



EASTON WALLED GARDENS

www.eastonwalledgardens.co.uk

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Newsletter No. 18, August 2008

Dear Friends

Thank you for all your support this season. We now have over 200 Friends of Easton Walled Gardens and as a thank you we are planning a special day for you and your guests in November. See below for more details.

This season has been a very exciting one. We finally have the tearoom, toilets and shop that we need to offer really good quality visits to our customers. This has been supported by winning the Lincolnshire Visitor Attraction of the Year, a National Treasure Award on the Alan Titchmarsh Show and, last week, the tearoom was awarded five stars following a spot check by South Kesteven Environmental Health.

Not bad for a team of seven! Thank you all for your support and your kind comments. It is much appreciated.

With Best Wishes
Ursula Cholmeley.

In The Gardens:

We have had some student help this year to assist with maintenance. The latest, my nephew Jamie Morgan, is assisting Stephen with weeding and cutting. The winter plans for the gardens are slowly taking shape and include meetings with Michael Marriott from David Austin Roses and Colin Chapman, THE big cheese in the Lilac World to plant roses and lilacs in the old walled kitchen garden. There are also advanced plans for a new vegetable area so that the tearoom has more fresh produce for next year.

Despite the tricky weather (late frosts and summer rain) the autumn floral display looks really fine and we are hopeful of picking up

some prizes at the Corby Glen Flower Show this year!

Birdlife has been prolific this year. We hope this is the result of active management to produce wild areas with long grasses and more hedging. The swallows raised at least two broods and we have seen black caps, spotted flycatchers and an abundance of long tailed tits who look like fur balls with tails attached. With the exception of honey bees, insect life has also been good. It is always busy, particularly with bumble bees, on the large number of annuals and daisy-type flowers we grow.

In the Tearooms:

Sadly, our spring plans for a new tearoom separate from the gardens were thwarted by

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– September 28th PLUS Thursdays in July and August. Sundays in October**

the rural grants body who deemed that this was not rural development. However, as most of you know, we were able to revamp the tearoom in the gardens.

Ann Weston is now running our tearoom 'in-house'. She has made a great start this year and was awarded five stars for hygiene last week. Ann and I hope to work together to improve on the variety and seasonal food offered next year. Variable and increasing food prices are making pricing complicated but we hope this will stabilize, so we can find a balance between quality and value for money. We have a special offer for groups for Christmas parties – please see below.

In the Shop and Office:

The shop's range continues to expand. We are currently planning the Christmas shop which will include everything from canvas overnight bags to decorations, children's toys and china. David Whitaker has helped us over the summer in the shop and we wish him a good year when he returns to the London School of Economics in October. Maggie has balanced the office through power faults, computer blips and school holidays. We are sorry if you have not been able to get through on the phone last week. We suffer from being at the end of the line for central networks and to cut a long story short they are currently repairing our computers, boiler and telephones!

Forthcoming Events:

As you can see from the enclosed brochure, we have lots going on. We are also offering the following:

Private Shopping Day for Friends of Easton Walled Gardens
Wednesday 12 November –
11.00 am – 4.00 pm

We hope you can join us for Christmas shopping, a walk in the gardens and lunch or tea in the tearoom. The gardeners, Maggie and Lady Cholmeley will be around to chat

about plans for the gardens over the winter and next year. We would also like to offer you the opportunity to show your friends the gardens, so every Friend may bring 2 guests free of charge.

Pumpkin Carving Competition

For our Autumn into Winter Day on November 2nd we are running a pumpkin carving competition. Entry forms will be available online. There is a senior and junior section so if you carve a masterpiece for Halloween, bring it along on Saturday 1st November for entry into the competition the next day. All entrants receive 2 free passes for 2nd November.

Winter Group Lunches

Ann is currently putting together a set menu for groups during the winter months. If you are a party of 15+ and would like to book an office lunch, girls' get-together, wedding anniversary or other special occasion, we can offer you exclusive use of the tearoom, the gardens and shop from 12.00 – 2.00 pm, week-days during November and early December. A three-course meal, and use of the gardens is likely to work out at around £20.00 per head, making it very good value. Please ring Maggie for menu options and to book.

Volunteer Bulb Days

We are carrying out bulb planting, seed collecting and winter work from 6th – 9th October (inclusive) and would very much welcome help from any volunteers who could work from 9.30 – 12.30 on any of these days. Please ring Maggie on 01476 530063 for more details.

Request to Friends:

If you have time to write a review of the gardens on tripadvisor.com or other visiting or gardening websites, it would be a great help to us in promoting our garden on the web.

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