



## **THE FRIENDS' AUTUMN NEWSLETTER, 2010**

**Coffee Morning** – Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup> of December – Parish Centre  
1030 – 1230. Entrance fee remains £1.

A Flier will be issued closer to the event giving details on where you can forward your cakes, jams, chutneys, bric-a-brac, books, bottles and raffle prizes. May I thank you in advance for your support and generosity?

### **Stop Press**

Dutch Bulb Fields Visit scheduled for Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2011 staying at the Mercure aan de Amstel Hotel nr Amsterdam. Bookings are being taken **now**. For more details please see page 8 & 9.

### **From your Curator**

This has been a fairly busy first few months for me, as the new Curator of Crescent Garden. As I'm sure you will remember, I took over from Wendy Osborne in February 2010 after the Friends' AGM and this is the first opportunity I've had of reporting all the work and events that have taken place since then.

The initial project was to coppice the large boundary hedge in Terrace Walk. Over the years it had fallen into a state of some disarray! It was heading towards 7feet tall, and was home to a vast amount of brambles, ivy and bind weed and every variety of beer can known to man (not to mention all the empty gin bottles!). The decision to coppice this had been made in conjunction with officers from Gosport Borough Council and the work was started in early March, before birds had nested.

As it was the first major job of my curatorship, it was decided that a letter to our immediate neighbours would be prudent. This was duly done and much interest was shown by all, as the Councils' Green Team removed the old hedging and it was cut down to 12 inches. Our garden volunteer team then spent 6 weeks of solid hard work clearing the site and we have had a programme of weeding and formative pruning to keep the area in the best possible condition since then. The hedge has grown well over three feet this summer and already looks much better.

This year the Borough entered Crescent Garden for the Green Flag Award and Britain in Bloom (South and South East) competition. I am pleased to report that the Green Flag was awarded in July, and the Garden received an "Outstanding" award for "It's Your Neighbourhood", and a Gold Award and category Overall Winner in the "Small Park" section of Britain in Bloom. The volunteers worked to a tight schedule to prepare for the judging, and the gardening was completed in the nick of time on each occasion. Numerous teams from the Council all worked hard to meet the deadlines and it was an amazing team effort. The judges were very complimentary, but as a result of lengthy questioning from the judges about the first aid facilities on the site, you will be pleased to learn that we now boast a First Aid kit second only to that of the War Memorial hospital!

We continue to have a WRAGS Trainee with us. (Women Returnees to Amenity Horticulture Scheme, run by the Women's' Farm and Garden Association.) Our trainee works 15 hours every week and receives a training allowance. This is jointly funded by Gosport Borough Council and the Friends', and is invaluable to us in terms of continuity of work.

This summer we have been laying Everedge - an amazingly flexible strip of metal, which will take up any curve, and is currently being fitted around the ornamental shrubbery. It will make lawn mowing much easier and was supplied by the Borough. It is being installed by one of the volunteers. We are renovating the leaf mould area as well, and I am pleased to announce that we have found an obliging horse locally and now can make our own compost! When I say "We" I actually am referring to the same volunteer who is fitting the Everedge. He assures me that he really likes compost, and thumping a large length of metal into the ground on a weekly basis is his idea of heaven!

We ran a pruning course for the volunteers in early September. This was given by one of the Friends who is a professional Gardener in Surrey. It was very informative and was designed to give everyone more confidence. We spent a happy morning snipping away at the afore-mentioned hedge.

For the first time, the volunteers held a team building meeting, and as a result we identified areas where we could improve our organisation. Another first for us took place in mid September. We decided to take part in the English Heritage Open Day scheme, and during a four day period we conducted guided tours for over 80 visitors. It was extremely enjoyable. We all felt we learnt much about the history of the Garden and the event was graced by "Regency" ladies and children strolling around

the grounds (actually, volunteer gardeners and local children, who were persuaded to dress up).

