

## Friends of the BARNHILL ROCK GARDEN

Spring  
Newsletter  
**2018**

### *From the Editor*

Once again I am compiling this newsletter from afar but managing to keep up to date with some of the things that have been going on since I travelled down under. I understand the snowdrops and aconites, duly registered on a Scottish Snowdrop Trail, have been a picture. This has given rise to a number of groups requesting to come and see them and, of course, the rest of the garden. We hope you managed to catch the snowdrops at their best. By the time I get back, other things will be in flower and Friends member, Margaret Alston, will already have been on several 'Bumblebee walks' with her granddaughter. Her article below gives insight into what they do on behalf of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. This newsletter, therefore, looks forward to another busy season for The Friends. **Anne Hesketh**



As volunteers for the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, this will be the third year we have taken part in their BeeWalk monitoring scheme.

At least once a month, we equip ourselves with recording sheet, magnifying glass, comfy clothes and of course a picnic lunch, then set off on our 'walk'. Starting at Bridge Street, this 'walk' takes us along the top and through the Rock Garden, on to the Nature Reserve, then back along the front of the Garden, ending back where we started. It is important for a scientific study, to always walk exactly the same route! We also try to go on a sunny and relatively calm day....ideal conditions for our bumblebee friends!

Our walk takes us past some wonderful bee friendly planting depending, of course, on the season. From the bell heathers and flowering currant in the spring, to the wonderful array of summer flowering plants, including masterwort, catmint, cotoneaster and scabious, then on to the autumn flowering geraniums, marjoram and sedums, to name but a few. On a warm, sunny day you really are guaranteed to see the most amazing selection of bumbles!

Our task is to record the species of bumble we see, along with the 'caste' (queen, worker or male). In the spring only the queens are out foraging. As the season progresses however, there are many workers followed by males, then finally new queens. All have to be recorded, with us counting sometimes as many as 120! Not always an easy task.

We have seen six regular bumblebee visitors to the Rock Garden. The Buff Tailed, the White Tailed, the



Red Tailed, the Common Carder (all ginger), the Garden Bumble (very like the white tailed but with an extra stripe) and the Early Bumble which is, of course, always earlier than the others! And once, to our very great excitement, we spotted two Tree Bumbles....quite distinctive with their ginger and black bodies and white tails. As its name suggests, it likes trees and bushes. We actually spotted ours in the snowberry in the Nature Reserve.

To us, watching the antics of these lovable, busy little creatures is a most worthwhile and pleasurable activity. As well as watching them, we are concerned about the declining numbers and want to help the scientists look for early warning signs of the particular species most at risk. For more information please visit [bumblebeeconservation.org](http://bumblebeeconservation.org)

**Margaret and Lily Alston**

## From the Chairman

By the time you read this newsletter, the 17/18 programme of winter talks will be over. We have to thank Ann Taylor for arranging these interesting talks. In the light of feedback about parking difficulties, we have been successful in getting Broughty Baptist Church Hall for our next AGM and talks. Hopefully parking will be much easier.

In October, Ruth Jack (Monday team) and Ann Taylor travelled to Stirling to collect our two 'It's Your Neighbourhood Awards'. Our new Green Flag is also proudly flying at the Geddes.



The Committee has arranged three summer outings (details elsewhere in this newsletter). I look forward to seeing members on these visits. The date for the Spring Tidy Up is 28th April from 10.00 to 12.30. Even though the snowdrops will have finished flowering, there should be plenty of other things to see. Please come along and help and have a 'catch up' with 'the Friends'. Tea or coffee is served at 11.00. Please wear warm clothes and bring gloves.

Some of you know that there is a 'Tree Trail' at the garden. We have about 6850! leaflets left, all printed by the Forestry Commission, so please do not hesitate to pick one up at the Geddes glasshouse and find your way round it.

