

Spring Visit

The visit to Charleston and Monk's House and Gardens on 12th June should prove to be an enchanting day. Charleston, a farmhouse nestled in the downs of East Sussex north of Lewes, was the country meeting place of the Bloomsbury Group. It is decorated throughout by the artists Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant who lived in the house for many years, often drawing inspiration from Italian frescoes and Mediterranean themes. The walled garden, which also has a beautiful pond, should be a blaze of colour during our visit.

Nearby Monks House, now owned by the National Trust, is a charming 17th century cottage and was the home of Virginia and Leonard Woolf. There is an enchanting cottage garden containing Virginia's famous writing room.

On route to Charleston we plan to stop for refreshments at Middle Farm, a delightful open farm with a well-stocked farm shop and plant stall. We will return here for lunch where a varied menu is available.

NEW TREASURER

We are very pleased to announce that Trish Kelly has agreed to become our new Treasurer. We are delighted that she is joining us and know how lucky we are to have her. Her first job is to remind any friends that have yet to renew their membership subscription to please send their yearly membership forms and fees to this address:

14 Tebourba Drive Gosport PO12 2NT

TENTS REQUIRED!



We require the loan of two tents measuring 6m x 3m and 9m x 3m for the June garden party complete with pegs, guide ropes, etc. If anybody can help please contact the secretary on 02392 582068

JOIN THE FRIENDS!

For all membership enquiries contact Ginny Whelan at: gedandginny@fridaywhelan.plus.com
Any other enquiries please contact the Friends Secretary David Merritt on 02392 582068

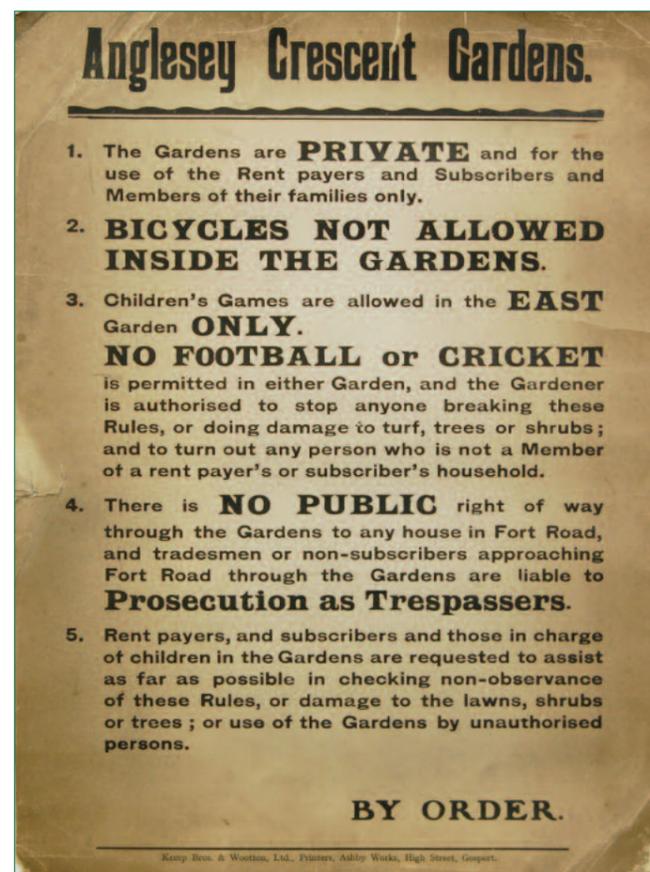
Autumn Visit

On Thursday 18 September we are visiting Mapperton, a Jacobean Manor in Beaminster Dorset, which is situated in the rolling Dorset countryside and is the home of Lord and Lady Sandwich. The 15 acres of enchanting gardens reflect many periods of history and include an orangery, croquet lawn and Italianate garden. There is an old tulip tree similar to the specimen in Crescent Garden.

Mapperton has a restaurant where Friends can partake of a wide choice of food and drink. This promises to be another delightful day with a gentle drive to Dorset and ample time at leisure to view the house and garden.

Please refer to the enclosed booking forms for itinerary and costs.

POSTER



This very interesting poster was rescued from a skip by local historian Phillip Eley. He passed it on to May Bumford who kindly gave it to Roger and Pam Mawby for the Friends of Crescent Garden to appreciate.