Of course, there was the Friends' Garden Party, the Children of Chernobyl tea party in June, and earlier in the summer Wendy O and I gave a tour for a party of ladies from the newly formed garden association at Alver Quay. Our plant sale for the National Garden Scheme was held on a cold and grey morning, but everyone gave of their time and plants very generously and a splendid sum in excess of £400 was raised in a matter of two hours for the NGS charities. Patricia Elkington from the NGS in Hampshire had inspected the Garden some days prior to the event and pronounced the Garden to be in excellent shape. (That was quite a relief I can tell you!) There have been many deadlines to meet throughout the year. We have had reliable commitment from our gardeners and there are lots of plans afoot for the winter, but as I'm sure you can see, so far, we really have had a "fairly busy few months", and it's not over yet.....

Gilly Jaynes

### **Friends Events/Outings during 2010**

#### **4<sup>th</sup> May – Visit to Stourhead**

Thanks go to Pam Dimmock once again for organising so well a very enjoyable day out.

#### **19<sup>th</sup> June – The Friends' Nineteenth Garden Party**

The Friends' Garden Party was blessed by good weather and attended by 232 adults (plus 17 guests) down very slightly from 254 guests last year, 26 under18-6 up from 15-6 last year.

Guests included the Gosport Mayor Cllr Roger Allen and the Mayoress, his wife Jill, Mrs Gilly Drummond OBE DL, Cdr and Mrs Julian Osborne MBE, The Revd Canon Ted Goodyer, Cllr.R Forder and Cllr. C Carter.

Thanks you 's to all those that provided their usual high standard of food and fruit (strawberries) and the Children's Lucky Dip.

The Tentage Team.

The Pimms Team.

The Gatemen and Ladies.

The PA System Team.

The Serving Team.

The providers of tables and chairs.

The washers and cleaning Teams.  
The Raffle team - helped raise £637 this year (last year £628).  
Those generous Friends' who donated Raffle prizes.  
And those that helped clean up after the Party.  
Well done, each and everyone!

The Committee's verdict – very good. Any suggested changes/  
comments or improvements? Tell us!

Gill Comrie our sole seller of tickets. remarked that;  
Selling - much easier with postal dispatching of tickets (employed for the  
first time). Very few phone calls.

Membership - paying annual subscriptions by Direct Debit should be  
investigated.

The Friends' Committee are still considering this subject, it makes  
common sense and would make life a lot easier for the Treasurer. As of  
the 23<sup>rd</sup> September there are 66 (inclusive of partners) who have still to  
pay their subs for 2010. Friends can check with the Membership  
Secretary or the Friends' Secretary if they are uncertain.

Clarification has been requested, when does the subscription year start  
and finish? The subscription year starts from the date of the AGM  
(Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> 2011) and ends the day before the next AGM. "What if I  
have joined somewhere in between" I hear you say. Well your Committee  
leaves it to the Treasurer and he is very flexible (up to a point that is). If  
subscriptions have not been paid a year after joining a gentle reminder is  
given. usually a brief note on the back of the next delivery of a Flier or  
Newsletter envelope. If payment of subscriptions is not made after 2  
years, usually your name is dropped from the Circulation List, and you  
may miss events.

Buying tickets for the Annual Garden Party is conditional on being in date  
with your subscriptions.

On a brighter note the Committee wish to thank all those who in paying  
for their tickets to this years Garden Party from Gill also paid their  
subscriptions (69 in total) and some were kind enough to glve a donation  
to the Friends', many thanks indeed.

I have been asked what is the purpose of the Garden Party? Responses  
from the Friends' Committee ranged from the raising of funds (from the  
Raffle) to help subsidise the event, a largely social occasion and one

where invited guests who in one way or another have been helpful can be thanked. An occasion where Friends' can bring their friend's and entertain them and to enjoy the beautiful Garden we have all made possible, at its best.

