

## Friends of the BARNHILL ROCK GARDEN

Spring  
Newsletter  
**2019**

### **From the Editor**

By the time you read this, Spring will hopefully be well on its way. The Friends have been busy as usual throughout the last few months with winter projects (John is never short of ideas!) as well as planning activities for the summer season. This newsletter focuses on recent months as well as the future. A bee walk in June, our turn for Gala in the Garden and Summer outings are just some of the things planned. Hopefully you will find something of interest to read in either what has happened since the last newsletter, or what is to come.

**Anne Hesketh**

## A fitting tribute

On Thursday 24th January a special ceremony was held in the Garden to honour that 'weel-kent' figure, Isobel Turner, Founder of the Friends, who contributed so much to the Garden's success. The weather was perfect; cloudless blue sky, calm but bitterly cold.

Isobel's two daughters, Ruth and Jill, aided by John, planted a Magnolia (Galaxy - a stated robust type!) in a sheltered area cleared after the earlier blowing down of a eucalyptus. Aconites and snowdrops provided a welcoming mat of colour for the new resident. There is no marker or allied publicity – typically Isobel!



The Friends then gladly moved into the warmer conditions of the Geddes Glasshouse where John gave a short speech. Much appreciated tea, coffee, biscuits and delicious fruit loaf (assured as 'healthy and low calorie' by its baker, Kate!) were gratefully consumed and helped to thaw out fingers and toes.

The bitter-sweet occasion was a fitting tribute to a remarkable, indomitable lady without whom, according to an ex Head Gardener, there might have been no Garden. Well done Isobel.

**Jane Peggie**

**Editor: In line with family wishes, there is no formal recognition of Isobel beside the tree. However the Committee has decided to have a memorial photograph displayed in the Geddes glasshouse.**



January can be a gloomy month but there is usually some cheer or a splash of colour to be found somewhere in the garden. Eleanor Mackie took all these photos one January morning in the Rock Garden.

## From the Chairman

The Committee has arranged three trips this summer in May, June and July. As last year, the trips will be on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and we hope this suits the membership of the Friends.

It is interesting to note that the local Health Authorities regard the 'Friends' as a stable community group and may refer patients to our Monday work party, when issuing a 'green' prescription. The scheme aims to encourage a healthy lifestyle change as an alternative to more pills.

A good number of you will have heard of the recent death of Mary Saunders who, until two years ago, was the Chairperson of the FBRG. Mary was an extremely committed member and was one of the 'original seven' committee members recruited by Isobel Turner. Always keen to raise the public profile of the garden and the Friends, Mary was happy to carry the torch and ensured that we became involved in the It's Your Neighbourhood Awards and the Green Flag. Mary was also involved in Broughty in Bloom.

We have been helped in this year's jobs by the Broughty Ferry Men's Shed who have made a plant sales table and four plant troughs for us - a much appreciated and mutually helpful arrangement.

**John Grocott**

## From the Gardener

Winter has flown in late this year! Due to the mild weather this has allowed us to get on with all the winter maintenance jobs and projects. We were weeding right up to December as the weeds would not stop growing.

In autumn we planted hundreds of narcissus bulbs, continuing to increase our spring display throughout. Other tasks included pruning or removing old shrubs/overgrown roses and mulching with our own compost, manure and leaf mould to improve soil nutrients. All paths were refreshed with new bark chipping to improve their appearance. I also really enjoyed getting involved with the Friends in designing, revamping and planting for our 'old bed rejuvenating programme'.

In early January, snowdrop wood was made ready for its debut on the snowdrop festival to ensure it looked its best. Unfortunately we lost a large Eucalyptus tree just before Christmas; however this has opened the area up allowing more light and moisture into the woodland.

The Friends and I were delighted that Ian Hunter and Ian Baxby both received a Community Champion award from Dundee City Council for their long service as volunteers at BRG. Well done!

We are trying our hardest to ensure the garden is ready for the 2019 season. And once again THANK YOU! for your continued support.

**Michael Laird**



## From the Gardening Team

One Monday morning, early in January, we were startled to find a large Eucalyptus tree had been blown down, falling into the Snowdrop wood. Once the fallen tree had been cut up and the area tidied up, it became apparent that a part of the tree canopy had been opened up. That is where we decided to plant the Magnolia 'Galaxy' in Isobel Turner's memory.

The Monday team, usually numbering ten people, has been renovating one of the island beds in the garden, improving the planting around the Geddes glasshouse, installing water-butts, sowing alpine seed and supplying and planting additional plants to various areas. Their input in a wide range of tasks makes a valued contribution to the garden.

**John Grocott**

## Michael's gardening tip

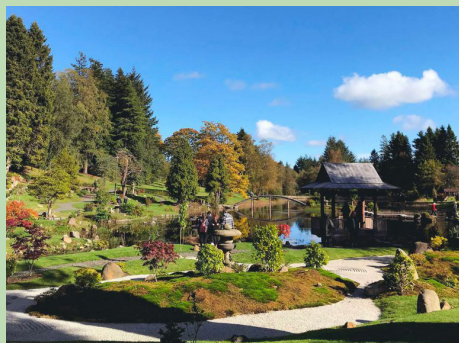
If you haven't already done so, tie up climbing and rambling roses to their supports.



Always top dress your containers with fresh compost to encourage strong growth.



# SUMMER OUTINGS 2019



**Thursday  
16th May 2019  
Cowden Castle,  
Dollar**

Leaving opposite Broughty Ferry Library at 1.00 pm, we travel to the Japanese garden at Cowden Castle, near Dollar. This garden was originally created

in 1908 by a Japanese woman, Taki Handa. Despite being described as the most important Japanese garden in the western world, it fell into neglect. The garden has now undergone three years of intensive restoration and is a tranquil and beautiful place to visit. After a short introduction, we shall be free to wander at will. Tea/coffee will be served at the café before leaving Cowden at approximately 4.30 pm.



