

## Friends of the BARNHILL ROCK GARDEN

Autumn  
Newsletter  
**2019**

### *From the Editor*

After an early, promising spring this has been a strange summer with weather very changeable. No brown grass this year! However the Garden (with Michael and the Garden Team) has coped well and we have been receiving lots of positive comments as to how lovely it looks. As well as our gardening activities and summer outings there have been many other things happening. First there was a very successful BeeWalk followed shortly by Gala in the Garden. A lot of planning between the Council and ourselves goes into organising the latter, but in the end it is fingers crossed for the weather. The article below tells you all about it. Also inside is an outline of the Friends' Summer Holiday being organised for 2020. Do ask for full details and register your interest if you think you might come. **Anne Hesketh**

# Gala in the Garden



The day started with uncertainty, the weather giving no indication of what is was going to do, but by noon the sun was shining. The event opened with the 1st Monifieth Boys Brigade Pipe Band lively marching into centre stage and giving a few renderings of some old favourites.

Around the central area there were lots of stalls and activities catering for a wide range of interest and age. The stalls included the Dundee and District Fuschia Society, The Embroiders' Guild, Dundee Floral Art, Broughty Ferry in Bloom, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, the Wine Society and the hosts, the FBRG. Several new groups joined the Gala this year. These included

community groups such as SAMH and Leisure and Culture (Douglas Sports Centre) who brought along equipment to encourage people into exercise. Park Lives, was another newcomer. They had lots of children playing various games on the grass whilst the old favourites such as the Story Telling, the Balloon Modeller and Face Painting were constantly in demand. A later star of the show was the arrival of the fire engine. The children clambered forward to get a chance to get into the cab and wear one of the fireman's hats. What excitement!

The varied entertainment programme continued in the main

arena with Dance Ihaymani, a group who thrilled the crowds with their display of Indian national dancing; the Happy Ukes, playing tunes that people sang and tapped along to; the Dundee Instrumental Band and finally the Swizzle Sisters - three ladies singing and playing their guitars.

The sun continued to shine with just the occasional cloud. Too soon it was 4pm, and time to draw the event to a close, although lots of people lingered, taking in the last of the sunshine and the atmosphere. We estimated that nearly 1,000 passed through the gala that day. Another very successful Gala in the Rock Garden.

**Ann Taylor**

## From the Chairman

I am writing these notes for the newsletter after the three summer outings have taken place. All three were well supported by the membership and I thank those who booked the coach and handled the bookings.

The Bumble Bee talk given in June, by Mrs Alston, was a success with the audience filling the Geddes Glasshouse. Lots of bees were seen on the walkabout after the talk. However the Garden's busiest day of the year was surely Gala Day in July. The Boys Brigade Pipe Band started proceedings at midday and other musical acts followed. We had a multitude of stalls, the tea /coffee van did a roaring trade and everyone went home tired but happy around 4 pm.

On numerous other occasions, the Garden has been used to demonstrate to different groups of children all sorts of gardening skills and also to explain the wonders of the natural world. We have now installed a large illustrated information board, detailing pond life 'month by month'. This was made for the Friends by the Broughty Ferry Men's Shed who, you may recall, made the plant table and troughs in the Geddes area earlier in the year.

An away trip to The Gardens of North Wales has been planned for May next year. Further details are on Page 4. **John Grocott**



## From the Gardening Team

The 'Monday Team', usually between 8 and 10 people, and the smaller 'Thursday Team' continue to meet in the garden between 10 -12 noon. We are kept busy looking after the nine areas that the Friends maintain as well as bringing on plants from seeds and cuttings. Some of these plants are for the garden and others for the plant table. We try to place plants on the table when they are in flower, although this is not always possible with some of the seedlings. All, however, have a label for plant identification and plant sales have been good so far this summer.

We are shortly to be making up a programme of work for the coming Autumn/Winter to further improve the garden. This year's summer weather has been better for us gardeners and the lawns and plants have not needed much watering. We will see what the Autumn brings. **John Grocott**

## From the Gardener

The mixture of sunshine and rain has been perfect for the garden, allowing good germination and an abundance of colour. The garden has been busy with visitors from all over the world. The team and I have also been busy with general tidying of the borders due to the vigorous growth this season. The two borders we renovated in the Spring are progressing well.



We have had a great display and scent this year from the Wisteria, beside the Geddes Glasshouse, the Alliums that we recently planted, and the Cordyline Australis (cabbage palm) has been magnificent. The combination of planned and self-seeded plantings has worked and blended in well throughout the whole garden. The yellow of the Verbascum has been a particular highlight and the Crocormsia 'Lucifer' is coming into its own.

As always we have strived to ensure that the garden was ready for all the inspections, tours and events scheduled. A big THANK YOU for your continued support.

**Michael Laird**

## Michael's gardening tip

**Net ponds now before autumn leaf fall gets underway to reduce the amount of debris entering the water.**

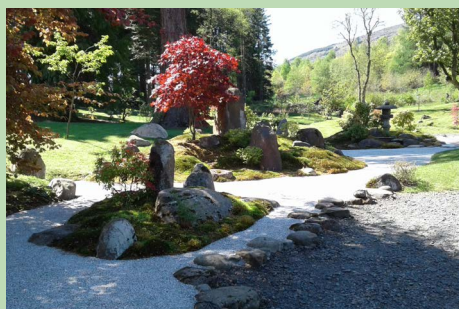
**Clean out cold frames and greenhouses ahead of autumn sowing and growing.**

**Now is the time to plant spring-flowering bulbs, eg daffodils, crocus.**





# SUMMER OUTINGS 2019



## May: Cowden Castle, Dollar

On a sunny Thursday, we arrived at Cowden Castle's newly restored Japanese Garden, 'Sha Raku En' ('The place of pleasure and delight'), set beneath the Ochil Hills near Dollar.

