After graduating with a degree in botany from the University of Oxford in 1978 HJN worked in Dundee Museum to complete a Flora of the county of Angus, followed by three years at the University of St Andrews working on the cytogenetics of the recently evolved species Senecio cambrensis. After a degree in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester his career from 1986 until 2017 was spent at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE). This initially involved curating exhibitions at Inverleith House, including a pioneering series on drawings made by Indian artists for Scottish East India Company surgeons. He then returned to botany, undertaking taxonomic research on Sino-Himalayan monocotyledons and running the Flora of Bhutan project from 1996 until its completion in 2001. From 2000 his research focussed on historical aspects of the RBGE collections, especially those of India, but also of Sri Lanka and the Pacific, and on the work of John Hope the Enlightenment-period Regius Keeper of RBGE. The publications on Alexander Gibson (in the *Dapuri Drawings*), Robert Wight and Hugh F.C. Cleghorn, form a prosopography of three of the key players in the field of Indian applied botany (including forestry and taxonomy) of the colonial period. After retirement from RBGE in 2017 his work has extended to cataloguing the Indian botanical drawings at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Natural History Museum London (of both of which he is an Honorary Associate), and in 2019 he curated the botanical section of In 2005 he delivered the

Hooker Lecture to the Linnean Society of London and was awarded the Stafleu Medal of the International Association of Plant Taxonomists, and in 2019 Society for the History of Natural History.

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