

Garden Post



Helping families in crisis

We're delighted to announce our merger with sister charity, the Royal Fund for Gardeners' Children (RFGC). Perennial has been providing help for the families of horticulturists since the charity was founded in 1839, but this merger enables us to broaden the scope of our assistance.

Perennial will be giving desperately needed help, support and encouragement to children and young people whose lives have been affected by the death of one or both parents, or who are experiencing other difficult circumstances.

We will continue to provide the help previously offered by RFGC in the form of grants, educational bursaries or regular payments, but in addition children will now have the extra support of our casework service. Many of the children we come across are facing trauma and grief or have

their home life and education disrupted by events entirely beyond their own control, so the benefit of a caseworker who can act as an advocate and advisor is immense.

Perennial's Chairman Sir Roger Singleton - a former Chief Executive of Barnardo's - said: "The welfare and interests of children has been at the heart of this decision; the merger will ensure a seamless service for the greater benefit of both the children and adults within any family that we help."

Turn to P3 to read about how we were able to help one family rebuild their lives in the wake of bereavement.

If you would like to make a donation to support our work with horticulturists' children and families, please use the slip on page 4, telephone 0845 676 0636 or go to our website.

Friends indeed!

We have many friends across the country helping to fundraise - this issue of Gardening Post is highlighting the work of some of Perennial's most stalwart supporters.

Over the last seven years Oatridge College staff and students have helped out in many ways, from designing and building show gardens at Gardening Scotland (pictured), to volunteering at our Special Events, their generosity has raised over £10,000. Ann Burns, team leader at Oatridge said, "Perennial is our trade charity, if we don't support them now then they will not be there for future generations that we are teaching. We always have a great time working with Perennial and we are looking forward to supporting them further in the future."

Find out more about our supporters' fundraising activities on page 3 and 4



Joe Swift champions Friends of York Gate

Image courtesy of John Whitaker



We are delighted to welcome garden designer, writer and TV personality Joe Swift to the helm of our *Friends of York Gate* scheme. Joe has long been an admirer of York Gate, our beautiful garden in Yorkshire, since filming here with the BBC and was keen to celebrate our scheme.

“York Gate is an inspirational garden of immense style and craftsmanship. With your support, by joining the *Friends of York Gate*, we can help Perennial to preserve it for future generations.”

Now is the perfect time to join the *Friends of York Gate* as from Sunday 3rd April we will be opening the garden to visitors for another fabulous season. With annual membership costing just £19.50 you will be helping to preserve the garden as well as enjoying a host of benefits. These include unlimited free entry for you and a guest on all public open days as well as the opportunity to visit on specially selected days from February to November when the garden is not normally open to the public.

Don't forget, York Gate is open from 2pm to 5pm every Thursday and Sunday until 29th September. On bank holiday weekends, we also open from 11am to 5pm on Sundays and Mondays. Full details about York Gate including directions can be found on our website www.perennial.org.uk.

To join, please fill in the response form on the back page or leave a message for Jennifer at the garden on 0113 267 8240. We look forward to welcoming you to this very special small garden.



York Gate garden's famous Herb Garden

Business backs Perennial

We are thrilled by the growing numbers of businesses who are supporting Perennial – in particular through our ‘Perennial Partners’ scheme. We are delighted to welcome **Notcutts Garden Centres**, **Scotts Miracle-Gro** and **Barton Grange Garden Centres**, who join **Vital Earth** and **NFU Mutual** as Gold members; also **Green Meadow Furniture** joins **Readyhedge** as a Silver member and **Mawgan Gardens** from Newquay becomes a Bronze member, along with **Bransford Webbs**.

Brightwater Holidays devised a special tour to the Gardens of the French Riviera for our supporters, raising £1287 for Perennial. A further tour - **Great Houses and Gardens of Northamptonshire** - is also being organised by Brightwater - contact www.brightwaterholidays.com or telephone 01334 657155 for details.

Every customer who makes a purchase via the link from Perennial's website to **Hayloft Plants** will earn Perennial a 20% donation.

