



Photo: Aaron Brunhofer

Our changing landscape

The Quiet Garden Movement has been offering peaceful green spaces for the inner journey for over 25 years, and we know that the practice of taking time out for silent contemplation and reflection is not a new idea. It is an ancient wisdom.

Following on from last year's 25th anniversary celebrations, we are now looking at what we offer as a Movement and exploring its value within the evolving landscape in which we find ourselves. We seek to openly look, listen and learn about what is changing at this time and how we might adapt into the future.

With this in mind, our small Trustee and Staff team have embarked upon a period of reflection with the help of an experienced organisation, Caplor Horizons, that assists small charities that face changing circumstances. Together we will be looking at our present and future to refresh our guiding strategy in order to be equipped for the landscape of 2018 and beyond.

Quiet Gardens in 2018

We are always grateful for the enormous amount of involvement, engagement and support we receive. In this past year it has enabled us to:

- ~ widely distribute our Quiet25 Leaders' resource;
- ~ encourage, guide, and support new and existing gardens and hosts;
- ~ run our first ever Quiet25 Retreat;
- ~ encourage, widen and promote greater participation in Quiet Gardens;
- ~ promote the Movement as a resource for those looking for silent restorative spaces in the outdoor environment.

Quiet Gardens operate across the world, with a fairly constant total of 300. These are now quite evenly split

between 36% in places of worship, 42% in private homes, and the rest in public spaces. Each year we ask Quiet Garden Hosts how their garden is used and roughly how many have used it during the year. This shows us the huge diversity of Gardens – each offering quiet spaces in its own appropriate way.

In places of worship Quiet Gardens are often available all the time. Some are deep in the countryside so may be visited by those specifically searching for solitude. Others are used informally every day by people taking a short break from hectic lives.

Feedback from hosts of Quiet Gardens in private homes suggests on average they each received 68 visitors in a year, whilst those in places of worship varied from 150 to many thousands. In addition, there were many specific events where groups used Quiet Gardens. This helps to indicate the breadth and variety of Quiet Gardens. It isn't about numbers though, we know that just one individual visit can make a huge impact, with visitors sharing comments such as these:

"Refreshed, resourced, renewed - what a blessing"

"Coming here has been a lifeline."

Not only is each Quiet Garden space different, what happens in them, and how they are run, varies widely too. Whether drop-in, or by appointment, special events, open days, led-days or simple drop-in access, all provide warm welcome and simple hospitality.

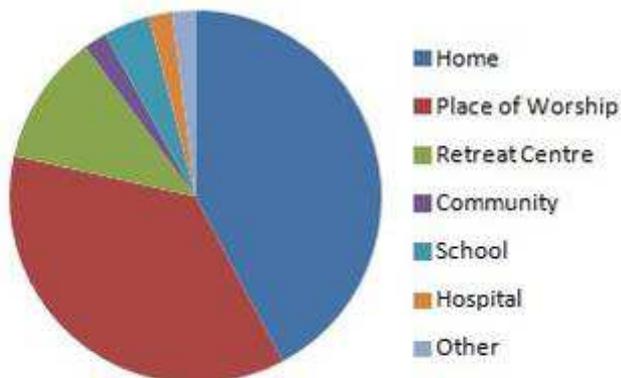
The inner silence or stillness we often find by being in a Quiet Garden can also be nurtured to be accessible anytime and anywhere. Finding such stillness amongst the noisy turmoil of life is perhaps even more necessary now than when Quiet Gardens first began.

Continued over page

Quiet Gardens - sharing outdoor space for the inner journey.

The Quiet Garden Movement nurtures low cost, accessible, outdoor space for prayer, contemplation, rest and inspiration in a variety of settings such as private homes, churches, schools and hospitals.

Where are Quiet Gardens found in 2018?



Search all our gardens at www.quietgarden.org/findgardens

Quiet Gardens in 2018 continued from front page

Hence, we published our Quiet25 Leaders' resource last year. Designed as a fresh new resource for groups and individuals to explore both ancient and newer ways of coming into silence. Its five session format allows for the exploration of silence in multi-sensory ways, which is beneficial in terms of flexibility and accessibility. Many Quiet Gardens have been using the resource, as a complete course, or have selected exercises, prayers and quotes, to use with their local groups and visitors.

We were particularly pleased to hear from Fr Philip Wells of Polesworth Abbey, who explained it had helped the local community there to re-engage with their Quiet Garden: "Discovering our own parish Quiet Garden where visitors spend time and encounter the 'Presence' and 'Sense of Place' of our Abbey, so much forgotten by us the parish community — as a group, together we connected again with our Sensory Garden..."

