

The Friends' Holiday *continued from front page*

Day 4: After visiting Abbeywood, an estate popular for weddings ("ultra smart and beautiful flower arrangements"), Tatton Park was our very last garden of the holiday. The main objective was to see the famous Japanese garden. The relatively small garden is set within an undulating, well planted part of the Park. Like most Japanese Gardens it has a number of Acers, stone lanterns, streams, little paths, trimmed grass and shrubs, mossy banks and an intriguing Tea House. The whole garden is fenced

off with rope and bamboo to prevent damage from visitors. Despite this the Garden was a delight and as someone commented "it is just drop dead gorgeous" and on a very different scale from Cowden Castle (see Pg 3, "more of a "stroll garden"). **John Grocott**

The group seemed to enjoy the various gardens visited, which were all very different. Both the hotel and the coach driver were excellent, resulting in another successful holiday.



Abbeywood



Tatton Park



Tesco blue tokens please

Ann Taylor has been busy and successfully applying for a number of grants for our projects and for the Children's Fund. Currently, the Tesco one 'Stronger for Life' is running in their stores in Monifieth, Barnhill (Esso garage) and Broughty Ferry until end September. We are guaranteed to receive £500, or possibly more, (£1000/£1500) for our children activities, depending on how many tokens customers drop in the box. So if you visit the shop, please post a few. **Editor**



Secret Gardens trail

The rain in the morning of Broughty in Bloom's Secret Garden trail rather dampened the spirits of those involved! Fortunately, the rain started to ease as the gardens opened and both John and Godfrey had over 70 visitors to their respective gardens. John also sold some plants for the Friends' funds. **Editor**

Winter meetings

25th September 2024

AGM with reports from John Grocott and Michael Laird. This will be followed by a power point show of our work and activities from throughout the year.

23rd October 2024

Subject: From Lochee to Buckingham Palace (Queen's coffin transport). **Speaker:** Alex Garty

27th November 2024

Subject: Iceland a virtual field trip. **Speaker:** Val Vannet

26th February 2025

Subject: The Archie Foundation - making the difference for local sick children. **Speaker:** Jamie-Leigh Cooke

26th March 2025

Subject: The Woodland Trust. **Speaker:** Ian Baird

All meetings to be held at Broughty Ferry Baptist Church, 86 St Vincent Street, Broughty Ferry, at 2.00pm.

Michael's gardening tip

Tender plants like Fuchsias should be covered, or cut by half to prevent mould, and protected from the winter weather. **Michael Laird**



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 **Friends of the
Barnhill Rock Garden**

From the Editor

The weather this 'Summer' for many has been a disappointment and for all, unpredictable. Forecasts such as wet, occasional downpours, above average Spring temperatures, below average Summer ones have all featured throughout the season. Despite this, we are pleased the garden is currently looking very colourful. This newsletter brings you articles on the Friends' holiday, the outings and the challenges faced. **Anne Hesketh**



Lowther

Gardens of Cheshire

Day 1: Setting off on a sunny, but cold morning, we stopped en route to Cheshire and visited Lowther Castle Gardens. Due to the ravages of a spendthrift earl, most of the castle had been demolished and the whole place had fallen into disrepair. Fortunately, it is now more than half way into a twenty year plan to restore the gardens. A rock garden, a rose garden and a Japanese garden are all in the process of renewal. The whole estate is vast, with plenty to see and do for adults and children. The café is good too! **Kate Grocott**

The Friends' Holiday



RHS Bridgewater

Day 2 was a whole day visit to RHS Bridgewater, which lived up to all our expectations. The garden was opened in 2021 and became the RHS' fifth National Garden. With so much to see, a full report will be given in our Spring newsletter. **Editor**



Ness

Day 3 of our garden tour trip was spent at Ness, the University of Liverpool Botanical Gardens. It is an enchanting, relaxing 64 acres of lawns, water features, herbaceous shrubs, a

Rhododendrons collection, and a large Rock Garden. This was of special interest to the creator of the gardens, A.K.Bulley, an alpine enthusiast. Research features large here, as does encouragement to understand the natural world, now essential in our changing climate. On a personal note, Bulley, who set up the Bees' Seeds Co., entrusted my great grandfather (an amateur horticulturalist and apiarist) with trialling new varieties.

We then headed to our afternoon destination, Stoneyford Cottages - quite a different experience. The very enthusiastic owner showed us round the extensive expanse of woodlands and water, the latter causing frequent problems with fluctuating levels, especially this year. The difficulties are fortunately offset by sales of the excellent plants raised at their nursery, which provides income for the family business to prosper (and keep afloat). **Jane Peggie**

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Stoneyford



From the Chairman

The early part of the year has been dominated by last winter's storms. A fallen tree across the railway line and the newly planted link border, left a large amount of outstanding tree surgery for the Council to address. I am pleased to say that the hanging branches and tree trunk were eventually cleared away mid June, leaving the garden a lot tidier. Only a few tree stumps with root balls await further attention by the Forestry Section.

It is likely that this coming winter will see the renewal of the electric cables and pumps near the ponds, which have not worked for a number of years. The ponds are a very popular feature with visitors and children so, in the meantime, Michael has been topping them up with a hosepipe. Council officers have indicated that they should have some capital budget funding for this important and costly work. The Friends have agreed to contribute up to £6K to this project (£1K from a successful grant application; the rest from carefully built up funds), which means that the two recirculating water features can be up and running again.

