



News... Issue 8 Spring 2015

Dear Friend

Since our last newsletter there has been a lot of activity in the gardens. Last year we held our annual September musical event in the walled garden and included a further one in June. Thanks to the hard work of all the volunteers and many other people these produced a healthy income as well as helping to raise our profile. We have also been the recipients of a very generous private donation and a number of specific donations for replacing the fruit trees on the walls in the walled garden. These have enabled us to continue adding to our collection of heritage fruit trees and old fashioned roses. All the planting has been completed and we are looking forward to the new season.

In addition to carrying out work in the gardens we have been busy securing a number of projects the main one being the provision of a composting toilet which will be a welcome facility for both our volunteers and visitors. We hope to have this installed by the summer. Details of this and all of the above are included in this newsletter.

Please read on



Beautiful Durham Awards

We were delighted to receive two awards in October for the gardens. At the Beautiful Durham Awards ceremony in the Town Hall, Old Durham Gardens was awarded a Merit for Best Group Horticultural Project and also overall winner for the Best New Entry.

The £40 prize money will go towards new tools for the garden.

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 28 May 2015

Date
for your
diary

7.00 to 8.45pm
Registration from 6.30pm
Room 1A County Hall, Durham

OPEN DAYS AND VOLUNTEERING SESSIONS

MARCH to SEPTEMBER 2015

THURSDAYS 2.00 - 4.00

APRIL 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
MAY 7, 14, 21, 28
JUNE 4, 11, 18, 25
JULY 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
AUGUST 6, 13, 20, 27
SEPTEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24

SUNDAYS 2.00 - 4.00

MARCH 29
APRIL 5, 12, 19, 26
MAY 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
JUNE 7, 14, 21, 28
JULY 5, 12, 19, 26
AUGUST 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
SEPTEMBER 6, 13*, 20, 27

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 10 - 13 SEPTEMBER

(*The annual Music in the Gardens will be held on : Sunday 13 September)

TRUSTEES

Chris Lee (Chair)	07966504597
Sandra Robertson (Secretary)	
Colin Jubb (Treasurer)	0191 3867619
Angela Lee (Membership)	0191 3865188
Paul Beard	
Adam Offler	
Martin Roberts	
Ian Rudd	
Christine Wiecek	
Jan Moyes	



3,200

Number of hours
volunteers gave to
Old Durham Gardens
in 2014



Would you enjoy volunteering with us?

Our volunteers enjoy a wide range of activities in the garden. We meet twice a week on Thursdays and Sundays 2 - 4pm from March through to September. We also have non-gardening tasks such as helping in the gazebo, greeting visitors, planning and preparing for events plus a range of other administrative tasks.

Does this interest you? Please contact Angela on 0191 3865188 or email us through our website: www.olddurhamgardens.co.uk



£65,000

Value of time gifted by volunteers in 2014



Publications

Martin Roberts, one of our trustees, has re-published Nairn's "Gazetteer on County Durham" originally printed in the February 1964 edition of The Architectural Review.

The book describes 76 villages and towns in County Durham. Martin has very generously donated all the profits of this publication to the Friends of Old Durham Gardens. The cost is £5 + £2 postage. Anyone interested in purchasing a copy, please send a cheque payable to:

Martin Roberts at Old Fleece House, 20B Front Street, West Auckland, Co. Durham, DL14 9HW, or BACS payment via email to martin@fleece.wanadoo.co.uk

Spring Walks

Continuing our established tradition of Spring walks to other historic gardens in the area, Martin Roberts will lead two more walks this year.

The first, somewhat surprisingly, will be around **Old Durham Gardens** itself – on **Sunday 31st May at 2pm**, starting at the Gardens. Since the walks began we have had an increasing number of requests to have a detailed tour of the gardens, as well as seeing them in their wider context of the changing course of the River Wear, Old Durham Beck, Maiden Castle and the lost Roman villa site.

