



## **Interim-Faculty Development Grant Report April 2013**

*Gnome and Garden*, a documentary  
By Heather Joseph-Witham

The lawn gnome is making a comeback. From roaming gnomes to Laker gnomes, youtube videos of evil stalking gnomes to roleplaying and gamer gnomes, gnome encampment participants at Burning Man, to the tellers of gnomish legends, this folkloric creature has captured the whimsy of many across cultures. I will tell the tale of the 21<sup>st</sup> century gnome and its human caretakers and liberators through a 20 minute documentary video.

I plan to visit the Gnome Reserve in North Devon, England to film and record interviews with the caretakers of and visitors to the 4 acre reserve, which houses a museum and gardens with over 1000 gnomes and pixies. I intend to take the chunnel to France, which is the home of the underground Gnome Liberation Front, which steals away enslaved gnomes held captive in gardens around the world and sets them on the path to freedom. They have also staged such actions as 'The Great Gnome Uprising' and the 'mass suicide' of captive gnomes. I also plan to visit, film, photograph and interview at Wastwater lake in the Cumbrian Lake District which houses a number of underwater gnomes popular with scuba divers. I will meet with numerous home gnome collectors to discuss this passion, one of whom has upwards of 1600 gnomes in his Lincolnshire home. While in California, I will take a road trip to film the hundreds of miniature gnome paintings that are appearing on Oakland telephone poles along with peoples' reactions to this folk art. I also intend to film at Lotusland in Montecito and capture people gnome-hunting at the annual Southern California Renaissance Faire.

I am currently researching and setting up interviews. My California filming will begin in May. My England filming will occur during July, 2013. Upon my return home in August I will log all of my material and begin editing. I should have a working copy at some point in October and will file my final report at that time.