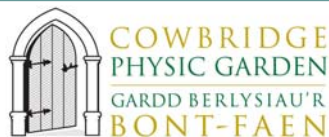


# Newsletter

Issue 4

July 2007



## Outstanding triumph of first official garden event

Our first major public venture in the garden during the first weekend of June proved to be successful in all ways. It kicked off with the erection of a marquee on the lawn by local contractors, Four Seasons, who did a superbly efficient job on our behalf.

First event was a buffet and drinks for our volunteer team who worked so diligently to hone the garden into its finished state.

There followed two programmes arranged by Jean Reader, involving knowledgeable specialists on plants in the garden (see page 3).

Highlight of the weekend was the Saturday evening members' garden party, an event that drew some 160 people, including almost 40 guests. Thankfully the rain held off, providing the opportunity for people to take a leisurely stroll to examine the planted beds and the numerous furnishings while a quartet of brass



The Brass Quartet  
Photo. by Mike Wilcock

from the Cardiff Royal College played a selection of music appropriately chosen to represent the Georgian period, rounded off by some delightful music from the George Gershwin songbook. Our chairman, Dan Clayton-Jones, later received a number of appreciative calls from members and guests, one of whom described the event as "an outstanding triumph."

The programme was rounded off by a press event, which unfortunately clashed with a royal visit to Cardiff, but press folk who turned up included BBC Wales, HTV, the Glamorgan Gem, the South Wales Echo and Western Mail and others.



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## New benches for the garden

Cowbridge Physic Garden Trust has deployed the services of craftsman Tim Wade of Llandovery to manufacture specially-designed oak benches. Tim has already created the oak benches that adorn the garden's two summer houses and which have proved to be so popular with visitors.

He is now working on a bench for the proposed quadrant area, just inside the Church street entrance.

This will form a convivial meeting place for people visiting the garden – a zone in which to debate world affairs, have an idle chat, or maybe simply pass the time of day. Tim is working to complete a curved bench to fit the area which is likely to be delivered during August or September.

Woodcarver Tim is a graduate of the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST), which was founded in 1990 to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Warrant Holders Association and the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of the late HM Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother.

Among his other accomplishments, Tim recently completed a year-long project designing and building an oak-framed chapel, made for clients who run a Christian retreat near Carmarthen. It contains 20 seats and uses sustainable local materials. Tim explained, "It has wonderful views and is influenced by my travels around the world."

If you'd like to know more, have a look at his website: [timwadekardos@btinternet.com](mailto:timwadekardos@btinternet.com).



## Historic Gardens of the Vale of Glamorgan

This book, edited by Hilary M. Thomas, describes a wide range of historic gardens in the Vale of Glamorgan, among them the gardens of Old Hall, Cowbridge, which included the site of our Physic Garden. The book is lavishly illustrated, with the majority of the illustrations in full colour. New information arising from recent research, and many illustrations published for the first time, make this publication a significant contribution to garden history. In style and content it will have broad appeal.

## Plant Sale

We took an amazing £1454 at the sale on 28th April. Many thanks to all those who contributed to this successful fund-raising event

## Volunteers

Over the first weekend of June the garden was a hive of industry. On Saturday 2 June volunteers counted everyone that came into the garden between 10am and 6pm: 563 people visited on that day. All weekend the marquee gave the garden a festival feel: there were visits from TV cameras and radio interviewers and two whole days were given over to medicinal plants and using plant to dye fabrics.

Lara Bernays presented a *Plants & Medicine* day which gave visitors an opportunity to consider the ways in which plants are used to cure illness. There was a workshop on what makes a plant therapeutic and opportunities to make both tinctures and ointment and, for children, an opportunity to make an herbal bath posy to take home. Throughout the day volunteers recorded memories of what our visitors remembered of plants which were used to cure illness in the past: the results of these memories have been sent to Kew Gardens to add to their database of remembered remedies.



Lara and audience



The Redpath's demonstration

Margaret and David Redpath gave a presentation of the ways in which plants are used to dye fabrics. They dyed wool using three of the most famous natural dyes to produce the three primary colours: red (from Madder), yellow (from Weld) and blue (from Indigo). Many members of the public had a go at dyeing yarn and took small hanks of wonderfully shaded wool home with them. The event also gave visitors an opportunity

to have a close look at the plants growing in the dye bed

## Membership

We are very grateful to everyone who has renewed their subscription this year. If you have received a reminder, but have not replied, please remember that we do rely on our members to ensure a regular income for the maintenance of the paths, structures & plants and for other expenses, e.g. insurance & services. We hope you will also enjoy being a valued member of the Trust,

Membership at the end of the July stood at 350.

## The Garden Magazine

If you are a member of the Royal Horticultural Society please look out for a small mention of the Physic Garden in the *Noticeboard* section of the October edition. The magazine has a circulation of about 354,000 so we might have a few extra visitors to the garden after its appearance.

## Wedding Memories

We were delighted to welcome our first “official” newly-weds, Chris and Heather Davies, to the Physic Garden on Saturday July 14 to have photographs taken with their guests.

Heather, from Whitchurch, Cardiff, and Chris from Llantwit Major, had made a prior booking with us so that shots of the bride and groom, their families and friends could be pictured in and around the garden. Luckily, amidst the June/July deluge, they had a fine sunny day –perfect for an album of photos. With their permission we took some pictures too, then through the good offices of the processor in pharmacist Sylvia Williams’ shop in Cowbridge Hugh Street we were able to run off two sets of prints, one of which we delivered to the bride’s mother ten minutes later as a token of our appreciation. Chris and Heather kindly made a donation to the garden which Heather judged to be perfect. “It’s just lovely here,” she said. We wish them well in their future life together



## Dates for your Diary

Judging of the Children’s competition for growing plants in suitable containers. **27 August 2007**

Using the produce of the Physic Garden for culinary purposes. **27 October 2007**

We shall be making a contribution to the Cowbridge Food and Wine Festival by presenting ideas on the use of plants for culinary purposes. We would like to hear from any readers who are experts at preserving garden produce as we shall be hoping to put on a display of such things. We shall also be pleased to hear of anyone who are likely to have surplus fruit and plants that we might be able to turn into samples to use on the day. We are particularly anxious to hear from anyone who is likely to have spare fruit of the quince tree. If you can help please contact: Jean Reader on 029 2059 6742 or e-mail: [jeanreader@btconnect.com](mailto:jeanreader@btconnect.com) .