**Tuesday  
18th June 2019  
Rodney Gardens,  
Perth**

Last summer we visited 'Edinburgh's secret garden'. Perth also has a lovely garden that many people are unaware of – the Rodney Gardens,

which have been extensively renovated in recent years. So again, leaving opposite the library at 1.00 pm, we travel to Perth where either a member of the Friends of Rodney Gardens, or a representative of Perth Council, will introduce us to the Garden. We might even get a cup of tea but that has still to be confirmed! We will then be free to wander through this delightful site by the river. Leaving at 3.45 pm we are returning via Glendoick Garden Centre where we will stop for refreshments (buy own) and the chance to buy plants etc. We will leave Glendoick at 5 pm approximately.



**Wednesday  
17th July 2019  
Glamis Castle  
Gardens**

Our final trip of the summer is to Glamis Castle. We leave at 1.00 pm from opposite the library and we are booked for the gardens and the exhibition

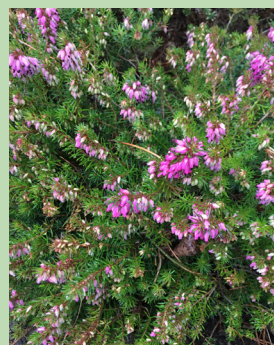
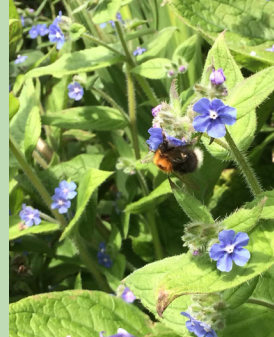
at the Coach house (Women of Glamis) – not the castle tour. There is plenty to see with the Italian garden, the Walled garden as well as nature trails and the Macbeth trail. There is a café and restaurant where refreshments can be purchased. We will leave Glamis at approximately 4.30 pm.

## Bumble food, no bumbles

Here we are on a lovely early February afternoon having completed our first BeeWalk of the year! It's early in the year but we were tempted outside by snow (Lily) and spring longing (me)! So, armed with a stick (Lily) and flask (me), off we set. There were no bumbles in sight but plenty of 'bee food' for our bumble friends for when they appear later in the spring – crocus erupting, bergenias, hellebores, bell heathers and gorgeous viburnum blooms....all a wonderful smorgasbord for hungry queen bumbles emerging from their winter sleep. As we walk we remember the joys of last season...10 tree bumbles on our June walk on the green alkanet by the railway; finding literally hundreds of white and buff tails on the cotoneaster in July; seeing the most enormous queen we have ever seen; walking through hot sultry days but actually seeing hardly any and never really knowing why!

When we arrived home, I went straight into my own garden to remind myself of all the potential food sources there for bumbles and plan to add more. More Beewalkers are needed to record the abundance of the different species so that something can be done to help understand the decline. Lily and I would encourage you to join us on 15th June to tell you a little more about the bees and then walk you round our route (transect). See Events page for further details.

**Margaret and Lily Alston  
Bumblebee Conservation Trust  
Volunteers**





## The Doctor's Garden

The last outing from 2018 (a visit to Dr Neil's Garden - 'Edinburgh's Secret Garden' at Duddingston Village), was too late to make the autumn newsletter. However it is well worth a visit, if you ever get the opportunity. The tranquil situation by the loch nestling at the foot of Arthur's Seat, the nearby kirk, the octagonal Thompson's Tower and the delicious cakes in the cafe all made for a great outing. The weather helped too!

**Anne Hesketh**



**STOP**

## Stop Press!

- Seats for the outings are booked on a first come first served basis, so submit your form as soon as possible.
- The plant sales table at the Geddes is up and running for the summer.
- The BeeWalk, 15th June, is for ALL ages.

## 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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**Website:** [www.barnhillrockgarden.org.uk](http://www.barnhillrockgarden.org.uk)



**Friends of the  
Barnhill Rock Garden**

## Calendar of events

### Garden Events

**Sat 27th April:** Spring Clean Up from 10.00 to 12.30 with a coffee break at 11.00. Any help would be very much appreciated.

**Sat 15th June:** BeeWalk from 10.30 to 12.30. Join Margaret and Lily for some bumblebee identification activities before taking a BeeWalk through the Garden. All ages most welcome. Tea and coffee will be provided.

**Saturday 6th July:** Gala in the Garden.  
12 noon – 4 pm. A free event for all the family.

### Band Concerts

**Sun 9th June:** 2pm – 3pm  
Tayport Instrumental Band

**Sun 21st July:** 2pm – 3pm  
Tayport Instrumental Band

**Sun 28th July:** 2pm – 3pm  
Steamer Lane

**Sun 4th August:** 2pm – 3pm  
Tullis Russell Mills Band

### Activities for Children

**Countryside Rangers:** The number and date/s of any sessions with the Countryside Rangers are still to be confirmed. Further information in the Geddes when available.

**Thursday 4th July:** 11am -11.30am  
Storytelling with Dundee Libraries

**Thursday 18th July:** 11am -11.30am  
Storytelling with Dundee Libraries

**Thursday 1st August:** 11am - 11.30am  
Storytelling with Dundee Libraries

### Outings (see previous page for details)

**Thursday 16th May 2019:**  
Cowden Castle, Dollar

**Tuesday 18th June 2019:**  
Rodney Gardens, Perth

**Wednesday 17th July 2019:**  
Glamis Castle Gardens