



Culpeper's New Resource Centre by Kirstie Mogilner

When I first arrived to work at Culpeper the new building was already standing, fenced off by boards covered with painted silhouettes of garden members and awaiting finishing touches to the interior—to me it looked full of potential. I had not been involved in the years of discussion, fundraising, planning committees, blood, sweat and tears that had gone into bringing it to the garden. I had no experience of the old ramshackle office/shed that so many of you loved and mourned the loss of, I didn't know the garden before so I wasn't aware of the loss of space that was forced by the discovery of a gas mains that pushed the building forward onto the lawn. In fact to me it's hard to imagine Culpeper without the lovely York stone courtyard space that now houses the compost bins and has acted as a very natural place to BBQ and hold a party. I arrived at the final stages, the birth of the building and have found it a pleasure to work in. I thoroughly enjoyed planting up the beds around the building with volunteers and garden members—all of us working together to green and soften the edges. The role the building will take in the day to day life of the garden is slowly developing. We have trialled a few events—the wonderful room2heal story telling event and fundraiser which was a huge success, Claire Sutton (ex-garden worker) held her charity's 'Lake Malawi Projects' AGM, the Pensioners Strawberry tea, the end of summer BBQ and Funders lunch. These events all proved that the building and courtyard work well and enhance the tea hut's role as the social hub of the garden. The summer arts project and the spontaneous bunting-making day also made good use of the new space. The building's green roof gives us another area to garden and to increase the diversity of plants in Culpeper—possibly a wildflower meadow in the sky if we can find seeds the pigeons don't like the taste of. Not only does the new building provide space to expand the garden's activities with members and enables us to offer toilet facilities to those with severe mobility problems, it also provides an easily-accessible, organised and spacious tool store. This in turn means that now the tools have been relocated we can finally reclaim and turn our love and attention back to the heart of the garden - the members tea hut. As the new building breathes fresh energy and possibilities into the life of the garden it's a good time to call on all members to remember thatCulpeper is your Garden.....please bring your ideas about what would like to see happening at Culpeper to the next members general meeting on Sunday 26th Oct 2pm. Add items to the agenda posted in the Tea hut or email us with suggestions. Top of the agenda is the Tea Hut..... It's now time our beloved tea hut received some care and attention - what would you like to see happen, can you contribute time, energy or ideas—its time to take control and have your say.



CULPEPER NEWS BY ELIZABETH EVANS

Never has the Culpeper Strawberry Tea (pictured left) been such a success. The weather was perfect and the garden looked it's glorious summer best. Ninety pensioners enjoyed homemade scones, jam, tea and mountains of English Strawberries and cream. Entertainment was provided by Peter, who sang well-loved songs with rhythm, feeling and panache and inspired his audience to get up and dance on the lawn led by the Pearly Queen of Islington wearing an elegant outfit far surpassing anything seen at Ascot. The afternoon finished with a raffle full of wonderful prizes donated by garden members and friends and drawn by the local police who keep a watchful and friendly eye on the garden. An event like this takes some organising, so thanks to garden workers Kate and Kirstie for all their hard work and to members Jane, Sylvanna, Gerrard, Julie, Louisa,

James, Tom, both Pauls, Ahmet, Gareth and a donation from Chapel Market Traders (and anyone else who may have been forgotten!).

People who have been members of the Culpeper Garden for a while will remember that back in the 1990s there were two teenagers, Gemma and Kristopher, who played a great part in the garden. Kris had his own plot and was an expert on frogs, toads and newts and his sister, Gemma was brilliant at persuading market traders to donate raffle prizes for the Strawberry Tea. When they moved to Scotland we were all sad to see them go, they were such an asset to the garden. Those who knew them have not forgotten them and they have not forgotten us either. On the July 13th workday Gemma visited the garden with her husband. They live near Edinburgh and have a small son. Gemma is just as pretty, charming and funny as she always was and it was lovely to hear all her news and reminisce about old times.

CULPEPER OUTREACH WORK. Garden member Andie Scott led an outreach project gardening and painting the beautiful mural (pictured right) with members of the Drayton Park Women's Centre. The six week project saw the revamp of the centre's garden and the creation of a wall mural of six foot poppies and nasturtiums. As Jan Elson from the centre commented "The DP sessions are great, I did not realise that gardening includes spectacular murals painted on the walls!"



