

# Friends of Crescent Garden

# AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2013

## Message from the Chairman

We are trying a new format for the autumn newsletter this year. I do hope you like it, your feedback would be most welcome. It was produced by a strong editorial team; Elaine Martin, Enid Billington, David Merritt, Pam Dimmock and Rosemary Harrison. I would like to thank them most sincerely for all their hard work. I would also like to thank all the Friends for their continued support. This year we have enjoyed two excellent outings, an illuminating lecture and a wonderful garden party. The garden continues to flourish with help from our dedicated volunteers – we are indeed very lucky to have them.

*Pamela Mawby*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Saturday 30th November 2013

Friends Winter Fair, St Mary's Parish Centre, Green Road, Alverstoke, 10.30am to 12.30pm

All are very welcome. There is an opportunity to become a member of the "friends" – ask at the pay desk in the foyer. We hope to offer the usual array of irresistible delights including desirable bric-a-brac, exciting books, homemade cakes, jams, chutneys, marmalade and Christmas goodies. There will be a bottle stall and some decidedly covetable raffle prizes!

*£1 admission – includes free coffee, biscuits and excellent company – don't miss it!!!*

### Saturday 1st March 2014

Friends of Crescent Garden AGM, St Mary's Parish Centre, Green Road, Alverstoke, From 2.30pm

### Saturday 31st May 2014

The Friends Annual Plant Sale, Crescent Garden, 10am to 4pm

### Saturday 21st June 2014

The Friends Annual Garden Party

### Spring 2014

Visit to Charleston in East Sussex, the country retreat of the Bloomsbury Group. Also to include nearby Monk's House – the 17th century home and cottage garden of Virginia and Leonard Woolf. The date is to be confirmed.

*David Merritt*



## 21st ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

2013 saw the 21st Anniversary of The Friends of Crescent Garden and we felt the occasion was very worthy of celebration at this year's annual garden party. In addition to the usual much sought-after Pimms, scrumptious food including strawberries and cream was provided by a loyal team of Friends. It was thought that this year a special cake was called for, superbly made by Carol Hambly, the daughter of a committee member. It was much admired by all!

The icing on the cake was provided by *Allegro*, a quintet who provided fine musical accompaniment to the celebrations and we hope to see them again at future garden parties. The weather this year was on our side and the feedback confirmed that a great time was had by all!

Our thanks to everyone who helped to make this event so special.

*Pam Dimmock*



*Anniversary cake*

**V**olunteers are very special people. They give of their time, energy and enthusiasm freely and unconditionally. Volunteer gardeners in Crescent Garden work unstintingly to make it a better place to visit. Every member of the team has their own unique skill and the weekly work is completed cheerfully, respectfully and thoroughly.

## WHERE THERES MUCK

The compost team spend a lot of their time carrying bags of "unmentionable" from source (The horse field in Clayhall Road) up to Crescent Garden. It is back-breaking work, but with wondrous alchemy it changes into that most amazing gardening ingredient which is spread around in the autumn and winter months. The roses love it and repay with boughs dripping with blossom in June.

## WADING BIRDS

Keeping the fountain clean and sparkling requires knowledge of electrics and plumbing quite beyond most of us. A stout pair of wellies is essential together with considerable time to devote to this task, as it takes all day to clean the fountain. The waders can be found every six weeks paddling in the water – not so much fun in January!

## EDGES AND HEDGES

An eye for a straight line is not a gift given to all! These volunteers leave the garden looking cared for each week.

Who amongst us has not admired the perfectly sculpted box hedge or the lovely edges around the borders enhancing the shape of the flower beds?

## ALL THE TRIMMINGS

If left to Mother Nature, a garden would quickly revert to a wild place with voracious weeds taking over and consuming the precious plants within. Every week the same job has to be done by those who weed and dead-head, then the prunings have to be removed from the site and left for our council colleagues to take away.

## SHORT BACK AND SIDES

It is very easy to get carried away when asked to prune a shrub or tree! In Crescent Garden the volunteers strive to reduce the height and size whilst retaining the original shape of the plant. This takes much time and care; but what a temptation just to cut one more branch.....