**John Grocott**

## From the Gardener

Hello again Friends,

This winter has allowed us to carry out many seasonal jobs to ensure the garden is ready for the year ahead. Once again we have planted up bulbs to give spring colour. We have mulched a third of the rock garden with leaf mould, our own homemade compost and manure to give nutrients to the soil for the new growing season. We have pruned the rock garden throughout, reducing shrub heights to encourage new growth as well as removing old and diseased shrubs. This is to uncover more rocks to strengthen the rock garden theme and increase planting areas.

Bark chippings have been laid on all paths to improve access for the public and alterations have been done to the snowdrop wood path. At the moment we are working on the border behind the toilets which is turning out to be a big job. We are clearing out Phormium leaves, ivies and suckers. We shall shortly be servicing and cleaning the Geddes Glasshouse, all signs and bins ready for the season to begin. The next job for us is to landscape an area where a large eucalyptus was removed and to improve access to the Geddes Glasshouse. I look forward to staging many events in the Garden this coming year and hope for another successful one. Once again thank you for your continued support. **Michael Laird**



## From the Gardening Team

Up to a dozen of us meet on Monday morning at 10.00, come rain or shine, for our regular gardening session. Despite stopping for coffee and a chat around 11.00 and finishing shortly after 12.00, it is a productive start to the week.

This winter we are supplementing the planting to the rear of the scree area and in the fernery. The planting behind the scree area a few years ago had very limited success due to the poor, dry soil and large tree. As a result the team placed new stones to improve water retention and now have enriched the soil ready for the further planting. An area between the renovated bed and the scree bed, near a bench, is also being re-turfed as it has worn away.

New plants are being raised from seeds and cuttings in the nursery as usual and will be planted in the garden or put on the plant sales table to augment funds. The plant table should be up and running from early May onwards so do have a look throughout the summer months.

**John Grocott**

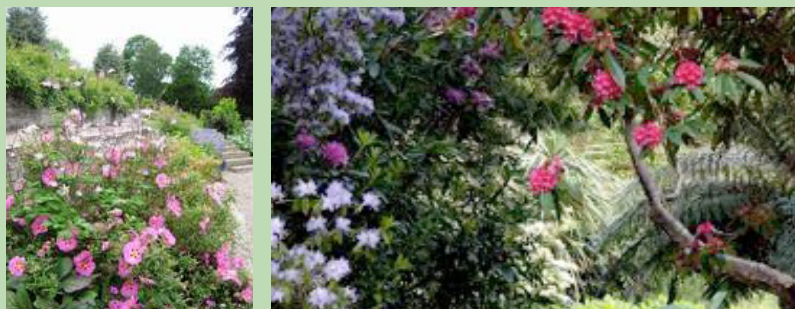
## Michael's gardening tip

**Soak your roots.**

The last thing you want is dry roots. Always soak the roots of new plants before you put them in the soil. Make sure the planting hole is bigger than the rootball before you attempt to put it in. The roots of a plant need to be able to spread to get the best chance of finding moisture and absorbing nutrients.



# SUMMER OUTINGS 2018



## Thursday 14th June 2018 Pitcurran House, Abernethy

Leaving opposite Broughty Ferry Library at 1.00 pm, we travel to Abernethy to this garden which was created 14 years ago. It has an interesting collection of trees, plants and shrubs. Tea, coffee and cakes will be served after the tour and we estimate we will be back in Broughty Ferry by 4.45 pm.



## Tuesday 10th July 2018 Backhouse at Rossie Estate

Departing from opposite the Library at 1.00 pm as usual, we travel to Collessie and on to the Rossie estate. One of the centre piece attractions of this garden is a series of arches covered in roses. Other features include herbaceous borders with wispy grasses, as well as alliums and a water feature. Light refreshments are included and are available in the Backhouse café. We should be back in Broughty Ferry by 4.45 pm.