Friends of Crescent Garden SPRING NEWSLETTER 2014

Message from the Chairman

I am pleased that so many of you attended the Annual AGM at the beginning of March. This year the tea was exceptionally good and I would like to thank Rita Rundle and her happy team for their hard work in the kitchen and also to thank everybody who gave so generously. Thank goodness the long wet and windy winter is over and we can look forward to the summer and the promise of our excellent Garden Party on the 21st June, Midsummers Day. I know our wonderful volunteers will ensure the garden will look as beautiful as ever, a small Brass Band will be playing and Pimms will be served! Do put the date in your diary.

Pamela Mawby

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 24th May 2014

Friends of Crescent Garden Annual Plant Sale. Crescent Garden, 10am to 4pm. All are welcome, refreshments available.

Please do bring your excess plants along but could you please label them clearly. If you need help with transporting plants please contact Rita Rundle on 02392 587311. Last year's event was a great success raising money for the National Gardens Scheme – the first hour is always busy and any help selling plants would be greatly appreciated!

Thursday 12th June 2014 - Spring Visit

Trip to Charleston and Monk's House, Sussex - the country retreat of the Bloomsbury Group and Virginia Woolf's home and cottage garden. A Booking form is enclosed with this newsletter.

Thursday 21st August 2014

Roy Lancaster, the celebrated broadcaster often seen on Gardeners' World and heard on Gardeners' Question Time, will be giving a talk at the Thorngate Hall at 7pm for 7.30pm. Tickets at £9.50 will be available soon. Coffee included.

Saturday 13th September 2014

Crescent Garden Green Team will lead two guided tours at 11am and 2pm.

Thursday 18th September – Autumn Visit

Trip to Mapperton House and Gardens, Dorset.

Any queries please contact David Merritt on 02392 582068

Our Website is now up and running.
Please go online and take a look at
www.alverstokecrescentgarden.co.uk



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A cordial AGM, held at Alverstoke Parish Centre on Saturday 1 March, was attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Gosport Cllr. John Beavis and Mrs Christine Beavis along with approximately 110 friends. Chairman Pam Mawby opened the meeting and gave an illuminating account of the events of the past year. Lesley Flett who, together with Annie Sayle, is co-ordinating the development and maintenance of the garden gave an in-depth account of work undertaken, and our vision for the future.

Auditor Ian Gallet provided a summary of the accounts, which remain in a healthy state. Anybody wishing to examine the financial report may contact Secretary David Merritt.

David Cooke reported on the positive relationship we enjoy with Gosport Borough Council and the Mayor congratulated the friends for the work they undertake in maintaining what he called Gosport's "jewel in the crown" where visiting Council officials and guests are often brought.

The afternoon concluded with an excellent tea. Thank you to all who helped and provided food to make this day a success.

Enid Billington

GARDEN REPORT

A long and cold spring in 2013 was followed by a hot and dry summer leading into a grim autumn and winter with its deluge of rain and gale force winds. Before the worst of the weather arrived we managed to plant various heritage tulips, narcissi and then, in early spring, some English bluebells in the green.

However the garden did experience some gale damage including a Euonymus at the East Gate which split and lost two large limbs. The Spanish chestnut lost a large limb around Christmas Eve and the council subsequently cut the whole tree down as it was deemed unsafe. A small tree on Terrace Walk came down and smashed through a neighbour's fence in Fort Road, and two others in the same location were removed by the council. A Rhamnus alaternus Variegata, a lovely variegated shrub, was another victim of the winds. We do want to replace it but will change the location to the East Gate and plant two new shrubs to help screen the brash from the path.

The recent temperatures have been high resulting in the early arrival of spring and there have been some lovely plants for us all to enjoy including the Lonicera fragrantissima at East Gate and Mimosa along Terrace Walk. We have appreciated the early arrival of Snowdrops, Crocuses, Narcissi and Tulips.

We have planted a variety of half-hardy and hardy seeds. Annie Sayle is also a volunteer at Haslar Memorial Garden and has kindly made use of the spare capacity in their poly-tunnel and greenhouse to bring the seedlings on. Annie and I are very excited by the connection between these two historic gardens and hope the Green Flag judges will approve.

