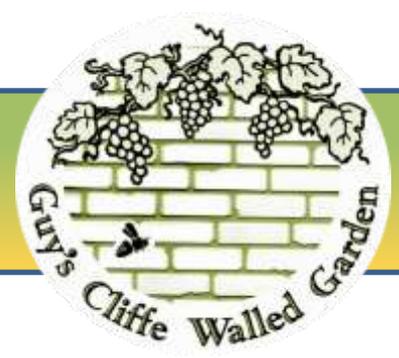


Newsletter



Review of 2016

It's been a busy and varied year! The gardening year was delayed by very difficult weather conditions in February and the whole of the western side of the garden was under water for much of the early spring. The sunken melon house was even more sunken than usual. June proved to be a difficult growing month – except for our resident horsetail. However, by August, the garden was at its colourful and productive best with bumper crops of beans, beetroot, courgettes and parsnips.



Much to the annoyance of the local pigeons and cabbage whites our Brassica cages have been completed and have greatly improved our crops.



We were kindly donated a superb cedar greenhouse which now stands at the north end of the garden and has been invaluable for growing on our many plants.



New wildlife sightings included a gatekeeper butterfly, elephant hawkmoth caterpillars, a poplar hawkmoth, and a rabbit that took up residence in the garden and dined on lettuces and courgettes, while the resident buzzards patrol overhead.

The garden continued to give up its historical secrets with finds including part of a flintlock pistol, two 1797 George III pennies and many more fragments of clay pipe.

The introduction of monthly Sunday visitor days to our calendar has been a great success. All have been well supported and the donations have added much to our funds. We will be extending Sunday opening in 2017.

On the 9th May, with the help of our astronomer in residence, we were able to see and photograph the transition of Mercury from the garden. Other than the interest that this stimulated, it had a historic context since Bertie Greathead had been a good friend of William Herschel, the astronomer who discovered Uranus and who was Court Astronomer to George III. Herschel visited Guy's Cliffe in the 1790s and it's likely that Bertie would have shown him the garden.



Visitors to the garden will have seen our volunteers wearing our new 'team' shirts. In addition we now have mugs bearing the garden logo, and have started the production of wooden boxes from recycled wood that we use to display our produce.



A major milestone was reached in August when we passed 10,000 hours of volunteer time. This is a tremendous achievement in the two and a half years since we started the restoration of the garden. The occasion was marked with a summer barbecue for volunteers.

We have welcomed a range of groups to either work in the garden, or simply to come and learn about its history and development. These included Youth Challenge Groups, The Prince's Trust, Tangent Groups, Local Horticultural Societies, Warwick University Retired Staff Association and U3A groups. In addition the Trustees have given a variety of talks and presentations to local societies and special interest groups.



September saw the Heritage Open Days weekend. The Saturday



was very wet, yet we still had over 130 visitors. However, Sunday was spectacular and more than 400 people came to enjoy the garden, and Peter & Mary's 'garden produce' cakes. A fantastic effort for all concerned with the garden full of colour, interest and produce, and our garden themed scarecrow display.

Looking ahead

2017 promises to be an exciting year in the garden. Thanks to a grant from the King Henry VIII Endowed Trust we have now completed the installation of the paths. This will make the garden more accessible to, for example, wheelchair users, and has greatly improved the aesthetics. Links with local schools are growing, and we are looking forward to welcoming them to the garden. We have been invited to open on 22nd July as part of the National Garden Scheme and will be in the "Yellow Book" for 2017.



Our first big project in the new year will be transforming the south border into a soft-fruit area. Fruit trees are already on order and we will begin planting up the border in February. At the same time, work will begin on repairing and re-pointing the south wall.

The garden is going to be open to the public much more in 2017. We will have five full open days including the RHS opening in July and the Heritage Weekend in September. From March, visitors will be welcome in the garden on the first and third Sundays of every month. We've also decided to open the doors to visitors on every volunteer day throughout the year. All this means the garden will be open to the public on more than 80 days in 2017. The website will have details of all our opening days and volunteers days very soon.



Plans are well in hand for the new growing season, building on what we have learnt from our first two years of cultivation. With all the work done so far, and with your help and support in the months ahead, we are looking forward to making 2017 our best year yet.

And finally...

Our volunteers have again been wonderful. Without their help there would be no garden! But we really do need some more! Volunteers find themselves doing a great variety of things – from basic gardening, propagation and looking after our crops to helping with the harvesting and preparation of produce, various construction projects, helping with publicity and meeting and greeting and serving refreshments on Open Days. Whatever your interests you will find a niche at the Garden! Why not come along and find out

how we can help you to help us? Our calendar of volunteer days is posted on the website at www.guyscliffewalledgarden.org.uk And if you are a member of a local community, U3A, heritage or horticultural group why not arrange a group visit via info@guyscliffewalledgarden.org.uk

