

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter

The long days are full of sunshine at the moment. We have lots of events and activities for adults and children over the coming months and it is a great time to see the park and gardens. See our website for more details.

Summer Days at Gatton

For our staff and volunteers the summer at Gatton can seem to pass in a blur—we are all so busy! We welcome most of our visitors during these hectic few months—school groups, children on holiday activities, additional Open Days and over one thousand people to Gatton Country Fair. And for the Park and Gardens team there are never enough hours for weeding and mowing! But if we can snatch a few moments where could they be better spent than watching the long grass of the meadow shimmer in the breeze or the damselflies darting over the ponds at glorious Gatton!



The Gatton Trust

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A sad goodbye

On Monday 30th June we said a sad goodbye to one of our volunteers, at a beautiful ceremony at St Martins Church in Farnham. Andy Helsdon passed away suddenly in May and the news was a shock to us all. He volunteered as a Park Warden Assistant here at Gatton Park in 2012 - 2013. He is very fondly remembered as part of our team, bringing exceptional enthusiasm to every job, along with great warmth and a wicked sense of humour. His family told us that he really enjoyed his time here and had many lovely memories of his time at Gatton. All our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

Wildlife Watchers Required!

Are you a keen bird watcher, snake spotter or mammal tracker? Kate Thompson, our parkland warden, will be spending some of the summer undertaking wildlife surveys at Gatton to improve our understanding of the park's habitats and species. If you have an area of expertise that we could draw on, or are just keen to help our then please contact our volunteers co-ordinator Fern Warwick-Ching.

Recent wildlife sightings: Grass Snakes, a Pygmy Shrew, a Little Owl, Buzzards, Ravens, Roe Deer, Kingfisher, Tree Creeper and a Barn Owl.

A Sign of Quality

We are pleased to announce that The Gatton Trust has been awarded the Quality Mark from the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom. The Trust had to ensure that its procedures and policies met a standard for best practice in our field. Thank you to Education Officers Gillian Jones and Sara Wright for their hard work on this.

Forthcoming Children's Events

Sun 3rd August Gardens and Grounds Open *See Adults' Events*

Mon 4th August Fairy Fantasy! (4 – 7 yrs)

Discover the fairies living in Gatton's gardens. Make fairy gardens and accessories to take home.
10am – 12noon or 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Cost: £6 per child

Wed 6th & Fri 8th August Toddler Tales and Trails (2 – 4 yrs)

Enjoy the story of The Owl and the Pussycat and go for a walk around the park to bring the story to life. Return to create artwork linked to the story.
10am – 11.30am or 1.30pm – 3pm
Cost: £6 per child

Thu 7th August Family Treasure Hunt (4 – 7 yrs)

Follow clues around the Park to find the treasure!
10am – 12noon or 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Cost: Adults free £6 per child

Wed 13th August Toddler Tales and Trails (2 – 4 yrs)

Enjoy the story of Where's Spot? and go for a walk around the park to bring the story to life. Return to create artwork linked to the story.
10am – 11.30am or 1.30pm – 3pm
Cost: £6 per child

Thu 14th August Jungle Art (8 yrs +)

Make your own jungle art scene using lots of art techniques
10am – 2pm Cost: £8 per child

Fri 15th August A Wild Night Out! Family Camping

Pitch your tent (from 5pm): enjoy a camp fire (with food), bat and moth hunts and games. Sleep over and enjoy a cooked breakfast. *Activities start at 7pm; Cost £55 per family of 4 (extra children 4yrs+ £15 each)*

Mon 18th August

Make a Mobile Case (8+ years)

Work with an artist to create your own unique case for a mobile or tablet from felt. 10am – 2pm Cost: £15 per child

Wed 20th & Fri 22nd August Toddler Tales and Trails (2 – 4 yrs)

Enjoy the story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar and go for a walk around the park to bring the story to life. Return to create artwork linked to the story. Cost: £6 per child
10am – 11.30am or 1.30pm – 3pm

Wed 20th August Bat Night (6 – 12 yrs)

