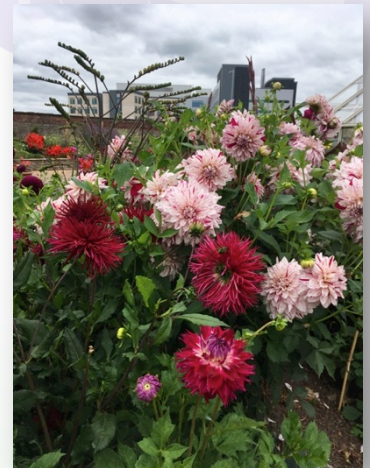


S U M M E R 2 0 2 1

# The Walled Garden

Newsletter of the Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden



## Welcome back

Welcome to the Summer 2021 issue of the Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden newsletter.

As the COVID restrictions have gradually been eased over the summer months, we have at last been able to open up a little more to visitors and welcome back some of our more vulnerable volunteers. We held our Annual General Meeting in July and welcomed the First Minister for Wales on a tour of the garden following the official opening of the new Grange University Hospital next door.

We have also been exploring some new ventures such as botanical illustration and making further progress on implementing the final garden design. Please read on to find out more.

## In this Issue

- Welcome
- Summer events
- No Dig update
- New ventures - a Florelegium of the garden
- Garden design update
- Supporting Us
- Official opening of Grange University Hospital
- Meet the staff from 1875
- Contact Us

## Summer Events - Have a Grow Day

*As COVID restrictions eased over the summer, we were at last able to resume some of our open days in the Walled Garden.*

Our first major event of the year took place on June 5th when we took part in the UK wide celebration of community gardening called "Have a Grow". This initiative is an annual event run by Social Farms and Gardens supported by Natures Path™.

As this was held while some COVID restrictions were still in place, the event was limited to pre-bookable slots. Even so, we still welcomed over 140 visitors on the day.

The event was supported by many of our regular volunteers, who either helped with setting up or clearing away, baked cakes or attended to provide a range of activities to keep everyone entertained. This included a tombola stall, crafts and produce stall, plant sale, wooden pallet recycling demo, seed sowing demo, shell picture activity and a refreshments stall, stacked with lots of beautiful homemade cakes. Visitors could explore all areas of the garden and also learn about No Dig veg growing from one of our Trustees.

Feedback from visitors was very positive and the event raised just over £1000 for our charity.

Thank you everyone for supporting this event, it was great to see so many people enjoying the garden once again.



## Summer Events - Open Day & AGM

*It has become a regular feature of the Walled Garden project to hold the Annual General Meeting of the charity on site during a public open day. In 2020 the pandemic prevented it going ahead, but with COVID restrictions easing, it was back on for 2021.*



The Annual General Meeting for the Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden registered charity, was held on Thursday 29th July 2021. It formed part of our second open day to the public of this year and this time, with COVID restrictions further lifted, no pre-booking for visitors was required.

We were delighted to receive over 170 people this time. Word is obviously getting around. We have had some extra help in this regard with great features on the garden in the South Wales Argus and Cwmbran Life.



As usual, a range of activities was laid on for people to enjoy, all run by our volunteers. In addition to those we provided on our Have a Grow Day, we welcomed a demonstration by the Wales Society of Botanical Illustrators (see feature over page), and the Gwent Guild of Spinners and Weavers and Dyers. There were also children's fun activities to keep them amused while Mums and Dads looked around. This included a little "bug hunt" for painted pebbles around the flower borders, which was much enjoyed.



At 2 pm the AGM was opened by the charity Chair Jan Smith, with all the Trustees in attendance. She outlined progress on the Walled Garden's development since the last public meeting in 2019 and how the challenges of COVID had been overcome with careful planning and management by the Trustees and by the continuing dedication and support of our volunteers and members.