## BOOK WORMS

Planting a regency garden requires a huge amount of research and reading. Some of us have acquired a large library detailing old plant species. These books are often found in charity shops although my 1835 edition of John Claudius Loudon's 'Encyclopaedia of Gardening' came from San Francisco: via the internet naturally! Robert Louis Stevenson said: "If a man love the labour of any trade, quite apart from any question of success or fame, the gods have called him".



*Raising the Flag*

## VOLUNTEERS I SALUTE YOU!

*Gilly Jaynes, October 2013*

*Gilly is no longer the Curator of Crescent Garden, but she is busy creating another garden elsewhere.*

## AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN

**A**fter an unusually dry summer the September rains enlivened the garden. The delightful orange-red funnel shaped flowers of our pomegranate plants *Punica granatum nana* have been profuse this year, attracting much interest on the Heritage Open Day. The pristine beauty and perfume of blooms on the *Magnolia grandiflora* also drew many positive comments. The volunteers have, as usual, been busy tidying edges, dead-heading and cutting back. The canopy on Terrace Walk has been raised to bring in more light and reveal more vistas of the garden. The young hedge there has been

trimmed to neaten it, and the compost bins are having horse manure added to produce a mulch for the Spring.

As autumn approaches, leaf fall on Terrace Walk and elsewhere in the garden is demanding more of our time but, as always, time spent in the garden is a joy.

*Lesley Flett & Annie Sayle*



*Magnolia*

## THANK YOU

**T**hank you Gilly for your dedicated commitment to Crescent Garden over the past four years. Your leadership and friendly guidance will be greatly missed by all the volunteers. We will also miss your gardening knowledge and skills, your enthusiasm and humour, in fact everything that made you a special volunteer.

*Pamela Mawby, Chairman*



"The Crescent bath house c.1910"



Crescent Road, Stokes Bay

Vivien Rolf carried us all along with her energy, enthusiasm and scholarship. She talked for over an hour but the time just flew past. We were transported to a time in history when bath houses and plunge pools were the fashion of the day, if a trifle risqué at times! Most were a delightful addition to stately homes, though all were unique in their way. Some were tidal, if near to the sea, while others were fed from freezing springs. It

made us all wish that our own Crescent Garden bath house, sadly demolished in 1950, was still with us today. Thank you Vivien for a wonderful and informative evening. Vivien's book *Bath Houses and Plunge Pools*, which includes references and images of Angleseyville, is published by Shire Library and is available for £6.99

*Elaine Martin*



John Claudius Loudon  
"Father of the English Garden"

Of the inspirational figures that have influenced the 'Renaissance' of Crescent Garden, John Claudius Loudon 1783-1843, is surely at the forefront.

It is unlikely that we would have the modern garden in its present form without him, and indeed the passion (or obsession) for gardening both professionally and as a hobby. Loudon's work as a journalist and author led to the 'democratisation' of gardening.

In his early career Loudon designed in a naturalistic style, while in later years he was at the forefront of the return to formality with his 'gardenesque' style of planting.

Loudon completed his first large-scale literary work in 1822 – *The Encyclopaedia of Gardening* which was to go through nine editions (some of which I have had the pleasure of buying and selling over the past 35 years!). It was hugely popular due to its comprehensive nature, encompassing the historical, technical, aesthetic and horticultural aspects of gardening. He reflected that, unlike its continental neighbours, Britain had few places for its citizens to promenade by horse or on foot. He promoted horticulture in smaller gardens and provided public parks and 'green belts' around towns and cities.

Through the development of his 'gardenesque' style he helped encourage the diversity of plant material within gardens that continues today.

One would hope that John Claudius Loudon would have looked kindly, and with some approval, on the 25 years of unstinting effort by many which has gone into the creation of this idyllic garden.