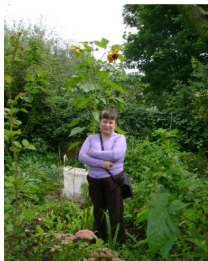
• DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Wed 8th Oct - RHS Trip 11am—4pm
- Sun 12th October - Autumn Plant Sale Time 11am-3pm
- Fri 31st October- Halloween
- Sun 26th October - General Members Meeting
- Sun 9th November - Workday & AGM
- Thurs 13th November - Trip to Kew Gardens
- Fri 19th December - Winter Solstice Party

MEMBERSHIP

Membership subscriptions for 2008 are now well overdue. Our subscription year runs Jan -Dec so if you haven't paid yet please arrange to do so NOW. Culpeper depends on the support of its members

in many ways including needing your money! Cheques to be made payable to Culpeper Community Garden can be posted to CCG, 25 Batchelor Street, N1 0EG. Or pay by hand to the garden workers Kirstie and Kate. You can contact us on 02078333951 or via email at gardenworker@gmail.com with any queries or to request a standing order form to make payment easier in the future. THANKS



CONGRATULATIONS to Garden Members Sylvanna (pictured left) and Minelle who both won First Prizes at the Islington Horticultural show. Sylvanna won for the Tallest Sunflower and Minelle for the Best Pot Plant.

CULPEPER AUTUMN PLANT SALE. SUNDAY 12TH OCTOBER.

Calling all members - we need your help. Can you spare some time to help set up the sale, to donate some plants from your plot, to make teas or cakes on the day, help sell plants? A list will be put up in the tea hut. Please sign up - the plant sales are great fundraiser for the garden - come and get involved. It will be great to see you there.

AGM & MEMBERS LUNCH

November 9th at 12.00pm.

Culpeper's AGM will be held on the November workday. We hope lots of you come along: its a relaxed and fairly informal meeting to review the year gone by and elect the management committee for the next 12 months. It is also a chance to find out what's happening at the garden, have your say, and to meet other members. Bring food and drink to share. We will also be showing the DVD of the Room2Heal storytelling evening from earlier this year and 'A Culpeper Year'.

Anyone interested in sitting on the management committee please have a chat with Kirstie or Kate before hand to find out what's involved.

GREEN PENANT SUCCESS

For the third year running Culpeper has achieved the prestigious green

pennant award for community managed public open spaces. Well done everyone!

CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN PARTY

Friday 31st October, 5-6.30pm

Come along to make masks (which you can wear on the night itself) and join in the fun and games. Bring your parents, and some food to

CULPEPER TRIPS. Culpeper members and Groups have made expeditions both near and far. Local inspirational gardens visited include Gerard's, St Lukes (more later), and King Henry's Walk Community Garden. Travelling further afield, and all of great interest were The Museum of Garden History and Tradiscant garden, The Phoenix Community Garden, The Peace Garden (pictured) where former garden worker Gareth gave a very warm welcome and warmed us with home made soup. All great fun, low cost or free, and really interesting, please join us on future trips....check the notice board in the Tea Hut for details. Planned future excursions so far include: Wednesday 8th Oct The Royal Horticultural Society Autumn Show at Vincent Square. Thurs 13th Nov Autumn Colours at Kew Gardens.



AUTUMN AMBLE (Thurs 3rd Oct) Islington's biggest annual walk. Attracting 80-100 older people each year, it is now a walking event not to be missed! This year our theme is the history of health - find out fascinating facts about the medical past of Clerkenwell. As part of the event we are collecting and displaying local people's memories of health care and home health remedies. So come prepared to share your memories, what ever your age! The walk will end with complimentary refreshments, local history information displays and some choral entertainment, courtesy of one of our local older people's centre's (TBC). As with all of the Islington's health walks, the Autumn Amble is free & there's no need to book in advance - just turn up! Emma Charlton, Walking Co-ordinator, Greenspace and Leisure, Environment and Regeneration Islington Council Tel: 020 7527 2626

