



# Friends of Walkden Gardens

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## Message from the Chair

### Dear Friends

I suppose whenever we enjoy ourselves in glorious sunny weather at The Heritage Open Day, we should know that it will only be a short time before the weather turns and the leaves fall as autumn sets in. So thank you all for your attendance and support on that occasion. Perhaps we shall have some unexpectedly good weather for our Christmas event around the Dovecote – for all the advance details see elsewhere in this newsletter, but with the usual mixture of schools choirs and Christmas music, stalls and refreshments it will bring in the Yuletide in style!

There are still interesting things to see in the Gardens, especially in view of all the advances we have made since last year at this time. I am sure Mike, our hardworking Head Gardener, will be only too pleased to tell you about anything new. Ask him if he has a leaflet on the Walkden Gardens as the weather does not always allow us to display them for you to take.

A lot of people have joined the Friends and we are working hard to bring our membership lists and website up to date. Volunteers, especially those who would enjoy helping us organise these days or serve on stalls or refreshments, are always wanted. See the website for contact details. And, of course, we send a very big "thank you" to all those who are helping us already. We could not continue without your help.

Have a good Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### Garth Jones

Chair of Friends of the Walkden Gardens

## Sale Festival - June 2009

We were delighted play to a part in the Sale Festival again and had two productions this year.

Peter Pan saw record numbers of young families flock to the Theatre Lawn with picnics to see a fine performance of this classic in the unique setting of Walkden Gardens.

We also had a double bill for the annual concert, first the Big Band and Swing Bands from Sale Grammar school played music from the roaring forties followed by the Stockport Pantomics – an internationally acclaimed youth steel orchestra who have performed many times on TV.

## Heritage Open Day 2009

We were fortunate with the weather for the September Open Day with record numbers enjoying cream teas, ice creams, garden tours and traditional games. The dovecote was open and croquet was played on the Theatre Lawn thanks to members of Bowdon Croquet Club who dressed in white for the occasion.



We were delighted that Sam Youd Head Gardener of Tatton Park and the Mayor of Trafford joined us to open Miss Cordingley's Garden, a project funded by Greener Greater Manchester and built by our wonderful volunteers. In a celebration later in the day we were joined by the Dry Stone Walling Association and, as part of their Pinnacle Award Scheme, Certificates of Merit were presented by Sam Youd to the Friends Group and craftsmen Andrew Loudon, Max Nowell and Jim Hanson for the Drystone Seating in the dovecote area.

## Christmas Carols around the Dovecote

Christmas Carols around the Dovecote.

Saturday 5th December 2009

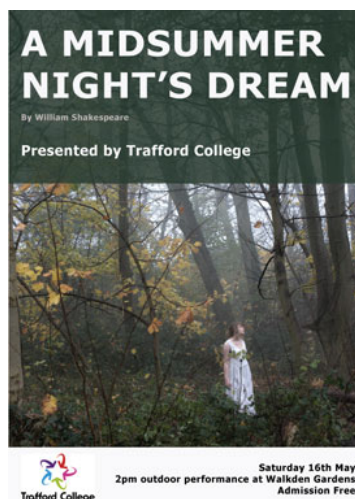
2.30pm to 4.30pm  
Featuring choirs around the dovecote, the Salvation Army Brass Band, mulled wine, mince pies, German sausages and German beers. If anyone would like to contribute to a bottle tombola (anything from Champagne to Salad Cream!) please drop them off at 139 Norris road or call 1061 905 3871 and we will collect. Thanks.



## The Show must go on...

A new venture in May this year was Trafford College's first production in Walkden Gardens of A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Having set up on the Theatre Lawn, the cast were rained off and regrouped in the scout hut. No sooner had they done this and the sun came out so back they went outside. Then it poured down and back they came and completed the first half indoors. After the interval the play continued on the Theatre Lawn in the sunshine.



## School Children Visit

In the Autumn sixty Year 4 children from Springfield Primary School, together with their teacher Chris Shaw, visited the Gardens.

Chris Shaw said "The visit was part of Springfield's Creative Day. Our theme was 'Outdoor Learning & The Community'. Each Year Group of children visited a different park / outdoor space around Sale. The children did various different activities, but most of all enjoyed their community on a beautiful Autumn day. They also did a survey of each of the outdoor spaces, rating them on their own criteria - information which has been forwarded and will be used by the Greenspace team at Trafford (Dave Rome).

The children loved their visit to Walkden Gardens, especially the mass game of hide and seek! Many thanks to Mike Girling and staff for their help."



## Recipes from a Secret Garden

The Friends Group has produced a special booklet of mouth-watering and interesting recipes suggested by various members of the Group. Some of the recipes have been closely guarded secrets until now!

The booklet will be going on sale at the Christmas Event on the 5th December. This is a very limited edition and could become a collectors item!

## A View from the Past



This picture was taken in the Gardens in the early 1970s. The houses in Holly Bank can be seen in the background.

We were surprised that as late as 1970 the photograph shows no sign of the beech hedges which are now such a feature of Walkden Gardens.

## Plant of the Month - Mahonia

We have several varieties of Mahonia in the gardens including Aquifolium, Japonica and Media which provide an attractive display through late autumn to midwinter. They are a vigorous, evergreen shrub bearing dense and sharply spiny foliage with small, fragrant, bright yellow flowers produced well into winter.

Mahonia are best grown in moist, well-drained, fairly fertile, humus rich soil in semi-shade. Little pruning is necessary but over-long stems can be cut back after flowering to provide a low framework.



## Green Flag 2009

Once again Walkden Gardens have qualified for the prestigious "Green Flag" national award. This is the sixth year in succession.

The Green Flag website says "Walkden Gardens is brought to life by the local community and its passionate and hard working friends group who work in partnership with Trafford

Council and many partners to develop and improve the gardens and bring them to life through holding numerous events and outdoor performances in the gardens. "

Congratulations to Mike Girling (Head Gardener), other Trafford Council staff and, of course, the all the Friends volunteers who have all worked so hard in various capacities to maintain the high standards of the Gardens.



## Looking Forward to 2010...

The Friends are already looking ahead and planning a range of events for 2010.

For example, during Sale Festival Week there will be two outdoor performances in the Gardens.

On Saturday 12th June, Ashton-on-Mersey Show Band will be returning with their always entertaining programme.

Then, on the Friday 18th June, there will be a dramatisation of the popular children's classic "The Secret Garden" by Frances Hodgson Burnett.

Of course, there will be other events including Heritage Day and Christmas Carols.

## Help us to keep you informed...

A copy of this newsletter has also been emailed to everyone on our list of supporters. If you did not get a copy by email but would like to be kept informed of activities in the Gardens, please email your name and contact details to [info@walkdengardens.co.uk](mailto:info@walkdengardens.co.uk). We promise that your details will not be passed to any third party and we will not inundate you with messages.

[WWW.WALKDENGARDENS.CO.UK](http://WWW.WALKDENGARDENS.CO.UK)