

# MARY MARY CREATES GARDENS

NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 2021



What another crazy year it has been! Much change has taken place globally, as well as locally and within our team.

Our Mary Mary team has expanded, gained experience and new skills. We have approached every new challenge with humour, professionalism and our own unique creative mindset

The glory of  
gardening: hands in  
the dirt, head in the  
sun and heart with  
nature

- 2021 was the year when we all anticipated things getting back to normal. It seems, however, that the old normal is gone forever and we Marys have relished the challenge of making our own new normal
- As 2020 had already demonstrated, more and more people have realised the value of their own precious patch of the planet and wished to make the most of it.
- We have built more vegetable gardens than ever before. Although we have always encouraged recycling, we have found ourselves installing more utility areas for people to recycle their own organic waste, for the benefit of their own garden. Ultimately for the benefit of their own soul.
- Restrictions on gatherings indoors and hospitality being closed for such a long period has led to more and more families needing to create entertainment space outside – somewhere to relax, share food and joyful times with loved ones.
- The Marys know from their own experience that being outside and immersed in nature is the best remedy for so many health issues. We have worked with more people than ever before, helping them to relish and cherish their little piece of the Earth.
- We have used innovative materials, designed ambitiously and still pursued our ethos of sustainability and support for all our natural flora and fauna. 2021 was as different as any year that came before it!

In 2021, the Marys worked with over 70 families – helping to improve their gardens and their lives



## FRESH FACES FOR MARY

By the start of 2021, the Mary Mary team had studied and qualified in varying different aspects of horticulture and landscaping. With these skills firmly under our belts we felt that the time was right to expand our team and nurture some new talent into the ways of Mary.

Peter spent a week with us for work experience in February and had joined us as a Mary Mary Trainee by March.

Having spent 6 months in the gardens learning the practical skills of installing hard-landscaping and caring for plants, Peter has now embarked on his RHS Level 2 course in Plant Science.



He is joined in his studies by Joanna, our Office Manager, and All Round Doer of Everything. She is aiming for a formal qualification to complement her immense experience and passion for all things 'planty'.



## OPEN GARDEN FOR THE HOSPICE IN THE WEALD

We were thrilled to be able to open Mary's Garden for the annual event to raise money for the Hospice in the Weald.

With social distancing in place, we set up refreshments in our and our lovely neighbours' front gardens. Unintentionally, but happily, this created a street party atmosphere, with people stopping for coffee, a chat and to donate, even though they weren't planning to visit! It was a truly beautiful day, and we always look forward to seeing so many different people coming along in the name of supporting one of the most important facilities in the area.

We raised over **£1700** – so a

**BIG THANK YOU** to everyone who came along!

See you again in 2022!



Mary's Open Garden supporting Hospice in the Weald



## INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION



Even without the backdrop of the global events, Mary Mary always look forward, relishing new challenges and embracing change. Our team has grown in number and experience, and all the Mary Marys are always eager to learn and experiment with innovative ideas.

With a waiting list of over eight months just for a first consultation, and many families desperate to engage our talented team, we had to work out how we could offer more, without spreading ourselves too thin. As the world slowly re-opened in the summer, we took a fresh look at how we offer our services.

Collectively taking a deep breath, we decided to cease offering regular management services, focusing our efforts instead on **restoration, development, design and installation**. This frees up our time to help more people engage with their outdoor, create an extension of their home to enjoy living in and sharing with everyone they love. Whether that is friends, family or simply the wildlife around us.



We were overwhelmed with positive comments about the change and have had the joy of working with more individuals and families than ever before.

So. Who exactly IS Mary?



## WHAT'S IN A NAME

Many of the team are often referred to as Mary by clients and suppliers. None of us take offence, not even the chaps, as we are proud to be known as the 'Marys', but maybe you would like to know where this unusual name came from?

Mary Mary Gardens began almost 15 years ago with a 3 year old warbling the nursery rhyme on repeat. A young Mum with abundant passion for gardening, but limited formalised knowledge and no professional qualifications was approached to help out another Mum who struggled to keep her outside space safe for her kids to play in. Both Mums took a leap of faith and, inspired to grab this opportunity to realise a dream job, Sarah founded Mary Mary Gardens with the invaluable support and input of her own Mum.

# Mary Mary Creates Gardens

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**SARAH** attended Hadlow College part time to study horticulture and balanced studying with caring for young children. She honed her skills volunteering at the local primary school, working in friends' and her own garden to experiment with plants, styles and techniques. Fast forward through nearly a decade and a half and you will find her spending less time getting muddy and more time meeting clients and overseeing the day to day running of Mary Mary. Sarah most enjoys working with Dave to devise beautiful, unique outdoor spaces. She has a tendency to kill houseplants.



