

# Friends of Crescent Garden

## AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2016

### Message from the Chairman

Our reputation is obviously growing, the plant sale in June was even busier than last year. We sold a record number of plants - and coffee and cake by equal proportion! Thank you to everybody who helped to make the plant sale such a success.

I am really happy to announce that we have been awarded yet another Green Flag for this year which we hope to raise on a new flagpole in November. The old flagpole has to be moved as the flag was continually being caught up on the branches of the Mulberry tree.

The Winter Fair at the Parish Centre will be on Saturday 3rd December from 10.30am to 12.30pm. As always there will be delicious cakes and preserves for you to buy, with Christmas stalls and a fantastic raffle. I look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible.

Pamela Mawby



### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Friends' Winter Fair

**Saturday 3rd December**

St Mary's Parish Centre, Green Road, Alverstoke  
10.30am to 12.30pm - all are very welcome.

There will be an array of festive gifts, books, Christmas decorations, homemade cakes, jams, chutneys and marmalade, plus a bottle stall and some great raffle prizes!

*£1.50 admission – includes free coffee, biscuits and excellent company – don't miss it!*

#### Christmas Tree Festival

**Friday 9th to Sunday 11th December**

St Mary's Church, Alverstoke  
Doors open from 11am to 6pm

Come and marvel at the Crescent Garden Christmas tree!

#### Friends of Crescent Garden AGM

**Saturday 11th March 2017**

St Mary's Parish Centre, Green Road, Alverstoke from 2.30pm

#### The Friends' Annual Plant Sale

**Saturday 3rd June**

At Crescent Garden from 10am to 4pm

#### The Friends' Annual Garden Party

**Saturday 17th June**

*The location of next year's spring visit will be announced at the AGM. Any queries please contact:*

*David Merritt - 023 9258 2068.*

### MEMBERSHIP

A very gentle reminder to all our Friends who may have overlooked renewing their membership this year. We really value your support and are grateful for your help to carry Crescent Gardens on to the future. To re-join please contact Trish Kelly on 023 9258 2786.

[www.alverstokecrescentgarden.co.uk](http://www.alverstokecrescentgarden.co.uk)



# HEAD GARDENERS' REPORT

## Green Flag

We are delighted to be in receipt of a new Green Flag! This is a glowing testament to the continual hard work by our loyal Green Team and was announced in The News at the end of July. The Green Flag assessor who visited the gardens on May 18th seemed to be quite charmed by the garden. Her report concluded:

*"This garden was a joy to visit. The volunteers have a good support mechanism with the council and have worked hard to bring this garden back to life, not only ensuring that it has retained much of its heritage but their commitment to the project is clearly evident. It thoroughly deserves its Green Flag status."*

## Wrags Trainee

Our new trainee is Richard McAnulty who began as a volunteer with the Green Team. He takes a very keen interest in all we do, follows up learning opportunities and has great potential to develop a career in horticulture. Although Richard is a trainee he has come to us with many existing horticultural skills and we are delighted to have him as part of the team.

## Horticulture

The new species dahlias which Paul Hattin grew from seed have been planted for Autumn colour but unfortunately they were decimated by slugs and snails, despite our use of natural slug pellets. We will try again next year but will harden off the young plants a little further before planting out.



*One of the new dahlias*

John and Kate Barnard kindly donated three mature ferns. Richard planted them at the east end of Terrace Walk where plants often struggle, having first dug over the triangular bed and replaced a layer of poor subsoil with compost.

A Pittosporum has been removed as it was a victim of either vine weevil damage to the roots or possibly Phytophthora root rot. There has been dieback of the Wintersweet and ivy growth in some places is very poor. We are investigating the possibility of introducing nematodes to tackle the vine weevil problem.

We have ordered the following new bulbs for the spring: Crocus speciosus 'Conqueror', Erythronium dens-canis, Tulipa 'Keizerskroon', Tulipa sylvestris, Tulipa 'Couleur Cardinal', Tulipa 'Peppermint Stick', Anemone nemorosa 'Vestal'.



## Wisley

We took the opportunity to use the Friends RHS affiliated group membership to visit Wisley. It was a really good day out for the Green Team and members of the committee, and Lesley and I spent the afternoon engaged in some research in the excellent Lindley library.

## Womens Institute Visit

The Stokes Bay WI had to cancel their visit that was arranged for 18th May due to inclement weather. Lesley and I have agreed to give a talk to Alverstoke Village People WI in the new year.

## Gosport Borough Council

Caroline Smith (Parks and Landscape Contract Officer) informed us that the council plans to do the following in the Autumn:

- Delivery of topsoil to be spread under the beech tree to raise the level of the ground in order to reduce flooding
- Reseeding of the area under the beech tree, it is hoped that new topsoil will aid germination.
- Replacement of the Pyrus salicifolia 'Pendula' - Silver Weeping Pear tree.
- Pruning of the bay tree at the west end of terrace walk and removal of a diseased holly tree
- Installation of a barrier to contain the bamboo.

On August 3rd a bay sapling was overhanging the road at the east end of the garden and was a hazard to traffic. We secured it temporarily and informed Dave Stubbington (Tree & Landscape Contracts Officer) who actioned its removal.

## Haslar Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden at the former Royal Navy Hospital is run by Shore Leave Haslar as a project for ex-service veterans with mental health support needs. An interesting talk by their chairman Chris Robson was attended by several members of Crescent Garden. The Green team and some of the committee visited the garden on the 14th September and found a hidden gem with beautiful parkland, stunning flower beds, lots of vegetables and an abundance of bees.

