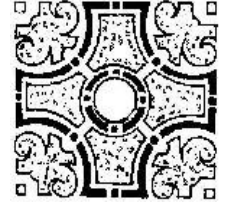




Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens

Newsletter ~ June 2011



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A Plea from the Heart!

Will someone please prove me wrong!

I am seriously concerned that, unless we do something urgently, these Gardens of ours could close before too long!

Am I being alarmist? - I hope so, but think about this – I am an Architect and have obtained Planning Permission for an improved Heritage Centre, but for this project to move forward we need to establish a “funding stream” with the Heritage Lottery and other bodies as soon as possible.

How can I possibly do this when we really haven't got enough helpers to run what we currently have, let alone something of the size we have in mind? Please remember that I have to report on our current situation to potential funders and other interested parties.

I personally thought that the Easter Event went splendidly, but I have heard that not everyone shared my view - if not – please tell me why not?

Hindsight as they say is worth tuppence a bucket! Sue Brain couldn't possibly work harder than she already does, but her time is fully occupied just putting events together – so if you have any ideas on improving things, please let a Trustee know and we will probably say “please just get on with it”.

In particular, we really need a group of people to “adopt” the planned Visitor Centre & run it between them.

So will someone prove my fears groundless and actually do this?

David Adams

Trustee and Joint Vice Chairman

Hello Everyone - may I first of all introduce myself, I'm Graham, otherwise known as 'The New Press Bloke'. So what does that job involve I hear you ask? You know, that's a good question – to find the answer, please read on.

Over the last few weeks I have been busy dragging Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust into the 21st century world of media, and the result is that the Trust is now on Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace, and we are attracting a lot of attention (including at least one celebrity!).

For those members and volunteers that have access to the Internet, you can link directly to all of our new sites from the home page on the Trust's 'official' website. I have also begun to contact more traditional publicity outlets in order to raise our profile.

And that's not all! I know that we have a lot of talented and vocal members and volunteers out there, so I have set up a web blog where YOU can submit your ideas, thoughts, photos, comments and musings; in fact anything that you think is interesting enough to share with others. Instructions on what to do are on the blog site.

Well, I've made a start: I hope you like it so far. Please send your suggestions to me (they are more than welcome) at: Pressofficer@cbhgt.com

Graham High, Press Officer

Crime Watch

Can all members and volunteers please keep a look out for the person or persons who is/are stealing the Trust's advertising signs.

We depend on local advertising to make all of our events a success and therefore the systematic removal of all our local signs is proving to be very costly.

The police are aware of the problem and are treating the matter as theft but they need your help. If you see anyone removing our signs please ring them a.s.a.p.

Income generated by recent events

In February we ran a **Snowdrop Day** which was well supported, and raised a total of £1407.13

Our **Easter Event** towards the end of April raised a further £1137.61

The **Rare Plant Fair** which took place on the 1st of May generated an excellent total of £1636.63

But the **Car Boot Sale** in the middle of May was somewhat disappointing when raising only £ 808.00

As all members are aware, without the support of our volunteers it would not be possible for the Trust to continue with its events programme. May I offer my sincere thanks and those of the Trustees to our list of willing volunteers.

To ensure the smooth running of the Visitor Centre it is essential that volunteers notify me as soon as possible if they cannot help.

We are still in urgent need of more volunteers to ensure the survival of this unique historic garden for the benefit of future generations. We need to spread the word regarding our existence.

We need volunteers to work in a variety of capacities including:-

The Visitor Centre

The Coffee Shop

To act as Guides

To assist with Special Events (Setting Up, Manning Stalls etc)

To help as Gardeners (including Grass cutting & edging, Pruning & Hedge cutting

Propagation & plant sales)

DIY Skills

Education Volunteers (especially those with Teaching Experience)

To act as Car Park Attendants

To work on Reception and/or as Clerical Assistants

Sue Brain



Pennies Appeal

Our Pennies appeal has now reached the excellent total of:
£3,310



Social Group/Meetings 2011

The next three Social Group meetings are listed here. All members are urged to attend as many of these meetings as possible and to encourage others (non members) to attend any or all of the meetings listed. The June and July meetings will take place as usual in the Arden Hall, Water Orton Road, Castle Bromwich starting at 7.30pm and the August meeting will of course take place at the Gardens themselves. The cost of attendance is £1.20 for members and £2 for non members. Tea and biscuits are served at all meetings.

