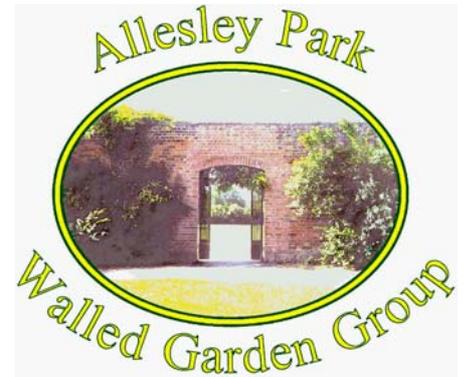




May



August 2013

Didgeridoos a big hit

Despite the bolts of lightning, thunder and tropical downpour the July didgeridoo workshop was instructive and fun for our young audiences. Well-known as an afficiado on all things Aboriginal, Alex Hampson from Wild Earth, captured the imagination of youngsters, some as young as six, with stories about living and surviving in the Australian outback. This was the second workshop this year with Alex, the first having taken place at the Saturday market in May when the weather was a good deal more amiable.

Alex's ability to play a variety of didgeridoos from his collection was awesome and soon he had everyone producing a surprisingly authentic sound from their own cardboard sleeve instruments. A basket with a variety of percussion instruments made from natural materials was the signal to start an Aboriginal 'jam' session. With instruction and practice the assembly was soon producing some interesting rhythms.

Then it was time for each youngster to paint his recycled didgeridoo. But first of all a walkabout in the garden produced some interesting natural objects that would serve as ideas for the colourful artwork that followed.

The workshops lasting nearly three-hours had passed so quickly. Without doubt both sessions were greatly appreciated and youngsters were eager to attend the workshops arranged for August.

Fun Day

The Walled Garden Group supported the Allesley Park Forum Fun Day in June. This year the venue was Allesley Hall Primary School. We took a visual display, promotional material and a selection of plants that sold out. Pictured is Mavis Lindop and Kathryn Unsworth with our stall.



July



Garlic Saturday

As customers arrived for the July Garden Market, they were offered a tasting of our delicious sun dried tomato, garlic and herb flat bread. Garlic and herbs from the garden were used in the mix, although we did have to 'import' the sun dried tomato. Recipes were given out and we are pleased to report that at least two customers have produced their own bread. At last we have plenty of vegetables from the garden and

the garlic, onions, peas and courgettes were quickly snapped up. Once again the coffee and cake was a real winner with many customers taking the opportunity to sit down for a chat with friends.

Pictured left is Mike Fell serving customers on the vegetable stall.

At the August market we are offering tasty Leaf and Fetta Cheese snacks. Make a note of the date: August 17, 11am to 2pm



All-weather

The need for all-weather accommodation in the garden itself has reached the critical stage. After weeks of hot dry weather we might have expected to have at least enjoyed a fine day when we had our July workshop. Instead the heavens opened and we suffered two of the worst thunderstorms of the year.

With the final Masterplan about to be presented with a vision for the Walled Garden over the next decade or so, we are pressing to have a suitable building planned into the corner where once there was a lean-to greenhouse. Pictured below is the party tent we are currently using as a makeshift classroom.



Heritage Weekend - Sept 14-15

It looks like we shall have a full programme of activity over the Saturday and Sunday of Heritage Weekend. On the Saturday alongside the monthly market we expect have several craft stalls and a workshop or two.

On the Sunday for the third year running we are promised some interesting cookery demonstrations. We would also like to run something for children. If you can help please contact Kathryn on 7667 3325.

The Garden

The month of July has been a race against time to hoe off the weeds and spend hours carefully thinning out and weeding out beetroots, parsnips and turnips.

This year's runner beans were at the top of the wigwams and producing a crop in advance of most gardens in the area.

The bush beans are now thriving and we continued to sow seed until the middle of July to extend the picking season.

The new black debris netting has proved its worth. Several varieties of cabbage have done very well and we are now picking very good heads of broccoli. In another enclosure we have already had a bumper pick of *Kelvedon Wonder* peas.

The pumpkins and squashes are looking good as are the courgettes in four varieties producing plenty for the coming market.

Good companions



Way back in April we took over a classroom at Allesley Hall Primary School to plant up pots and modules with nine-year old pupils. The Walled Garden Group had chosen five vegetables and five flower varieties to demonstrate how it's possible to grow without using nasty pesticides.

We called the project companion planting and clearly the concept was easily understood by the youngsters. Seeds were nurtured in the school green house and grow tunnel and by early July were ready to be planted out.

A plot where we had grown the purple sprouting broccoli over winter had been cleared ready to create a garden for the school. For our part we had grown a few vegetables and flowers to supplement those grown at school. On the day the class was split into five groups and each planted vegetables and flowers in its allotted space.

There are several lessons to be learnt from an operation like this. As well as the concept of chemical-free gardening the very fact that the plot was small for a class of thirty youngsters made it essential that there was full co-operation between each group.

The garden is growing well and there should be some useful crops very soon.



Photos from top: Kathryn briefing the class ; a group goes off with the truck laden with plants; planting sweet corn

Less stress

There's more scientific evidence to support the benefits of community gardening from a research programme carried out by Cardiff University called 'Growing a Healthier Older Population'. The research shows that allotment and community gardening reduces stress, boosts self-esteem and enhances well-being and happiness.

For more see: www.uwic.ac.uk/ghop

Harvest

Through the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens we have learnt about a scheme about to be run by the BBC. The project is called Harvest and will help us promote activities that demonstrate where our food comes from. We shall use the free resources provided in September and October.

New Crops - progress

The Sowing New Seeds project at the top of the garden is progressing well despite the ever present problem of pigeons damaging our crops. However we have succeeded in growing the Indian version of cress—Haloon, some Chickpeas, although much of the seed failed to germinate, the leafy vegetable Amaranth or callaloo, some African corn and Vietnamese Mustard. The star performer once again is Shark's Fin Melon that we are growing onto the recently constructed pergola. Only one of the Bottle Gourd seeds germinated—often called dudi, its fruit is used by the Asian community. As soon as dudi takes off will it be as rampant as the melon. Remember to check during the next market.

Contacts

Chairman: Keith Draper tel: 024 7640 2030
email: dandelion@ntlworld.com
Company Secretary: Ruth Wills
tel: 024 7633 4773
email: ruthmwills@btinternet.com
Membership secretary: Mavis Lindop
Committee members:
Kate Hughes, Mavis Boswell
and Kathryn Unsworth

LATEST NEWS ON OUR WEBSITE : www.allesleyparkwalledgarden.org