Watch bats flying over the ponds and learn lots about these amazing creatures.
7pm – 9 pm Cost: £6 per child

Thu 21st August Pirate Challenge (4 – 7 years)

Games and art on a pirate theme.
10am – 12noon or 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Cost: £6 per child

Tue 26th August Fairy Fantasy! (4 – 7 yrs)

Discover the fairies living in Gatton's gardens. Make fairy gardens and accessories to take home.
10am – 12noon or 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Cost: £6 per child

Wed 27th & Fri 29th August Toddler Tales and Trails (2 – 4 yrs)

Enjoy the story of The Princess and the Wizard and go for a walk around the park to bring the story to life. Return to create artwork linked to the story.
10am – 11.30am
or 1.30pm – 3pm Cost: £6 per child

Wed 27th August Moth Night

(6 – 12 yrs) Find out more about moths and check out the moth trap to discover which moths live at Gatton.
7pm – 9 pm Cost: £6 per child

Thu 28th August Geocaching Challenge (8 – 12 yrs)

Use a GPS to discover the hidden clues around the park
10am – 12noon or 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Cost: £6 per child

Would you like to receive mailings about our events and activities? Please send your postal and email address to us and tell us whether you would like information on adult or children's courses, or both.

News from the Education Team

This summer term is proving to be as busy as ever for the education staff and volunteers. This year many of our younger visitors have been discovering life in the ponds on our new "Big Bad Fish" programme. The children (aged 4 and 5) listen to a story, make a tadpole and then look at the creatures living in our rock garden ponds. As a record of their discoveries they make a headband with pictures of the animals stuck on. "The combination of outdoor activities, artwork and stories is perfect for this age group" explained Education Manager Louise Miller, "The children have really enjoyed it".

World War I Remembered

On four hot days in June, some of our education staff and volunteers were on the 'frontline' at special history education days at local National Trust property Reigate Fort. Pupils from Royal Alexandra and Albert School, Warwick School and Reigate School were invited to step back to the time of the Great War. They wrote letters home from the Front, ate authentic food and undertook army training from a living history group. Bridget Smithson, our acting Education Manager developed the sessions alongside experts on military history and the activities were a resounding success with teachers and students.

The Frontline Surrey Project was led by Surrey Hills. It also involved an exciting new production by Gatton Community Theatre. A new script was written by Elizabeth Godber based on local stories and included smugglers, pilots and highwaymen. The performances of 'Tales of Surrey Hills' took place at the end of June at Reigate Fort and involved 45 actors and a further 30 people backstage. The project is supported by The National Lottery working through the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Forthcoming Adult Events

Sun 3rd August

Gardens and Grounds Open

Enjoy a walk around the park, free activities available for children.

1pm – 5pm. Adults £4 Children free

Mon 11th – Fri 22nd August

Explore Open Days for Families

Park and gardens open, free children's play trail and activities. Why not bring a picnic? Light refreshments available. Open daily from 12noon – 4pm. Adults £4

Tue 26th – Fri 29th August

Tea in the Japanese Garden

Why not treat your friends and family to morning or afternoon tea in our Japanese tea house? Surrounded by nature, enjoy exclusive use of the garden for a cream tea or variety of cakes, tea and coffee. Buggy ride included! Morning & afternoon slots available. Max 6 adults per group.

Cost: Adults £10 per person. Children £5 each. (£40 min charge). £10 Deposit required to reserve booking. Advance booking only: Tel. 01737 649068

Sat 6th September Felt making

Create a Cobweb felt scarf or 3d ipad case (or similar item)

10am - 4 pm Cost: £40 including materials

Sun 7th September

Gardens and Grounds Open

Enjoy a walk around the park, free activities available for children.

1pm – 5pm. Adults £4 Children free

Thu 11th September

Heritage Day Tours

10 am, 2pm and 3pm Meet at St. Andrew's Church lych gate.

Free. Advance booking only: Tel. 01737 649068

Friday 19th September

Outdoor cinema By Luna Cinema

Dirty Dancing Doors 6pm for a 7pm start.

Bring a picnic or refreshments available to purchase on the night.

