

A U T U M N 2 0 2 2

# The Walled Garden

Newsletter of the Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden



## Autumn is Here

Welcome to the autumn issue of our quarterly newsletter on the Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden project. The season has brought some much-needed rain at last to the garden after a real scorcher of a summer. The mild temperature has meant that many of our flowers and shrubs have continued to bloom and fill the garden with colour.

We are continuing to see lots of people dropping in to enjoy the garden now that we are open daily to the public. We would like to be able to stay open for longer hours but this is dependent on having enough volunteers wanting to work in the afternoons. Watch this space and if you are one of them, please let us know.

Read on for more news about how the garden is developing and our plans for the future. We have a number of events coming up just before Christmas, details of which can be found on page 5.

Please contact us if you would like to get involved. Our contact details are on the back page. No matter what your age or abilities, new faces are always welcome.



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## Around the Garden

***While many of our flowerbeds and demonstration gardens are maturing well, there are a number of hard landscaping developments still to be completed.***

The stone wall around the vegetable plot has been 'dry built' to check we have enough stone and to work out a pattern; quite a challenge as the stones are very heavy and are lots of different sizes. Our next job will be to dismantle them and build the wall proper, (another challenge as none of us have ever build a dressed stone wall before)! We are ever hopeful that someone with the right skill set will offer to help – so, if anyone knows of such a person, please do put us in touch.



Once the wall is built this will extend our veg growing area considerably. Our successional growing plans are enabling us to continue to crop until the end of the calendar year. Look! Our salad leaves are still going strong in November!



In the northwest corner, work has begun on the floor for a corner shelter. Concrete foundations have been set in

and a checkerboard quarry tile floor has been partly laid. We are grateful to Mark Brinksworth, Brinky's Paving Services, a nephew of one of our volunteers, for breaking the back of this work and showing us how to do it.



Next steps are to build a stone seat against the walls and then complete the tiling up to it. The shelter itself will come later.



As reported in our last issue, the Jubilee Garden has had a major makeover!

Inspired by the long hot summer we have created a Mediterranean Garden at the top of the steps in the southeast quadrant. A generous voucher from Chepstow Garden Centre has enabled us to buy lots of sun loving plants. The lavender and rosemary plants have been joined by some cordylines, a small palm, a lemon tree, an olive tree, a banana and much more. A donation from Jill Long has funded a Mediterranean style sundial. A further donation has been pledged by another supporter, which will go towards the cost of building a timber arbour over the steps to support a grapevine. Our thanks to both.

Our Welsh Guard scarecrow stood proud over the Jubilee Garden and paid tribute to our late Queen but what shall we do with him next?

## The Spirit of the Gnome

Remember we have acquired a gnome? He has been popping up in all sorts of places around the garden so we have had to send out our younger visitors to track him down. It was especially difficult over Halloween but we think we caught on camera a ghost gnome instead! Can you see him?





## Planning Ahead Together

***The Walled Garden project is a cooperative community effort so we believe it is really important for everyone to share their ideas and to build our plans together.***

About 25 volunteers took part in a (unseasonably cold!) 'stock take and planning session' at the end of September 2022. We tried to structure it around 'what worked well' and 'what didn't work so well' over the past six months, and 'what needs doing' and 'what could be done' over the next six months and beyond.

Discussions started in four quadrant-based groups with people who usually worked in that quadrant, and then expanded into everyone hearing about the discussions and being able to chip in.

We hadn't held this sort of event since well before Covid struck, so it was a welcome opportunity for everyone to catch up with everyone else's thoughts and plans for the different areas. It will also help the session leaders and Trustees in planning work over the coming autumn and winter.

We had hoped to start discussions on other topics such as the use of various operational areas of the garden, but time and temperatures curtailed this. We plan to hold another similar event some time February 2023; although we will find an indoor venue for that one!



Some of the key discussion points included:

- SE quadrant - design patio, canopy, possible balustrade for cafe area
- NEQ - plant step-over apples and pears, create more veg beds, lay perimeter path and plan for a new propagating greenhouse against the east wall.
- NWQ - implement water feature and corner shelter elements, create some large obelisks for sweet peas and review planting scheme for winter interest.
- SWQ - Moon gate to be installed between the wildlife and Japanese gardens. Complete "rainbow bed" and sort out the non-boggy bog garden!
- And a whole lot of other ideas and actions!



