

GLYNNEATH & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

www.glynneathgardeningclub.com



Members' newsletter

July 2013.

Hello everyone

After the very late spring, we have been enjoying a splendid spell of sunshine – fantastic for gardening, enjoying sitting in it, or visiting other people's gardens. However, it has not been ideal weather for writing newsletters. When I woke up this morning the rain had arrived and it was blowing a gale, so I decided it was high time to make a start on this edition. The plan is to have it ready to give to you at the Garden Party.

Let us hope it is a glorious sunny day, but if not we can always enjoy the strawberries and cream in the marquee.

*Margaret & Isabel,
Wednesday 12th June.*

www.glynneathgardeningclub.com



*Glynneath Town Hall
September 2012*

Picture courtesy of Mr Howard Jones

Be prepared!

September may seem a long way off, but it will be here before you know it. **This year's Show is on Saturday 7th September.** Last year was very successful despite the weather – let's make it even better this year.

Do try and enter something, whether it's from the garden, or you bake a cake, or put in your favourite photograph. The schedule of classes is enclosed with this newsletter, and is also on the website.

Could you please sell the raffle tickets enclosed, (or buy some yourself) and return the stubs and money by the day of the Show.

The Show opens at the Town Hall at 2 pm.

2013: Programme for July – September

Saturday 20 th July	TRIP £13.50 for bus and entry.	TREDEGAR HOUSE, NEWPORT. 17 th century house & garden recently taken over by the National Trust.
Friday 26 th July	Local Visit. 1 pm	Meet at 1 pm in Neath Victoria Gardens for a talk and guided tour of the gardens.
Sunday 4 th August	TRIP TO GOWER SHOW	The show is held in the grounds of Penrice Castle Park, Reynoldston.
Saturday 7 th Sept.	HORTICULTURAL SHOW. Glynneath Town Hall	Show opens to the public at 2 pm
Saturday 28 th Sept.	TRIP to Malvern	RHS AUTUMN SHOW, MALVERN. £24 each, for bus and entry to the Show.

From October, we will continue to meet monthly on a Friday afternoon at 1 pm in Glynneath Training Centre.

PLEASE SEE THE BACK PAGE FOR DETAILS OF THE AUTUMN MEETINGS

Our website address is: www.glynneathgardeningclub.com

It was a bit chilly on May 11th when we visited the National Botanic Garden, but it did stay dry all day. Because it had been such a late spring, the herbaceous borders still had a lot of growing to do, but the tulip beds and the magnolias were really beautiful, with flowers galore in the Great Glasshouse.



There was plenty to see (and taste) because the West Wales Food Festival was in full swing, with a variety of Welsh food and drinks, and demonstrations, music and master classes throughout the day.

Our next trip is on
SATURDAY 20TH JULY
to

TREDEGAR HOUSE, NEWPORT



Tredegar House is one of the architectural wonders of Wales, built in the 17th century, and situated within 90 acres of beautiful gardens and parkland.

For more than 500 years it was home to the Morgan family, and now belongs to the National Trust.

**The trip will be £13.50, which includes the coach fare and entrance to Tredegar.
Leaving Glynneath at 10 am.**

**The Training Centre is closed during the school holidays, and so instead of a meeting in August, this year we are planning to go to the Gower Show.
(see below)**

SUNDAY 4TH AUGUST

THE GOWER SHOW

The Gower Agricultural Show is held in the beautiful grounds of Penrice Castle Park, Reynoldston, on the first Sunday in August.

If you enjoy the countryside or are looking for a great day out, you will enjoy the Gower Show.

The cost of the trip will be £15, for the coach and entry to the Show.

Leaving Glynneath at 9 am.

SATURDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER



RHS AUTUMN SHOW, MALVERN

By popular request, we are returning to the Malvern Show this year.

The cost of the trip is £24 per person, which includes the coach and entry to the Show.

We will be leaving Glynneath at 8.30 am.

If you would like to come on these trips then get in touch with Diane as soon as possible. Her telephone number is 01639 721034.

What else is happening ?



**Friday 26th July
VICTORIA GARDENS, NEATH
Meet at the Community Building
at 1 pm**

**Sarah Maybery-Thomas,
Audience Development Officer,
and David Roberts, Head Gardener**

will take us on a guided tour of the gardens, including the tree trail, and welcome us back to see the Community Building and talk about the renovation of the Gardens.

The Splinter Group

For the last couple of years, some members have gone on a wildlife walk with Anthony Adams. The first one was an unforgettable experience, when we saw and heard nightjars at dusk. Last year we went up to the lake at Craig y Llyn to look for peregrine falcons.

