

## AN EVENING WITH W. L. WYLLIE

On Wednesday 18 March over 100 members partook of a glass of wine and some nibbles while enjoying a fascinating presentation given by Richard Martin on the life and works of the marine artist William Lionel Wyllie. Many of you may recall that last year Richard gave a similar account of Gosport's own Martin Snape. This year he was once again assisted by his wife Elaine who operated the PowerPoint presentation. The lecture, illuminated with many slides, did not disappoint the audience and took us from Wyllie's birth to his death and eventual burial at St Mary's Church, Portchester Castle. Richard's calm presentation and measured timing made for very easy listening. We are fortunate to have Elaine and Richard as friends of Crescent Garden who not only give of their time but have so often provided framed antique prints for the raffle. At the end of the evening someone was heard to say: "How wonderful to see many people leaving with a smile on their face, and how fortunate we are to have so many delightful people as Friends of Crescent Garden". The proceeds of the evening will be used to replant the roses in the Repton Baskets. Thank you Richard and Elaine for giving us such an enjoyable evening.

Enid Billington



The Green Team enjoy a day making Christmas Wreaths

## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL



Friends of Crescent Garden again took part in St. Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival. Our tree was decorated by Enid Billington and Pam Mawby and was quite wonderful thanks to Enid's inspired idea of using gold hand-painted leaves which were much commented on.

David Merritt

## CHANGES TO THE COMMITTEE

After many years on the Committee Pam Dimmock has decided she must retire - we will all miss her. Pam has been a longstanding and much valued member of the committee, always there to support us in every way. For many years she bought and prepared all the strawberries for the Garden Party, a long-winded and very last minute task! Thank you Pam, for all you have contributed to the garden, your place will be very hard to fill.

Pam Jackson has also retired. Pam has given many years of commitment to the garden and we would like to thank her. We are delighted that Stephanie Fisher and Jackie Askew have agreed to join the committee - we very much hope they enjoy working with us.

We are very sad that David Cooke died in early December last year. David joined the committee in March 2014 with responsibility for liaising with Gosport Borough Council, a position he filled with great enthusiasm. David was an excellent member of the committee, bringing not only experience and enormous efficiency, but humour as well. We shall miss him.

Pamela Mawby

## 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)

# Friends of Crescent Garden SPRING NEWSLETTER 2015

## Message from the Chairman

I would like to begin by thanking you all for your unstinting support during the year. All the events that have been arranged have been extremely well attended, giving us funds to maintain and replenish the garden.

This year the garden will be looking particularly smart for the Garden Party on 20th June. You may have noticed that the paths have been resurfaced with Breendon Gravel and the railings have a fresh coat of black paint. The Garden Party will be as ever - Pimms, strawberries, roses and a charming small brass band - do come and join us and bring your friends.

Pamela Mawby



The first herald of spring

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Saturday 30th May 2015**

**Friends of Crescent Garden Annual Plant Sale**

At Crescent Garden from 10am to 4pm

All are welcome, refreshments are available. Please clearly label any plants you bring.

For help moving plants contact Rita Rundle on 023 9258 7311. Last year's event was the best yet and raised money both for Crescent Garden and the National Gardens Scheme - the first hour is always busy and any help selling plants would be greatly appreciated!

**Friday 5th June 2015**

**Spring Visit**

Trip to Stansted Park Garden Show, West Sussex.

**Saturday 20th June 2015**

**Friends Garden Party**

At Crescent Garden from 6 to 8pm.

**Thursday 10th September 2015**

**Autumn Visit**

Trip to Abbey House Gardens, Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

Details to follow!

**Saturday 12th September 2015**

**Tours of Crescent Gardens**

From 11am to 2pm as part of Gosport Heritage Open Days weekend.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A well attended AGM was held on 28th February and was opened by Pamela Mawby (Chair), who gave an overview of the major events in 2014. We enjoyed a very successful June Garden Party, a spring visit to Charleston House and garden and an autumn visit to Mapperton House and garden. All were well attended by FCG. The Christmas Fair rounded off the year with seasonal good cheer.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Gosport, Keith and Eira Gill, were in attendance with other Councillors. They reinforced Gosport Borough Council's commitment to "Gosport's jewel in the crown". This is all possible due to the continued hard work and dedication given by the garden volunteers with the management and direction provided by Lesley Flett and Annie Sayles, our joint Head Gardeners.

Lesley gave an excellent update of work undertaken in the garden during 2014, along with planting and pruning plans for the forthcoming year.

As usual the meeting concluded with a delicious array of sandwiches and cakes kindly provided by members and organised by Rita Rundle, with further help from Joan Anderson, Pat Anderson and Jackie Askew.

Enid Billington

## FRIENDS ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY

**Saturday 20th June, from 6.00 to 8.00pm**

Please join us for our Annual Summer Garden Party. Guests are very welcome. Please note that we no longer limit each household to two tickets only. Booking form enclosed with this newsletter.

