

From the Editor

I am currently drafting the introduction to this newsletter in Australia as I won't be back until late March. I would like to be able to enlighten you on my horticultural visits/experiences down under but a new baby, 24 mth toddler and a lively dog are curtailing such activities! However I am hoping to get to visit The Cranbourne Botanical Gardens, one of the many delightful gardens Barry Crawshaw showed us at the November Rock Garden talk. The garden was quite new when he visited so I expect it will have matured considerably in a few years. I'm sure by the time I get back the revamped bed in the Rock Garden will also have progressed. As you will see inside, work in the garden and related activities by the Friends carries on throughout the winter months and there is always something of interest to see in the garden. Although there will be no Friends' summer holiday this year we have the usual choice of summer trips so read on and sign up.

Anne Hesketh

Scottish Snowdrop Festival **2016**

Did you know that the Barnhill Rock Garden has been included in the Scottish Snowdrop Festival for 2/3 years?



"Visit the garden and view the thousands of snowdrops. Visitors can combine a visit to our Snowdrop Wood with a visit to the garden in spring. We have once again planted thousands of

snowdrops to really make an impact for the public to enjoy. Dogs are welcome but please keep them on leads at all times. 30 Jan 2016 - 13 Mar 2016 dawn - dusk"

Thus reads our entry in the Visit Scotland website and it has generated additional interest in our Garden – even from Switzerland!

Some years ago Michael Laird decided he would like the woodland lying beside the railway line at the west end of the garden to be known as **Snowdrop Wood**. This decision followed a number of years' work in the area, assisted by the Friends, tidying up the area and making it more attractive for visitors. Over a number of years we have planted thousands of snowdrops – singles (mainly the simple *Galanthus nivalis* pictured above), but also a

few others varieties including doubles *Galanthus nivalis flore-pleno* pictured opposite. We have been assisted in this work from time-to-time by children from the Eastern Primary (in pouring rain); Monifieth Cub Scouts and the Barnhill Out-of-School Care Group. Alongside the snowdrops we have also planted Snowflakes (*Leucojum vernum* - pictured below) and Hellebores. There were already a large number of aconites in the woodland and they have continued to multiply. Kathleen Stewart took these lovely photos in February. If you were not able to view the wood this Spring – put it in your diary for February/ March 2017!



**Mary
Saunders**

From the Chairman

After one of the wettest winters I can remember we can at last look forward to summer and hopefully a little less wind and rain! Before that though a look back at the last six months.

Our AGM in September was well-attended and Daphne Barbieri's film of last year's away trip very much appreciated. The Autumn clean-up went well and at the end of October Ann Taylor and Isobel Turner attended the Beautiful Scotland Annual Seminar & "It's Your Neighbourhood" Awards Presentation in Stirling. Once again The Friends were recipients of an Outstanding Achievement Award and a Certificate of Distinction for their work in the Rock Garden. Michael Laird had the responsibility for getting us there and back safely, driving the community mini-bus taking the Dundee attendees to the event in atrocious wet weather. Our winter programme of illustrated talks in the St Aidan's Centre went well although problems with the move to the upper floor reduced the numbers able to attend. For this reason we have made arrangements to hold our 2016-2017 winter programme of talks in the St James Church Halls in Fort Street, Broughty Ferry (nearby the Life Boat Station) which we hope will be more convenient for those of us having problems with staircases!

I hope as many of our members as possible will take part in the Spring Clean-up at the Garden on Saturday, 30th April, our summer outings and enjoy the Council's programme of band concerts at the Garden. Once again with the help of the Countryside Rangers and Broughty Ferry Librarians we have an entertaining summer programme for children. I look forward to seeing as many "Friends" as possible during the coming months – in the Garden and on our various outings.

Mary Saunders

From the Gardener

Over the winter we have been busy getting all the many winter jobs completed in preparation for the year ahead. Borders have been mulched throughout the garden to improve the soil nutrients. Trees and shrubs have been assessed and pruned to improve growth whilst also removing dead and diseased branches. The Geddes Glasshouse, nursery greenhouse and poly tunnel, notice boards and signs have also all been serviced and cleaned.

