

News from the Head Gardener

The first frost of autumn came on November 11 - a minus 3 which was followed by storm Debbie with 40mph winds on November 13. Autumn has arrived.

Work completed

Repairs to the step to/from the Grotto have been completed. The colour match to the cement did not quite match the original colour as hoped but it should soften with time.

Work ongoing

Heavy pruning on the shrub bed opposite the Edwardian seat is all but finished. Edging and replanting the front of the bed is now ongoing to be followed by wood chip mulching.

The shrub bed where the Lawson Cypress once stood is being pruned back and the area around where the tree was has been cleared of weed and self-seeds just leaving the best ones to continue growing, Re planting is ongoing using stock from around the garden and more shrubs will be bought to add interest. Leaf clearing is in full swing and will probably continue until Christmas. We are still waiting for the tree contractor to come onto site to clear up a hung up tree near the ship area in the woodland walk and then pollard a sweet chestnut tree close to the forest school area.

Work Planned.

Work coming up will be tidying the path edging around the garden and turning the compost heap. The King Charles tree has been ordered and is due in from the nursery soon. After pruning to the two large shrub beds has been completed, pruning to smaller areas around the path walk will be started, subject to time and the weather.

Repairs to the subsided cobbles and paving next to the Swiss Cottage will be investigated and made good by our conservation volunteers.

A method to record the servicing of the machinery is in place and service work on the mowers etc will be completed over the winter.

All work done and planned is greatly helped by the volunteers who now find themselves as the new garden team. Without them the job would be so much more difficult. Many thanks for their enthusiasm and most of all their hard work in all conditions.

A meeting with Debbie Land from the SVAS is planned for the new year aiming to make up our volunteer numbers for 2024 on Mondays and Thursdays.

Tony Young

Art and Photography Exhibition and Competition

The theme for this year's exhibition and competition was British landscapes, gardens and wildlife. The private viewing, judging and awards took place at 6pm on 22 September in the Garden Room and light refreshments were provided.

There were around 60 exhibitors and winners in the various categories are listed below. Pictures and results are shown on the Friends of the Swiss Garden (FOSG) website. Pictures have not been included in this Newsletter because they make the document too large to send by e mail.

All visitors to the Exhibition had the opportunity to vote for their three favourite artworks irrespective of any category, known as the "People's Choice".

People's Choice, First prize

Snow drops sprinkled beneath silver birch, Anglesey Abbey, Sarah Clee

People's Choice, Second prize

Kingfisher, Huw Lewis

People's Choice, two joint Third prizes
Sunrise, Sue Levy and Bright Eyes. David Brewerton

There were also four categories on which entrants were judged:

- Under 16's artwork - in any medium
- Adult painting or drawing
- Adult photograph
- Adult sculpture or mixed media

Under 16's artwork, Winner
Flower Power, Renee Brantigan

Adult painting or drawing, First prize
Fantastic Mr Finch, Jasmine Rosher

Adult painting or drawing, Second prize
The Trossachs, Denise Rudgley

Adult painting or drawing, Third prize
Maisy Cow, Christine Kirby

Adult photography, First prize
Butterfly on Buddleia, Huw Lewis

Adult photography, Second prize
Mosaic of Pansy Flowers, Angela Baker

Adult photography, Third prize
The end of Harvest, John Ayres

Adult mixed media, Winner
Secret Lagoon, Lauren Mitchell

Halloween Haunt

The Halloween event was held on Saturday 28 October from 5pm. The prelude to the Garden in Lights event - more of a Garden without Lights - the Halloween event made a welcome return to the Swiss Garden after an absence of 3 years. Having agreed to organise this some of my madder ideas were successfully incorporated - use of the White Rose bus, a dead tree decorated to look like a person, theme for the volunteers of Victorian/steam punk. Cue confusion all round as to quite what to wear.

Months of planning followed including recruiting willing volunteers from the garden, the vintage bus team and engineering. I also bought some props (one of the best bits), made or repaired various items and carved a pumpkin or two. That part was not so great as pumpkins are a bit smelly. The professional pumpkin carving kit from Amazon proved very useful to put holes in plastic skeleton heads to decorate a wreath.