Meanwhile, we have been continuing with our usual children's initiatives. The 5 Day Trip to some gardens in Cheshire took place in June. Our three afternoon trips to three very different gardens were enjoyed by full coach loads. The committee meets each month and we are particularly grateful to Ann Taylor for her continuing efforts to obtain grant funding for the children's activities and other projects. **John Grocott**

From the Gardening Team

The large tree trunk, left lying for some months over the recently planted 'link bed', has been cleared away. The resulting bark chippings have been used by the team to smarten up the many paths. However, the storm resulted in some re-planting (and more expense to the Friends).

We are continuing our battle with the weeds in the areas which we maintain. The mild, wet Spring has made this a major, on-going task. On the plus side, the wooden containers growing some vegetables in the Geddes area, has been quite a success in its first year and, hopefully, we can improve our technique and grow more suitable varieties next year. I can also report some success in getting Yellow Rattle established in the wild flower meadow. This should encourage further plant germination. However, our attempts at re-planting part of the scree bed have not been altogether successful, but we will continue working on this area of the garden this coming autumn and winter.

Our perennially cheerful maintenance group is a team of many and varied talents. We are fortunate to have such an excellent team, who continue to meet rain or shine from 10.00 to 12.00 each Monday morning. **John Grocott**



From the Gardener

The summer maintenance started late this year due to illness, but we managed to get the garden under control, eventually! The wetter weather ensured the plants and grass remained lush and green but, unfortunately, encouraged the weeds to grow. I particularly enjoyed the Lillium, Abutilon and Phloxes, which have given a great show of colour. There was an abundance of colour in May, but as I write this in July, the colour is starting to fade to give way to autumn berries. However, despite the unseasonable weather this year, visitor numbers are higher, with the garden being well used everyday.

The new path on the west side is settling in well, with new planting at each side of the entrance and large areas reseeded with grass. This is a great enhancement to the toilet section. A new entrance was needed in this area, as this is very well used space.

The vast display of poppies across the road has been a great success and it's a welcome sight after the years of construction work on the Esplanade. I hope they reseed themselves next year, to give an even bigger display. As always the two lains and Kyle have been a fantastic help in the daily maintenance and are ready for duty, no matter the weather. A big thank you to them !!

I am looking forward to all the autumn and winter projects as well as time to complete the summer jobs.

Thank you for continued support.

Michael Laird



SUMMER OUTINGS 2024



May: Cowden Castle

Our first outing of the summer was to Ella Christie's restored Japanese designed garden called "Sha Raku En" (The Place of Pleasure and Delight) near Dollar, originally built in 1908. The requirement to limit our group to 30 ensured that the garden was not overcrowded and, in two separate groups of 15, we enjoyed tea/coffee with scone, clotted cream and jam.

It's five years since our last visit. The garden's structural restoration is complete and now awaits the planting's future maturity. At the centre is the magnificent lake that, by reflecting in its mirror surface all the garden's



landscape and features, doubles the garden's size and its impact on our senses. So we stepped through the "Welcome Gate", hesitantly walked the zigzag and arched bridges that crossed the "mirror" lake, admired the rock and moss Dry Garden, breathed in the sweet scent of Azalea luteum, and drank in views from the new thatched Garden Pavilions.

Yet another trip here can be looked forward to in years to come that will find more "rooms" and surprise views created by enclosing yew hedges, taller trees and more substantial Rhododendrons. **Godfrey Nicholson**



June: Teasses Garden, Fife

Having driven through murky cloud most of the journey, it was lovely that the sun came out just in time for looking around the 60 acre estate. We were greeted by a guide who proceeded to take us on a tour.

We started by entering into the walled garden with its beds for cut flowers along with some raised vegetable beds. Our excellent and informative guide gave us many tips along the way and had us smelling flowers and tasting seeds. We then walked along the long border beside the tall wall, covered, in part, with espalier fruit trees.



One area of the border was planted with cool colours, the other hot. Next we moved onto a lovely woodland path with red squirrel feeders on the trees and later past a quiet area with a pretty bench. We carried on up to a panoramic view across the countryside looking down onto Teasses House, built by the Baxter's in 1879. Our guide gave us some history of the house, as well as mentioning that Prehistoric and Pictish remains have been found in the surrounding large field. The tour finished back in a large glass conservatory, where we had tea/coffee and wonderful cakes. **Jill Gartland**

July: Langley Park Gardens, Montrose

This garden is privately owned and is north of Montrose Basin, near to the House of Dun. The owners were very welcoming and had done a lot of work to the house and garden, both of which had been in a very sorry state when they bought it.

The walled gardens had been restored gradually along with lawns, hedges and paths. Herbaceous borders, a rose garden and seating area were also added. The lowest of the three walled gardens had wonderful views over a wild flower meadow and standing stone to Montrose Basin. This large meadow, which had various paths cut through it, also had a seat installed at the top to take advantage of the view.

A group of quails wandered over the the lawns near the house and there was a very large pond teeming with fish. Our hosts kindly provided tea and coffee, which was enjoyed by all. **Marge Auras**