NEW FROM EC1 by Heather Stabler. This autumn brought the first bountiful harvest of vegetables from mini-allotments in the St Luke's Centre's car park on Central Street, EC1. Islington Council's Youth Offending Team and other volunteers built the raised beds, and EC1 New Deal for Communities funded the project. Twenty-two plots were allocated for free to local residents who don't have access to outside space, as well as a local community group and an after school club. The allotment holders, many of whom have never gardened before, have grown a range of plants and, despite the threat of greedy squirrels and pigeons, a bumper harvest of vegetables, including potatoes, cabbages, beans, lettuces, tomatoes and peas. Some of this produce will be exhibited at the Islington Mini Horticultural Show and the Capel Manor Harvest Festival. The project was recently short-listed for Best Forgotten Corner in the Islington in Bloom awards. If it wins we'll have a good argument for taking over the whole car park with vegetables!

The St Luke's Centre's car park is also home to four bee hives which have produced a harvest for the first time this year as well. If you would like to buy some local EC1 honey or learn more about the bee keeping project, contact Alessia Bolis on alessiabolis@hotmail.com or 020 7251 9428 or 07942 781 912. Jars cost £4.50.

St Luke's Time Bank is planning a "Health & Beauty Day" which will take place on Saturday 11 October from 12 – 5pm. The day will consist of a series of workshops, classes and sessions. Some of the things you can expect to take part in, on the day, will include High & Low Impact Aerobics, Shiatsu Massage, Reflexology, Ti Chi, Hairdressing, Homeopathic Beauty Treatments, Healthy Eating & Nutrition sessions, Hand Massage & Manicures. For more information please contact the St Luke's Time Brokers, John or Jonies, on 0207 549 8181.

EC1 Green Fingers group. These evening gardening sessions are open to everyone in the EC1 area and are suitable for both beginners and more experienced gardeners. Each session will feature simple gardening tips and techniques that you can use anywhere, whether you have an outside space or just want to grow things in your flat! All materials and plants will be provided and will be free to take away. The sessions will take place at the St Luke's Centre, 90 Central Street, EC1 from 6.30-8pm and the programme is as follows:

Thurs 11 Sept – plant some indoor bulbs to flower for Christmas and/or some spring bulbs to brighten up your balcony or garden. The session will also feature how to grow salads indoors over the winter months.

Thurs 9 Oct – plant up some winter-flowering containers for some much-needed colour and interest over the winter months.

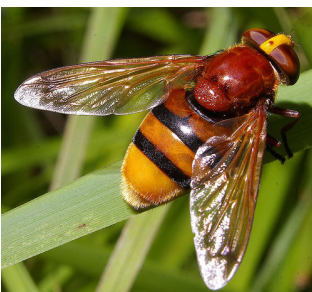
We will also look at how to grow herbs indoors and the huge variety of different ways in which they can be used. Thurs 13 Nov – create your own cactus garden – easy to look after and suitable for people who always forget to water their plants! We will also be making some food for the birds and looking at ways to attract wildlife into urban areas.

Wildlife notes by Viv Palmer

After all the excitement of nesting and rearing their babies, the birds in the garden seem to be having a holiday in summer. True, there are still the young magpies harassing the blackbirds, and the noisy alarm calls of the wrens, but it seems quiet after the spring's cacophony. This is partly because the moulting season is now in full swing. For adult birds, the moult is a period of quiet – birds often can't fly as well during the moult, so will keep a low profile. Young birds too are losing their baby feathers, and acquiring their adult plumage. So, the little spotty robins will shortly be appearing with their russet chests, and will be treated as competitors by any adult robins that they meet. Having been thrown out of their parents' territories, many young birds are heading off to find territories of their own. On the basis that there is safety in numbers, they sometimes form juvenile gangs. You may see young blue, great and even coal tits flying about together, feasting on the insects which seem to be everywhere.

Indeed, the multitude of insects makes up for the lack of bird activity in the garden. The wet summer hasn't been good for butterflies – this seems to be a country-wide phenomenon, much discussed on many of the wildlife websites. Although in Culpeper I've mainly seen cabbage white butterflies, I also saw one beautiful Comma butterfly in the wildlife area. We tend to assume that butterflies are ethereal creatures, just floating about and drinking nectar, but the male Comma is very territorial, and will defend an area of woodland against all other butterflies. The caterpillars eat nettles, elm or hops, and the adults enjoy sedum, buddleia and hebe (as do most butterfly species). The adults hibernate from about October onwards. It is interesting that the garden has attracted this species, when we've had so few of the commoner species such as Peacocks and Red Admirals, but I think it shows how useful it is to have such a variety of habitats that we can attract what is basically a woodland species.