The highlight of 2014 was receiving our 10th Green Flag award. We were given a great score of 80 plus, an important benchmark of a quality park, and had very positive feedback from the judges: "The garden is very well managed by the council and the Friends working together. An extremely attractive small garden that is a credit to the Friends, the council and the local community". With Crescent Garden having been so expertly designed and laid out by Wendy Osborne and all of the previous volunteers, our task currently is to maintain the garden's splendour. Of course much of that maintenance involves weekly jobs that are somewhat mundane, particularly cutting back the dreaded bay shoots! A visitor to the garden will often see little change and may not be aware of the hard work that goes on every Wednesday morning. The warm weather last summer meant that the roses were magnificent. For a few years now some of our roses have been susceptible to disease and our target over the next two years is the replacement of some of the specimens in the Reptonian rose baskets. Annie Sayle has been in contact with Jonny Bass, Head gardener at Mottisfont, to ensure we choose only the best quality and historically correct replacements, sourced from his recommended suppliers. To create more space for the new shed we have reorganised and added three more compost bins which will make the storage and mixing of compost easier. We now have more space to accommodate rotting horse manure which is a great addition to the well rotted leaves. In the autumn we had to wait for the weather to get cold enough to plant some new bulbs.



The following list may be of interest:

- Bluebells - *Hyacinthoides non scripta* x 100
- Narcissus - 'Pheasant's Eye' x 80
- Tulipa Lac van Rijn (1620) x 30
- Tulipa Acuminata (1813) x 30
- Tulipa Clusiana (1607) x 30
- Tulipa Clusiana x 50 (A different supplier to that above to avoid any failure of bulbs regarding date)
- Tulipa Keizerskroon - x 100
- Tulipa Sylvestris - x 100
- Tulipa Coleur Cardinal - x 100

Last May we held another successful plant sale and raised a great sum for NGS charities, and about £200 for the garden coffers, by selling teas, coffees and cake throughout the day. We had visitors from as far away as Southampton, Winchester, Guildford and Basingstoke many of whom made fantastic comments not only about the garden, but also about the delicious cakes! Of course none of this could have been achieved without the efforts of the wonderful volunteers. The Green Team turn up weekly in all weathers to dig and weed, but others volunteer for non-gardening duties including moving chairs, erecting tents, baking cakes, manning stalls, serving teas, selling raffle tickets and organising visits and fund raising events. But we always need more helpers - If you feel you can contribute in any way you would be very welcome. We would like to take this opportunity to give a special thank you to Ian Drummond for repairing the fountain after it was damaged. The most rewarding thing about being part of the Green Team working in the garden on Wednesdays is talking to the visitors. People are so grateful for all the hard work we do and are so appreciative of the beautiful environment. In return we try recruiting them as Friends! And so on your next visit you will see that the maintenance of Crescent Garden continues, and with this maintenance comes the conservation of this evocative Regency garden.

*Lesley Flett and Annie Sayle*

## GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

*Friends, gard'ners, countrymen (and women) lend us your hands;*

*We come to tend the garden, not to spoil it.*

*The care that we all give stays after us.*

*We gather Wednesday morns to laugh and chat,*

*Drink coffee, make good friends and celebrate*

*Our birthdays and the beauty all around.*

*We also work to cultivate this place,*

*And hope that you will join us when you can.*

*No special skills are needed, only love*

*For all the plants and flowers that we grow.*

With apologies to Marc Antony and Mr Shakespeare. Do come and say hello any Wednesday morning.

*Rita Rundle*

### The Snowdrop

The Snowdrop is among the very first sights to tingle our senses into believing that winter will soon be past and warm days might really return. Who doesn't seek for signs of them in gardens, parks and churchyards on a fine January day as the first grey-green spears of foliage push through the frosty earth? Perhaps surprisingly, these perfect little blooms are not wild British natives. It is thought that the bulbs were first brought to Britain in the 15th century by Italian monks, who introduced the bulbs into the gardens of monasteries. Gerarde referred to them, in his 'Great Herbal' of 1597, as 'Timely flowering bulbous violets'. Snowdrops are often represented as shy flowers, who in folklore are afraid to raise their heads because of some misdemeanour or other. The real reason is that their dusty pollen must be kept dry and sweet in order to attract the few insects flying around in winter. No mean feat in the February wind, snow and rain. And so - they droop! Last year the Green Team planted a number of bulbs in the garden and the picture shows the lovely result!

*Richard Martin*



## SPRING VISIT - STANSTED PARK



Our spring visit this year has a different dimension; we will be visiting a garden show. 'Stansted Park' near Rowlands Castle has, for several years, staged an excellent show with specimen plants, garden furniture, designer gardens, organic food products and many other things. This promises to be a good day out and not too far for those who find travelling difficult. Stansted House can also be visited (this is not included in the price of this visit). The garden centre and tea shop provide facilities if required. Alternatively there are food stands at the show. I would suggest wearing flat shoes, as the show is on grazing land. For those with a shooting stick this may be useful for resting, although there are seating areas. Departure from the Parish Centre, Alverstoke, Friday 5th June at 9.30am to arrive at Stansted Park at about 10.30am. Departing from Stansted Park at 4.00pm, arriving back at Alverstoke at about 5.00pm.

Cost for transport, show admission and drivers tip is £16.75

Please contact Enid Billington by 8th May 2015, telephone 023 9258 0746, email: enid.billington@googlemail.com

or by post: 16 Captains Close, Gosport, PO12 3AU

Cheques must be made payable to "Friends of Crescent Garden" Applications will not be acknowledged unless the coach is oversubscribed. We look forward to seeing you!

*Enid Billington*