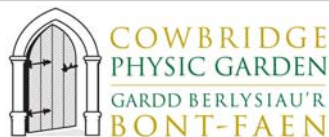


Newsletter

Issue 6

March 2008



THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

May 2006 - December 2007

By May 2006 the hard landscaping of the garden was in place but there was not a desirable plant to be seen and the task that lay ahead was a very daunting one. The garden needed volunteers to dig, weed and plant the garden as well as people who could plan and organise a range of activities.



The garden in Nov. 2007. Photo. by Mike Wilcock

Help came in the form of a grant of £43,225 from an organisation called the Heritage Lottery Fund which funded a project called 'Volunteers for Planting and Maintaining Cowbridge Physic Garden'. This Newsletter is a celebration of this project which was funded by HLF between May 2006 and December 2007.

What is the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)?

- An organisation set up by Parliament in 1994 to give grants to projects aimed at preserving and making accessible the nation's heritage. The money it distributes comes from the National Lottery. The specific sources of funding within HLF vary from time to time: our funding came from a pot called 'Your Heritage' which is for projects needing grants of between £5,000 and £50,000. There is lots more to know about HLF - the address of their website is: <http://www.hlf.org.uk>
- The 'Your Heritage' initiative seeks to involve as many people as possible from all walks of life in heritage projects and the way the Cowbridge project was structured had to reflect that. For example,



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund

Cefnogydd gan
Y Loteri Genedlaethol
trwy Gronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri



YBYRDOLŪ FRD
creative
RURAL COMMUNITIES
INSPIRING THE VALE



WALE o'r GLAMORGAN
Anerim a heylusor Erthygl 33 gan
Llywodraeth Cymru a Chymru dan
Cynllun Datblygu Gwledig Cymru
Article 33 is funded and facilitated by
the Welsh Assembly Government under
the Rural Development Plan for Wales



we could not spend the grant on employing a gardener but we could spend it on employing someone to co-ordinate volunteers working on developing the garden.

Another very important part of the initiative was that we had to 'match-fund' the grant from HLF with the work done by volunteers in the garden. That's why Genevieve and Jacky were so adamant that every hour spent by volunteers doing things in or for the garden should be recorded! At the end of the period covered by the grant it is estimated that volunteers put in at least 4,704 hours: that is something like 196 days or 28 weeks of service, 24 hours a day!

What did the HLF grant pay for?

The list is long but the items below should give an impression of some of the things the funding has enabled us to do:

Undoubtedly the most important result of getting the HLF funding was that it enabled us to employ Jacky Thorne, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, for three days each week between 1 June 2006 and 31 December 2007.

- Many of the plants in the garden have, of course, been paid for from other sources but the HLF grant made a substantial contribution towards our plant purchases.
- HLF constantly stress the importance of quality in work undertaken and the grant has enabled us to pay for a selection of signs in the garden: these include the slate HLF sign and the slate signs in the medicinal beds.
- HLF have encouraged us to use the Welsh language in the garden whenever possible, for example the individual plant signs are written in English, Welsh and Latin.
- We have been able to buy tools like the strimmer and lawnmower with our grant.
- Educational and publicity material like the poster for schools and leaflets for the European Heritage days in 2006 and 2007 have been produced.

Our volunteers are the most precious of our assets and the grant has enabled them to visit places like Llanerchaeron and the Chelsea and Petersfield Physic Gardens. HLF funding has also enabled them to hear visiting speakers like Professor Terry Turner.



Jacky Thorne, MA Feb 2008

Will HLF continue to pay for all these things?

No. HLF does not fund the same project again so now we have to think about how we can continue our work without their help. This is not to say that we shall never be able to apply to HLF again but, if we do, it will have to be for a substantially different aspect of our work.

So what'll happen in the future?

We have been fortunate to receive a grant from Awards for All (<http://awardsforall.org.uk>) which is enabling us to employ Jacky until October 2008: her remit is to increase and extend the number of volunteers involved with the garden. The Trustees are also funding her for the same period for another day so that we can continue to draw on her excellent horticultural skills.

We shall have to keep increasing our membership base and fundraising as much as we can!

How are volunteers organised?

As a result of informal discussions over many months a group of volunteers has taken on the organisation of the way in which the garden is run.

The volunteers have elected a 'Garden Management Group' comprising seven people and Jacky as an *ex officio* member. Since September the group have organised all maintenance and planting activities in the garden including the ordering of new plants and the reorganisation of the volunteer room.

Margaret Collett, one of the members of this group, has recently become a Trustee of the garden

Co-ordinator's news

It's heart warming to see the new growth of plants emerging from the ground, the Hellebores are looking particularly delightful, and people are beginning to come back to spend their lunch times in the garden.

We are very grateful for the donation to be used for attracting birds to the garden. It has enabled us to buy three bird boxes and Morello cherries which will be planted in close proximity for the birds to feast on. Thursday when it was quiet in the garden I saw four Blue tits and a few black birds

Now is the time to divide any over crowded plants, please remember us, our plant sale is on Saturday April the 26th, if you pot them up soon they'll have time to settle in their pots before the sale. Please try and label the plants before you bring them to the garden, any unwanted gardening books would be very useful.

With the better weather the volunteers and I are looking forward to working with any new helpers, but its not all hard graft! During the summer months we need people to take tours around the garden; informal training is provided. Don't forget when the clocks change the garden will be open till 6pm. Come and see me in the garden every Thursday, or phone 07870858079 or e-mail jacky.thorne@ntlworld.com



Even the rain does not deter visitors!

Benches

The surface finish of the oak seating has had a number of test treatments. It has now been decided to use the natural surface aging with routine sanding when necessary

Membership

We are continuing to look for new members. The current number is 372 and we are grateful to those of you who have joined since the last Newsletter or who have encouraged their friends to join as a result of Dan's letter included with the last issue

Garden Visitors

Lord Daffydd Elis-Thomas, Presiding Officer of the Assembly, and Andy Klom, the European Union Representative in Wales visited the garden and were given copies of the book 'Historic gardens of the Vale of Glamorgan' which includes the history of Old Hall gardens

Dates for your Diary

Plant Fair—26th April 2008, 10.30am to 3.30pm at Old Hall, Cowbridge.. The third year of this popular event

Annual General Meeting—April 15th 2008
7.30 pm in the Lesser Hall, Cowbridge