Unilever plc provided a team of volunteers who took charge and staffed the **Rose Marquee plant crèche**, cloakroom and our trading stand for a day at last year's **RHS Hampton Court Flower Show**, co-ordinated by Unilever employee and Perennial supporter/volunteer Paul Cooper. In addition to this, Unilever generously donated £100 for every 10 hours of volunteer time that their staff provided. We are looking forward to welcoming the Unilever team back to this year's show in July.

Botanica Consult has adopted Perennial as its preferred charity. The company, formed by horticulturalist John Smith in 2010 has added a strap line to its invoices which informs all their customers that a percentage of the income will go to support the work of the charity. John said, “I've spent over 40 years working in horticulture, and I've seen how Perennial has helped people over the years. Their caseworkers do an amazing job. We wanted to do our bit to help them”.

When sorrows come, Perennial's here

'When sorrows come, they come not in single spies, but in battalions' is a truth all too evident in many of the sad cases that come to our attention. When Bill, a groundsman, read about Perennial in a trade magazine he never imagined that he would ever need our help. Tragically his wife died in a car accident and he had to adjust to the difficult role of single parent to their teenage daughter. As the main wage earner, Bill's wife had taken care of the family finances and this was just one of the tasks he was now struggling to cope with. The last straw for Bill was the complicated paperwork concerning his wife's death and it was then that he remembered reading about Perennial.

When Bill* got in touch, one of our senior caseworkers arranged an immediate visit, when she was able to help him with the most urgent problems concerning his paperwork, and helped him make applications for benefits that he'd been unaware he

was entitled to.

Over the next few days and weeks she helped father and daughter begin to make plans for their future. Working with the Royal Fund for Gardeners' Children she secured an ongoing payment to assist with any extra costs for Lucy*. Of course, this could never compensate for the closeness and special bond that she had with her mother, it was at least able to alleviate some of the financial pressures; for instance, a promised school trip was unaffordable without her mother's income, so between RFGC and some extra fundraising from Perennial enough money was raised, and she was able to enjoy a wonderful break with her friends.

Perennial continued to provide financial support until the insurance payment from the accident came through. Just as the family's situation seemed to be improving, a second

devastating blow struck when the owner of their rented house died. They were given just one month to vacate their home - a traumatic experience at the best of times which without the help of our caseworker could have been so much worse. She guided Bill through the complicated process of a housing application and fortunately a suitable property was made available.

Bill and his daughter are now settled in their new home and are starting to get used to life without a wife and mother. Our caseworker still keeps in touch to ensure they receive all the help and support they may need - and will continue to do so for as long as necessary.

**Names have been changed to protect our clients privacy.*

If you would like to make a donation to help our work with children and families please use the slip overleaf.

Fundraisers swing into action

Ladies' Captain **Julie Broom** of Rugby Golf Club has nominated Perennial as her charity of the year. Fundraising has teed off to a great start, Julie informs us: "The annual captain's charity auction raised just over £400 - I was really pleased!" She hopes to raise £3000 for us during her term. Thanks Julie, we wish you a fun year. If your golf club would be interested in helping us in a similar way please contact us on 0845 230 1839.

When Chris and Fred G. ran a stall at the autumn plant fair at **Mapperton House and Garden** on Perennial's behalf, they were so impressed that they recommended it to the Regional Manager as a venue for a Perennial Special Event and we are now looking forward to an event there on 7th July 2011. Chris and Fred also made quite an impression at Mapperton and as a result we were delighted to receive a donation of £265 as part of the proceeds of the Snowdrop Days held there this year. Thanks must also go to Lesley T for all her help on the day.

Mary Jenno from Berkshire recently

ran a Pampered Chef party for her friends, donating her commission of £85 to Perennial. Mary also sells Perennial's cards and gifts at horticultural shows and fetes.

CAN-tastic! Huge thanks to **Andrew & Glynis Roache** and their Perennial collection can. Over three years, they have been mustering donations for Perennial at the Affordable Garden Art Competition & Exhibition held at Showborough House in Gloucester.



The result? A wonderful £1,200 raised for our charity!

Inspired? Find out more about volunteering for Perennial by going to our website or calling our fundraising team on 0845 676 0636.

