



guilhelmus Tuenen

# WELLS OLD DEANERY GARDEN PROJECT

The Old Deanery, Wells, Somerset BA5 2UG

## newsletter

ISSUE TWENTY TWO SPRING 2013

### Winter Event 2012

We were delighted to welcome many Friends and Gardeners to our well-attended Christmas Event on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November. It may have been a blustery November day outside, but inside we were kept warm with mince pies and coffee, and wonderfully entertained by Annie Maw who talked to us about the other 'Secret Gardens' in Somerset.

After her year as High Sheriff, Annie became a Director of the Bath and West Society and soon identified the annual 'Garden Show' as providing her with a worthwhile and interesting project. It would promote good horticultural practices and the importance of gardens, aesthetically and therapeutically, as well as the cultivation of vegetables and fruit. As part of her involvement, Annie established a stand entitled *The Secret Gardens of Somerset and the South West* with the intention of publicising privately owned gardens that did not have the high profile of NT or RHS gardens.

Her research led her to discover a wide and varying range of gardens that straddled the centuries from the Medieval gardens at Cothay Manor and Forde Abbey, the Tudor garden at East Lambrook Manor, to the eighteenth century of Bowood House and Sydney Pleasure Gardens, and including 19<sup>th</sup> century Kilver Court, Claverton Manor and ending with 20<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary gardens at Colesbourne and Holburne Museum in Bath.

Syon House was also mentioned by Annie, owned by the Duke of Somerset it had a direct link with the Old Deanery Garden, as William Turner played an important role in planning the garden there and it was at Syon House, that Turner wrote *The Names of Herbes* in 1548.

Annie has been particularly closely involved with the creation of the garden at the Duke of Cornwall Spinal Treatment Centre at Salisbury, where she herself was a patient for a year. Her Consultant, David Chapple, had suggested that there was space to create a garden, specifically designed for the patients to get outside, whether in wheelchairs or in their beds. He had recognised how therapeutic it was for his patients to be able to be in the fresh air and as they progressed to be able to work in the garden.

### ODG Spring Lecture



*Dean John Gunthorpe (1472-1498)*  
*his Friends and his Books*

by Miranda Young

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2013  
7.00 for 7.30pm

Bradfield Room, The Old Deanery  
Admission by ticket only

**£5** each, including a glass of wine and nibbles. Available in advance from Reception at the Old Deanery or by post from Diana Wheeler, Brandon House, 28 Milton Lane, Wells, BA5 2QS. For postal requests please enclose s.a.e. and a cheque payable to **Bath & Wells Diocesan Board of Finance**



His young son, Horatio had worked at the Centre prior to future medical training and had become involved in planning for the creation of a garden. Horatio wrote a questionnaire for the patients to complete to give some idea of what they actually wanted from a garden with the surprising result that the most important thing they wanted was to be able to grow vegetables and herbs. Very tragically, Horatio was killed whilst on a school expedition to the Arctic, and so the garden has been designed and created in his memory. Cleve West, the renowned designer, created the final design which reflected the purpose of the Centre, and included special surfaces, raised beds, and an enormous greenhouse large enough to fit in 9 wheelchairs at one time. The garden was opened in September 2012, and proved to be a huge success. Annie added that visits can be arranged which was greeted with enthusiasm by the audience.

After answering various questions, Annie was thanked most warmly for her extremely interesting talk that gave us all much food for thought – no pun intended! *S.A.H.*



## ODG Spring Lecture

The Spring Talk this year is being given by Miranda Young, who has been Education Officer at the Cathedral for a number of years, and has recently become their Education and Outreach Manager. She studied Dean Gunthorpe, his contacts and colleagues, and his book collection, for her MA at Bristol University. John Gunthorpe and William Turner, a hundred years apart, both had the benefit of an Italian university education, the one during the high Renaissance, the other during the turbulence of the Reformation in northern Europe. The beautifully decorated manuscript books Gunthorpe acquired (and which Miranda has photographed) suggest he had an interest in natural history, and some of the designs have links with the stained glass in the Old Deanery. There is more to Gunthorpe than just the guns we see carved on the wall of the north wing, overlooking the garden!

“Dean John Gunthorpe (1472-98), his Friends and his Books”. Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2013, in the Bradfield Room, 7pm for 7.30 pm. Tickets £5 each, to include a glass of wine and nibbles. Tickets available from Reception at the Old Deanery. *FN*.



Discover the man responsible for these beautiful windows, in the Gunthorpe wing, that overlooks the garden

## Turner Weekend: A Celebration

While we are marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Old Deanery Garden Project with our grand Tudor Open Day in June, we are concluding this celebratory year with a William Turner weekend at the Old Deanery on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> September. Morpeth, his birthplace, has held two successful conferences about his background, and his natural history interests. We are going to explore his later career, in and around the place where it actually happened. A preliminary flyer for the weekend is enclosed with this Newsletter. While September may seem a long way off from February, do note it in your diary. We hope this early publicity means you may be able to arrange holidays and other commitments around it. Bookings will be first come, first served, and we do not want our own members to miss out on this event. Get in touch for more details. *FN*.

