

Newsletter Summer 2014

Welcome to our Summer Edition of the Martineau Gardens' Newsletter.

Strolling around the Gardens in Summer is like time spent in the country without the journey. Find peace and tranquillity, shady woodland, wildflowers and enjoy birdsong here. Highlights include Solidago and Lysimachia in the herbaceous beds, fragrant scents

from the rose garden, and the Snow Gum Eucalyptus coming into flower. So called because when its delicate white starburst flowers drop, they look like snowflakes falling. Soft fruit is ripening; our Jam Making volunteers will be making delicious preserves from the Gardens' bounty, currants, gooseberry and mulberry —why not pop in for a jar or two?

Caroline Hutton, Director



Weeding vegetable beds and Woodcraft members picking broad beans and radishes

Grow to eat

Rachael Burt our Therapeutic Horticulture and Education Officer is leaving us for a full time job teaching horticulture after six years, here at Martineau Gardens. Leading the Friday's Women's Group, Rachael has taught them how to propagate, sow and plant the produce that grow on the demonstration vegetable beds. Between them, the group keeps the beds well stocked with unusual and heritage varieties 12 months of the year, so that there will always be something fresh that you can buy from the gardens (providing a source of income for the charity). All produce is grown organically, which means we don't use insecticides, slug pellets or artificial fertilisers. Thanks to their TLC, the vegetables and salads are truly tasty and our gardeners work together, supporting each other through the ups and downs of life, through the supportive atmosphere that Rachael has created.

Regular volunteers to the Gardens, are pupils from Calthorpe and Baskerville Special Schools – for the last five years, pupils have worked alongside Rachael, gaining hands-on work experience with a horticultural expert. These young people who have learning disabilities and / or are on the autistic spectrum, often have difficulty in gaining work experience. Martineau Gardens was designed as a place for children to get close to nature and find out more about the natural world around them. There's every kind of habitat here: an alpine bed, a hot house, woodland, meadow, pond and more, contained within two and a half acres of a Midlands' garden. They come here to learn where food comes from, to see it growing and taste it. Whether it's picking peas fresh from the pod or learning how the bees of Martineau Gardens pollinate our vegetable crops, children have the opportunity to find out more about healthy eating. As our profile rises we are receiving more and more visits from schools and afterschool clubs. Book a school visit by calling 0121 440 7430.



The warm summer colours of rhododendrons and azaleas along the track
photocredit: J Fletcher

Reading this and not a Friend? Isn't it time you joined?! Become a Friend of Martineau Gardens at : <http://bit.ly/1bsoAfO>

or sign-up when you next visit.

Diary Dates

Tuesdays, 11.30am-12.30pm

Tai Chi with Sue Ebbs £4 (see article overleaf)

Sat 12 July, **Bee Keeping Course** (course sold out)

Sun 10 August, 2pm, **The Taming of the Shrew** with Folksy Theatre

Sat 13 & Sun 14 Sept, 10am—4pm
The Honey Show with BDBKA

Sun 28 Sept 11am—3pm
Autumn Event

Fri 31 October,
Halloween Storytelling with the Traditional Arts Team

Full details at:
www.martineau-gardens.org.uk

Bank holidays: Open Mon to Sat 10am—4pm, except bank holidays, closed Monday 25 August.

New Garden Feature



A huge tree that fell in the woods during the winter high winds has been transformed into a new feature for the garden. Pictured here, Stewart (our Therapeutic Horticulturalist) and Mark (Garden Volunteer) are creating a stumpery, planting it up with ferns (harts tongue, shield, lady and male ferns) and sweet woodruff and mosses. Stumperies became popular with the Victorians to display unusual ferns. Today, we love them because they also create a miniature ecosystem, attracting fungi and insects, which in turn attracts more wildlife to feed. Look out for it the next time you're in the woods, which are wonderfully shady at this time of year.

Volunteers needed!



Over the summer we're taking a Martineau Gardens stall to fetes and events around Birmingham, promoting the Gardens and selling our plants and jams. We're looking for someone to run our stall. Can you help? You need to have use of a car, enjoy talking to the public, and be free on various Saturdays

throughout the summer. We think our events programme is growing from strength to strength, but we couldn't do any of these without our wonderful volunteers who give up a few hours on an events day to help out. We're looking for people to join the Event Volunteer Team, it's always a varied day, with a chance to meet new people and have fun. Please call Caroline on 0121 440 7430 if you can help with either of these roles.

All the World's a Stage ...



We had a fantastic Storytelling Festival with the Traditional Arts Team, in June, so many people came! A massive big thank you to all our volunteers who helped out behind the scenes and to all the wonderful performers, musicians, dancers and artists who came together to entertain us.

'All the world's a stage ...' and in this case, even the decks of the Pirate Shipwreck in the children's play area. This August we're looking forward to our first-ever open air theatre production of Shakespeare. Touring company, Folksy Theatre is bringing their production of 'The Taming of the Shrew', to Martineau Gardens on Sunday 10 August (2pm), with the shipwreck play area being turned into a stage for the afternoon. Set in 1950's Britain, this production is filled with doo wop, combed back hair and polka dots. You can buy tickets in advance on-line via www.folksytheatre.co.uk/Open-Air_Shakespeare.html ,or in person from Martineau Gardens (cash or cheque only) or on the gate, subject to availability. Family tickets are only available in advance. Meet up with friends and family, bring your picnics, blankets and folding chairs to enjoy the comedy of Shakespeare.

Credit: E Holbrook / T Bithell



Tai Chi by the Rose Garden



Join our new Tai Chi class with Sue Ebbs (Tuesdays 11.30am-12.30pm) for gentle exercise. The class is a drop in, just turn up at 11.30am. All welcome. Costing £4, a contribution of this goes towards Martineau Gardens. Find out more at

<http://bit.ly/1i0k7KG>

Connect with us ...

How to contact us

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www.martineau-gardens.org.uk



Opening Hours

For visiting: Mon - Sat, 10am - 4pm

Volunteering: Mon - Thurs, 10am - 4pm

Volunteering for women: Fri, 10am - 4pm