The charity's treasurer Chris Parsons then presented the Annual Accounts, which are to be submitted to the Charity Commission in due course. The Annual Accounts and an Annual Report for 2020-21 were made available for viewing at the AGM and have been published on our website at this link:

<https://llanfrechfawalledgarden.wordpress.com/about-2/>

## Future plans for No Dig growing at the Grange

*At the end of June our No Dig veg growing course officially ended. We now want to continue the No Dig approach and share our new-found knowledge.*



The taught component of the No Dig course may be over but there are still lots of veg in the demo bed, which we are continuing to grow on and harvest. We are still picking courgettes, runner beans, dwarf French beans, broccoli and parsnips. Still to come are the celeriac, leeks, onions and kale. It has been great fun and very interesting.

In addition we have grown other veg across the rest of the plot applying the same principles, such as sweetcorn, potatoes, swede and fennel.

Now we need to start to plan for the future. We hope to maintain contact with our course tutor, Cherry Taylor, and fellow course participants, so that we can continue to grow and learn together. In the autumn we will put together a new seed list of vegetables to grow next season. If indoor activities continue to be permitted under COVID restrictions, we will also think about providing an introductory session on No Dig gardening to raise awareness and give advice for those wanting to try out this approach for the first time. Please get in touch if you would be interested in taking up this idea and what you would like to see covered. Our contact details can be found on the back page.



Above clockwise: No Dig demo bed in July; Baby broccoli; Veg harvest in August.

## New Ventures - A Florilegium of the Garden

When the Wales Society of Botanical Illustrators got in touch recently to suggest collaborating with the Walled Garden project, we were intrigued. A visit to the garden by their members was arranged and they told us about their ideas. Members of the Society also came along to our Open day in July to provide a demonstration area, which generated a lot of interest.

What they are proposing is to undertake the compilation of a Florilegium. What is a Florilegium? Basically it is a pictorial inventory of all the plants in the garden created through the medium of botanical art and illustration. It is a lovely idea and we are keen to explore more about how this would be put together and made available for visitors to enjoy.

You can find out more about the Society at their Facebook page or email: [enquiries@wsbi.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wsbi.org.uk)

The Wales  
Society of  
Botanical  
Illustrators



The Snowdon Lily  
(*Gagea serotina*)  
© WSBI

## Garden Design Implementation

*Work continues across the four quadrants to implement the garden layout with hard landscaping, planting schemes and interesting features to draw the eye.*

### The Stumpery garden

In Victorian times it was the fashion to have a fernery and stumpery garden to introduce a bit of gothic drama into the planting schemes. Our stumpery and fernery are positioned in the southwestern-most corner of the garden, facing the lawn circle, the shadiest part of the whole garden. A range of interesting woodland plants and wild flowers has been tucked in and around a landscape of old tree stumps and logs to create texture and shape. This includes different types of ferns, hostas, lily of the valley, cerinthe, irises, aconites, crocus and lobelia. We have saved the old wild rose on the back wall and introduced a tree fern, *Antarctica Dicksonia*, which we hope is going to grow into a spectacular centre-piece in the fullness of time!



### The Nursery bed

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board has kindly agreed to extend the boundary of our lease to include the south and east borders on the outside of the peripheral walls.

The eastern border, which is out of sight of any visitors, is now our composting area.

The southern border is to be a nursery bed, to be used to bring on young plants and cuttings that are not quite ready for planting out into the borders. It will also enable us to store spare plants suitable for selling.



### Finishing touches

While the hard landscaping in the southeast quadrant is continuing to develop, we are pleased to report that the paving in the lower tier outside the shed and greenhouse and continuing to the new pot washing area, is now complete and looks very smart.

On the upper tier, the "door to nowhere" in the cottage garden, now has its mock Victorian glass windows.

Adjacent to this on the SE perimeter wall, two of our volunteers have produced a delightful geranium theatre and hand painted ivy trellis mural.

Last but not least, the north gate now makes an impressive entrance. The commemorative NHS 70 roses have been bordered with dressed granite. One has a slate plaque welcoming visitors to the garden and the other slate commemorates the rose planting by the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent in 2018.