*Richard Martin*

*(Largely from the writings of Louise Wickham)*

## DAVID WARDLE



In early October a small (select!) gathering took place at David and Eileen's house to present him with a picture by Andrew Wing combining David's submarine command with memories of Crescent Garden, family life (especially grandfather duties) and his naval career. His amateur dramatic skills and second career in London were also portrayed. We wish him well.

*Roy Anderson*

## HERITAGE OPEN DAY



For the fourth year running visitors to Crescent Garden very much enjoyed guided tours led by a volunteer gardener during the Gosport Heritage open days in September.

## RECENT VISITS

In September the “friends” visited Sudeley Castle, near the old village of Winchcombe in Gloucestershire. Part of the castle remains in ruins, the maintained section being the private family home of Lord and Lady Ashcombe, which we were privileged to visit.

The well-maintained tranquil gardens provide a haven of peace, in particular the secret garden designed by Roddy Llewellyn. An exhibition on Catherine Parr, whose last resting place is in the chapel, provided historical interest.

*Enid Billington*

*Picture right : The Secret Garden*

*Picture below: The Insect Hotel*



Our trip to the Staffordshire gardens, organised by Bill and Rita Rundle, was a delight from beginning to end and every garden was very different but spectacular in its own way. Firstly, Upton House near Banbury was outstanding for the way many of the gardens are built on terraces on a steep cliff at the bottom of which is a large and lovely lake. There are many steps to be climbed up and down but we did enjoy it!

Secondly we visited Trentham Gardens near Stoke-on-Trent which are vast and quite amazing. Amidst so much of interest were seventy flower beds with the largest display of perennial

plantings in Europe known as the “Italian Gardens” – breathtaking in their autumn glory.

Next we went to Biddulph Grange which is an exciting revival of the great age of Victorian gardening, with many lovely areas including a stumpery and Chinese and Egyptian style gardens. Finally we visited the Dorothy Clive garden, another spectacular garden set among gorgeous views of the Staffordshire countryside, at which one of the highlights was the kitchen garden filled with insect hotels! Altogether a fascinating and memorable trip.

*Jill Parry*

## CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PARTY

On the 10th June the Lee-on-the-Solent group of Chernobyl Children's Life Line visited Crescent Gardens. They planted plants in the garden, had their faces painted, made masks, played games and had a treasure hunt. They were spoilt with lots of food and amazing cakes and all the children had a great time.

The Lee-on-the-Solent link would like to thank Helen Feculac and all the lovely people who made this day possible. The children come over to England and stay with host families for a month – it is said that one month breathing clean air and eating fresh food can enhance their life expectancy by up to two years. Every penny that we raise goes towards bringing the



*Chernobyl Children's Life Line*

children over. If anyone would like any information about the charity, or would like to help us in any way please

contact Patricia Unwin on 07769 948457.

*John Unwin*

# GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

**D**o you sometimes feel a little musty?  
Would you like to gentle your condition?  
Try this remedy near you:

*We few, we happy few, we band of sisters;  
(and a few men – more needed)  
For they today who garden here with us  
Shall be our helpers, although lacking skill,  
This day shall gentle their condition:  
And gardeners in Gosport now a-bed  
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,  
And hold their powers cheap whiles any speaks  
That gardened here with us on Wednesday morn  
(With apologies to Henry V)*

But seriously, there is a devoted group of volunteers to be seen most Wednesday mornings digging, planting, cutting, sweeping, and making compost. Anyone is very welcome to come and help or just see what we are doing. We chat, make friends, learn about gardening, drink coffee and generally enjoy ourselves while keeping Crescent Garden in good condition.