How your support helps

If you ever think your support can't make a difference, think again! Through Perennial's help, every penny you donate makes REAL improvements to people's lives. Here's just a few of the comments we have received from those we have been able to help:

"Perennial fought the battles we no longer had the strength to fight - and won"

"Perennial has kept my car on the road. I can enjoy life and not be housebound. It has been a lifeline"

"I don't dread the postman any more - I can open mail straight away and deal with bills"

"Perennial helped me with the cost of a stair lift which has helped improve the quality of my husband's life"

"They have made it possible for me to go on living in my home at eighty years of age. God bless them for their help"

"Perennial has constantly valued me, as a client and as a volunteer. I can tackle most things if my self-worth is maintained"

"Having ADHD twin boys of 8, life has been hard. Perennial have helped us to make life easier"

"There is always someone to talk to about whatever help and advice you need"

Need more information? Telephone 0845 676 0636 or visit www.perennial.org.uk

Open gardens for Perennial

So many kind garden owners open their gardens for Perennial. We are of course grateful to them all, but deserving a special thank you for their many years of support are the following:

Mrs Sue Nicholls of **BARNARD'S GREEN HOUSE GARDEN** which will open Sunday, 5th June 2011 from 2 - 5 pm. Sadly this is a last chance to see this much loved Malvern Garden because the owners will be moving, so don't pass up an opportunity to visit! Entrance is £3, children free and there will be teas, plants and gifts available for sale on the day.

On Sunday 31st July the **MAZE GARDEN** in Siddlesham near Chichester will be opening for Perennial for the ninth year running, over which time Richard and Sandra (pictured below with their team of helpers) have raised a fantastic £9,500. If you have the chance please do go along to support this very popular event – you won't be disappointed!

After raising a brilliant £660 last time, the residents of **STONE RINGS CLOSE** in Harrogate will once again be opening their gardens on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th May, with refreshments, plant sales and a tombola on the day – a wonderful day out.

For full details of all garden openings, please visit our website or telephone 0845 676 0636.



Like topsy it just grewed...

If you were as interested as we were to read about Madge Hooper's life in horticulture (covered in Garden Post last year) you can now go to our website to download Madge's complete memoir 'Like topsy it just grewed', a captivating story recounting Madge's life on her Herefordshire herb farm. Madge has very kindly donated the memoir to raise funds for Perennial; you will find it by following the link from the front page on our website. If you don't have access to the internet but would like a copy, please call us and we will be happy to send a copy for a suggested minimum donation of £5.

Blooming marvellous!

Next time you send flowers to someone, why not help Perennial too? Charity Flowers have a marvellous selection of seasonal bouquets and 15% of your purchase could go to Perennial (You will find us listed as Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society.)

Order by telephone on 0870 5300 600 or visit www.charityflowers.co.uk to order online

Please help. . . Your donation will enable us to reach more vulnerable people who are facing hardship or crisis - thank you.

I would like to help with a donation of:

£15

£30

£50

£100

Other £

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

DAYTIME TEL. NO.

Or telephone us with your credit/debit card details on 0845 676 0636 (24 - hour)

I would like to join Friends of York Gate and enclose payment of £19.50 (cheques made payable to Perennial)

Please send me information on the Friends of Perennial

Please email me news of Perennial events in my area

Please tick this box if you do not want to receive an acknowledgement

EMAIL

Are you a UK taxpayer? If so, the Gift Aid scheme enables us to increase the value of your contribution at no extra cost to you. Simply tick the box below.

I would like Perennial to treat all donations I have made going back four years and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise as Gift Aid donations. I have paid an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to any tax reclaimed.

SIGNATURE

DATE

We would like to send you our gift catalogues, produced by our trading company GRBS (Enterprises) Ltd. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive these catalogues. *Please return this form to Perennial, 115/117 Kingston Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7SU.*

AN EXEMPT CHARITY IN ENGLAND AND WALES NO. 15408R A CHARITY REGISTERED IN SCOTLAND NO. SC040180

24 - HOUR DONATION LINE call 0845 676 0636 to make your credit/debit card donation