**Friday 9th August – MOTHS AND BATS -
Bryngolwg, Pontwalby**

This year, Mark Evans and Geri Thomas have agreed to come to Isobel's garden to try and identify moths and see if there are any bats around. It needs to be getting dark, so they suggested starting at about 9 pm, for approximately 2 hours.

If you would like to come, please bring a torch, warm clothing, good shoes and some insect repellent. In the event of rain, it would have to be cancelled.

For more details,
Isobel's telephone
number is
01639 720237.



ngs gardens open
for charity

**BRYNHEULOG, 45 HEOL Y GRAIG,
CWMGWACH, NEATH, GLAMORGAN, SA11 5TW**

Opening dates and times: Visitors are welcome by appointment, from May to October

Admission: £3.50 each, children free – to **NGS charities**

Refreshments: Home-made teas

Contact: **LORRAINE RUDD** Telephone: 01639 722593
Email: lorraine.rudd@bbmax.com

Bryngolwg, Pontwalby, Glynneath, Neath SA11 5LH

Isobel and Andrew were accepted by the National Gardens Scheme and planned to open their garden to the public by appointment this summer for the first time. Unfortunately they will not be able to do so, because Isobel is due to go in to hospital shortly. We wish her well, and hope that they will be able to open another year.

GARDENERS QUESTION TIME

**Thursday 19th September
at 2pm**

**Groundwork Trust HQ
Fedw Hir, LLWYDCOED**

The panel will consist of:

**Dyls Ayling
Ivor Mace
Gareth Davies
And a member of the
Groundwork Trust.**

**Dyls has told us about this
event, to which members of
the Gardening Club are
invited.**

**Do you have any gardening
questions you would like to
put to the panel?**

TWO SPEAKERS

The vegetable garden slot was filled this year by our own Bill and Keith. They came with various props giving practical demonstrations and advice. This detailed information proved invaluable for less experienced vegetable growers and filled in many gaps for others. One of the points of particular value was Bill's system of growing tomatoes. Over many years he has perfected his system using a bed of manure inside a bottomless box the size of a grow bag. The grow bag is laid on top with a slit in the bottom. Three bottomless plant pots each containing a tomato plant are then placed in the grow bag. Watering is restricted to wetting the manure only until the first truss is set. At this point feeding takes place via the plantpots themselves – result – masses of tomatoes!

Other tips were:

1. to always pot-on in ever increasing pot sizes rather than putting a seedling into a very large pot from the start
2. use small plant pots to bring on onion sets giving them a good start and the opportunity to develop good bushy rootlets before being planted in the open ground
3. use modern materials to maximise plant growth and quality, for instance fleece used as a barrier to prevent carrot fly; also use fleece to protect early grown tender plants such as kidney beans.

A perennial argument amongst allotment people is, apparently, the best way of sowing beans for early growth – whether flat, on their sides, on one edge or the other. Bill experimented with all the different variables – result – they all came up at the same time. Despite this, the arguments continue!

This was an informative, humorous and innovative session as we would expect from two of our liveliest gardeners. Great stuff!

DYLYS AYLING

Dilys has been a regular speaker at the gardening club since its inception. This time she fulfilled all our expectations with slides and advice about growing perennials in small gardens. She is always full of enthusiasm, information and expertise. Despite the fact that the May meeting had to be held on a Wednesday due to her other commitments, it was extremely well attended and numerous people took notes for their own benefit.

Before leaving, Dilys told us that a new variety of Dahlia had been named after her and attempts were made to buy one from Halls of Heddon, the nursery which developed it. However, this was not possible as they had sold out, but next year it will be generally available.



BEWARE - DO NOT ACCEPT LIFTS FROM STRANGERS

Keith Edwards was waiting for the bus on the square the other day when a car parked on the road began tooting his horn. Keith looked – no, he didn't know the chap and so took no notice. The horn tooted again more insistent, Keith looked – no, still didn't recognize the chap, so looked away. The horn tooted AGAIN very insistently this time, so Keith opened the car door, got in and said "Oh alright then – take me to the Half Way – and DON'T go all the way round Banwen!" At the Half Way he got out and still couldn't work out who the driver was.

The next day he saw his mate, Duncan. "Ho" says Duncan, "You're a funny b----r aren't you – I tooted my horn at you, and you got in the car in front!"

Just to remind you that when we start back in the Training Centre in October, our monthly meetings will begin at 1 pm on a Friday afternoon.

This will give us time for a cuppa and a chat before the speaker begins, and also a chance to select a library book from our selection.



If you have any library books you borrowed earlier, could you please remember to bring them back when you come to the meeting. Many thanks.

