



# Friends of Walkden Gardens

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Issue 14

June 2010

## Message from the Chair

Dear Friends

Welcome to this slightly truncated newsletter. Its main purpose is to give you notice of our AGM on June 30<sup>th</sup>, with a talk from Gordon Cooke, details of which are listed elsewhere in the newsletter. We hope to see as many of you there as can make it. Frosts of an unusually severe level, inflicting damage on unsuspecting plants, followed by a miserable Spring, have at the time of writing at last given way to warm sunny days. Long may those days continue – or at least until a hosepipe ban is imposed! You will see that the exciting progress with Miss Cordingley's Garden is continuing, thanks to the work of your Committee, the dedicated garden volunteers and the patient work of Head Gardener, Mike Girling. We have just heard news about a planned re-organisation which affects him and his post and we are waiting for information and clarification from Trafford Council's Environmental Services. Our thoughts are with Mike at this anxious time, as well as our concern for the welfare of your Gardens, their upkeep and security.

Nevertheless, we are all looking forward to our Summer events – with a return visit from the ever popular Ashton-on Mersey Showband on June 12 at 7pm, with seating provided. The other is an appropriately named production "The Secret Garden", from Heartbreak Theatre at 5.30pm on Friday June 18<sup>th</sup>, no seating provided. These are both part of the Sale Festival. There are also details in this letter about the popular Heritage Open Day, around the Dovecote, in September.

So make the most of the good Summer we are promised and enjoy your Gardens!

Garth Jones  
(Chair of the Friends of Walkden Gardens.)

## Friends of Walkden Gardens AGM

### **The Friends of Walkden Gardens ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2010**

**Wednesday 30th June at 7.30pm**

**The Scout Hut, off Marsland Road, Sale**

All Friends of Walkden Gardens,

Please see above details of our annual AGM at which Officers will be elected and Reports from Committees and Annual Accounts will be made.

We need a good attendance, so please do your best to be there. As an incentive and additional and enjoyable attraction, we are delighted to have a talk by **Gordon Cooke**, who needs no introduction to those who have seen his garden or who have walked over our / his wonderful Compass Point ceramic in Walkden Gardens. Aply then, he has called his talk, "**Going to Pot**"

Join us, too, in a glass of wine or soft drink.

## Sale Festival - 12 June 2010

The Ashton-on-Mersey Showband is back again by popular demand on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> of June starting at 7pm. The theme of the evening is 'Groove in the Gardens'.

Why not make an evening of it? bring a picnic and enjoy an al fresco performance by a leading local band in the beautiful grounds of Walkden Gardens. Hot dogs and our famous homemade cakes will be available, also hot beverages and beer and wine. Tickets £7 on the night £6 in advance from Waterside.

Accompanied children under 14 Free!

Uncovered seating will be provided.



## Sale Festival - The Secret Garden - 18 June 2010

The Theatre Lawn in Walkden Gardens has seen many performances over the years -including a murder! in Shakespeare's Macbeth. Performances aimed at children are extremely popular - *Wind in the Willows* and *The Adventures of Alice* being recent successes.

This year we have *The Secret Garden* - and can there be a more suitable venue for this production? Heartbreak Productions version of this classic children's tale demonstrates all that is good about friendship and promises a touch of magic to your summer's evening. This outdoor production is suitable for all ages, but please bring something to sit on. Performance Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June 5.30pm Tickets from Waterside.



## Gordon Cooke

The Friends Group is very pleased to have Gordon Cooke as the guest speaker at this year's annual general meeting.

Gordon is a renowned ceramicist, potter, and garden designer with an international reputation and his talk "Gone to Pot" will be about his work.

Gordon has a well-established connection with the Gardens. He did the overall design and ceramic elements for the Compass Point.



During Sale Festival (11th to 20 June 2010) Gordon will be holding an exhibition of his prize-winning garden, together with his pots and other work in stoneware and porcelain.

Visit his exhibition at 17 Poplar Grove, Sale, M33 3AX. It is not too far from Walkden Gardens.

For more information, please see Gordon's website <http://www.gordoncooke.co.uk> or the Sale Festival website at <http://www.salefestival.org.uk>

## Himalayan Blue Poppy



Anyone visiting the Triangle area of the Gardens in late May or early June cannot fail to have noticed the spectacular bright blue flowers of the Himalayan Poppy (*Meconopsis betonicifolia* 'Lingholm').

This poppy can be tricky to grow. It is fussy, needing cool air, moist acid soil, and light mid-day shade. However, it seems happy in its current location which obviously suits it.

## Heritage Open Day 2010

The Heritage Open Day has become a regular fixture in Walkden Gardens. This year it will be on Saturday 11th September between 11am and 4pm.

The dovecote will be open with an exhibition inside, there will be guided tours of the garden, traditional games, ice cream, cream teas and other attractions.

Look out for other local events on this national day.



## 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!

There are still some copies available at £2. This is a very limited edition and could become a collectors item!

## May & June in the Gardens

The Friends of Walkden Gardens have been busy over the Winter and Spring further developing Miss Cordingley's Garden and making improvements to the long borders. We can now look forward to enjoying the Gardens even more during the coming months.

During May we have the splendour of the many varied rhododendrons and azaleas we have planted in different parts of the Gardens but especially in Miss Cordingley's Garden where visitors have not previously been able to ponder.

All these, though, do not outshine the star of the show, the WISTERIA ARCH.



## Green Flag 2010

The annual Green Flag inspection in the Gardens was carried out on 17th May 2010.

We will probably not get the results until July.



## Worrying News...

It has just been announced that Trafford Council intends to "re-organise" its Parks Department, with a loss of 27 posts. Our Head Gardener, Mike Girling, is involved in this process. Not only is it a personal blow to him, but also suggests a lack of recognition of the part he has played, as an "attached" gardener, in the improvement of the Gardens. According to articles in the local press, there will no longer be any permanent on-site gardeners; work will be done by a mobile team. The Friends group fear that this will not produce the same standards of maintenance. They are concerned that the lack of staff presence in the Gardens will leave them open to vandalism or anti-social behaviour and may affect some advertised facilities.

If you share our concerns about this proposal, please contact your local Trafford Councillor or write to the Executive Member for Environmental Services, Cllr. John Reilly, c/o Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Rd., Stretford, M32 0TH.

## 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)