### **Garden Party Tentage**

For 7 years Guy Sitwell has organised the collection of the tentage, its erection, dismantling, and return to its stowage location care of Jerry Clarke. Guy is standing down and a replacement is urgently needed. Guy has done a wonderful job over the years and he is to be congratulated for all his efforts. Thank you, Guy!

The show must go on as they say. We normally manage to raise a team sufficient to put up and take down the tentage, what we now need is someone to do the organising of this very necessary task. Help will be given to the person or persons who takes this one on (only once a year)! The Secretary would be delighted to hear from you.

### **24<sup>th</sup> June The Chernobyl Children's Party**

Held once again in Crescent Garden. Followed a similar pattern to previous years, first they are individually photographed then the party games begin. Then it is time for the Treasure Hunt helped by a few clues, every child gets a goody bag which is rapidly opened and shown to their mates.

Soon its time for tea for the adults, whilst the children tuck in to the usual splendid food, drinks and ice cream, yummy. Finishing with Felicity Anderson's marvellous chocolate cake, inscribed in Russian and translated as "Dear Friend's we love you".

They had such fun. Well to be honest; everyone had fun - children and helpers alike.

The children entertained us with their songs and happy faces - sporting such images as spider man, or butterflies, thanks to Helen with her face paints. This was a truly lovely event and included many non - gardener Friends.

Unusually, the children's guardian Tatiana (visiting for the second year running) recited a moving poem, which has a lot of truth in it and I thought I would share the poem with the Friends.

Friends are the ones that are always there,  
Whenever anything gives you a scare.  
They'll be there when the road is rough,  
They see you through when times are tough.

Expressing myself is easy and I feel free,  
To say that my friends mean so much to me.  
They are always there and never complain,  
They feel your laughter and also your pain.

They know when to laugh, when to smile, when to cry,  
They even know when all you need is a sigh.  
They make you laugh when you are down,  
They make a smile out of a frown.

Never hold grudges over something that's silly,  
The best friendships are often hilly.  
So just remember when you find a true friend,  
Never let that friendship end.

As the children were getting ready to board their bus they were each presented with a framed picture of themselves.

A big thank you to all the helpers who organised the event, took part, provided the food, photographs and the goody bags.

### **7<sup>th</sup> September – Visit to Clandon and Hatchlands Parks**

A very interesting double visit, well organised by Pam Jackson.

### **Another short anecdote by one of our regular gardeners**

#### **A word in edgeways**

As a volunteer I'm just beginning to understand what goes into making the Garden as you have in Crescent Road. My idea of gardening is hacking away at the undergrowth, making compost and humping stuff to the local tip. If you look at the last couple of newsletters you'll see that I got it wrong, giving a holly tree a 'trim'. Wendy looks at a tree with an artist's eye and where it fits into the garden plan, as if the tree has a place within the artist's 'canvas'.

When it comes to 'art' I can't draw a 'stickman' without feeling inadequate. But do read on, as I was in for a surprise.

As you know, to avoid me doing any further damage I was dispatched to Compost Corner, in charge of a pile of leaves. Do what you will with a pile of leaves and you still end up with a pile of leaves - so no harm done. I think of Wendy as the Curator Emeritus and Gilly as the New Curator. I think they put their heads together and said, "Poor old chap - we'd better give him something to do to lift his spirits!",

They came up with the job of laying down metal edging to the shrubbery. This aims to give a firm barrier between earth and grass so that the edges are protected from mowing. I was supplied with a garden roller, a hunk of oak and a lump hammer with which to install the joined metal pieces.

The roller is required to bend the slats to the curves defined by the existing beds. It is straight-forward, sometimes arduous, but satisfying work spending most of the time at ground level to manipulate the curves and hammer them into the ground.

An acutely observant resident in No. (-), who seemed to take a keen interest in my progress, was heard to remark, "He seems to spend most of his time on his knees with his bum in the air!" Well, in what ever form, 'tis better to be noticed than ignored!