## The First Important Plant Book...

William Turner and his work are now attracting considerable scholarly study, in particular Marie Adyman's forthcoming new biography of him. In this connection she has alerted us to something we must learn afresh. We have always tended to say that William Turner's *A New Herball* was “the first plant book written in English”, as the few earlier English herbals were translations from Latin or French. Now we must learn to say that *A New Herball* was “the first important plant book written in English”. It is a small but significant difference. Apparently there are two earlier plant books written in English in the 1520s. Scholarship moves on, and we have to keep up to date with it! *FN*.

*The photo of snowdrops on page 1 was provided by Marianne Adams, photos from the garden are always welcome for the newsletter. Thank you to all the contributors for this newsletter; please see page 3 for the deadline for the Summer Issue. Ed.*

## “If you don't ask you don't get”

This was heard at a general meeting when the subject of the annual Friends donations was aired. The project is ten years old this year and when the Friends of the Project was formed the minimum donation was set at £5 per person. As everyone knows £5 ten years ago is not worth as much today!

There are many Friends who donate larger sums but for those in the £5 bracket could you please consider upping it? To celebrate the *10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* how about £10? Of course, if your pen slips and you add another 'o', we wouldn't grumble! *S.R.H.*

## Talks and Snow in the Air

At the beginning of 2012 I was asked to give a talk in Banwell; the date? Sunday November 4<sup>th</sup>. Remember it? Yes, correct, it was the day North Somerset and Bristol was covered in snow. Quite unusual for snow so early.

Anyway, from that talk - with Marianne efficiently operating the power point presentation (and chipping in with the odd comment) we were asked to repeat the talk at Burnham-on-Sea on Monday January 21<sup>st</sup>. “Delighted”, I replied, “Unless it is snowing and icy”. Prophetic words in deed. Perhaps it is worth noting this talk has been postponed till May 20<sup>th</sup>. Keep a watch for snow, after all snow has been known in May! *S.R.H.*

## The Herber, Upper Italian Garden

As was discussed at the last General Meeting, the Herber is in a pretty poor state. The roses aren't flourishing and need to be moved, probably to the East Rampart. We all agreed that we needed to create something rather striking there and we asked for ideas of suitable plants to use in that bed. Sylvia very kindly donated her fee from giving a talk about the garden, towards buying some new plants for the herber. We have now received a very generous donation from Taras Kovsky and Dawn Holman, in memory of Dawn's late parents, so we hope that work can begin on revitalising the Herber in the Spring. *S.A.H.*

## Book Corner

Pamela Egan has donated a most interesting book to our Reference Collection, on its own shelf in the Resources Centre of the Old Deanery: *The John Tradescants – Gardeners to the Rose and Lily Queen* by Prudence Leith-Ross, (revised edition, 1984). Thank you very much, Pamela! *FN.*

## Have you seen?

The new book about Wells Cathedral and its setting? In it there is a very nice piece about The Old Deanery Garden, with a beautiful picture (p. 153-154). This is good news for us. The book is a good read and, almost without you realising it, very informative. It is rather like a walk round with a knowledgeable friend. I recommend it to you.

Details: *Wells Cathedral, An Architectural & Historical Guide*, by Elsa van der Zee. Obtainable from the Cathedral Shop, price £14.99. *D.W.*

## Events & Diary Dates 2013

- *Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> February, 7pm for 7.30*
- **Spring Talk**
- ‘Dean John Gunthorpe (1472-98) his Friends and his Books’ by Miranda Young
- Bradfield Room
- *Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 9.45-11am*
- General Meeting
- Bradfield Room
- *Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> April 10am-4pm*
- **Spring Open Day**
- Seed Sale & Refreshments
- *Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2-3.30pm*
- General Meeting
- Stewart Room, tea in the garden
- *June, July & August, every Wednesday, 1.30-3.30pm*
- Garden open to the public
- *Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 10am-4pm*
- **Open Day**
- *10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* of the Garden Project. Tudor style entertainment, plant stall & refreshments
- *Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> July, 9.45-11am*
- General Meeting
- Stewart Room, coffee in the garden
- *Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 9.45-11am*
- General Meeting
- Carey Room
- *Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 10am-4pm*
- **English Heritage Open Day**
- *September 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>*
- **William Turner Weekend**
- A Celebration
- *Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> November, 9.45-11am*
- General Meeting
- Stewart Room
- *Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 10.30am-12pm*
- **Friends Winter Event**
- Did Turner celebrate Christmas?
- Carey Room
- Deadline for the next newsletter is **Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> July**
- Thank you! *L.N.*

## Contact Details

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