

News from the Head Gardener

The new Head Gardener, Tony Young, took up post on 17 July.

He has provided the following information on his background:

Leaving school at 16 I went to work for a local landscape gardener which led to me taking a full time National Certificate in Horticulture at Merristwood in Surrey. On leaving college a year later I took a position as an experimental gardener at the MAFF station in Harpenden growing horticultural and agricultural crops on trial plots and looking after the grounds. Two years or so later I left and worked for the Agricultural Research Council at Rothamstead in the station grounds and manor house. I then moved on to work for Hertfordshire County Council Education Department as a groundsman gardener across their schools in Harpenden. Around now I studied for the City and Guilds Phase four Agriculture and Horticulture Business Management which took about two years to complete. I then became self-employed for 15 years, looking after private gardens large and small and grounds of blocks of flats. In the background I bought 10 acres of land at Upper Caldecote that was growing pick your own strawberries. I developed the business further by adding more soft fruit enterprises until the market dropped off and was no longer viable. I worked for a year at Shuttleworth College in the Writtle days on the grounds, gardens and airfield. The chance of running a grounds maintenance contract for Waterer's Landscape at the MOD base at Chicksands was too good to miss and I did this for four years until the contract came to an end. I had a brief time working as a contract supervisor in St Albans running the parks, open spaces, play areas and shrub beds then worked for myself again before going to Bedford School as a gardener then to their nature reserve at Ickwell as the warden whilst still gardening at the school. The school created a role for me as Head Gardener until I left in 2022. Since then I have been self employed again and also had a part time job in a

Homebase garden centre. The position at the Swiss Garden was advertised, I applied, was successful and so here I am .

I am looking forward to using my wide gardening experience for the benefit of this unique and historic garden.



Farewell

Steve Morris, the remaining member of the permanent garden staff, who had agreed to stay on in order to provide a formal handover to the new Head Gardener, left on Friday 28 July.

His ongoing support has been very much appreciated and means that there has been a continued experienced presence in the garden. He will be missed and we wish him well for the future

Conservation

General

We are sad to announce that part-time Conservation Steward, Julia Sanderson, will be leaving Shuttleworth in August. We have three conservation volunteers who we hope will continue to support the valuable work that goes into monitoring and conducting minor conservation-led repairs to the garden's historic fabric

Corinne Price

Message from Julia Sanderson

I have always been passionate about the Swiss Garden since I was first introduced to it as a child. Since then I have been involved with it through employment or volunteering.

I began my current conservation work at the garden in the summer of 2021 and have gained three conservation volunteers who have been a great help in assisting with the conservation work carried out in the garden. To date we have cleaned all of the stone urns and vases throughout the garden, the marble well head and the wooden sculptures in the Woodland. As the objects are subjected to the great British weather cleaning and maintaining them is a continual process, particularly in the wetter parts of the year. Additionally we carry out regular checks to monitor the condition of the buildings and historical objects in the Swiss Garden and report any damage. We also monitor the relative humidity of the interior of the Swiss Cottage and check for harmful species inside and outside the building. We are currently working on restoring the cobbles in various parts of the garden.

It has been exciting to work as part of a team in helping preserve elements of the history of the Swiss Garden and ensuring it can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Friends of the Swiss Garden Diary dates

A reminder of potential future events:

1 September	Swiss Garden Guidebook Launch
11-22 September	Art and Photography Exhibition and Competition
28 October	Halloween
Autumn date (not finalised)	Tree planting ceremony for King Charles III Coronation

Unfortunately the Online Pumpkin Competition planned for October/November has had to be cancelled due to temporary administrative difficulties.

Art and Photography Exhibition and Competition

The fourth Art and Photography Exhibition and Competition will be taking place from 11 to 22 September, with the private viewing, judging and awards taking place at 6pm on 22 September in the Garden Room. Light refreshments will be provided.

The Art competition is open to any amateur artist (ie those who do not earn a substantial part of their living by selling their art). Entrants do not need to be a member of the Friends of the Swiss Garden so please persuade friends and relations to enter the exhibition and competition.

The theme for this year's exhibition and competition is British landscapes, gardens and wildlife. This may be interpreted in as literal or general sense as you wish. Entries are invited in the following four categories and entrants can submit more than one artwork/photograph either within the same competition category or in different categories:

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

Further information is available on the Friends' website:

www.friendsoftheswissgarden.org

A reminder that the deadline for receipt of artwork/photographs at the Shuttleworth shop is **FRIDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER**

Swiss Garden Guidebook and Launch



The Swiss Garden Guidebook, funded by the Friends of the Swiss Garden, is now on sale in the Shuttleworth shop. Priced at £9.99 (don't forget your Friend's discount) it gives a wonderful and illustrated summary of the garden's history, the families who created and developed it and some of their stories, the garden's feature areas and structures and information about seasonal plants and wildlife. It will hopefully answer any burning questions you may have had about the garden and is a lovely keepsake for visitors to take home with them .

On Friday 1 September Twigs Way (writer) and John Williams (designer) are coming to Shuttleworth to promote the guidebook. They will be in the Discovery Hub from 11am to 1pm to speak about the process of writing, editing and publishing the guidebook and can even sign your copy, whether purchased in advance or on the day. Members of the Friends Committee will also be there - why not come along and enjoy a slice of cake and a cup of tea or coffee from the the cafe, or tie it in with a visit to the garden?



Halloween Haunt



Come along to the Swiss Garden on Saturday 28th October from 5pm and enjoy a guided tour and eerie encounters within the garden. We have a unique Victorian ghost story for you which may raise a few shivers! Included in the ticket price is some children's entertainment in the Discovery Hub afterwards. The Runway Cafe will be open for refreshments and there may be a chance to enjoy a spooky bus ride if you dare!

Tickets now on sale at shuttleworth.org/product/fosg-halloween-haunt.



RHS Partner Garden of the Year Competition 2023

The RHS is once again inviting its members to vote for their favourite "Feel Good" Partner Garden in recognition of the positive impact gardens have on our health and wellbeing.

So if you love visiting the Swiss Garden cast your vote and say what the garden means to you.

Vote at rhs.org.uk/pgoty and voting is open until 12 noon 29 September 2023.