Built in 1908 by owner and traveller Ella Christie, with Japanese female garden designer Taki Handa, the garden was vandalised in 1963 and fell into disrepair. Visiting it now with many young Japanese maples, cherries, azaleas and hedges, was to see it as she had done. The beauty and fascination of the garden was immediately spread out before us with a peaceful loch at centre stage. Traditional Japanese garden features (all with Buddhist or Shinto meanings) surrounded it: a dry sand and rock garden, zigzag and arched bridges to an island (representing the passage from this life to the next), a 'Welcome Gate' and 'Rest House' beautifully crafted in wood, stone lanterns, rocks and stepping stones all set among mossy hummocks.

The garden will mature. Over the next 10 years we could experience the final vision of a 'stroll' garden enclosed by substantial trees, of delightful views appearing and disappearing around mature maples, cherries, hedges and clumps of Japanese azaleas. It will definitely be worth seeing again.

**Godfrey Nicholson**



## July: Glamis Castle Gardens

On 17th July, we had an enjoyable trip to Glamis Castle Gardens and were reasonably lucky with the weather, so umbrellas were needed only occasionally. The Castle itself makes an imposing backdrop and there is plenty to see.

We were particularly impressed by the Pinetum with its huge and ancient trees. This area was also enlivened by the Macbeth trail with wooden figures of the Three Witches and other characters of Shakespearean fame. The Walled Garden has recently been redeveloped and features fruit vegetables, a fun grass maze, Monet style fountains and a variety of fragrant flowers. The Italian Garden was designed by the Queen Mother's mother and laid out in 1910 with its formal borders providing spectacular floral displays in the summer. We were interested to see gardeners planting seedlings of *Verbena Bonariensis* with a view to attracting butterflies.

Finally an added bonus - there was a choice of two coffee shops to revive one's flagging energy!

**Margaret Macdonald**



## June: Rodney Gardens, Perth

Having never heard of Rodney Gardens, the visit was one of complete amazement and surprise.

This hidden gem was mostly achieved by enthusiastic local gardeners who volunteered to design and plant this large forgotten site which extends to the banks of the River Tay. Their hard work, over a period of around 6 years, has produced remarkable results with a variety of beautiful heathers, trees, shrubs and other plants in peaceful surroundings. The maintenance and care is still provided by these same volunteers although the Council now look after, and have developed, some of the peripheral area of the gardens.

Many thanks to the FBRG for this visit to a real eye-opener.

**Ann Mitchell**





Caerau garden



Bodnant  
laburnum arch

## 2020 Friends' holiday

**Gardens of North Wales**  
26 May - 30th May 2020

A holiday in May has been arranged with Glenton Travel next summer to visit several gardens in North Wales. We shall stay for four nights at the 4\* Llandudno Bay Hotel, which is situated on the promenade. The cost, including dinner, bed and breakfast and some admissions, is £469.00. There are a few single rooms available, but otherwise the single supplement is £20 per night for sole use of a double room. We are visiting one garden en route, and some well known Welsh gardens such as Bodnant, Powys gardens and Portmeirion village.

If interested, or for a more detailed itinerary, please email [grocottja@btinternet.com](mailto:grocottja@btinternet.com) or phone John & Kate Grocott Tel: 01382 779581. Full details will be available at the A.G.M.

**STOP**

## Stop Press!

**Autumn Clean up** 12th October from 10.00 to 12.30pm with a coffee break. Do come and help us for as long or short a time as you can manage. All ages welcome.

**Winter talks** We have been asked to stress that access to the hall for the talks (see opposite) is only from 7.20pm in order to allow the earlier children's dance class to vacate.

## Need to contact us?

**Chairman:** John Grocott: 779581

**Vice Chairman:** Ann Taylor 737573

**Secretary:** Anne Hesketh: 739982

**Treasurer:** Heather Dailly: 778061

**Membership Secretary:** Kate Grocott 779581

**Barnhill Rock Garden:** 07985 878515

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## Bumblebee spotting in the Garden

We were very pleased with the interest shown in our BeeWalk in June. We didn't know whether to expect 2, 20 or 200 people as it had been widely advertised by the Council! In the end we had about 35 people of all ages. Margaret Alston and her granddaughter had something for everyone. The people attending were right across the age spectrum and included children and teachers. Their knowledge ranged from none to that of a Naturalist. All seemed to enjoy the talk, coffee and exhibits/games, followed by bee spotting in the Garden. Well done Margaret, quite a challenge.

**Anne Hesketh**



## Winter meetings

**September 25th 2019**

AGM and film of Friends' activities during 2018/19 by Daphne Barbieri

**October 23rd 2019**

Dr. Neil Paterson: Charles Darwin - Tendrils, Traps and Moulds

**November 27th 2019**

Alban Haughton: South West Australia Flora

**February 26th 2020**

Brian Allan: European Primulas

**March 25th 2020**

David Martin: RNLI & The Mona

All meetings held at **Broughty Ferry Baptist Church, 86 St Vincent Street, Broughty Ferry, DD5 2EZ**, Wednesdays at 7.30pm. Please note there is **no access to the hall until 7.20pm** (see Stop Press).