## Fundraising

After all the hard work raising funds for the garden we have chosen to purchase a Niwaki tripod ladder. It is a fantastically secure platform, with no wobble. It is perfect for all volunteers to use safely for pruning and cutting back.

## Come and Join Us

We are actively seeking people to join the Green Team. You don't have to be 'Monty Don' just enthusiastic and willing to be involved in all types of jobs. Come and see us any Wednesday from 9.30am until 1pm (with a coffee break at 11am) or ring Lesley on 023 9261 3907 or Annie on 07795 263361.

**We look forward to welcoming you!**

*Lesley Flett and Annie Sayle*

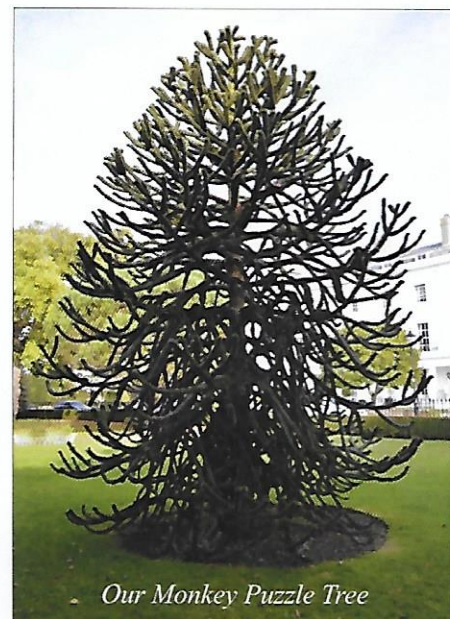




# GARDEN CUTTINGS

## The Monkey Puzzle Tree (*Araucaria araucana*)

Many members will recall the planting, in Crescent Garden, of the Monkey Puzzle tree on the 23rd December 1997. The tree was given to the garden by Sir Ian McIntosh in memory of his wife Lady Elizabeth McIntosh and was officially planted by the McIntosh family in the presence of some of the Friends. The McIntoshes lived in the Crescent for many years and were keen supporters of the garden. The tree, now looking resplendent as it approaches its 20th year, replaced the venerable specimen of great age which had been in terminal decline for some years. The Monkey Puzzle is endemic to Chile and Argentina and is the national tree of Chile. It is sacred to the local Pehuenche people with the seeds being an ancient staple of the Chilean diet. It is said that the tree possibly gained its name because it would be a real puzzle for monkeys to climb through its spiny leaves, surprising as there are no monkeys in Chile! Monkey puzzles were alive 200 million years ago and rubbed shoulders with the dinosaurs. They can live for 1000 years in South America and grow to 50 metres in height, though in the UK they generally live for around 150 years. Archibald Menzies was a botanist and naval surgeon on board Captain George Vancouver's 1791-1795 circumnavigation of the globe in Captain Cook's former ship *Discovery*. The two roles went hand in hand as, at that time, medicines were primarily derived from plants. Menzies was served the seeds of the conifer as dessert during a dinner hosted by the governor of Chile but rather than eat them he cultivated them on the quarterdeck and returned to England, providing several seeds to Kew Gardens. The chronology lines up well enough to perhaps muse on the possibility that Archibald Menzies worked at nearby Haslar Hospital during the early 19th century and - who knows? - may even have had some input to the planting of Crescent Garden's original monkey puzzle tree.



*Our Monkey Puzzle Tree*

*Richard Martin*

# GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

**If**

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are despairing when the snails eat the plants,  
If you can plant again when others doubt you  
And give that flower bed another chance;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of time to tend  
The garden fair and many things within it,  
Then - great - you'll be a volunteer my friend.

*Thank you Rudyard.*

*Forgive me for corrupting your poem!*



*The Green Team*

*This year we have suffered a lot of trouble with snail and slug damage.*

*If you know a foolproof, organic method of dealing with the ravages they inflict on our gardens, please let us know!*

*Rita Rundle*

# THE FRIENDS' ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY



*Friends enjoying the garden party*

Once again the Garden Party in June was well attended and was very much enjoyed by many Friends. The Brass band, that has now become a delightful fixture, the flowing Pimms and the quite exceptional finger-food made for a wonderful evening. I so appreciate all the support from the committee and the Friends who make this event possible, it is certainly the highlight of the summer social calendar!

*Pamela Masby*



## OTHER NEWS.....



*Sweet things at the Plant Sale!*



*A very successful and well attended Plant Sale*



*Colourful Lupins at Stanstead*

## REAR ADMIRAL JOHN HERVEY CB OBE (1928-2016)



**I**n May we were saddened to learn that Rear Admiral John Hervey had passed away. He was the first chairman of the Friends of Crescent Garden and many of us will remember his entertaining naval anecdotes and his gentle, modest and unselfish nature. He was a true gentleman who encouraged and supported us at every event. He will be very much missed.

## JOIN THE FRIENDS!

For all membership enquiries contact Ginny Whelan at: [gedandginny@fridaywhelan.plus.com](mailto:gedandginny@fridaywhelan.plus.com)  
Any other enquiries please contact the Friends Secretary David Merritt on 023 9258 2068  
or email: [davidmerritt1@virginmedia.com](mailto:davidmerritt1@virginmedia.com)