## Remembering Glyn

We were deeply saddened to learn that Glyn Matthews passed away on September 4<sup>th</sup>, after a short illness and at just 57 years old. Glyn was one of the Growing Space staff who supervised the youngsters on our Therapeutic Horticulture Programme, working with us for several years until the programme closed in 2020. We will remember Glyn as a strong healthy man who loved life. He will be sadly missed by all of us, along with his colleagues, friends and family.



## Supporting Us

***Volunteering with us is a great way to meet new people, learn new skills and celebrate the changing of the seasons in many diverse ways or become an Associate Member.***



Volunteers all dressed up for Diwali

The end of October isn't just about Halloween, it is also the month for the Hindu feast of Diwali which celebrates the triumph of good over evil. Our volunteers were treated to a wonderful spread of Indian food and sweet treats laid on by Volunteering Secretary Sundari and regular volunteer Suchitra. Not only did they dress up some of our ladies in saris but they also decked out the greenhouse with twinkling lights and patterns made of rice paste. Fireworks were off the menu but we did have some fun with sparklers instead.

Often, our volunteers work on different days of the week to each other so a really important part of volunteering support is to ensure everyone gets the chance to meet up and have some fun and this event was much enjoyed by all who attended.

## Become a Member

Can't volunteer but still want to support the project and follow our progress? The please consider becoming an Associate Member. It costs just £5 per year with renewals every January. As an Associate Member you will:

- Receive our quarterly newsletters by email
- Have access to the 'Members only' section of our website providing more detailed information on the progress of the garden and learning resources.
- Get "Early bird" invitations to events at the garden, such as Open Days and workshops.
- Be supporting a worthwhile project which is proving to be so beneficial to staff, patients and their relatives and the local community.

If you are already a member, a reminder about renewal for 2023 will be sent at the end of December. If you are not yet a member and would like to support us, membership forms are available at the Garden, via our website or e-mail. Go to the back page for links and contact details.

## Welcome Volunteer Newbies



Newbie Liz Appleton

We are always delighted to receive new members and volunteers. Welcome then to new recruits Kate Dufton, Liz Appleton and Sian Davison.

Our volunteers enjoy being part of a friendly, supportive community, nurtured by our volunteering secretary, Sundari. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Sundari at email: [grangegardensundari@gmail.com](mailto:grangegardensundari@gmail.com)



Newbie Sian Davison



# The Garden Diary

*Activities planned for the coming weeks*



## What

### Christmas Wreath Making Workshops

Open to all with priority booking for Associate Members and volunteers of the Walled Garden. Max 15 guests per 2 hour session. £25 per person includes materials, tuition and light refreshments.

To book please email us at [info.lgh.garden@gmail.com](mailto:info.lgh.garden@gmail.com)

Please state wreath workshop in the subject line of your email and advise which date/session you require. Payment can be made by bank transfer on confirmation or cash on arrival.

### Pop up craft stall in aid of Walled Garden

Range of home crafted Xmas gifts, decorations and preserves. There will also be a raffle.

This event is for staff and visitors to Grange University Hospital but a selection of sale items will also be available at the wreath workshops and Xmas social.

CASH ONLY.

### Xmas Social for regular volunteers

Fun and games and a Xmas quiz followed by a warming lunch and mince pies for invited guests.

## When

### Sat 26th November

10.00 - 12.00 hrs

13.00 - 15.00 hrs

### Sun 27<sup>th</sup> November

10.00 - 12.00 hrs

13.00 - 15.00 hrs

### Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> December

10.00 - 12.00 hrs

13.00 - 15.00 hrs

### Tues 4<sup>th</sup> December

10.00 - 12.00 hrs

13.00 - 15.00 hrs

### Tues 29th November

### Tues 6<sup>th</sup> December

### Tues 13<sup>th</sup> December

All 10.00 - 14.00 hrs

### Sun 11th December

10.30 – 14.30 hrs

## Where

The Recreation Hall (opposite Grange House), Llanfrechfa Grange, NP44 8YN



Outside or in the Foyer, Grange University Hospital, Llanfrechfa.



Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden with lunch to be held in the Recreation Hall opposite Grange House.





# Incredible Edibles



[Nadiatalent-CC-BY SA 3.0 via wikimedia](#)



It's time for the pumpkin harvest and as usual we have grown an interesting variety in the Produce Garden this year.

One of the more unusual squash is the Tromboncino, pictured above and left. It's huge and looks like its namesake, the trombone! This unusual squash is an heirloom vegetable, originating from Liguria in Italy. It has a vine-like growing habit and can be harvested green during the summer but when it matures it will go a light beige colour. They can be cooked like courgettes which is what they mostly taste like. Now we just need some adventurous cooks!



## Contact Us

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