14th June - Mrs Judy Bates

‘A Brief History of Birmingham Buildings’

12th July - Mrs Sandra Brew (former Lady Mayoress) - ‘Precious Memories’

9th August - A Tour of the Gardens

13th Sept - Mr Stuart Hawker - A Talk about Dunlop

11th Oct - Mrs Heather Hawkins
Retired Greyhound Trust

8th Nov - Mrs Elizabeth Perkins
Birmingham Conservation Trust

More events are planned for the remaining months of 2011, and information on these will be posted on the Trust’s website well before they are due to occur and details will also be included in the next Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust Newsletter

News from the Trust

At the end of March we heard that our grant from Solihull would be cut, but only by 10% in 2011, so this is not as bad as it might have been and is in line with our new budget, which already included reduced expenditure of one third to match the expected income level. In this very difficult financial climate, the Trustees decided that we could not afford 3 gardeners and a General Manager. Therefore the Trustees resolved to use the limited funds available and to appoint a Head Gardener.

We were able to appoint Yoke van der Meer at the beginning of April 2011. Yoke is Kew trained and has considerable horticultural experience both here and at home in Holland. The Trust wishes her well as she gets to grips with the unique challenge of restoring an early 18th-century Baroque Garden.

Whilst various Trustees are dealing with some of the tasks previously done by the General Manager, David's departure has left one hole yet to be filled. Are you a Mr. or Ms. Fix-it? Could you cope with some of the minor repairs about the place? If so you could be our **Handyman or Girl Friday**. Contact me via the office for more details.

Following the appeal in the last newsletter we were able to appoint Graham High as our Press Officer. Among other things, Graham has set the Trust up on Twitter and Facebook etc.. – links can be found on our web site. He can be reached by email at Pressofficer@cbhgt.org.uk – so go on, give him something to write about.

Dave Bennett

Special Events 2011

Below is a list of Special Events organised at the Gardens during 2011. Members should refer to the asterisk note at the foot of the list for details of costs etc. Could all members please help to promoter the events listed below to any non members. Speaking from experience everyone is guaranteed a great time at any of the events. All we need to ensure this is good weather on the day, but that is out of our hands!

** Saturday & Sunday 2/3 July [Crescent Theatre](#) presents An Ideal Husband by Oscar Wilde

Sunday 31 July [Central England Concert Band](#)

** Thursday 11 August [Animals in Hands](#)

** Saturday 20 August [Falconry Display](#)

Sunday 18 September [Car Boot Sale](#) * Only Booters pay.

Sunday 2 October [Apple Day](#)

** Tuesday 22 November [Flower Demonstration](#)

Sunday 4 December [Christmas Event](#)

** Members of the Trust are required to pay the admission/ticket prices for these events but will get free admission to all the other Trust Events on production of their membership card(s).

The New Heritage Centre

[Building Fund Appeal - Progress Report](#)

Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, a walled garden created in the early eighteenth century are all the more special for having survived intact on the outskirts of Britain's second city at the time of its greatest expansion.

The Gardens also owe their continued existence to the benign neglect of their owners when they moved to a grander house – missing out therefore on being involved in the ‘fashionable improvements’ of the times. After the Gardens were rediscovered – when an attempt was made to carry out housing development on the surrounding land - the Trust was established in 1985 in order to: ‘promote the permanent preservation and restoration of the Gardens and buildings therein, for the benefit and education of the public generally’. The Trust has continued to carry on with this process and 25 years later, also continues to use the same temporary premises which were erected in those early days and which today are well past their best.

The Trustees feel that visitors to the Gardens deserve better than this and are also particularly anxious to increase the educational experience of the gardens for all ages. We have recently obtained Conservation Area Consent (Planning Permission) from Solihull Council to replace the old buildings with a much improved Heritage Centre. Within this new structure will be a multi-purpose refreshment/educational/exhibition space with increased area for administration & Trust archives. The Trustees also hope to be able to provide suitable accommodation for a wide ranging horticultural library which would be available for reference purposes.

It is intended that as much use as possible is made of “green technology, with the possible use of eco-friendly ground source and solar heating methods and rainwater harvesting. The new building will be more accessible to less-able bodied and disabled visitors with a level entrance from the courtyard level.

The Trust needs to raise the necessary finance and therefore is seeking assistance in order to carry the scheme forward and to gain technical approval.

Please help us to preserve and restore these unique gardens – by spreading the word to any members of the public.

££ ~ Financial Appeal ~ ££

It costs over £100,000 per annum to maintain Castle Bromwich Gardens and to ensure that they are open to the public and to schools. Some of this money is raised by admission charges, donations and fund raising events run by the Members and Volunteers. Some is provided by grants from the Local Authorities but there is never enough money and without a steady stream of **Donations** and **Bequests** these beautiful and unique gardens will be lost forever.

All contributions however small will be gratefully received. The Trust would also consider **Sponsorship** from suitable organisations. Cheques should be made payable to: [Castle Bromwich Hall and Gardens Trust](#) and sent to:-

The Hon Treasurer
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