



FRIENDS OF CRESCENT GARDEN AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2018

Message from the Chairman

Another six months have come and gone and autumn is now with us again, mellow and golden.

We've had another eventful summer in the garden what with the plant sale, garden party, Green Flag ceremony and Heritage Open Day. We've been judged for three competitions and were delighted to win a gold medal for 'Small Parks' in the South & South East in Bloom competition. We were nominated by the Green Flag award for one of the ten best gardens in the country!

It has been a struggle to keep the garden looking at its best in the full glare of one of the hottest summers ever recorded, but somehow we managed it and our new head gardeners and volunteers have excelled themselves again.

We have lots of events to look forward to, and to start the new year Richard Martin will be repeating his 'Alverstoke Past & Present' illustrated talk which was over-subscribed last year. All proceeds to support the garden.

Thanks to everyone for all your efforts this year. Please do continue to support us.

Elaine Martin

Dates for your Diary

**Friday 7th until
Sunday 9th December**
Alverstoke Christmas Tree
Festival, St Mary's Church

Friday 18th January
7pm for 7.30pm
'Alverstoke Past & Present'
Repeat of Richard Martin's
illustrated talk

Saturday 23rd February
2pm to 4pm
AGM at the Parish Centre
Teas served

Saturday 18th May
10am to 4pm
Friends' Annual Plant Sale

Saturday 22th June
Annual Garden Party



Help!! Committee Members Required!

Due to ill-health and long service we are losing some of our committee members at the next AGM. If anyone could spare a little bit of time to join our very friendly committee we would be so grateful. It's a lovely project to be involved with and we're a sociable bunch! Call Elaine Martin on 07752859443.

www.alverstokecrescentgardens.co.uk

Head Gardeners' First Report

Two become four – when our two Head Gardeners, Lesley Flett and Annie Sayle, stepped down in April 2018 after five years in the role – four of us took over the helm, namely Stef Fisher, Sharon Miles, Gina Rowe and Irene Buggle. We had all been members of the Green Team for a number of years and served on the FOCG committee. We would like to thank Lesley and Annie for their continued support and help, and all the Green Team for making it an enjoyable start.

We of course endeavour to maintain the Garden's Regency character and to ensure that any plant species we buy or cultivate had been introduced into Britain by 1850. It is not always easy and this requires quite a bit of research.

Now in late September the garden is still looking remarkably colourful, especially the bed in front of the fountain where the roses are still flowering and there is a blast of orange and purple from the miniature pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) and *Verbena bonariensis*. This is mainly due to the special attention the roses have received this year thanks to Sarah Palmer, and the leaky hose system we installed last winter.

The weather this year posed many problems for the Green Team starting off with two very uncharacteristic snowy and bitterly cold periods – 'The Beast from the East' – the latter of which nipped at many of the young buds and delayed or killed-off a few plants. This was followed by a very wet spell in spring, when every Wednesday for four weeks it rained, making it very difficult to get tasks completed. We also had our work cut out as we had officially the hottest summer on record with watering being our main concern. It was extremely difficult to keep the gardens watered sufficiently, especially some of the annuals and other plants we had planted earlier in the year.

At the west end of the garden we extended the bed around the monkey-puzzle tree, planting it with *Euphorbia mysinites* and Digger's speedwell (*Parahebe perfoliata*). We also created a small bed around the weeping pear (*Pyrus salicifolia* 'Pendula') planting it with *Nepeta mussinii* and heritage scented pelargoniums. Many of the Green Team grew annuals to plant in the beds around the fountain area as the garden's heritage Dahlia order from the specialists, Gilberts of Romsey, was cancelled due to the plants failing to flourish. We extended the electricity supply to the shed and installed all-weather sockets along the west side of the garden in the spring. This helped us considerably with cutting the box hedge in May/June as we no longer have to wait for batteries to be recharged, significantly speeding up the process.

The NGS Plant sale, held in the garden in June, was once again a great success selling a record number of plants, teas and homemade cake. We were very lucky with the weather and it was a really lovely day – although exhausting for all concerned! We are delighted to announce that Crescent Garden won the Green Flag for the 14th time. Gosport council entered the Garden into the Gosport in Bloom and South and South East in Bloom competitions this year and, although we were disappointed with a bronze medal from Gosport in Bloom, we received a Gold medal from South and South East in Bloom – a competition we have only entered once before.

Irene Buggle, Stef Fisher, Sharon Miles and Gina Rowe



Garden Volunteers

*Oh, it's a long, long while
from May to December,
But the days grow short when
you reach September,
When the autumn weather
turns the leaves to flame,
We're out on the grass for the
sweeping game*

*Oh, the days dwindle down to
a precious few,
September, November*

*In these few special days we'll
cut back shrubs,
And leave the place right for
spring to emerge*

**Why not join our merry
band of volunteers every
Wednesday morning
from 9am – we'd be
delighted to see you!**

Rita Rundle

Garden Cuttings

British gardens are at their most resplendent during late spring and early summer. Our wonderful Crescent Garden is no exception of course, and is at its most magnificent then when its profusion of old roses are in full bloom.

The rose is a phenomenal plant and is rightly known as the world's favourite flower. Indeed, it has been estimated that 150 million plants are purchased annually by gardeners worldwide.

Remarkably, according to fossil evidence, the rose is 35 million years old! Today there are over 30,000 varieties of roses with the most complicated family tree of any known flower species.

The cultivation of roses most likely began in Asia around 5000 years ago but weren't introduced into Europe, from China, until the late 18th century and it is probable that several of these early imports were used in the lay-out of the original Crescent Garden around 1830.

During the garden's 'renaissance' some 26 years ago it was decided that, in order to reinstate its late Georgian period appearance, all plantings should be of species from no later than that era or perhaps with a little slippage into the early Victorian period. Happily, that rule has been strictly adhered to and the summer visitor to Crescent Garden will find an abundance of these lovely old roses to behold.

Throughout the history of civilization, no other flower has been so immortalized and integrated into daily life as the rose. From poetry to music, from festivities to wars, Mother's Day to Valentine's Day and birth to death, the rose has held a unique role.

Richard Martin



Rose Coupe d'Hébé



Rose 'Mme Hardy'



A fine array of plants and cakes made for a very successful plant sale in early June



It's Pimm's o'clock at the annual garden party!



Other news this summer...



Happy volunteers having just learnt of gold success in the 'South and South East in Bloom' competition



Green Team summer lunch



Back to work after coffee!



Our mulberry and tulip trees displaying autumn shades



Rita and Annie leading a Heritage Day tour

Privacy: Your data will be stored electronically and/or manually in accordance with the current GDPR data protection legislation for Friends of Crescent Garden administrative purposes only and not shared with any third parties

JOIN THE FRIENDS!

For all membership enquiries contact Ginny Whelan at virginia@fridaywhelan.plus.com
Any other enquiries contact Gina Rowe on 02392 358207 or famrowe@aol.com

Compiled by Elaine Martin / Designed by Ben Martin