

## Friends of the BARNHILL ROCK GARDEN

Autumn  
Newsletter  
**2017**

### *From the Editor*

The Council's Gala in the Garden comes to the Rock Garden every two years. It can attract a lot of visitors, some regulars and others perhaps for the first time. Two years ago we had glorious weather, whilst the time before the heavens opened; soggy was putting it mildly. The Council, Michael and the Friends put a lot of hard work into organising the Gala so it was fingers crossed for a good day again and we got it as you will see below. The Friends' summer holiday was not so lucky but an excellent guide, interesting gardens and good company made it a very enjoyable break. Read about both of these events and the other activities the Friends have been up to this summer. **Anne Hesketh**

# Gala in the Garden

Saturday 8th July, 2017 turned out to be a glorious day at the Barnhill Rock Garden. What a success for the Friends who hosted the event this year in conjunction with the Council. We could not have asked for better weather. The day was hot and sunny and the garden was in full glory, thanks to the hard work of the gardener and the team. It delighted many who had been there before and those who had not, but promised to come again.

The biennial event started at 12 noon with a local BB pipe band opening the proceedings. The many visitors, numbering over 1000, enjoyed the festivities which ranged from Face Painting and Balloon making to wine tasting and flower arranging. It was one of these days when the sun shone constantly and people mingled, met old and new friends, lingered at many of the various stalls, catching up with all the news.

The local Fire Station provided us with an engine and the firemen delighted the children with tours around it. The Countryside Rangers did their bit too, entertaining the children. There was a great community spirit, crossing the barrier of the ages. There was plenty for all to see and do and a Star stage was set up in the middle of the grassy area with lots of seats around it to watch the various entertainments scheduled for the day. These included Indian Dancing, Tayside Ukes, who played lots of old favourites, Dundee Instrumental, who kept peoples'

feet tapping and near the end a Ceilidh Duo, who not only delighted the crowds but had the children dancing in the centre of the star stage. It was wonderful to see the delight of these youngsters dancing and skipping to the beat of the music. The music filled the air without being offensive and loud.

A gazebo was set up on the patio area, and tables and chairs were arranged for the people who wished to purchase coffee, teas and cake. These ladies did stout service to the delight of many of the hot customers. Time seemed to go by very quickly and it was 4pm before we knew it and thus time to close the event. People still mingled around and a few ventured across to the beach for a last stroll of the day.

The day was a huge success, and we can only add our thanks to all who participated, those who helped set up and those who cleared away. You made Gala in the Garden 2017 a most memorable occasion.

**Ann Taylor**



## From the Chairman

I feel that I have 'settled in to the job' now and I am delighted to report that the garden has been awarded again, a Green Flag (for being a high quality public open space) and has been highly commended by the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' judge. I am sure these complimentary comments had little or nothing to do with the sandwiches, cakes and coffee with which we plied the judge!

It was heartening to see a good turnout at the Spring Clean Up and it was good to see Friends on the outings organised by the Committee. I look forward to an equally large group turning up for the early autumn tidy-up on 30th September.

The big event of the summer was surely the 'Gala in the Garden' held on Saturday 8th July. We were blessed by a truly beautiful afternoon and the Committee were delighted with the peaceful but happy crowd that came along. The entertainers using the 'star tent' were enjoyed by the crowd and the Indian dancers were even more colourful than last time. The success of the afternoon was a true reflection of the co-operative efforts of all concerned. **John Grocott**

## From the Gardener

Hello again Friends,

Good weather has made the garden extremely popular with visitors this year. The team and I have tried to ensure that your garden is maintained to a high standard so it is ready for inspections and the many events it stages. We have had many remarks about the abundance of colour in the borders and I think the many years of trying to enhance the planting schemes are now paying off. We have been busy planting up any gaps in the borders from plants produced from our nursery to improve displays. We are now starting to think about autumn jobs which include bulb planting along with winter projects to tweak borders so your garden is ready for 2018.

Plants this season worth looking out for are the beautiful blue flowerheads of the Agapanthus and red glow of the Tamarix.

I look forward to another exciting year ahead. Thank you for your continued support. **Michael Laird**

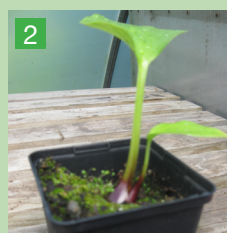
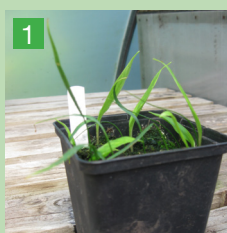


## From the Gardening Team

Meeting regularly on Monday at 10.00, the group has grown and now sometimes numbers 12. It is quite difficult to get some of them to stop at 11.00 for a cup of coffee. The renovated Alpine bed at the Geddes Glasshouse is settling down nicely with some new plants replacing those few that did not survive being dug up, set aside and replanted. The new Fernery (see above) planting in the woodland area is also establishing well and could possibly be extended in the future. The team will be concentrating in the coming winter on improvements to the areas we already maintain and using our funds to buy additional plants. **John Grocott**

## John's pride and joy

Cardiocrinum seeds take 4 to 5 years to develop from seed to flower. They flower once and then die. Currently we have had one in flower in the Geddes area and two next to the buckie. You can't miss these magnificent tall plants and John delights in showing them to visitors. Flowering has now finished for this year, but many seeds are developing. John has been bringing on more seedlings over time in the hope of another one flowering next year as the pictures show. **Anne Hesketh**



## Michael's gardening tip

Potted plants you buy may well be root bound which prevents water and other essential nutrients from travelling to the rest of the plant. Don't be afraid to gently tease the roots outwards or, if really tough, carefully make vertical cuts into the root ball with a knife. This encourages root development.