Fr Wells explained that of the final session on 'shared silence', "People said that they felt supported by one another; able to find the time because others were doing so too; other comments included "we are all the same when we're quiet". In 2018 Polesworth Abbey are running the Quiet25 course for a second time with their local community!

And feedback from other users included:

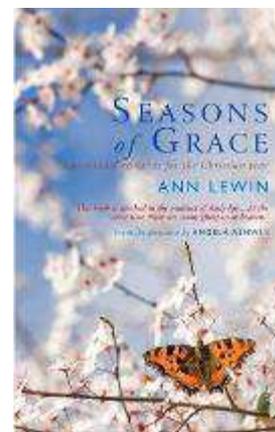
"Excellent questions got people thinking and sharing, and interesting adaptable activity ideas were useful whatever the weather and group size."

"The material helped further my understanding of God speaking through creation and the practice of silence. It gave me opportunity and confidence to share and explore this with others."

"The materials are so good, providing a huge variety, focused into helpful themes. We were able to use some of the input sessions to bring in other material and explore something about our particular tradition of prayer and contemplation. The illustrations in the booklet were helpful in engaging everyone."

We've been active outside our immediate networks too. For example Tina Jefferies, Quiet Garden host and trustee, recently wrote the Prayer Focus for Issue 115 of Magnet magazine, the theme of which is In the Gardener's care (www.ourmagnet.hymnsam.co.uk). Whilst last autumn Revd Dr Chris Walton, former host and trustee, led a training day for teachers on the relationship between children, spirituality and the natural world.

Suggestions for future collaboration are welcome and we invite you to join us and support our work - see back page.



Book Review

Seasons of Grace, inspirational resources for the Christian Year by Ann Lewin

Many Quiet Gardeners will be familiar with the poems of Ann Lewin, particularly, **Watching for the Kingfisher**. '.....Prayer is like watching for the Kingfisher. All you can do is Be where he is likely to appear and Wait.'

I have just discovered **Seasons of Grace, inspirational resources for the Christian Year**. In this book Ann weaves her poetry with creative prose to provide fresh ideas for the liturgical year. Angela Ashwin in the foreword, reminds us, "We can sometimes be so busy or preoccupied we miss the richness and flavour of the different parts of the Christian year."

So we have prayers for a Posada during Advent, and lots of resources for Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. What was so special for me was to find nearly 40 pages with suggestions for events in 'Ordinary Time'.

These include suggestions for use in a Quiet Garden. Ann gives three possible themes:

- * *Consider the Flowers;*
 - * *Trees - the tree of knowledge and the tree of life;*
 - * *and Consider the birds.*
- Each is developed, providing basic material for a day

Her poem: *Peace trees* would make a wonderful introduction to a Quiet Day
*'To be in the presence of trees
Is to know peace ...'*

There is also a Eucharistic prayer for use at a Quiet Garden event and many more riches.

So here is a useful resource to add to the ones you already use. Or perhaps this might be a gift for a creative friend.

Revd Sue Nightingale,
Chair Quiet Garden Trustees

Seasons of Grace is published by
Canterbury Press ISBN 9781848250901



A Leaf Falls

A leaf falls,
 setting stillness of the pond a-qaiver –
 A drop tips off the end of a cedar leaf,
 transformed to ripple –
 May I be set a-qaiver, turn to ripple
 By falling,
 dropping,
 Grace.

by Janet Aldridge

Written at Runcton Quiet Garden in 2017



Award winners - St Seraphim's Quiet Garden, Norfolk

The North Norfolk Annual Environment Award was won by this garden which has been created on former derelict land next to the Chapel. The role of volunteers was acknowledged by Leader of the Council Mr Fitzpatrick who said: "Many volunteers have been involved in this project, creating a beautiful and peaceful garden for public enjoyment and for the benefit of ecology and wildlife." Sylvia Batchelor, Quiet Garden host, received the award on behalf of St Seraphim's Quiet Garden.

The Orthodox chapel is in an old station building. This is also a centre for icons which used to be painted here.

www.quietgarden.org/gardens/St-Seraphims-Quiet-Garden/

Canadian Quiet Garden links with college

Kent Lodge Quiet Garden, the first Quiet Garden in Nova Scotia Canada, opened last September with a blessing and celebration. Since then, existing connections with the Horticulture and Landscape department of the local Community College have been strengthened as a group of students worked in the garden and designed and created a new flower bed. The students valued the experience and the garden - "It's beautiful all year round, even in the winter time". Quiet Garden host, Pat Moore, appreciated their help and hard work.

www.quietgarden.org/gardens/kent-lodge/

The Poppy Tree

In Bearsden Baptist Gardens there stands a dead tree. It has a dramatic, jagged shape which resembles a bolt of lightning flashing down from the sky. One day, in early September, our Children and Families Worker, Mairi Nasr, asked God for guidance on what to do next in her ministry. A picture of the Tower Bridge poppy display instantly came to her mind, followed by the unmistakable image of the dead tree.