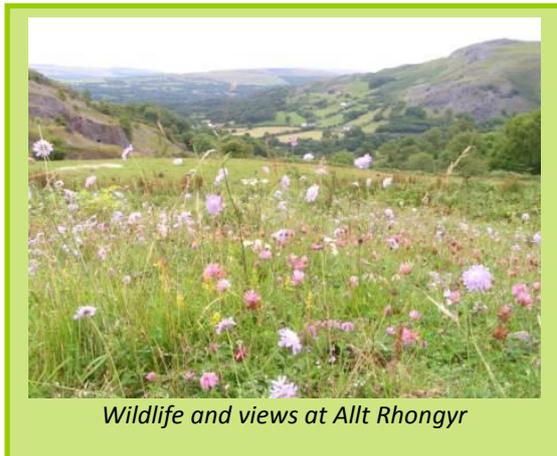
In March, Keith Noble of the Brecknock Wildlife Trust, gave us a stunning slide presentation on Wildlife Gardening, and described the work of the Trust. We are grateful to his colleague, Ben Mullen, for writing this article on the Trust's project in the Upper Tawe Valley.

A LIVING VALLEY

Brecknock Wildlife Trust has a 'Living Landscape' project in the Upper Tawe Valley. We are working to create a wildlife rich landscape, which offers opportunities for people to experience and interact with it.

We offer many opportunities for you to get involved in the work we do. Regular volunteer work parties help us manage our nature reserves. It's a fun way to get active, learn new skills and gain knowledge about wildlife and management techniques. We carry out surveys such as for the rare marsh fritillary butterfly that lives in the area. This protected species is in need of our help to protect and enhance its habitat.

Much of our work at **Ystradfawr** nature reserve is to recreate and restore the Rhos pasture habitat this magical butterfly breeds in. The wet tussocky grassland needs managing to stop it reverting to woodland.



At **Allt Rhongyr** nature reserve there are magnificent limestone grasslands, which are carpeted in flowers in summer. We carry out a lot of bracken cutting in the summer to enhance the wonderful flora. It has magnificent views and delightful carpets of wild flowers.

Would you like to help us manage our nature reserves? Without volunteer help we wouldn't be able to do all that lovely management work to benefit the wildlife.

We have a small team of volunteers who help us on our practical work parties.

Why don't you come along and learn some new skills, keep fit and have fun. Stay as long as you like - do as much as you want. So come on give it a go!

BEN MULLEN
Upper Tawe Valley Project Officer
Brecknock Wildlife Trust.

To find out more about the work of the Trust have a look at its website:
www.brecknockwildlifetrust.org.uk



SOUND AS A POUND

**DISCOUNT STORE,
PET & GARDEN
SUPPLIES**

**Stephanie Williams
38 High Street,
Glynneath**

Tel: 01639 722444

THE LAMB & FLAG GLYNNEATH

Tel: 01639 721995

Weekly food offers:

**OAP Menu
Tuesday & Thursday
12 – 3 pm**

**Carvery - £7.50
Sunday
12 – 5 pm**

NELSON'S COACHES

Tel: 01639 720308

*We do a wide variety of
day trips, so if you fancy
shopping,
the seaside,
Bristol Zoo, Longleat or
the Royal Welsh Show*

*There is a trip you will
enjoy.*

We are circulating this newsletter to members, past and present, in the hope that you will find there is plenty going on in the coming months to interest you.

**If you have not rejoined yet for 2013 then it is NOT TOO LATE.
The membership fee is £12 a year, but
YOU CAN JOIN FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2013 FOR JUST £6.**

**WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL AGAIN SOON
EVEN BETTER, BRING A FRIEND WITH YOU – NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**

In the autumn we start meeting monthly at 1 pm on a Friday afternoon in the Training Centre. Here is a taster of what is to come:

FRIDAY 25TH OCTOBER

SIMON GOODENOUGH,
Curator of Horticulture at the
National Botanic Garden of Wales

We have enjoyed visiting the Garden –
now we can learn much more about it.

In the meantime, you can find out more from the
Botanic Garden website: www.gardenofwales.org.uk

Click on to the **Curator's blog**

FRIDAY 29TH NOVEMBER

JOSEPH ATKIN
Head Gardener at
Aberglasney Gardens

(Do you read his column in
the South Wales Evening Post
on Saturdays?)

We have the Annual General Meeting in the autumn (date to be confirmed). This is your chance to vote for members of the committee and have your say on what you would like to see the Club doing in the future.

In December, take a break from the shopping, and come along for the final meeting of the year. We could have a buffet - and Dylis Ayling has promised to come and show us how to make table decorations for Christmas.