought of because they happen after the plants are well established such as pruning, tying up, staking, and trellising, all of which I was taught the proper way to do.

However due to these incredibly careful considerations and steps taken, some truly breathtaking arrangements were formed and perhaps my favorite area of Heronswood was the former potager. The original design was to be a French vegetable garden while Dan Hinkley himself lived there and since has been changed into an absolute stunning gallery of uniform plantings within the interior beds and the outer beds with a very Gertrude Jekyll feel. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, I often spent quite a bit of time in the potager deadheading, re-planting, fertilizing, and general grooming the interior gardens. This was some of the best times I had spent in the garden, I will enclose a picture to try and give it justice. The interior flower beds are uniformly planted in marigolds and dahlias of alternating colors and as a whole it really is a show onto itself.

But as I stated, this kind of beauty takes substantial work. Shortly after arriving one of my first tasks was to pot up and sort the left-over marigolds and



dahlias by color as replacements for the potager garden just to ensure uniformity not only in color but in height and vigor as well. So, in addition to working in the gardens full time, I also often took care of the greenhouse plants on the weekends (this was never an inconvenience and very easy to do since housing was provided on site). And there was never a dull moment while living on tribal land. Often times some of the teenagers or gentlemen from the local sweat lodge would stop by and cut wood for the sweat ceremonies or the elders of the village. Everyone I met and dealt with on tribal lands were incredibly inviting and always offered the highest level of hospitality and when you come from the deep south, that's saying something.



In conclusion, this internship has absolutely radically changed my plans for the future. Dan Hinkley spent a good bit of his time explaining to me and showing me the benefit of higher education and the importance of pushing your limits to achieve what you didn't even know possible. So, I have decided to peruse at least my master's degree after graduation in plant biology to better understand and widen the collective human knowledge of growing and producing annual bedding flowers in a greenhouse setting. Particularly I am interested in what initiates, sustains, and suppresses flower and petal growth along with how this impacts flowering time. Currently professor Paul Thomas is already trying to place me.

Thank you so much for the opportunity and I hope you can keep giving students like myself amazing experiences that will follow them for the rest of their lives as the memories, friends, and skills I've learned and gained will.

~Thomas Brumblow

P.S.- A very special thanks again to the Ball family for everything, and to Ms. Debi Chedester for making sure I had all of my ducks in a row!



^*Cardiocrinum giganteum* var. *yunnanense*^

Largest lily in the world- 16' pictured