From the start of the event visitors wore glow bangles to ward off anything nasty they might encounter in the garden; had a rummage in the feelie boxes and an exciting ride on a spectacularly decorated bus.



Tour guides led groups around the garden to be confronted by several very vocal jumper outs/spooky sound effects/ weird lighting and objects and pumpkins carved by volunteers in the week before. Spooky lighting glowed and rather a lot of green plastic eyeballs watched the fun.



Based on a story written by FOSG committee member David Ingram, imagining the origins of the garden - diamond mining, large white dog, vindictive Duchess - the four story tellers did a great job conveying how the Swiss Garden might have developed if it actually had diamond mines underneath it.

Despite a forecast for an 80% chance of heavy rain at 5pm (our start time) the rain held off until 9pm (near our finish time) and wasn't too heavy.

You knew it was going to be a good night when Cousin It rocked up wearing sunglasses (in the dark!) declaring he “couldn’t see a thing” and many of the children had imaginative outfits - a dragon, a small cute pumpkin. The knife in the head running from ear to ear was interesting. The advert encouraging dressing up obviously worked.

After the conclusion of the story in the grotto the visitors all made it safely back to the cafe for themed cakes and other goodies. They all seemed to enjoy the event and were suitably spooked.

Special mention to Julie Clark whose artistic skills with the “pop out heads” and balloon board in the cafe and numerous other painting skills including her own face were amazing. We will be calling her Wonder Woman in future for all the hard work she put in completing loads of other jobs as well.

My thanks to an extremely cheerful, willing, enthusiastic, brilliant bunch of volunteers who all helped make the event a great success.

Hilary Davidson
Treasurer, Friends of the Swiss Garden
Committee

Shuttleworth in Lights

Literally shining the light on what makes Shuttleworth unique – the 199 year old Regency style Swiss Garden and the world-famous Shuttleworth Collection full of vintage aircraft and vehicles.

When the sun goes down the Swiss Garden and Hangars are illuminated in a wonderful display of big, bold, colour, showcasing the wonderful natural features of our landscape and heritage.

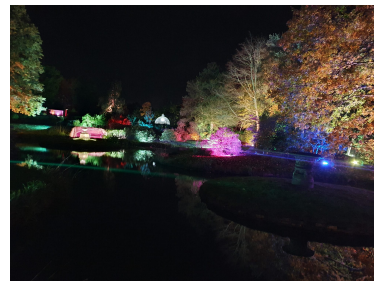
Events are taking place from 1 to 17 December, Fridays to Sundays. There are 7 sessions every evening at 20 minute intervals between 5pm and 7 pm. Tickets are available on line on the Shuttleworth website with a discount for FOSG members.

Begin the visit with a cup of hot chocolate or maybe even mulled wine from the coffee pod before purchasing glow sticks at the box office and making your way through the gates and into the historic Swiss Garden – lit up in spectacular new ways.

The Swiss Cottage, Grotto, Chapel, rockery, bridges, vases, trees & shrubs – the Swiss Garden was constructed 199 years ago. New views can be discovered as you walk around the historic garden.

Take your time in the garden before heading through to the Runway Café to be warmed with hot snacks, drinks and treats from the counter – maybe even take a trip into the Gift Shop to pick up those last minute Christmas gifts!

The final part of the illuminated trail – The Collection – takes you through the 100+ years of aviation and automotive history packed into our six hangars; from the WW1 aircraft that soared above no-man’s land to those that have starred in Hollywood blockbusters, steam engines, buses, motorbike and carriages and so much more.



Shuttleworth House Christmas Market

The Christmas Market is being held on 9 and 10 December between 10 am and 4pm (last entry 3.30 pm).

Entry is free (donations are welcome) and trade stalls will be positioned around the grand rooms of Shuttleworth House and the Garden Suite for visitors to enjoy the stunning interiors as they shop from a variety of food, craft and gift stalls. Some of the areas are only accessible via steps.

Coffee and cake will be available in the Garden Suite.

Parking is separate from the main visitor attraction and will be located on the Parkland by Shuttleworth House. Please follow parking signage on the day.

Please note that if you wish to visit the Collection, Swiss Garden or Shuttleworth in Lights you must purchase a valid admission ticket.

