

This year's Floral Clock celebrates three and a half centuries of The Botanics

The Floral Clock in Edinburgh is the oldest in the world and this year it marks an important anniversary of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh which was 350 years-old last year.

At a small ceremony on Friday morning the Rt Hon Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Frank Ross thanked the parks staff who created and planted the design, including David Jamieson, David Dorward, Jillian Denney and Thomas McKirdy. Director of Operational Services at The City of Edinburgh Council, Gareth Barwell also attended the unveiling of this year's floral masterpiece.

The Lord Provost was accompanied by the Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Simon Milne MBE and representatives from the Botanics, Horticulturists, Gunnar Ovstebo and Marc Gilbert, and David Knott, Curator of Living Collections.



The 350th anniversary of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh was 2020 but the anniversary has been marked this year with the Floral Clock in Princes Street Gardens unveiled by The Rt Hon Lord Provost Frank Ross and Regius Keeper Simon Milne
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At a small ceremony on Friday the Rt Hon Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Frank Ross said: “It is tremendous to see the clock with hands on it again. This year represents the 350th anniversary of the Royal Botanic Gardens one of the key stakeholders in the city and I am delighted that the Regius Keeper is with us this morning.

“There is a tremendous amount of work in producing what I am reliably informed is 45,000 plants. The team have done a fantastic job in bringing all of this together and of course the clock also requires ongoing maintenance. The 350th anniversary of the Botanic in 2020 coincided with the 75th anniversary of when the clock began on the floral clock.

“I hope everyone has an opportunity to enjoy the clock along with the cuckoo which is working well.”

The floral clock in Edinburgh marks the 350 years since the [@TheBotanics](#) was established as a small physic garden. The lovely thing is that the hands on the clock are now working and the cuckoo is in good voice. The [@LordProvostEdin](#) declared it officially open today pic.twitter.com/D20ruYoszG

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [July 30, 2021](#)



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Regius Keeper Simon Milne, MBE, said: “Three hundred and fifty-one years ago, in a small plot just about one mile from

here, a physic garden was established that would become the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

“Our founders could never then have envisaged that the garden, created to learn and teach about the medicinal qualities of plants, would grow and develop into one of the world’s leading botanical research institutes. Nor could they have imagined that our teams of dedicated scientific and horticultural staff would work, not just in Scotland, but in 55 countries across the world to help combat climate change and biodiversity loss.

“However, from the beginning, the Botanic Garden has always been a garden at the heart of the city of Edinburgh and it’s wonderful to see our 350th anniversary celebrated – albeit a year late – in such magnificent floral fashion in the world’s oldest Floral Clock. Two icons of Edinburgh reflecting the four centuries of friendship between the City of Edinburgh and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

“We have been an integral part of the city since 1670, located at Holyrood, the Nor’Loch and Leith before arriving at our current Inverleith site in 1820. We have taught generations of the city’s medical students in the centuries when physicians required knowledge of botany, and countless thousands of new parents found that a trip to the Botanic Garden was the best way to entertain and exhaust their energetic toddlers.

“‘Healing’ has therefore always been at the core of what we do, but it is perhaps in the last 16 months that our service to the City of Edinburgh has been most meaningful. As Covid restrictions closed our shops and restaurants and prevented us from meeting our loved ones, the peaceful green spaces of the Botanic Garden provided both a physical escape and a place of mental solace to the people of Edinburgh.

“Now, as Covid-19 restrictions begin to be lifted, I am

delighted to see our anniversary bloom in glorious fashion in this year's Floral Clock. Originally planned for our anniversary year in 2020, experts from the Parks and Green Spaces department welcomed our horticulture teams into the complicated creative and design process of how best to represent the Botanics in plants. The intricate process included discussions around the most suitable choice of plant colours for the lettering and how best to express our logo and its rather complex representation of the *Sibbaldia procumbens*."