Another spectacular insect that I spotted feeding on buddleia last week was the Giant Hoverfly (*Volucella zonaria*). When I first saw it, I thought that it was a hornet, but it just mimics this species as a defence mechanism. It is striped in chestnut, yellow and black, and is apparently spreading north from the south coast (another example of climate change affecting our fauna). The larvae hatch in wasps nests, where they live by scavenging.



Volucella zonaria, the Hornet Hoverfly

The pond has also attracted some very interesting insects. On a sunny afternoon last week, two species of dragonfly were taking advantage of the water. One was a Common Darter, its' bright red abdomen indicating that it was a male (females have an olive green abdomen). The one I saw was sunning itself on a flagstone. Hopefully it will be around for a while – dragonflies are ferocious predators of all kinds of insect pests, and the Common Darter can sometimes be seen as late as November.

Even more impressive were a pair of Blue Hawker dragonflies, rattling like toy airplanes above the pond. These are big insects, the male striped in blue, brown and green, the female in green and brown. Their larvae live in the bottom of the pond for up to three years, eating all kinds of water creatures (including tadpoles), until one night they crawl from the mud and fly away.

In the pond itself, I spotted a few tadpoles with their tiny front legs just forming – having escaped ducks, dragonfly larvae and herons, I'm keeping my fingers crossed that at least some of them survive to breed next year! There was also a Water Hog Louse, a relative of the woodlouse (which is, incidentally, the only crustacean to live on land). The Water Hog Louse bumbles about in the detritus at the bottom of the pond, scavenging on organic detritus. They can tolerate water which is low in oxygen, as can the Ramshorn Snails which are also in the pond - there are many different species of Ramshorn Snail, but with any luck these will be baby Great Ramshorn Snails, which grow to the size of a 50p piece.

So, in spite of a wet summer, the fauna at Culpeper continue to thrive, with a very wide range of species, including some unusual ones. As summer draws to a close, and autumn begins, we can look forward to the arrival of birds that spend the winter in the UK, and to the gentle lengthening of days that heralds the turning of the year.

If you see any unusual animals in the garden (or 'usual' animals doing unusual things!), do let me know – my e-mail address is viv_palmer_1999@yahoo.co.uk, and I would love to hear about the creatures that you've seen as you've been working in, or enjoying the garden.

Culpeper Projects

Kirstie's Wildlife Signs/Mosaic. We held the first wildlife sign painting workshop in the summer with artist Daisy Sheppard and it was a great success. Another is planned in October. The mosaic will take place in November/December - all details will be put on the noticeboards and emailed to all members. If you are interested contact Kirstie or Kate.

Winter Crafts at Culpeper - after the spontaneous bunting making workshop enjoyed by many in the summer. The idea of craft sessions at Culpeper is being explored - knitting, sewing, wreath making ... If you are interested or have skills you can offer let us know.

Culpeper's website - Active committee member and EPP group leader Ahmet noticed after a visit to King Henry's Walk's website and that of ex-worker Gareth that the Culpeper Website (in comparison) could do with being brought up to date and made live rather than static. Do you have ideas or opinions on the website? How can we bring it to life? Take a look at KHW's - <http://www.khwgarden.org.uk/> and Peace Garden's - <http://forestfarmpeacegarden.org/> (it has a herbalist's blog). If you have any ideas please contact Ahmet or one of the garden workers.

Bill's Bog Garden - although we were slightly defeated by the very rainy weather this summer the Bog garden project continues. Bill has been enlisting young people in the garden and Kirstie has visited some local youth groups. If you know any young people interested in getting involved talk to Kirstie and Bill.

Culpeper's Annual Summer Art by Soheila Keyani

Creating and being creative is our natural birthright; as natural as breathing air, drinking water, dreaming, eating, sleeping, and loving.

It was with great pleasure that for the 3rd year running, I was invited to run and facilitate Culpeper's annual summer art. I had the good fortune to have the space and resources to work on a one-to-one basis as well as in group, encouraging and helping each person to come out with their own unique and innate creativity and talent. "The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery." Mark van Dorren.