# SUMMER OUTINGS 2017

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## **May: Willowhill Garden, Fife**

We set off in brilliant sunshine for our first trip which was to Willowhill Garden in Fife. Sadly by the time we crossed the Tay, the sun was not quite so evident. Our hosts Eric and Sally met us at the gate. Some of us walked round with Sally, whilst others explored on their own and two old gentlemen bowlers were content to sit on a bench and look!

The garden abounded in Euphorbias and alliums and many other plants which I am unable to name (two of our Committee plantsmen being absent from the trip!). It had areas themed by colour and a large natural area with a wildlife pond in grassland with trees and bulbs. Hidden among the planting were two metal deer, a hare, a heron and a few other creatures. In addition there was a vegetable garden and plants for sale.

Most of us were surprised that such a large garden was the work of two people allegedly working two days a week. The visit culminated in tea/coffee and cakes. The generous helpings of cake meant that no one needed to worry if their evening meal was delayed. However we were back in Broughty Ferry about 4.15 and no precipitation marred the visit. I did enjoy the garden and the plants I bought were approved!

**Kate Grocott**

## **June: The Explorers' Garden, Pitlochry**

This unusual garden was planted to celebrate the achievements and subsequent fame of Scotland's noted early plantsmen. The weather, although cloudy, was dry for our party to enjoy both the visit and the surrounding scenery. Lunch was at the Festival Theatre before the garden tour, conducted by Julia Corden, head gardener and a font of knowledge and major inspiration for developments old, new and planned.



Information boards in the different section describe the natural habitat of the huge variety of flowers, shrubs and trees from N & S America, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the Himalayas. Some thrive here in unlikely situations due to pockets of microclimate eg Agapanthus. Swathes of Meconopsis and a demonstration of their propagation delighted enthusiasts. Cardiocrinums reach for the sky! A 16ft specimen is in the David Douglas Pavilion.

At the end of the tour a plant stand tempted some of us, as did a welcome seat and refreshment in the restaurant before departing.

**Jane Peggie**



## **July: Cambo Gardens, Fife**

Cambo is well known for snowdrops, but it was recommended that we should make a summer visit. We were also told that the garden is at its best between July and September.

Many of us spent a lot of time in the large walled garden, and this lived up to expectations. The garden was full of colour with some varieties of roses and herbaceous plants in bloom and also grasses. We had a 2 hour visit but I realised that one could spend a whole day there. The attractions, apart from the walled garden, included a woodland walk, a pig enclosure, a gift shop, plant stall and tea room. Apparently there are 350 varieties of snowdrops at Cambo so I will have to go back during the 'snowdrop' season.

**Anne Chalmers**



## Away trip to Aberdeen

Despite the rain and a poor weather forecast, we set off in good spirits looking forward to the seven gardens to be visited. Crathes Castle and Garden was our first port of call. The extensive gardens have woodland walks, topiary and a large attractive walled garden full of colour.



The next day, after an amusing tour of Leith Hall, we went on to Kildrummy Castle Gardens. Set in a quarry with a stream and waterfalls it has unusual plants, including a Chilean Fire tree in glorious bloom, as well as two rare purple oaks.

On Wednesday we set off for Haddo House, an imposing Georgian building surrounded by formal terraced gardens restored to their original design. We admired the magnificent Queen Victoria Avenue of lime trees planted in her honour. It was a Scots mile long, which we learned is 1.2 miles. Later we enjoyed the manicured gardens of Glenkindie House with its extensive topiary of soldiers, teddy bears, sheep and Alice in Wonderland characters.

The following morning it was Birken Cottage, the private garden of two retired botanists. It is packed with 1350 species of plants. Our last visit was Kincardine Castle which features an extensive walled garden with an amazingly long Laburnum Arch. This was in full bloom - a treat before arriving back to a wet Broughty Ferry.

*Marge Auras, John Grocott, Andrea Subedi*

**STOP**

## Stop Press!

**Autumn Clean up**, 30 September from 10.00 to 1.00pm with a coffee break. Can we do it again? A magnificent 'call to arms' last time, thank you.

Is there any interest in a trip in 2018 or 19 to **Chelsea Flower show**? If so please give your name (no commitment) to a member of the committee.

## Need to contact us?

**Chairman:** John Grocott: 779581

**Secretary:** Anne Hesketh: 739982

**Treasurer:** Heather Dailly: 778061

**Membership Secretary:** Kate Grocott: 779581

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Friends of the  
Barnhill Rock Garden

## Winter meetings

### September 27th 2017

AGM followed by a film by Daphne Barbieri of Friends' activities during 2016/7.

### October 25th 2017

Godfrey Nicholson: 'Gardens of Thailand'

### November 29th 2017

Andrew Clegg: 'Burns, the Song Catcher'

### February 28th 2018

Graeme Butler of Rumbling Bridge Nursery:  
Topic not yet decided.

### March 28th 2018

Ian W.J. Sinclair: 'George Forrest,  
The Great Plant Collector'

*All meetings held at St James' Parish  
Church hall, Fort Street, Broughty Ferry,  
Wednesdays at 7.30pm.*