

BARN HILL CONSERVATION GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1085476

'Keeping in Touch'

Issue 47 – April 2010

Roe Green Walled Garden

During this bleak winter we have carried out many improvements to the overall appeal of the site. We have tidied the barn, making more space for visitors to walk through and browse. We have used the covered area at the side of the workshop to create a feature, which we have called 'Arthur's corner'. In Arthur's corner we have a 1930s bicycle kindly donated by Peter Gallup. Sitting astride the bicycle is Arthur, a mannequin created by Rose, dressed in an old fashioned costume. We have included the old cart refurbished by Geoff, and decorated by Mireille, and an old cast iron fireplace in the corner. A photograph is shown below.

We have also moved the 'sentry box', which was full of old tiles, to an area behind the barn. The sentry box was a bit of an eyesore behind the workshop, and the area is now a more open and pleasing space.

Denis was the driving force behind all these changes. I asked him how he moved the sentry box as it was so heavy. Apparently this was done using old tree trunks as rollers, as in Roman times.

Thanks to Janet for giving us all a Christmas present of organic fertiliser liquid produced from her wormery. As it looked like ginger beer, one of our members mistakenly had a sip! However, she very gallantly said that she was past the age of being fertilised and would leave it for the plants.

Bernard



Arthur's corner

Ernest Trobridge – Architect and Gardener

Within a mile of the Walled Garden are many interesting homes built by the architect, Ernest Trobridge. He moved to Kingsbury in 1915, growing food on a smallholding near Hay Lane while devising a house-building system using green elm wood. From 1920 he built timber cottages with thatched straw roofs in Stag Lane and Slough Lane, including "Hayland" where he lived from 1922. By the 1930's he was designing flats with marvellous brickwork. The most unusual are his "castle" blocks at the top of Buck Lane. With the outbreak of World War 2, he unsuccessfully sought 25 acres of the Regional Open Space for a co-operative allotments scheme, and cultivated the spare land at his home as a market garden.

A free exhibition about Ernest Trobridge is on display at Brent Museum until 19 September.

Philip Grant

The Newts Club News

The Newts Club is held once a month in the Garden for children. All children are invited to come along . The following report was written by a member of the club:

The first Newts Club session of this year was based on potato planting. There was a fear of rain but luckily there was only a light shower. First of all the club made and decorated potato people. They used pieces of fabric and wrapped it around a bunch of straw. They then decorated them and made humorous or realistic potato people. Many children attended this event and enjoyed it and got to take their potato people home. After this the club planted potatoes to find out how they grow and learn more about planting them. Each child got a seed potato and carefully planted it. The potatoes will be watered and checked on regularly. The potatoes will be full grown in July. In this session, the Newts Club played many games. The children in the club found the games interesting and exciting. Every child agreed that the session was brilliant.

Maya

A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker in a local garden

On Friday 26 February 2010 I was in my living room reading. I had two eyes on the book and half an eye on the feeder in the back garden. A movement outside caught my eye and I realised a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was on the feeder. My reaction was one of disbelief, then realisation, then euphoria. In three and a half years in our house I have regularly watched and fed the birds, kept a list and contributed records to BTO Garden BirdWatch. Green Woodpeckers can be heard in the Fryent Country Park woodland which backs onto the house, and Great Spotted Woodpeckers are sporadic visitors to the garden. But I never expected a Lesser Spot. The bird in question fed for a couple of minutes then flew into a nearby field maple where it cleaned its beak. I could see by the absence of any red on the head that it was a female. After hopping up the branch it flew upwards into a willow tree, then took off.

Two days later on the Sunday, what should I see on the feeder? A Lesser Spot! A female as before, and in all likelihood the same bird. It became a regular visitor and invariably behaved the same way: it never made any noise; it would just appear on the feeder; it fed for between two and four minutes; after feeding it flew to the nearby field maple for beak cleaning; then it flew up to another tree and away. When on the feeder it would not let other birds near it - a lunge with its beak saw off anything which got too close.

As I write on 31 March the bird has been seen a total of 38 times since 26 February. A most unexpected but welcome addition to my garden bird list.

Debbie Pledge

We are open at the garden Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 am to 2pm. Sundays we are out in Fryent Country Park carrying out conservation project work. Please see the web site below for the programme of projects at Fryent Country Park or telephone the garden. Feel free to join us in our conservation projects at Fryent Country Park.

We are now collecting old pottery garden pots and would appreciate any you no longer want.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Annual General Meeting 8th May 10.30 am at Roe Green Walled Garden
- Open Day at Roe Green Garden (part of London Open Garden Squares weekend) 12th June 11am to 4 pm
- Ernest Trobridge Exhibition at Brent Museum, Willesden up until 19 September. Free transport from Kingsbury Library on certain days. See Library for details.

Contact numbers: Garden 0208 206 0492 (answerphone if nobody there)
John (Chairman) 0208 205 2040

Also at our website: www.bhcg.uk.com and at www.brent.gov.uk/parks