Once again our snowdrop wood has been tidied up to ensure it looks stunning as it is on the Visit Scotland Snowdrop Trail. Water features 1 & 2 have received a clean out in order to ensure they are ready to be switched on. Also a small border was renovated and planted up to give colour and interest to an otherwise dull area. Currently we are starting to think about seed sowing to help keep up our wide range of plants for the public to enjoy.

Finally helping with renovation of this year's new border project has been enjoyable. I cannot wait to start planting up this renovated bed to enhance the garden further.

All ten events for 2016 are booked and I hope you will support them as always. So the garden is again ready for the season ahead and I look forward to another successful year.

Michael Laird



From the Gardening Team

The large island bed in the garden that is being renovated as this winter's project has been cleared of unwanted plants, thoroughly cultivated and levelled. Discovery Compost, supplied by the Council, has been spread and incorporated into the soil, new plants needed for the border have been ordered, these being paid for by the Friends and will be planted on arrival.

The Snowdrop Wood at the time of writing looks magnificent with a lovely display of Snowdrops, Aconites and Snowflakes. We are adding to the display with more bulbs from Cambo, some of which can be planted by groups of children when they make their planned visits to the garden.

The winter flowering heathers in the bed by the Geddes Glasshouse are most attractive at this time, the display improved by the cyclamen beneath the Pine tree and the dwarf daffodils among them.

John Grocott

Michael's gardening tip

- Tie up your climbing and rambling roses.
- Always cover your carrots with garden fleece from the time of sowing until they are harvested to ensure the dreaded carrot fly does not attack them.
- Remember to increase watering your house plants in April.



SUMMER OUTINGS 2016

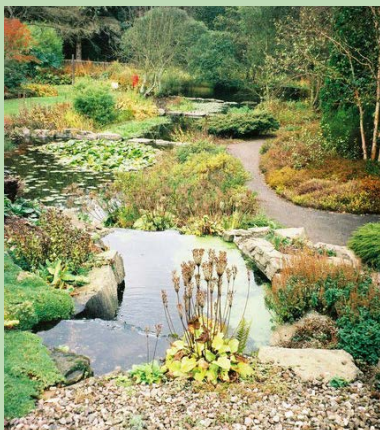
Wednesday, 25th May 2016: David Welch Winter Gardens in Duthie Park, Aberdeen.

Departing from Broughty Ferry (layby opposite the Library) at 11.00 am our first outing of 2016 will take us to Aberdeen where we will have the opportunity to spend 2 hours in one of Europe's largest indoor gardens and Scotland's third most visited gardens. The Winter Gardens boast a beautiful floral paradise all year round and many rare and exotic plants including one of the largest collections of Cacti and Succulents in Britain. There is a restaurant if you need something to keep you going until we get to the Belvedere Hotel in Stonehaven for a meal* on our way home (*full details on booking form). We anticipate arriving back in Broughty Ferry around 7.00 pm.



Wednesday, 22nd June 2016: St Andrews Botanic Gardens.

We shall leave Broughty Ferry at 1.00 pm for our visit to the Botanic Gardens. The garden has been described as a 'hidden gem' of Scotland. About 8000 species of ferns, herbaceous plants, shrubs and trees are grown here. Some are native to Scotland but most grow wild in other regions of the world. At the time of our visit the



Botanic Rock Garden scree bed should be in full colour. Again we will spend 2 hours in the garden which should give us plenty of time to visit most parts of the garden and glasshouses. Following the visit we shall call in at St Michael's Inn for a cream tea, returning to Broughty Ferry by 5.30pm.