The second walk will be a month later, to **Durham Castle** on **Sunday 28th June at 2pm**, meeting at the Castle gates on Palace Green, where in the seventeenth century the earthworks and grounds of the now-redundant medieval fortress was cleverly transformed into terraced and walled gardens. There may be a modest charge for entry to the Castle gardens.

For both walks it is important that you let Martin know you are coming at martin@fleece.wanadoo.co.uk. This will also enable you to receive an advance copy of the visit notes to print and bring with you. We can also then alert you to any unforeseen changes to the programme.

Projects

Toilet

Our Neighbourhood Budget application for the funding of a composting toilet has been successful subject to a financial appraisal. This facility will encourage increased use of the gardens. The bid was supported by our three local Councillors: Patrick Conway, Katie Corrigan and Bill Moir, to whom we are extremely grateful.

We hope to have the installation completed by August 2015.

QR Codes Project

Since the lower garden and orchard are open to the public everyday of the year, trustees recognised the need for on-site interpretation when leaflets were not available from the gazebo. Rather than erecting interpretative boards which were felt to be visually intrusive, we have opted for QR codes mounted on Perspex panels at key points within the gardens which can be read by smart phones. We hope to have these made and erected during the coming season. We are grateful for all the work undertaken by Durham University's IT Students

Fruit in the walled garden



Over the winter 7 heritage varieties of apple have been planted along the west wall in the walled garden. These will be trained as espaliers on oak frames attached to the wall. The design of the frames is based on those used at Hampton Court dating

from the 17th Century. Two of the trees are already partially trained and the rest will be trained by the Friends.

It's your Neighbourhood Project Funding



We are delighted that our bid for £500 to buy 5 fruit trees and oak frames will enable us to continue the planting on the south facing wall of the walled garden. The trees will be trained as fans as shown above. Work will start this year and be completed by December

Supporting the Gardens

Thinking about joining us?

You can become a member for only £5 a year by completing the accompanying membership form.

Are you a member?

If you are a member, thank you for your support. You could also support us by promoting the gardens to friends and encouraging them to become members, too. If you pay by cheque and would consider changing to payment by standing order, that would be much appreciated.

Donations

Giving a plant or a tree makes a unique gift for birthdays, Christmas and anniversaries and is also a gift for the future of the gardens. It can also be a special memorial to someone who has passed away. For more information, please see our website or telephone 0191 3865188 or pick up a leaflet from the gardens (open Thursdays and Sundays 2.00-4.00pm)

Music in the Gardens - 14 September 2014

The annual "Music in the Gardens" on the Sunday afternoon of Heritage Weekend, is now well established in the Durham music calendar.

Although it is very dependant on the weather, it was once again deemed to have been highly successful in 2014. Having had an absolutely gorgeous summer day in 2012, and then torrential rain in 2013, 2014 brought a cool, but bright day, which meant that everyone knew how to dress!.



The every popular Durham Harmonics Group entertained us with a selection of pop and jazz classics.



The Trevor Snowden Duo provided a gentler selection of pieces for piano and flute with some saxophone



There was a wide range of music to suit everyone's taste starting with "Gidimapati", who played a mixture of folk and medieval music.



"Step this Way" with the "Bones Creek Band" were as popular as ever with Appalachian Clog Dancing and Old Time American music

"C Bar Saxes" are a relatively recently formed group who played song arrangements and light jazz.



It was a lovely afternoon of music and we are all very grateful to the musicians and dancers.

The Friends and volunteers from Durham Amateur Rowing Club provided home made cakes and scones along with hot and cold drinks. FODGers beer and the prosecco stall did a brisk trade as did the plant stall manned by members of the Houghall Horticultural Society. We are extremely grateful to everyone who helped to make the event a success. Thanks must also go to Mr Clive Hole for the loan of the marquee, Durham City ARC for the loan of the tables and chairs and Carol and Mick Downsworth our "first-aiders"

Music in June



A smaller concert was held in June thanks essentially to the Durham Scratch Choir. We were lucky with the weather and we are considering repeating the event in the future.