But here's the thing: perhaps head down, bum up, does things to a fella. If you have a moment, try it. Pop out to the garden and adopt the prescribed posture and I'll bet you notice a difference. You begin to see life in a different way. Let your mind follow a curve as it gently skirts a Silver Milkmaid. Stay down-end up-ward and let your senses flow with the curves, in my case hammering away through the intoxicating scents of *Hydrangea Quercifolia*. Even the bay trees have got to be got round and half a day of those sends you home happy, I can tell you!

Anyway, the experience is exhilarating, the feel of progress sensuous. By the time I was half up the Garden I was beginning to cotton on to the scheme of things. Art is the science of the unexpected. Or to say it, as stolen from a garden seat at Hinton Ampner:

*Let not each beauty everywhere be spy'd*

*Where half the skill is decently to hide.*

*She gains all points who pleasantly confounds*



*Surprises, varies and conceals the bounds.*

So take me to the Silver Milkmaid! Let her embrace me in her,  
er, foliage.

So it does a chap good to see a few curves around the Garden.

But one may not be as observant as the cute lady in No.(-), of  
whom I would ask:

Mon derriere parat-il grand dans ceci?

**David Palmer (Compost Specialist)**

**STOP PRESS**

Dutch Bulb Fields Visit scheduled for: Friday 15<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2011

Programme: Leave Parish Centre Alverstoke - 0700 Friday 15<sup>th</sup>

Return Alverstoke 2100 Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>

P & O crossing ferry Dover - Calais 1100 15 April 2011  
2 nights Dinner, bed and breakfast at the Mercure aan de Amstel  
Hotel nr Amsterdam. All rooms with Private facilities.

Entrance to Keukenhof Gardens included. There is also an annual  
flower parade which takes place on 16 April, which takes place  
outside the Keukenhof Gardens and can be seen by anyone  
wishing to do so. Coach to be available for local journeys  
throughout the stay.

**PRICE:**

£286 per person based on minimum of 30 persons  
sharing twin/double rooms £262 per person based on  
minimum of 40 persons sharing twin/double rooms £55  
single supplement

**Final payment due 8 weeks prior to departure. Therefore the  
balance needs to be with me by 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011.**

Insurance is available through Lucketts for £23.00

**REQUIRED NOW:** If you would like to join us for this trip please  
telephone Pam Dimmock on 92526761 as soon as possible where  
a list will be made up. This will be a statement of intent and will not

be binding until a booking form is completed in the New Year. In the event of insufficient support the trip will be cancelled.

### **Gosport Heritage Open Days – 9<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

For the first time the Friends' of Crescent Garden were invited to provide an event that would be of interest to both the local and wider communities. In all there were 31 events being put together, we were the only Garden to be included.

A sub-committee comprising of Wendy Osborne (to act as artistic director), Gilly Jaynes, Pam Dimmock and David Merritt was formed to decide how we were going to deal with this new challenge. Rosemary Harrison joined us towards the later stages of developing our plan of action.

First we had to be formally accepted by completing a Registration Form comprising of an Organiser Agreement to show we were fit to take part in the event, followed by a range of searching questions asking what we had to offer visitors and that we could accept those with disabilities.

Fortunately HODs offered to cover our event by their own insurance policy. There was another hurdle to jump, a Health and Safety check other wise known as a Risk Assessment, which was carried out by a suitably qualified officer and all the possible hazards were assessed as either superficial, remote or insignificant. This assessment produced a document which helped us to be awarded the Green Flag this year.

It was agreed that we would hold 3 guided tours each day, hire 2 ladies Regency costumes, have two stalls selling plants, preservers, Wendy's amazing photographs and Crescent Garden Prints, Friends' notelets and for the first time copies of Bill Rundle's recently produced scaled down prints of our new Interpretation board well actually two A3 size prints to a set, this was necessary because if you tried to scale the IB down to one A3 you would not see clearly the detail nor be able to read the inscriptions.