Wednesday, 13th July 2016: Dunninald Castle and Gardens. (2 miles south of Montrose)

Our final outing will depart from Broughty Ferry at 1.00 pm and members may choose to visit both Castle and Gardens or just the Gardens. (Tours of the Castle built in 1823 by James Gillespie Graham take around 40 minutes and are restricted to groups of 12 people. Our time at Dunninald will allow for 36 members to visit the Castle.)

(cont'd overleaf)

Working hard for Awards

As Michael commented at the AGM the Garden has been inspected and judged five times this year for various awards. Each of these awards has their own individual long list of criteria to be met and judges' comments to be considered by both the Council and the Friends.

Action towards some of the criteria are out with the remit of the Friends e.g. sustainability – low flush toilets!; some cause us all to raise our eyes to the sky e.g. The recommendations in 2007 under the category 'Environmental Sustainability' included "*The plan does not say what energy saving devices are used on site ie low energy light bulbs in the glasshouse.*" We do not have electricity in the glasshouse let alone light bulbs!

For some of these categories the Friends have a significant input. For example under Community Involvement the Friends run children's activities, run a web site, have developed tree trails for children and adults etc – all helping us to win 'brownie points' in addition to our gardening activities which, of course, are closely scrutinised.

This year this all added up towards the Friends receiving two It's Your neighbourhood Award Certificates – a *Level 5 Outstanding for our work in the Garden in 2014-2015* and a *Certificate of Distinction for consistent growth and improved performance over the years we have participated in the campaign.* No mean feat with only 15 Certificates of Distinction awarded out of 145 community groups throughout Scotland who took part.

Anne Hesketh



Dunninald Castle and Gardens (cont'd)



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Dunninald has extensive grounds with a traditional walled garden displaying mixed borders, vegetables, fruit trees and a greenhouse. In recent years the planting has changed to include a double herbaceous border with rose arches down the centre of the garden and mixed borders along the walls. Following our visit we are returning to the Park Hotel in Montrose for High Tea. (Full details on booking form.)



Stop Press!

Spring Clean up

Saturday 30th April from 10 am to 1 pm with a coffee break. Once again your help would be very much appreciated.

No stairs!

Just to flag up again the news that we have recently booked the hall at St James Church (opposite the Life Boat Station) for the next set of winter meetings - all on the ground floor with easy access.

Need to contact us

Chairman:

Mary Saunders: 477019

Vice Chairman:

John Grocott: 779581

Secretary:

Anne Hesketh: 739982

Treasurer:

Heather Dailly: 778061

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Kate Grocott: 779581

Barnhill Rock Garden:

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Summer Events

Band Concerts

Sun 12th June 2pm – 3pm

Tayport Instrumental Band

Sun 24th July 2pm – 3pm

Tayport Instrumental Band

Sun 7th Aug 2pm – 3pm

Tullis Russell Band

Activities for Children

Wed 6th April 1pm - 3pm

Countryside Ranger Service - Signs of Spring

It's a busy time in the garden for plant and animals. Activities suitable for all ages.

Thurs 7th July 11am - 11.30am

Storytelling with Dundee Libraries

Thurs 14th July 11am - 11.30am

Storytelling with Dundee Libraries

Wed 27th July 1pm - 3pm

Countryside Ranger Service - Ugly Bug Ball

Minibeasts abound in this natural haven. Activities suitable for all ages.

Thurs 4th Aug 11am - 11.30am

Storytelling with Dundee Libraries

Wed 10th Aug 1pm - 3pm Countryside

Ranger Service - Teddy Bears Picnic

If you go down to the Garden today – bring your Bear! Activities suitable for all ages.

Wed 19th Oct 1pm - 3pm Countryside

Ranger Service – Haggis Hunters

The naughty Hairy Haggis family have taken over the garden - help track them down. Activities suitable for all ages.

Outings (see previous page for details)

Wed 25 May

Depart 11.00 am for
David Welch Winter Gardens, Aberdeen

Wed 22 June

Depart 1.00 pm for
St Andrews Botanic Gardens

Wed 13 July

Depart 1.00 pm for
Dunninald Castle and Gardens, Montrose