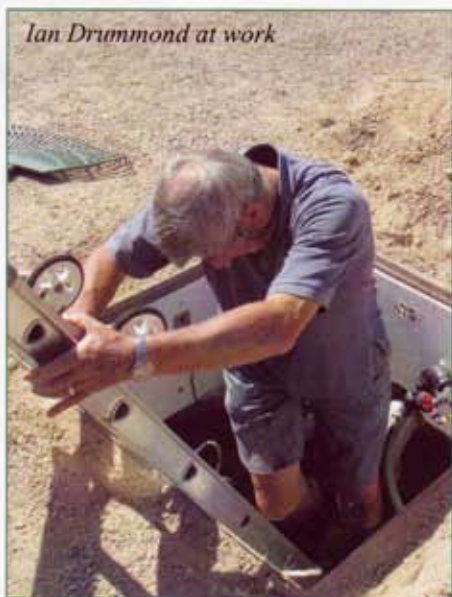
Join us any time; no gardening expertise needed (though useful). Other skills are sometimes required like cake baking, making Pimms or general administration. Hope to see you in the garden soon!

*Rita & Bill Rundle*



## THANK YOU

*Ian Drummond at work*



**A** special Thank you to Ian Drummond, who lives locally, Ian pictured here, is entering the fountain tank to repair a fault with the pump. After cleaning the filter and making sure the pump was properly suspended, a normal flow of water was achieved. This an example of many jobs that Ian has been involved with on our behalf, free of charge. On behalf of the Friends of Crescent Garden we are much indebted to him.  
Thank you Ian!.

*David Merritt*

## THE CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

**S**t Mary's will be magnificently decorated again with many Christmas trees, accompanied by seasonal music and refreshments. Our own tree will be labelled "Crescent Garden". The festival starts with carols, led by Viva Voce choir, in the church beginning at 6.15pm on Thursday 5th December. The Mayor and Mayoress will both be in attendance. The festival continues from Friday 6th until Sunday 8th, doors open from 11am to 6pm.

*Christmas Tree*



## NEW TREASURER

**W**e warmly welcome Mr John Mullen as our new Treasurer. We are delighted to have him on board and are sure he will make a very worthy replacement for David Wardle.

## 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 02392 582068

# CRESCENT GARDEN WINTER FAIR

at St. Mary's Parish Centre, Green Road, Alverstoke  
**Saturday 30th November 2013 at 10.30am - 12.30pm**

*We hope to offer the usual array of irresistible delights:-*

Desirable bric-a-brac, exciting books, CDs and DVDs (further donations very welcome!), Friends' cards produced by Wendy Osborne, bottle stall, Christmas gift stall, cakes, home-made chutney, jam and marmalade, etc. Star raffle prizes are a hand coloured print depicting St. Mary's Church Alverstoke in 1838 donated by Richard & Elaine Martin and a special Christmas cake.

All this plus the usual coffee, tea, biscuits and excellent company for an admission fee of just £1

*....don't miss it!!!*

*Contributions/Telephone calls will be joyfully received from the 16th November by the following:-*

## CAKES, JAMS & CHUTNEY'S

to Marilyn Mullen (02392 584865) at 73 Vectis Rd. Please arrange deliveries with Marilyn before hand.

## BOTTLES FOR THE BOTTLE STALL

to Roger Mawby (02392 502855) at 25 Anglesey Rd. Not after the 28th November please.

## BOOKS

to David Merritt (02392 582068) at 20 Little Green.

## BRIC-A-BRAC

to Pam Jackson (02392 581560) at 5 Beech Grove. Not after the 28th November please.

## RAFFLE PRIZES

to Rosemary Harrison (02392 524189) at 47 Anglesey Arms Rd. Not after the 28th November please.

*Many thanks to all those who have volunteered to run the stalls, provide refreshments, lay out the tables and chairs, collect entrance fees, and to all those who will donate the goodies.*

**If you are unable to deliver your donation please contact David Merritt who will arrange collection.**

## DATES FOR 2014 DIARIES

**AGM:** Saturday 1st March, at 2.30pm in St. Mary's Parish Centre.

As described in the Spring 2013 Newsletter minutes of the 2013 AGM (page 14) will be distributed prior to the 2014 AGM, as it is felt the changed timing will make matters fresher in everyone's memory and facilitate general discussion of 'matters arising'.

**Plant Sale:** Saturday 31st May, 10am to 4pm.

**Visit in May** - Possibly to Charleston House & Monk's House both have gardens in East Sussex near Lewes. To be confirmed at the AGM.