She felt immediately that this was a project in which all children attached to the church and gardens could get involved in. Bearsden Primary After-School Club enlisted the help of a potter, and so the project began.

Over the next two months the after-school children, along with the children who attended the church, made clay poppies. A simple technique facilitated by the potter, Steph Baxter, allowed the modelling of the flowers to remain easy and fun. After firing the poppies were painted red and glazed.

By early November around 200 poppies were ready to be fixed onto the tree. The installation process was achieved using fine gold wire which was then stapled to the tree on swathes of evergreen branches. The result was stunning!

On Saturday 11th November a Remembrance event was held in the garden for the children and their families. They enjoyed hot chocolate and muffins while listening to our 'poet in residence' Jim Ewing perform his poem: *Remember if you Will*. The children took part in an interactive poem *He Dies – but Why?* facilitated by Mairi. The telling of the poem involved actions intended to allow us to contemplate on the One who had died on a tree for us. To finish we sang 'Flower of Scotland' and played some percussion instruments. It was a great day!



Mairi Nasr and Rachel Tainsh, Bearsden Baptist QG, Glasgow
www.quietgarden.org/gardens/bearsden-baptist-church/

Places of Enchantment Meeting God in Landscapes by Graham B Usher - a personal review



This book seems to flow from Graham’s love of the natural environment and personal experience of God in the landscape. The evocative descriptions transport the reader to the different landscapes (such as mountain, forest, desert, garden, sea) explored in each chapter. I defy anyone to read of the coastal train journey into Scotland without hearing the waves and the call of the oyster catcher! As befits an ecologist, there are webs of interconnecting topics for each landscape type.

We learn about landscape in the Bible as places for encounter with God or as metaphor or parable whether in the Psalms; Old Testament narrative; or the New Testament, including the life and teaching of Jesus. Throughout history, landscapes have had spiritual significance; saints, writers, poets and artists have been inspired by natural places. Extracts and poems from Thomas Merton, William Blake, a fourth century pilgrim, early saints and others - some well-known, others less so - are scattered like jewels through the book. I found myself pausing to appreciate them as one might stop to fully take in a view. This book invites contemplation and prayerful thought but also discussion and activity. Connections between people and landscape can reflect society’s values. Issues relating to land use, climate change and social justice are also raised.

This small book contains an immense amount of material for personal or group use. The chapters could form the basis for fruitful group discussion. Just one or two of the ideas or quotations from a chapter would give a focus thought or challenge for a quiet day. Those familiar with Quiet Gardens may especially appreciate the chapter on gardens. They may find passages which chime with their own experience or bring a new perspective – perhaps to their own Gardens of Eden, or Gethsemene. Above all this book reminds us to be attentive to God in the landscapes of our daily lives and to ‘become attuned to encounter God’s shadow in unexpected and surprising ways’.

Mary-Anne Hall, Administrator, Quiet Garden Trust

Places of Enchantment is published by SPCK, ISBN 9780281067923

Rt Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Dudley, UK, was guest speaker at our Annual Gathering this year. A report will appear in the next edition of this newsletter and talks will be available on the Quiet Garden website.

PATRONS OF THE QUIET GARDEN MOVEMENT

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|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia | The Rt Revd John Pritchard |
| Margaret Magdalen Evening | Professor Sir Ghillean Prance |
| Richard Foster | Margaret Silf |
| Terry Hershey | The Revd Lucy Winkett |
| His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols | |
| FOUNDER: Revd Philip Roderick | |

Welcoming New Quiet Gardens

Cyprus

Quiet Garden Cyprus, Larnaca

Ireland

Padley, County Cork

UK

- Charlecote Quiet Garden, Warwickshire
- Gardd Tawel, Rhondda
- Hill View Barn Quiet Garden, Shropshire
- Room to Breathe, Lincolnshire
- The Quiet Garden at Clearwell, Glos
- The Meadows, E. Riding Yorkshire

3 Ways you may like to Join Us

- * **Offer a Quiet Garden** - download or request our information pack as the first step
- * **Join the Friends** who support us in prayer and with regular donations - download or request our Friends leaflet
- * **Make a Donation or Leave a Gift to The Quiet Garden Trust in your Will.** Legacies large and small have played an important role in financing the Quiet Garden Movement. They help ensure Quiet Gardens are here for the next generation to enjoy.

Explore these ideas through the Join Us section of the website

www.quietgarden.org/join/

Or contact the Quiet Garden office

Date for your diary

Regional gathering

for hosts and those interested in Quiet Gardens

10am – 4pm **Saturday 3 November**

at St Bede’s Pastoral Centre

York, UK

For details contact

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