



# Albatross

The Newsletter of **Friends of Valley Gardens, Harrogate**



**AUTUMN/WINTER 2014**

Welcome to the first edition of "Albatross". The new title comes from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" containing a reference to "Water, water everywhere, Nor any drop to drink" which seems highly relevant to our situation in the Valley Gardens. *Peter Blayney: Editor*

**NOT RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP YET? Jon Collins would like to hear from you.** Individual membership still costs only £10 or £15 for a family. **Please call Jon on 01423 506935** to ask for a standing order form and, if you are a tax payer, a Gift Aid form. Cheques and forms may be returned to: FOVG, 23 York Road, Harrogate HG1 2QL.



**SITE DEVELOPMENTS update** Since our last publication we have: a new path linking the Magnesia wellhead to the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room (OMWPR); paving round the Magnesia and the Chalybeate wellheads; the seat re-set close to where it was; grass over a large area of the Peat Garden and bulbs planted in selected areas; the woodland area cleared to the west; trees planted; security lights on the OMWPR, "bird baffles" in the soffits, wooden flooring and a wooden bench inside, the panelling restored and the doors strengthened; the electrical wiring prepared; the outside and inside painted.



**FROM OUR CHAIRMAN Thank you** Trustees, Executive members, all volunteers and members for all your hard work and financial support. FOVG would like to thank our HBC Clerks of Works, Trish McLaughlin, Mark Coston and again Head Gardener Simon Collier and his team. It has been a very busy summer and the public have expressed their appreciation over the developing project.

**Congratulations to FOVG Trustee Jim Clark on becoming Mayor.**

**Powerpoint presentations** have been given to: Harlow Residents Association, Jennyfields Over 50's Club and at the Duke of York Annual Meeting. Presentations can be booked by contacting Jane (see below).

**A Hardy Plant Group of 30 from Wisconsin, USA** was taken on a whistle-stop tour of the Valley Gardens.

**A question has been put to HBC at a Council meeting that as all monies raised at the 1940s Open Day are donated to HBC, could the £495 fee for the hire of the Sun Pavilion that day be waived?** FOVG are presently restoring the OMWPR and the volunteer gardening team regularly assist in the planting out, restoration and maintenance in the Valley Gardens enhancing the area and so helping to make the Sun Pavilion an even more appealing asset for event hire. Watch this space!

**TOP TEN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS** Robert Grange, right, alias Mr Wilford, records the following from the public about the OMWPR:  
 Oh, it looks so much better!  
 Where is the well?  
 Can I taste the water/did it do you any good?  
 Do you drink it or bathe in it?  
 Carry on the good work  
 You've spent how much?!!  
 What will happen to it when it's finished?  
 I've never seen it open and I've lived here all my life!  
 My kids called this the witch's house  
 Is this/where are the toilets?



**ANNE'S ANGLE** Our major annual fundraising event, the **1940s Open Day** held on 29 June, was a huge success, helped by the 27,324 visitors to the Valley Gardens recorded by Harrogate Borough Council. The weather was fine, which ensured a flypast by a Spitfire and Hurricane of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight – quite the highlight of the day. The rest of the entertainment was amazing and on top of that we raised £6,000. It could have been more had we had more volunteers helping on the day. **TO HELP WITH THE 1940S OPEN DAY ON SUNDAY 28 JUNE NEXT YEAR PLEASE CONTACT KIM ON 01423 561618.** We had a successful four days mid-September when we opened the OMWPR for the **Heritage Open Days**. Again, more volunteer "guides" would have been welcome. In August we received £226 from the Inland Revenue after applying for Gift Aid on membership fees and donations. This is currently 25p for every £1 we receive, but we can only claim this money if we have a completed Gift Aid form. **IF YOU ARE A TAX PAYER AND HAVE NOT COMPLETED A GIFT AID FORM PLEASE CONTACT ANNE ON 01423 522720.** We have almost reached our target to complete the work on the OMWPR but we cannot be complacent and our next fundraising event is **Bag Packing at Asda on 22 November.** **IF YOU ARE AVAILABLE ANY PART OF THE DAY, EVEN AN HOUR OR TWO, PLEASE CONTACT JANE ON 01423 505231.** The more bag packers we have, the more money we collect. We have received an award of **£1,000 from the Northern Horticultural Society**, the majority of which has been allocated to 8,000 bulbs some of which have been planted by **60 children from Western School.** Grateful thanks to Western School.



