

Newsletter Winter 2015

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

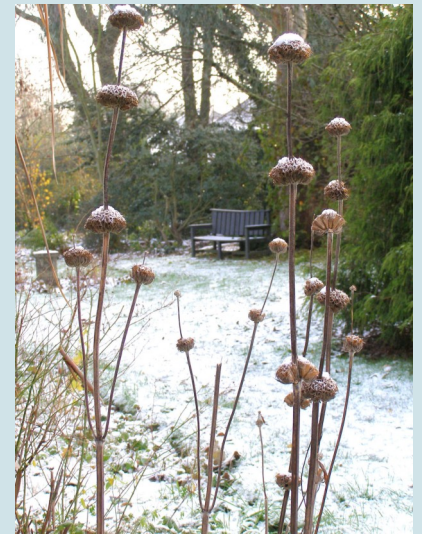
We're looking forward to 2015 here at Martineau Gardens, not only do we have new events this year including *Wind in the Willows* and *Hamlet* (see our website for details), but we're developing the plans to refurbish and enhance the present buildings, enabling Martineau Gardens to continue to offer Therapeutic Horticulture to those in need and provide a wonderfully restorative place, indoors and out, for all to enjoy.

We're delighted that artists (both experienced and new) are using the

Studio until the refurbishment starts: 'Tiger Skins of Sunlight' are a group of local creators working on Arts projects during the week and at weekends, Crafty Kids with Kika is inspiring family groups to join in with creative play and workshops.

Our thanks and appreciation to Peter Arnold for raising £1,757 in the Great Birmingham Run. If you want to make a difference in 2015, could you take on a fundraising challenge for Martineau Gardens? Visit <http://bit.ly/1xxppzq> for a list of local running events that you can register for.

Caroline Hutton, Director



Frost on dried seedheads near the sundial lawn credit: J Fletcher

Introducing Miranda

Miranda Kingston is our new Therapeutic Horticulture and Education Officer. Pictured here (*top right*) on a sunny December afternoon with one of her first crops, this chard was sown in July, when Miranda started her work at Martineau Gardens. Since then, she's supervised young people with learning disabilities from Baskerville School and Queen Alexandra College in the growing of winter greens, broad beans and onion sets. The students come here weekly for work experience in horticultural skills. Miranda also leads the working with women sessions on Fridays — the group are responsible for growing food and propagating plants for the sales area. You may have met Miranda in person when she ran family learning sessions at the Autumn Event last year. Pictured right, a mother and daughter get to grips with propagation, taking cuttings from the shrub Box.



New friends welcomed

Reading this and not a Friend? Isn't it time you joined?! Join online <http://bit.ly/1bsoAfO> or come to reception and sign-up when you next visit.

Diary Dates

*Various Saturdays **Crafty Kids with Kika Workshops**

Sat 14 Feb, Sat 14 March **Winter Working Conservation Parties**
booking essential via 0121 440 7430

*Fri 20 March, 7pm, **Nomad Variety at Martineau Gardens**, The Studio

Sat 21 March, 2pm **Compost & Veg Event**.

*Sat 25 April, 8.30pm, **Bat Walk and Talk** with BrumBats

Sun 17 May, 11am-3pm, **Spring Event**.

***Sat 20 June, Storytelling Festival**, with The Traditional Arts team

* *Pre-booking recommended, see*

www.martineau-gardens.org.uk

Open: Mon to Sat 10am - 4pm, except bank holidays; open Good Friday, Easter Saturday but closed Easter Monday.

Wood warms you twice

If you visit the gardens over winter, you're likely to encounter wood smoke and hear a plink plink sound. Volunteering continues throughout the winter at Martineau Gardens. The ESF Community Grant and support from Charitable Trusts enable us to offer opportunities five days a week at Martineau Gardens.

Pictured here on a bright but fresh December day, Stewart and Garden volunteers are sawing and splitting the logs that are donated to us by tree surgeons. These logs are cut to size, left for a year to dry and then sold to our visitors as logs to burn on open fires or woodburning stoves. All proceeds go straight towards Martineau Gardens. The pieces that are just too knobbly to work are responsible for the drifts of woodsmoke you might see, creating some welcome warmth for this outdoor task.



Update on funding

Our Therapeutic Horticulture Programme includes people with mental health issues and learning disabilities. These gardening volunteers acquire skills, knowledge, experience, physical fitness and confidence which can help them to get into further volunteering, training and employment. We are grateful to the ESF and our other funders for this support.



A living space is restored



A major transformation is taking place in the Hot House thanks to a donation from the Rowan Trust (enabling renovation work to go ahead) and the hard work of Stewart and the volunteers (pruning and moving plants). The funding has paid for the framework of the hothouse to be primed and painted, glass panels to be replaced and the soil reconditioned for replanting. Pictured *above left* is Peter Athorn priming the metal supports. The subtropical species that were growing in the hot house had become too big and weren't 'showing their best'. These over-mature plants have been dug out and a number of cuttings have been taken such as the tea plant and jasmine. The potted subtropical plants, cacti and succulents will return once renovations are complete. Our Hot House will become a warmer, well-lit, dry space. With tables and chairs in the centre, it will be used by the volunteers on rainy days for wet weather gardening tasks and provide a beautiful, indoor, yet green space, to enhance visits for school groups and visitors.

Visible heat loss

Pictured here is John Newson, Development Officer for Balsall Heath is Our Planet. He is using Northfield Eco Centre's Thermal Imaging Camera as part of a survey of our wooden buildings capturing evidence of heat loss, the data of which will inform our renovation work.



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