## Wednesday 15th August 2018 Dr Neil's Garden, Duddingston Village

Our final trip is to Edinburgh to what is sometimes called 'Edinburgh's Secret Garden'. This garden sits on the lower slopes of Arthur's Seat, with beautiful views over Duddingston Loch. We leave opposite the Broughty Ferry Library at 10.00 am. We shall travel to Dobbies at Lasswade, where people can buy a snack or light lunch before leaving at 1.15 pm to go to the garden. People are free to walk around it and the neighbouring Duddingston village. Coffee, tea and cakes can be purchased in the Garden Café. We shall leave around 4.15 pm to go back to Broughty Ferry.



## From the Vice Chairman

Just a note to let you all know of other exciting things we have been and are doing in the Rock Garden in 2018.

You may not be aware, but Beautiful Scotland has designated 2018 as the year of young people. We have, in the past, done lots of things with pre-school and nurseries but we are hoping to increase this and organise a lot more activities and, hopefully, involve brownies, scouts and cubs. Child oriented activities are already essential for us gaining awards, and the community aspect is a large part of these competitions.

Groups such as Asda and Tesco, are areas where we have applied for funding to enhance the knowledge base of children. I was amazed when recently talking to children that they all thought vegetables came off a



supermarket shelf. I even suggested to some of their helpers to take them to see some allotments and see vegetables in the 'Flesh'. Michael is very keen for much more involvement with the children and hope more people see its potential ie a Garden for All.

The other interesting thing is that John Grocott and I are liaising with the council about the replacement of our green metal club huts. We call them our 'Buckies'. All I can say is watch this space.

**Ann Taylor**



## On our way to Chelsea

After the announcement in the last newsletter and at the winter meetings, sufficient interest was shown in the proposed trip to Chelsea Flower Show to explore it further. It has now been organised by John Grocott, Marge Auras and Jane Peggie, in partnership with Glenton Holidays. The trip is from 22nd to 26th May. We are visiting Harlow Carr(RHS) in Harrogate, Wisley (RHS), The Chelsea Flower Show and then two more gardens on our return journey - Snowhill Manor and Holehird in Cumbria. Thirty nine people have signed up for the trip and we are all hoping for sunshine and good company.

**Kate Grocott**



## Stop Press!

We have been told that the Garden is listed as no.14 out of 17 top Dundee tourist attractions on You Tube! We were surprised at the news and pleased to have received free publicity for the Garden.

All ages welcome at our Spring Clean Up for as long or short a time as you can manage.  
(see calendar of events)

## 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

**Email:** [grocottja@btinternet.com](mailto:grocottja@btinternet.com)

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**Friends of the  
Barnhill Rock Garden**

## Calendar of events

### Garden Events

**Sat 28th April:** Spring Clean Up from 10.00 to 12.30 with a coffee break at 11.00. Any help would be very much appreciated.

### Band Concerts

**Sun 10th June 2pm – 3pm**

Tayport Instrumental Band

**Sun 22nd July 2pm – 3pm**

Tayport Instrumental Band

**Sun 29th July 2pm – 3pm**

Steamer Lane

**Sun 5th August 2pm – 3pm**

Tullis Russell Intermediate Band

### Activities for Children

**Wed 11th April:** 1pm - 3pm Countryside

Ranger Service – Nature Detectives

**Thurs 5th July:** 11am -11.30am Storytelling  
with Dundee Libraries

**Thurs 19th July:** 11am -11.30am Storytelling  
with Dundee Libraries

**Wed 25th July:** 1pm - 3pm Countryside  
Ranger Service – Nature Detectives

**Thurs 2nd August:** 11am – 11.30am  
Storytelling with Dundee Libraries

**Wed 10th October:** 1pm – 3pm Countryside  
Ranger Service – Nature Detectives

### Outings (see previous page for details)

**Thursday 14th June 2018:** Pitcurran House,  
Abernethy

**Tuesday 10th July 2018:** Backhouse at  
Rossie Estate

**Wednesday 15th August 2018:** Dr Neil's  
Garden, Duddingston Village