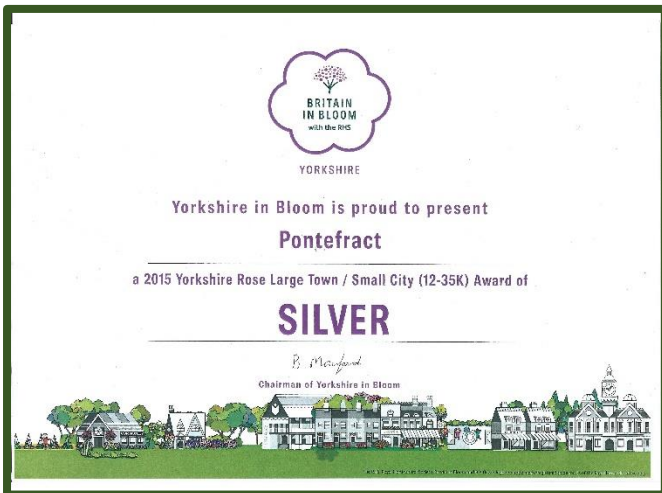




Newsletter

November 2015

Britain in Bloom – Silver Award for Pontefract



Britain in Bloom came to Pontefract in July and visited the Valley Gardens during the inspection. The Rose Garden was given a special mention.



“The 31 rose beds replanted all with sponsorship is just one example of the great work of the Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens, demonstrating great achievement within the community. The

volunteers and committee are an asset to the town for their tireless work and projects, well done”

Former aviary gets a facelift

Remember how it looked in May 2013



In July we were very happy to have SLIC training (pre-employment training) in the Valley Gardens again with a group of trainees getting training in horticultural techniques. They weeded, cultivated and edged all the rose beds and paved the area in front of the aviary. They also painted some of the old benches. The paving materials were donated free of charge and delivery by Travis Perkins and Barkers Fencing – thank you to all. In September the outside brick work of the building was repointed by Wakefield District Housing (WDH) as a contribution to the “Love Where You Live” initiative. The “aviary” should be good for another 170 years or so – we think it dates from around 1840.



Here's the WDH gang with Delia Perrett and Colin White (FFVG committee). I'm sure you agree that the building now looks an asset and not an eyesore. The next phase in the renovation is the inside of the building and creating the camera obscura.



We've refreshed the anti-climb paint around the edge of the roof and plan to fix another panel of art work on to the door. One of the junior schools will be doing art work with a Valley Gardens theme. The two lower shutters have been left as chalk boards.

Successful events: summer and autumn

We were lucky with the weather for all events in the Valley Gardens this year: Liquorice Festival, Yorkshire Day and the Lantern Festival. This was the third consecutive year that we have participated in these events. For the **Liquorice Festival** we get no help or support from the Events Team organising the town centre event and we're not considered to be an integral part of the event. Despite this we had more visitors than previous years. We will continue to harry the Events Team to involve us more in the publicity of



the event so that more visitors to the town on the day will extend their visit to the Valley Gardens.



Yorkshire Day was on a Saturday market day this year, consequently more activities were placed in the Valley Gardens and the day was a great success. The donkey rides and welly wanging were particularly popular.

Overload 2015, a music festival organised by young people and supported by Wakefield Council Youth Work Team on 19th September was very popular, attracting a large number of young people to listen to local talent including Jack Walton of X Factor fame.

The 4th **Lantern Festival** organised by Pontefract Lioness Club on 17th October was again a greatly acclaimed. The lantern parade from the Castle was led by the High Sherriff of West Yorkshire and the Mayor of Wakefield and finished in the Valley Gardens where the paths were lit with candle lights. This year we provided hot food vendors as well as the usual hot drinks and

parkin. Numbers were slightly down on last year probably because of the Rugby World Cup.



Information Boards

A grant of £250 from WDH Community Fund paid for 4 information boards: Sensory Garden, St Richard's Friary, Liquorice and the 4th depicting the history of the Valley Gardens is being prepared. Thank you again to WDH.

Meeting in Valley Gardens with Street Scene

Members of the committee had a walk round meeting on 29th October with Street Scene council officers responsible for parks and gardens to review progress and consider our plans and priorities for improvements. There is some funding for infrastructure repairs and we did hope for repair of the pillar and fence at the Friarwood Lane entrance and a handrail for the steps at the side of the Rose Garden. However the state of the paths takes priority for safety reasons and repair of potholes may consume all the funding available. We also asked about standard roses in the Rose Garden, but we can only plant them in the existing rose beds so as not to interfere with grass cutting. We can also plant standard roses in the "star beds" to add colour and height; donations for the planting of a standard rose are invited. For £30 we will plant a standard rose of your choice (from Priory Roses catalogue) including the name plaque.

Winter 2015 -16: we need more volunteers

There's much to be done before spring next year – in the Rose Garden all the beds need weeding and edging, and there's the early spring pruning. The herbaceous borders need clearing and weeding. Gardening sessions for November and December are from 1.30 to 3.30pm: Tuesday 10th and Saturday 21st November; Tuesday 1st and Saturday 12th December. Tools provided but bring your own gardening gloves, all help welcome.

New committee member

Delia Perrett joined the committee in August. Additional committee members would be welcome. We meet on the last Tuesday evening of every month except December. Get in touch: friends.friarwoodvalleygardens@gmail.com or via www.friendsfriarwoodvalleygardens.btck.co.uk or find us on Facebook