## Supporting Us

*There are many ways people can support the Walled Garden project to help keep things going. Here are some of them.*

### Welsh cake sales

This summer, staff and visitors to Llanfrechfa Grange and Grange University Hospital have discovered a welcome treat just outside the south gate to the Walled Garden. One Friday a month, volunteers Bridget and David Haylins have set up their Welsh cake stall to sell fresh bakes to passers-by and volunteers. All profits have been donated to the Walled Garden. To date this has raised just over £370! Thank you Bridget and David for your generosity and time.



### Welcome new volunteers

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest volunteers: Mike and Carol (below left), Kerry (below right), Trudi, and also three members of the Welsh Society of Botanical Illustrators; Linda, Barbara and Sian.



If you would be interested in volunteering with us you can find more information on our website:

<https://llanfrechfawalledgarden.wordpress.com/volunteering/>

Or please contact: Dr Sundari, Volunteering Secretary, Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden, Grange House, Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran, NP44 8YN.

Email: [info.lgh.garden@gmail.com](mailto:info.lgh.garden@gmail.com)

### Membership update

The garden charity is currently run by 6 unpaid charity Trustees and all income has to be generated by fund raising activities such as grant applications, donations, sales and events. In addition the charity offers associate membership to people who want to be kept informed and involved in the garden's development for a small annual fee of £4, which provides a regular income towards the operational costs. In return members receive "early bird" invitations to events and activities, the quarterly newsletter by email and have 'members only' access to further information and resources on the website.

Our membership has grown steadily over the last few years. It includes many of our regular volunteers but also individuals who live far away or who are unable to come to the garden in person for other reasons. It is incredibly heartening to have so much support; our membership currently stands at just under 100 individuals! Thank you.

If you are not a member but would like to join, it is very easy. We have an online form on our website:

<https://llanfrechfawalledgarden.wordpress.com/supporting-us/online-associate-membership-application-form/>

or you can email our membership secretary, Bobinca Wilson: [info.lgh.garden@gmail.com](mailto:info.lgh.garden@gmail.com)

# Official Opening of Grange University Hospital

*First Minister takes a tour of the garden after formally opening GUH.*



The garden team were delighted to be represented at the official opening of the Grange University Hospital on August 27<sup>th</sup>. As many of our supporters know, the new hospital has been built next door to the Walled Garden and has close ties with our project. The ceremony was held in a marquee outside the hospital with the R.H. Mark Drakeford, First Minister for Wales, declaring the building formally open.



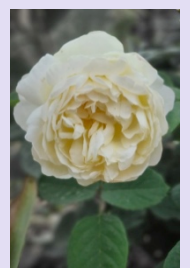
After the ceremony the First Minister toured the walled garden and chatted with volunteers along the way. He paid compliments to all for creating such an amazing garden and posed happily with "Max the Vax", our Caerleon Scarecrow Trail entry. At the end he was presented with a basket of vegetables from the No Dig project.

A very special day for all.



## Nye Bevan roses

*David Austin Roses have launched a new rose called Nye Bevan. Bearing unusual open cupped flowers of soft yellow that fade to cream, this uplifting rose is dedicated to the NHS and its founder Aneurin Bevan. It radiates hope and positivity in what has been such a testing time for so many.*



*Two of our greatest supporters, Mary Berrington and Jenny Lloyd have each donated one of these commemorative roses, which we have planted either side of the steps in the southeast quadrant.*

*Thank you Mary and Jenny for such a special gift.*



## Meet the staff - Grange House 1875



Meet the staff of Grange House, Llanfrechfa Grange when it was the private dwelling of the Mitchell family. This photo dates from about 1875. At this time the Walled Garden was a traditional Victorian kitchen garden, which would have provided all the fruit and vegetables for the kitchens in the grand house.

The picture was sent to us by David Bowman, whose Great Grandmother Ann Williams, was the housekeeper. She married the gamekeeper, Samuel Jackson when she was 22 and he was 23. It is thought they are the couple in the front row. The man in the bowler hat was probably the butler. If any of our readers are able to identify any of the other people in the photo please contact us (see details below).

Our thanks to David for sending us this wonderful photo.

## Contact Us

Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden,  
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Website: <https://llanfrechfawalledgarden.wordpress.com/>



Or find us on Facebook at llanfrechfa grange walled garden

