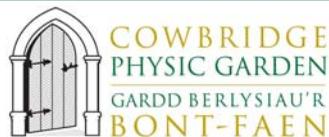


Newsletter

Issue 3

March 2007



Bruce McGovern

We were all saddened by the death of Bruce in January. He was a founder Trustee of the Cowbridge Physic Garden Trust and did invaluable work acquiring the lease to the site and also writing the details in the health and safety documentation.

The CPGT are planning, with his family and other local organisations to which he belonged, to install a special bench in the Physic Garden

Ancient apple marks a special place in the physic garden

Assembly Member Jane Hutt Jane Hutt planted an apple tree in Cowbridge Physic Garden to mark the Assembly's Tourism Week - and in doing so praised the project for coming in on time and on budget as a valued new addition to the tourism profile of Wales.

Physic Garden Trust Chairman, Dan Clayton-Jones said, "It was a delight to have our local Assembly member with us to further cement out links with the Vale community. She has taken a very keen interest in the project throughout and was especially pleased to find that it had met all its objectives in planning and financial terms."

Accompanied by Sir Brooke Boothby, Chairman of Tourism Wales, Mrs Hutt planted a special apple tree chosen for the garden by Jean Reader, head of the project's planting group.

The tree, a Warner's King apple, has a pedigree going back to Jacobean times and was sourced from a specialist grower in Devon.

Sir Brooke Boothby observed, "Cowbridge Physic Garden has turned into an enterprise of considerable distinction in the Vale and will be a valued addition to the tourism map of Wales. It has been beautifully fashioned, with an eye to quality throughout, which is obvious even to the casual visitor. I'm certain it will be a huge asset for the town."



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Volunteers News

Feb 2007

Thank you to all the Volunteers. Our volunteers are our most precious possession. Many have braved winter weather and the very difficult conditions we have found in the ground and without them the garden would not be the lovely place it is today. Now, as the days lengthen and the summer is on its way we shall be



needing lots more volunteers so, if you haven't been in a position to work in the garden yet, there are still lots of opportunities to help. Please see the enclosed form for details.

We are constantly being asked how many people visit the garden. It is difficult to give an answer to this question but we need to have some idea of numbers not only for our sponsors but also to try and estimate how we shall manage the garden in the coming years. Consequently, we plan to count people through the garden on a few days in the coming months.

The random dates will be: **Tuesday 15 May, Saturday 2 June; Sunday 15 July and Monday 27 August.** These include a day in the middle of the week, a potentially busy Saturday; a quiet Sunday and a Bank Holiday Monday. Can you help us with the counting? We shall arrange it so that a person sits by each gate with a hand-held 'clicker' counter. We hope that most people will be prepared to do an hour session so we'll need sixteen people for each of the days. It shouldn't be arduous and there's a good chance of a cup of tea to keep you going! If you are able to help please fill in the forms in the volunteer room for the date and time you can manage or contact Jean Reader on 029 2058 6742 or e-mail: jeanreader@btconnect.com

Garden News

Hard work by the volunteers and the effects of benign spring weather have contributed to significant developments in the garden. The roses in the fragrant area have been planted and are growing strongly. Some of the roses and other climbers for the Pergola have arrived and are about to be planted. These plantings will ensure a profusion of colour and fragrance in two areas of the garden.

The apple trees to be pleached along the Ogee Arches have all been planted, fruit trees against the walls are being trained (espaliered or fanned), and it is with great delight that we have observed new growth sprouting from the ancient pear trees against the south-facing and west-

facing walls. It is hoped that it will be possible to identify the variety of the pears.

Now that most of the structural planting is in place we shall be concentrating on getting the medicinal and dye plants established in the garden. The medicinal beds will be in the twelve, box-edged, central beds. Each of these beds has been designed to contain plants known (or believed) to have curative properties for certain parts of the body or conditions. For example, there will be separate beds containing plants for use in curing the kidneys or during childbirth.

We recently took delivery of some rather special slate signs for the twelve medicinal beds. The names on the signs (in both English and Welsh) were carved by Robert Kennedy, a sculptor working at Chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff. He carved them from a piece of slate which for many years was the side panel of a bath in Cardiff! They are not yet fixed into the ground: this work is due to be done in the very near future.

Sponsored trees have already been labelled in English, Latin & Welsh etc. We now have the Gravograph machine on loan from Dyffryn Gardens for making the permanent labels. Until these are produced (this work is being undertaken by a volunteer) temporary labels will inform visitors of the content of each bed.

The old Acer tree adjacent to the east wall of the garden, has been lightly pruned and its canopy shaped, and is now an aesthetically pleasing feature of the garden. This work was undertaken by Rhodri Jones of Sharp Edges who gave an informative talk to volunteers on the equipment he uses for tree surgery before he demonstrated his skills on the tree.

At the Physic Garden we are anxious to involve and interest children in the way in which plants that we use everyday are grown. This summer we are asking children up to the age of 11 to grow things in the containers in which they are sold. For example, they might grow a broad bean in an

Pruning demonstration



empty tin which used to contain broad beans or basil in an old crisp bag which once contained basil-flavoured crisps. The possibilities are endless: the only rule will be that the growing plant should be identifiable

by our team of judges and that the container must once have contained the plant which has been grown and must show either the name of the plant or a picture of it. Anyone born after 1st September 1996 should get scouring the shelves in the shops for ideas for containers and then get planting! Judging will take place on 27 August 2007. There will be prizes for the best plants and the most imaginative containers. Children wishing to enter or teachers interested in the competition should contact Jean Reader on 029 2059 6742. e-mail: jeanreader@btconnect.com

Membership

membership at the end of the March stood at 301, just beating our target of 300 for the first year. We aim to get to 500 by the end of year 2 to ensure a regular income for the maintenance of the paths, structures & plants and for other expenses, e.g. insurance & services.

Members are invited to the first fund-raising event to be held in the garden, a Garden Party, on June 2nd. This will be an evening of good wine, food & music, and of course, company. We hope will be blessed with good weather but a marquee will be available for shelter. Numbers are limited to 150—so please apply early to avoid disappointment

Dates for your Diary

Herbs, Medicine, Legend and Legacy: Sunday May 27, 11am.

A guided walk by Lara Bernays, a Medical Botanist, around Llyn y fan fach, Carmarthenshire to consider the work of the Physicians of Myddfai.

Volunteers from the Physic Garden have been invited (Places limited).

Volunteers Evening. Friday 1 June

The first event to be held in the garden will be specifically a thank-you to all the volunteers who have worked so hard to get the garden into shape. Invitations and precise details will be available soon.

The History of Plants in Medicine. Saturday 2 June 10.30am – 3.30pm.

Lara Bernays, a Medical Botanist, will be giving demonstrations exploring the history of plants in medicine, especially those used in Wales.

Physic Garden Party Saturday. 2 June, 6.15 for 6.30

The event is exclusive to Members of the CPGT. Tickets cost £10, to include champagne and canapés. Please use enclosed form to apply

Dyeing Fabrics. Sunday 3 June, 10.30am – 3.30pm.

Margaret Redpath, an expert from Pembrokeshire, will run a community event to illustrate the ways in which plants have been used to dye fabrics.

Press Day. Monday 4 June, time to be confirmed.

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