

Garden Update 10 July 2013

Well as some of you may know sadly Steven Allmark passed away early in June – he was sitting in the Garden cooking food for everyone and sharing his glorious radish on day and gone the next and we miss him very much

Steven was a great guy, peacemaker and brilliant at getting things to work. Including us humans So we have been quite busy over the space of the month of June getting ready for the Govan Fair Fun Day event – apparently some folk were so impressed with Steven they wanted to do an interview with him. I should say so. We hope that when time has healed a bit we can have a page so that family members can recount stories about Steven, because there were many and they were all amazing

We were joined in June by John MacAndrew, a gentleman full of fire, ability and knowledge who has years of working on various historic project including the Glenlee and the Skylark IX which is being refitted for the Dunkirk Flotilla, having been raised from the bottom of the River Leven at Balloch and recognised as being a Dunkirk Veteran

Chris Wright and his team have been into the garden several times to help cut the grass and trim the hedges in order to keep the front garden and orchard looking smart – thanks so much guys it looks great, and Michelle and Chris ZenthenJames have been working hard with slates to create beautiful paths which look very smart

Chris and Tiger were a lucky find – we met them outside the garden one night trying to retrieve some pallets the young team had chucked over for easy access in the future – guys!!!

Chris has been slowly tidying up the garden, sweeping here hoeing there, trying not to worry about being unemployed – why he is unemployed is a mystery, but currently our gain

So far plants seem to be doing well this summer, which is useful, because the kids keep running off the water. Or were until Daniel and Chris turned the butts around. Luckily for us other water butt handles are broken so a little harder to switch on.

Shearer Bee Candle Project

Well this was very interesting. We spent a week potting up and caring for plants to go into the what turned out to be hard core subsoil – no topsoil at all just grass and moss.

But the pupils of St Saviours are made of tougher material than that and happily waded in with pickaxe and gloves to haul out stones galore, which they used to make a bee cairn. We have heard about [Yacouba Sawadogo](#), who grew trees to stop the desert by planting seed with balls of manure mix. We barrowed a good a mix of leaves, compost and manure from the garden, dug holes and trenches in the tiny space we concentrated on, which was still full of stones, and lined them with moss. Then we added the compost mix, and planted peas, chives, wall flowers, and other been plants on top. Shearer Candle workers kindly watered by hand with buckets for a couple of days, until it rained and we are pleased to report that while the site is a pretty sorry mess, the plants are all still alive even after the heat.

We are hoping that the organic matter and moss will hold the moisture in after the rain, under the soil and the stones will reflect away the heat, and protect from wind. It will be interesting to see if the plants have survived by start of term time for the students to see. The good news is that minutes after we had

planted the last of the plants, the bees had already found the flowering plants, and we have not taken out any of the current bee friendly flora to boot.

We have tried asking for topsoil from builders but now may have a source for decent affordable compost either from Scottish Hydro partner plant in Linwood, or from [GP Plantscape](#) so fingers crossed Shearer's won't have to put up with the eyesore for much longer and the bees will enjoy the plants we have been growing from seed waiting in the garden

Talking of which the garden is quite buzzing with the happiest of bees, they are holding tails quite high, the phacelia is a huge success, as are other plants. Cabbage seedlings, broccoli, lettuce, herbs including the thyme and chives are doing well. And we planted out some more stock, marigold, sweet william, courgettes and beans. Seedlings have been coming up like mad and Steven is keeping us busy trying to find somewhere to put them all safely.

Actually the beans and peas are not doing very well this year considering the amount of seed we have put in the ground. Usually they do quite well. And out of the three boxes in the pergola space, the middle one is a bit sad, which is strange. The same mix of leaves, compost and manure were put into each. It is a puzzle. The same goes for some of the large tyre planters. Some plants are happy while others just fade away. Rosa, our expert is on holiday til August, but we may just try to start some more seed in case we have a long summer.

The roses are beginning to flower which is lovely, the first one came out on the day of Steven's funeral, so we took a small bouquet of garden flowers down, including some of his radish flowers which are quite beautiful. The front garden has been welded off from the rest of the space, so we access it from the park. We have weeded part of the outer bed and planted sunflowers, also by the corner of the fence coming into the park where the soil had been turned by new fence works in the park

And we put some plants including sunflowers into the beds in the front garden, weeded out more thistle and fireweed, but left some to grow for the bees and birds

Some of the roses are promising to grow fast over the fence already and some of the brambles have taken too

The fruit garden is coming along if swamped a little in phacelia, but since the plants are young, having been taken from our own plants early this year, we will probably leave the phacelia be. We may take cuttings later to grow outside the front fence. Gooseberries should thrive there.

The strawberries have been popular and sweet and we have already given away some cabbage leaves, strawberries, kale, herbs, lettuce, potatoes – they are coming up everywhere – and beetroot.

And the weather is scorching

We had a brilliant meeting with the community police and are hoping to hear more from them with regard to the building upgrade later

meanwhile we have in our spare time been working on documents which will we hope get the building project under way, including a constitution, and a couple of architects have visited the site along with a roofing company and are keen to get started – all we need is a team committed to turning up to meetings to get this thing going – any volunteers?