Tickets available from www.thelunacinema.com

Sun 21st September 'Capability' Brown's Vision for Gatton

A tour of the whole of Gatton Park to learn about Brown's vision for Gatton and how this landscape is managed today. Meet at Wray Lane car park notice board. Good level of fitness required.

1pm – 4pm Cost: Adults £10 Children £2 includes tea/cake

Sat 4th October Screen Printing

Using your own image or art work to create your own screen for printing on textiles.

10 am - 4 pm Cost: £45 including all materials

Sun 5th October Gardens and Grounds Open

Come and discover more about apples and orchards, with activities for all ages.

Enjoy a walk around the park, free activities available for children.

1pm – 5pm Cost: Adults £4 Children free

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Volunteering at Gatton Park



Gatton Country Fair!

It was a record breaking event for us this year with more visitors than ever!!

New this year was a huge reptile & amphibians display, a Punch & Judy show, Paint Spinning (using a bike wheel and pedal to create art – and a lot of mess!) and lots of new and interesting stalls, including a Wildlife charity who brought their own pet owl and an organisation that offered to fix bikes for free.

We had an amazing amount of support and help from our volunteers! Talking to everyone at the end, it sounds like all were really pleased and impressed by how it went and we're already taking ideas and making plans for another amazing event next year.

Farewell Bridget!

In June, we sadly said goodbye to Bridget Smithson, who had been covering as Education Manager since July last year. Taking a break from her previous position teaching at a primary school, as she wanted to explore outdoor learning. With all the pond dipping, bug hunting and camp building that goes on with our Education Team she says she has experienced a lot to take to her next role! She thoroughly enjoyed her time here, saying thanks to all staff and volunteers for being so friendly and welcoming, and hopes to stay in touch.



Summer 2014 Volunteer's BBQ

As we do every year, in June we put on a BBQ for all of our staff and volunteers, to say thank you and as a good chance for people to meet each other or catch up with old friends.

We were expecting a big turn-out – not least in anticipation of the glorious sunshine forecast for the day!

About 60 people came and relaxed on the parterre, there was plenty of food to go round and with some great help from some of the volunteers the day was very enjoyable for everyone.

And of course a massive thank you to everyone for all your passion, enthusiasm and pride for Gatton Park!!

Current Volunteering opportunities

The volunteers at Gatton make it what it is. If you would like to get involved there are many different ways you can help out.

Garden restoration and maintenance:

Since 1996, the garden restoration volunteers have brought back to life the rock and water garden, the Japanese garden and areas of parkland. These areas need continuing development and maintenance. You don't have to be a gardener to help us but any experience would be useful.

Parkland Management Assistant:

Come and help the Park Warden with the maintenance and development of the park. Work involves hands on woodland and grassland management, habitat creation and surveying.

Estate Tour Guides:

Gatton Park has a rich heritage that we are keen to share with as many people as possible. This opportunity provides you with the chance to develop tours around the park and gardens by using the resources of our recently developed archive. If you have a passion for history and a natural flair for talking to groups, Gatton Park provides a wonderful setting for you to develop your interests. Basic training in how to use the archive and deliver park and garden tours will be given.

Kitchen Garden Maintenance:

An area of kitchen garden has been reinstated by volunteers, for use mainly by the children of the RAA School. You could work in the allotments preparing them for winter or alongside teachers working with children. It would be great if you have any gardening/food growing experience though this is not essential.

Can you help the Education Team?

We need help on a wide range of tasks. These include:

- Office Manager, look after the office when staff are out with school groups. Manning the phone, taking bookings, giving info on events, checking emails
- Helping with or leading groups of children on indoor and outdoor studies and activities
- Administrative help, such as computer work and promotional mailings
- "Blue Peter" volunteers – cutting, sticking, colouring, laminating – to prepare for children's activities
- Helping out at special events or with weekend activities
- Marketing or assisting with fundraising

We are happy for volunteers to come anytime during the week that fits in with your schedule.

If you would like more information on our volunteering opportunities please call or email us. Our contact details are on the front page