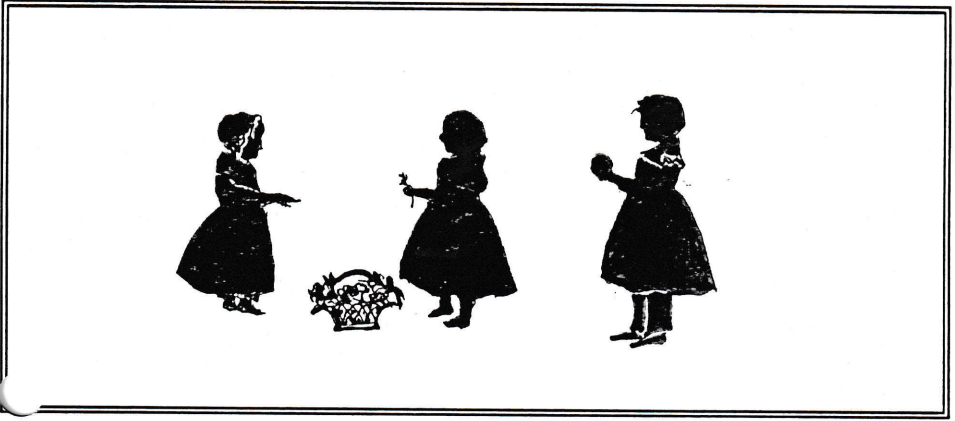




## **FRIENDS OF CRESCENT GARDEN**





Silhouettes of groups of children in a Garden, done by E Whittle, c. 1836

*FRIENDS OF CRESCENT GARDEN*  
*AUTUMN NEWSLETTER, 2005*

## Dear Friend of Crescent Garden,

The Garden is flying its Green Flag for a second year, and the planning for late Summer is now paying off, with some interesting colours and contrasts.

Morning Glory is trailing splashes of crimson and violet, fresh and ferny Cosmos has flowers of varying pink, and the bronze and scarlet dahlia 'Bishop of Llandaff' is in full swing with a foil of apple green scented-leaved Geraniums and showers of starry white flowers from the Gaura.

Roses - 'Stanwell's perpetual', and 'Blush Noisette' - are flowering generously, though there is anxiety about other Roses and we're consulting the RHS about the possibility of treatment with mycorrhizal fungi.

But turning disasters into opportunities is one of gardening's big challenges. Researching plants available by 1850 that need less water, less feeding, and less pruning has led to a few interesting innovations that may help the Garden towards greater sustainability in the changing climate - we'll see!

It's been a busy year. Until June, our WRAGS trainee Kate worked well with us; funded by GBC and trained in basics by Friends. Offered a better paid job nearer home, she broke her year's contract. Understandable, but her tenure had underlined the real need for a regular input of labour, preferably on set days. We're hoping WRAGS will find us another trainee before Spring; meanwhile more volunteers, regular or occasional, would be wonderful! (Ring Rita Rundle, 92-587311; I'm off on a French Sabbatical!)

A co-operative funding effort, and detailed consultation between the Friends and GBC's Arboricultural Officer Dave Stubbington resulted in a long awaited major reduction of the overgrown Bay trees along Terrace Walk.

This let sunlight and rain into the shrubbery beds, where plants showed almost immediate improvement, besides lightening the Walk, which was becoming a gloomy tunnel.

Sadly it had to be accepted that an ancient Holly was dead, after 3 leafless years. (Since the Friends' involvement, the Garden has lost 6 trees: 4 from age or disease. 27 have been established, mostly given by Friends, besides many shrubs.)

The 'understudy' policy suggested by Tree Consultant Jeremy Barrell in 1993 proved sound advice; the Green Flag Judges certainly approved the result.

The Friends had a wonderfully sunny and enjoyable Garden Party, and a highly successful Plant Sale for the National Gardens Scheme, which features Crescent Garden in its famous Yellow Book.

Children from Chernobyl had another great party, and we had an energetic visit from Alverstokes' Brownie Pack.

Less happily, the fountain was damaged 3 times; in the early evening, at 3am, and in mid-afternoon as the Summer holidays began. It was decided to leave the top section off until they were over! Uncertain if it can be straightened this time - a replacement top is on order in case of need.

Parties of drinkers and drug takers were an ongoing problem for the first 6 months and patrols by Police and Community Safety Officers increased after numerous incidents. Whether it was this that improved matters - or simply that Stokes Bay is the preferred venue in Summer weather - remains to be seen. Probably a bit of both.

**Police have requested that anyone who is concerned that drunken behaviour looks potentially destructive should ring them on 0845-045-45-45. Don't leave it to others - Police advice is that several calls are far more effective than one.**

A perennial headache for the Committee is the ongoing problem of unpaid subscriptions. Meetings are dogged by lists of Friends who still haven't remembered! Because it's a small amount it easily gets overlooked - and we fiddle around with slips, and little red reminder dots, feeling badly - about nagging a very generous group of people for a very small sum - but also that it takes up so much time and effort. This time, we're enclosing envelopes for those on Maggie's list, to help you speed your Subs. to her door! (If you've already paid, or you don't wish to stay on the mailing list please put in a note to let us know.)

**Dates to remember:-**

**The Coffee Morning** is on November 18th, at 30 Western Way. A flier nearer the time will give details of where to take gifts and goodies beforehand.

**The AGM** - 2-30pm, the Parish Centre, February 25th '06.

This is a briefer Newsletter, but not too short to remind you that your Committee welcomes any comments and suggestions you may like to make.

Most important of all: **THANK YOU** - to all Friends who have contributed so much. Label sticking, tent erecting, making lovely eats, weeding, fountain-mending, arranging wonderful visits, attending Meetings, brewing gallons of tea and coffee, joining working parties, delivering Newsletters, deadheading 1,000 Roses, marvelling at Moths (at our Moth Watch, they were *amazing*) tending beds, making pictures, researching Bamboos, growing and selling plants, giving all kinds of nice things, hosting Coffee Mornings, and picking Mulberries: the list is endless, as is the good will and kindness of the Friends. **Vive les Amis!!**

Looking forward to the Coffee Morning -

*Wendy Abome*