Culpeper has a rich mix of members and visitors from all ages, backgrounds and life conditions. It is an all embracing space. Participants to the workshops reflected this grand diversity. Altogether over 40 people, families as well as individuals participated in the workshops. The feedback was very positive and encouraging. Karen who attended last year and returned again this summer with her equally creative and talented 4 year old daughter will be having her first exhibition this Christmas. I was over the moon when I heard the good news.

Another participant Elizabeth who hadn't painted for over a decade, responded to my invitation to join in and painted to her heart's content. Along with her beautifully inquisitive 3 year old son, both mother and son enjoyed themselves, creating many pieces of art works which were exhibited on 6th September 2008.

The art workshops further inspired one member Pilar to write a story titled 'not a proper summer!' which we displayed on the exhibition day. A thought provoking, fun, and heart warming read.

"There is a voiceless cry resting in the depths of our souls, waiting for expression. Art gives the soul's feelings voice and form." Daisaku Ikeda. Thank you to all at Culpeper for providing a space where people can nurture their inner self in so many different ways. With Love. Soheila.



CULPEPER BUNTING

Thank you to Nikki for leading the group who evolved from Summer Arts (inspired by King Henry's Walk) and made beautifully designed bunting from scraps of material collected over the years. It is so colourful and decorative and has already been used at our summer party, our fundraisers party, the Islington Horticultural Show and the Capel Manor Show. Nikki has also made clever canvas cases for our two gazebos. Thank you.

NEWS FROM KING HENRY'S WALK

The Garden Classroom is a new social enterprise in Islington set up to run gardening & wildlife workshops. Initially with children age 3-11 the aim is to expand the service to other age and community groups. It has been created by Islington resident Marnie Rose.

Each two hour session takes groups of children through the basic principles of gardening and provide information about wildlife. Through demonstrations, practical activities, creative games and worksheets, the aim of the project is to increase general knowledge of our environment. A pilot starting in autumn 08 will begin sessions at King Henry's Walk Garden firstly with a local primary school with the aim of extending the activities to other clients and greenspaces in Islington in 2009. Each session will be taught by qualified and experienced workshop facilitators the gardening & wildlife workshops will teach children in inspirational settings about: organic growing principles with special regard to consideration of soil; insects & animals; composting & wormeries; the food chain – where our food comes from, harvesting and using produce; environment issues such as reduction in food miles, fresh food, cost effectiveness; physical exercise, linking with nature (grounding); practical biology, food technology; geography, weather and orienteering.

Department for Children, Schools and Families. The Growing Schools Garden - learning outside the classroom "Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances." Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto. For further information or to book a series of workshops, please contact Marnie Rose. marnierose@btinternet.com / 07974 353148

STUART LOWE TRUST GARDENING PROJECT

Virginia Low, Chair of The Stuart Low Trust sent us this: "A gardener who prefers to keep his surname anonymous has written the following article for our Newsletter, but says you can print it in yours as well. Our next Newsletter won't be out until October. I thought the piece was such a beautiful endorsement of gardening at Culpeper that we would all want to circulate it as widely as possible". "Last November, my psychologist suggested that I might benefit from joining in one of the SLT's activities. I went along to the Gardening Project on Thursday afternoons at Culpeper Garden. I am really glad that I started to go, and glad that it was this activity that I chose. It means that I have a regular thing in the week. It means that I meet new interesting people. And that I am involved with something real. You can't get more real than the earth and the seasons. To be honest, it wasn't that great when I first started, the weather was cold and there was all this mud, and nothing made sense, and I didn't know which plant was a weed and which was a good one. The only good side was that there was always a cup of tea or coffee available and other refreshments. But I persisted, and Robin from SLT, and Kirstie and Kate at the garden are all helpful and friendly and give advice and encouragement and treat you with respect. Things started to pick up with the Spring. I began to see the results of the work that we had done in the winter, and now that the summer is here, it is amazing. I would not have believed that the bit of muddy land that I first saw last November would become the mass of flowers that it is now. Visitors to the garden compliment us on our blooms. And part of the change in the garden is as a result of what I have done. That makes me feel better all round".