Dogs are sadly not permitted inside Shuttleworth House, Swiss Garden or Collection Hangars but are welcome outside for a walk around the parkland and house grounds. Assistance dogs welcome.

Mind BLMK Mental Elf 2023

Mind BLMK will be hosting a fundraising event 'Mental Elf' on Sunday 10 December at Shuttleworth with an exclusive fun run route around the grounds.

Mental Elf is a unique event which focuses on bringing people together, not only to fundraise, but to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing. It promotes the benefits of physical activity, connecting with people and doing something to help others.

All proceeds will help fund their key mental health and wellbeing services in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. Each entrant will receive a victory medal and other exclusive goodies.

It's an inclusive and non-competitive event, accessible and open to all ages and abilities, and of course, Christmas fancy dress is very much encouraged

Santa is going to be paying a visit to the Mental Elf fundraising event and there are slots to meet him from 10:30am to 2:50pm. The ticket price to meet Santa in his grotto is £5, plus a booking fee, per child. Each ticket includes 5 minutes with Santa per child, a gift for every child, as many photos as parents wish to take and more than one parent can accompany a child. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

This event is put on by a third party, please contact the event organisers directly via their website – Mental Elf 5k 2023 – Mind BLMK (mind-blmk.org.uk)

Winter Talks Programme

Shuttleworth are introducing a new Winter Talks programme. Free talks will be held every Thursday from 11 am to midday in the Discovery Hub. The programme is still being developed but you may be interested in the following

- 4 January Shuttleworth House
- 18 January History of the Swiss Garden

Shuttleworth House Open Weekends 2024

Shuttleworth House will open to the public **free of charge** from 10:30am to 3.30 pm on

- Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 January 2024
- Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 January 2024

Visit the Grade II* House set within the historic Lakeside Parkland. Inside, the rooms are full of original period detail, including a Victorian Grand Piano, enormous chandeliers, gold-leafed ceilings and panelled walls.

Parking is separate from the main visitor attraction and will be located on the Parkland by Shuttleworth House. Please follow parking signage on the day.

If you wish to visit the Collection or Swiss Garden, you must purchase a valid admission ticket.

Shuttleworth House Wedding Show

Visit Shuttleworth House for a Wedding Show on Sunday 18 February 2024 from 11am to 3pm. A registration form is available on the Shuttleworth website and admission is free.

Set in 425 acres of historic parkland, Shuttleworth offers a wide range of wedding options all of which are perfect to celebrate your special day.

The dedicated Weddings team will be on hand for exclusive private show-rounds of Shuttleworth House and Parkland, Please book an appointment on arrival to request a tour.

Diary Dates

A reminder of potential future events:

2023

1-17 December	Shuttleworth in Lights
9 and 10 December	Christmas Market
10 December	Mind BLMK Elf Fun Run

2024

4 January	Shuttleworth House talk
18 January	Swiss Garden talk
20 and 21 January)	Shuttleworth House
27 and 28 January)	Open Weekends
18 February	Wedding Show

RHS Garden magazine December 2023

The Swiss Garden is mentioned in a short partner garden article in the RHS Garden magazine for December 2023.

Memorial Tree Planting

Following the planting of a tree in the garden last year to commemorate her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's platinum jubilee and her dedicated and lifelong service to this country, it is intended to plant another tree to commemorate King Charles III's Coronation.

Diary dates in the Summer 2023 edition of Clippings indicated that the second tree planting ceremony would take place in Autumn on a date to be finalised. A date has still to be finalised and further information will be provided on the FOSG website in due course: www.friendsoftheswissgarden.org.

A favourite tree of King Charles III is the Indian Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus Indica*) and this is the tree that will be planted in honour of his Coronation.

Winter walks in the Swiss Garden

Guided weekly walks in the garden are in the process of being arranged. Once details have been finalised information should be available on both the Shuttleworth and the FOSG websites.

Swiss Garden 200 year Anniversary in 2024

You will have noticed that the text in Shuttleworth in Lights refers to the 199 year old Swiss Garden. 2024 will therefore be the 200 year anniversary of its inception.

The Committee is currently considering appropriate ways to recognise and celebrate the bi-centennial and would welcome suggestions from members to assist their deliberations. Please forward suggestions to the FOSG website (see previous column).