During our planning meetings we discussed what we can offer the public that is different, given that the *Garden* is always open and many people know it very well.

We decided that the emphasis should be on the historical aspect of the site and plants. In order to give these tours an extra quality and

another dimension, it was agreed to have volunteers in period costume wandering around the site whilst the tour takes place. Fortunately a source of costumes was found locally in Stoke Road a shop by the name of 'déjà vu' at a very reasonable price, almost half of that quoted by a distant (Hazelmere) theatrical agency. The costumes were worn with distinction and grace by Gilly Jaynes, Pam Dimmock, Rosemary Harrison, Sylvia Torrance and Wendy Hobson our WRAG.

Finding Friend's (mostly gardeners) to act as tour guides, stall managers and Regency actors was not very difficult, some of the team at some stage took part in each of these tasks.

The first tour was presented by David Merritt and the last was bravely given by Wendy Osborne despite not fully recovered from a recent injury to her foot.

The number of visitors booked through Gosport Tourist Information Centre at first were quite disappointing, but picked up to present at the end of the day an average of 10 adults per guided tour, in addition 3 disabled adults and 5 children accompanied their parents. It was noticed that 3 of the visitors were members of English Heritage (probably giving us the once over). The furthest visitor on the day travelled from North Baddesley (near Romsey). There was also a family from Honduras and a gentleman from Edinburgh on holiday locally who were amongst the visitors.

The visitors seemed to enjoy finding out why this part of Alverstoke became known as Angleseyville, as the resort created by Robert Cruickshank, a local entrepreneur, was known. They were surprised that the architect Thomas Ellis Owen was only 21 years old. Cruickshank wanted a celebrity of the day to be the resort's patron. The late Marquess of Anglesey was a Friend of Crescent Garden until his death.

The visitors wrote glowing praise of the quality of the Garden in the HOD's Visitors book.

It would go amiss if I did not mention other helpers and they are Don Cripps, Rita Rundle, Penny Monk, Lin Hay, Christine Oldham and the two little girls Mia and Isabel from Crescent Road whose mummy's beautifully dressed them on the Sunday to accompany our two Regency Ladies.

Money raised at the stalls exceeded our outgoings by £49.61, so no cost to the Friends.

After a busy but enjoyable (largely) few days it was time to fill in the Heritage Organisers Feedback Form, Volunteers Feedback Forms and together with the Visitor's Feedback Forms and Visitor Report book and deposit them at the GTIC.

Would we do it again – probably! Apparently the Steering Group for the next Gosport Heritage Open Days starts planning in November for 2011.

### **St Mary's Church, Alverstoke Christmas Tree Festival**

The Church will be decorated with over 50 Christmas trees, music will provide a festival atmosphere and seasonal refreshments will be available.

Once again the Friends' are supporting this very popular event by sponsoring a tree and we will be attractively decorating our tree on Thursday the 9<sup>th</sup> December. Our tree will be labelled "Crescent Garden". From Friday 10<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December the event will be open to the public for a small donation.

Last years event was spectacular especially at night with thousands of Christmas tree lights were all illuminated at the same time.

Contact Sue Simpson in the Parish Centre on 023 92580551 if you would like to help preparing the trees for fitting in the church on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Thank you.

**Your views and suggestions** on both Garden and Friends' activities are always welcome, either through our Chairman Don Cripps whose e-mail address is – [bandcripps@btinternet.com](mailto:bandcripps@btinternet.com) or the Curator – [gillyis@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gillyis@hotmail.co.uk) or any of the committee members.

### **Next Annual General Meeting**

Saturday 26th February 2011 – Parish Centre, 2-30 – 5pm.  
Hope to see you there.

***David Merritt***

Friend's Hon Secretary

Tel. 02392 582068

Email [davidmerritt1.virginmedia.com](mailto:davidmerritt1.virginmedia.com)

Dated: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010