We do hope all Friends of the Garden are able to take the time to walk through the garden regularly and enjoy its special atmosphere.

The volunteer gardeners are a dedicated band and work hard to maintain the high standards set since the formation of the garden. In the next three months, in partnership with Gosport Council, we will be working hard to ensure that we are once again awarded a Green Flag.

If anyone would like to join the Green Team we are there every Wednesday morning so do come and join us. It's very rewarding, great fun and helps you keep fit!

Lesley Flett & Annie Sayle



Spring tulips in the garden

GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

Our happy band are joyously welcoming the more spring-like weather that we have recently been having with memories of floods, gigantic puddles and being confined to paths fading rapidly. If you stroll along Crescent Road on any Wednesday morning you will see the volunteers beavering away – sometimes eccentrically dressed, often in contorted postures and wielding strange tools, perhaps crawling under bushes or climbing trees, scrabbling about in flower beds or even attempting a bit of heavy digging! We have two aims: to enjoy ourselves but also, and more importantly, to keep Crescent Garden as beautiful as we know how! At 11am coffee arrives as if by magic and we pause to discuss our progress, admire our handiwork, and enjoy the garden, especially now that new growth is emerging.

The new tulips planted in the autumn are really coming along! If you feel an urge to come and join us on Wednesday mornings please don't hesitate to come into the garden and talk to us!

Rita Rundle



The Volunteers

GARDEN CUTTINGS

Members will, no doubt, be aware of the ancient Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) which dominates the western end of the garden and has stood there proudly for the better part of 200 years. Although sadly now in decline, this wonderful specimen will be remembered fondly for its large yellow and orange tulip-shaped flowers which bloom in May and early June and its almost equally vibrant autumn colours.

A member of the Magnolia family, the Tulip Tree is a native of America and the tallest of all its hardwoods, growing to 100 feet or more and used in making furniture, cabinetry, musical instruments and wood veneer. Over the years the tree has acquired several names including Tulip Poplar, Yellow Poplar and Canoe Wood. The latter name harks back to when Native Americans built canoes from the lightweight timber logs of this tree. The natural range of this hardy, long-lived tree is throughout the east-coast from southern New England to the northern half of Florida.

The celebrated plant collector John Tradescant the Younger (1608-1662), made three voyages to Virginia in 1637, 1642 and 1654. These journeys, at such an early stage in the setting up of the colony, were to produce a treasure trove of plants and trees and it was in the family garden at Lambeth in London that the discoveries from Virginia, including the Tulip Tree, were raised.

It was at Mount Vernon that the Tulip Tree had its proudest historical moment. George Washington introduced it there in 1785. It would grow so majestically that it would be selected as Mount Vernon's official bicentennial tree.

On this side of the Atlantic, in a quiet corner of Alverstoke, a distant relative lives on, no less admired by all who see her. When next you gaze upon her, reflect on her great longevity and the many changes she has seen.

Richard Martin



Tulip tree at Crescent Garden

WINTER FAIR

Our annual winter fair was held on Saturday 30 November and was well attended, despite the dull winter weather. The Parish Centre was a hive of activity with many friends providing quality bric-a-brac including books, potted plants, bulbs and a selection of tempting homemade jams, chutneys and cakes. Some friends even arrived especially early to buy the homemade Christmas cakes before they sold out and I'm still enjoying the delicious fig, apple and vanilla jam that I bought! As usual our ladies were on hand to provide tea and coffee and, as an extra dimension this year, hot winter Pimms to keep out the chill. The fair raises funds for the maintenance of the garden and I'd like to express my sincere thanks to all those who contributed and for helping to organise such a lovely day. We raised a grand total of £805.61.

Thank you!

Enid Billington

FRIENDS ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY

Saturday 21st June 6 - 8pm

Please join us for Midsummer magic. This year bring as many guests as you like – we no longer limit each household to two tickets only. Booking form enclosed with this newsletter.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL



The Crescent Garden tree

The Alverstoke Christmas Tree Festival at St Mary's has grown into a successful annual event attracting large crowds into our local church. This year it was better attended than ever with large crowds enjoying the display of finely decorated trees and festive music. Thank you to Rosemary Harrison, Sarah Cooke and Kate Barnard for making such a beautiful job of the Crescent garden tree!

Elaine Martin