Photos by Adrian Murray

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE** Key in [www.friendsofvalleygardens.co.uk](http://www.friendsofvalleygardens.co.uk) and see who's visited the OMWPR. It seems we've gone international. Bring yourself up to date with all the latest as it happens thanks to Tom Holleman. Due to the wonders of computer science Tom can manage this even when he's back in the USA.



**TREES PLANTED** Two infant giant sequoia trees have been placed with much care off the path going towards the War Memorial. Tenderly grown from seed and kindly donated by Matthew Sharp, these trees can grow to a massive girth and height – that is if you can stick around for 3,000 years. Some *Sequoiadendron Giganteum* are known to be as ancient as this. How would they look and what would they be looking out on then?



**GARDENING TEAM** The Wednesday Gardening Volunteers have consistently provided 6 to 8, and as many as 11 helpers to work in the Peat Garden and alongside our professional gardeners throughout the summer. The spectacular transformation of the Peat Garden is evidence of the magnificent work done. Special mention must be made of Liz Chidlow, Jenny Travena and Jane Blayney who have worked tirelessly planting out the rock and sensory gardens and securing a home for no less than 8,000 bulbs, which hopefully the squirrels will leave to provide a fine show next spring. Thank you Head Gardener Simon and his gardening team for their support and guidance.



**TALISMAN** Hygeia was an ancient Greek goddess, the daughter of the god of medicine, Aesculapius, and Epione. Hygeia lived on Mount Olympus and had four sisters, Panacea, the goddess of universal remedy, Iaso, the goddess of recuperation, Aceso, the goddess of the healing process and Aglaea, the goddess of beauty, splendour, magnificence and adornment. Quite a family! Hygeia was associated with the prevention of sickness and the continuation of good health. Her name is the source of the word “hygiene”. As many will know FOVG has adopted Hygeia as our mascot. This is particularly appropriate as Hygeia featured prominently on a publicity poster for Harrogate in the early part of the last century, personifying good health and cleanliness, the message our town wanted to convey to the world about the benefits of the treatments that were available here, amongst which was, of course, Magnesia water. Portrayed as holding a drinking vessel, Hygeia also clasped a serpent, the symbol of healing, which is replicated in the supports for most of the benches in the Valley Gardens today.



**FOVG ELECTIONS** The following have been elected to office:

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Trustees:                      | Jim Clark, Jane Blayney, Jon Collins, Anne Grange, Peter Blayney |
| Chairman:                      | Jane Blayney   |
| Vice Chairman/Membership:      | Jon Collins  |
| Treasurer:                     | Anne Grange  |
| Young Persons' Representative: | Sally Haslewood  |
| Marketing/Publicity:           | Kim Wilson   |
| Secretary:                     | Peter Blayney  |



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|----------------------|----------------|---|
| <b>FUTURE EVENTS</b> | 7 November.    | Western School Heritage Tour.   |
|                      | 12 November.   | 1940s Open Day Group meeting.   |
|                      | 12 November.   | Presentation by Jenny Travena to "Wild About Gardening" group at 7 pm at Marston Grange Farm, Tockwith Road, Long Marston, York YO26 7PL. Donations £3.                       |
|                      | 13 November.   | General Meeting. <b>Talk on Fountains Abbey by Mike Bevington.</b> Members Free. Visitors £5, refundable if they sign up as members on the night. St Peter's Church. 7.30 pm. |
|                      | 22 November.   | Bag Packing at ASDA. <b>Volunteers needed.</b>  |
|                      | 12 March 2015. | Annual General Meeting.   |
|                      | 28 June.       | 1940s Open Day  |