**DAVE** dipped his toe into the world of Mary in 2011, then joined the Mary family full time as Creative Director in 2015. With his joinery background, is always happier with a hammer than with a piece of technology. He is the creative mind behind such masterpieces as the Death Swing and the Jelly Bean Garden and has spent the last year mastering CAD in order to help the team visualise his ideas clearly before they bring his designs to life. A skilled carpenter and landscaper, Dave has driven Mary Mary in a truly creative direction, which has been enthusiastically embraced by the whole team. He has an extensive collection of hats.

**KEATON** joined Mary Mary in 2010, working part time in the gardens whilst balancing his studies. He took two years out to complete a carpentry apprenticeship, qualifying top of his class and returning in 2015 as a full time Mary. His inability to stand or sit still has been an invaluable asset for Mary Mary over the years. He sets a fearsome pace of work, which only the best can keep up with. He has worked hard to gain many different skills and sees every issue as a puzzle to solve. He runs the majority of the hard-landscaping installations and is involved in every aspect of the Mary Mary business. He's not grumpy and he likes Lego and sea shanties.





**JOSEF** joined Mary Mary in 2014 and immersed himself in horticulture, studying for his RHS Level 2 qualification and regularly challenging Sarah on all things plant science. Passionate about the natural world, Josef has an extensive knowledge of birds, their song, invertebrates and other creatures that are generally unnoticed by other humans. As Mary Mary evolved and started designing and installing more and more gardens, Josef threw himself wholeheartedly into acquiring the high standard of landscaping skills he now demonstrates. A unique well of knowledge, Josef is an invaluable support to every person in the Mary Mary family. He loves his shed very much and throws beautiful pots and dishes.

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**JESS** became part of the Mary gang in 2017, bringing her own unique take on the world with her. An ardent proponent of sustainability and doing everything she can to save our natural world, she has influenced all the Mary Marys to carefully consider choices that are ultimately best for the health of the planet. Her creativity spills over at every opportunity – ideas bubble out ceaselessly. Equally at home digging a hole, sketching out a complex plant scheme or overseeing a garden installation, there isn't much she won't turn her hand to. Jess likes her lovely horse and dog and is partial to cake.





**ROB** approached Mary Mary for work experience in Spring 2018 and joined full time later that year with day release to study horticulture at Hadlow College. Last year he completed his studies and apprenticeship to become a fully fledged garden maker and designer. His unique view of the world comes through in his designs and approach to every task. Never camera shy, he is as skilled at photography and videography as he is at devising and producing schemes and seeing them through to fruition - and beyond. Rob likes pizza and has an alarming collection of trees for someone who currently lives in a flat.

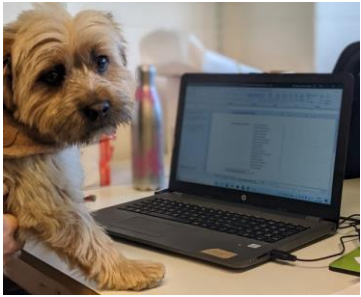
**JOANNA** joined the Mary team in early 2019 to support the office Marys with marketing and general admin. It was not long before she was out in the gardens, digging holes, humping soil, pruning, weeding and doing anything that attracts mud. Sharing an inability to keep still with Keaton, she seamlessly divides her time between supporting the background work of the garden planning; project support, sourcing plants and ordering absolutely anything that is required.

She recently achieved a lifelong ambition to wear waders.



**SUSAN** came into the Mary family in 2017, looking after all our day to day books and finances. Her meticulous approach, attention to detail and gentle, friendly manner has made her invaluable as our Money Mary. Although permanently working from home since Covid took over the world, she is very much in the heart of the Mary Mary team. She likes numbers and vibrant gardens full of colour.

**JANE** is the OG, or rather the OM - the Original Mary. By Sarah's side when founding the business in 2007, she has offered invaluable support and expert advice throughout Mary Mary's growth and evolution. Although now semi-retired, she still takes an active interest in Mary Mary in her role as Financial Director and continues to be an integral part of the Mary Mary family. She loves dry white wine, deep blue irises, cryptic crosswords and achieving zero points on Pointless.



**BUDDY** joined us in September this year as IT Manager. He has zero qualifications and can't type. He likes his ball and rolling in smelly things.

**PETER**, you have already met above. There will more of him next year, we are sure. In the meantime, we can tell you he likes football, eating pasta and hula hoops.





## THANK YOU!

Finally, we really want to say a massive heartfelt **thank you** to every single one of you, our amazing clients, suppliers and friends.

Mary Mary Creates Gardens would not have survived yet another difficult year without the continued support of our community - for this we are exceptionally grateful. We rely on the support of the people around us to help us grow in knowledge, challenge us and provide us with opportunities to do what we love best even better; creating gardens for people to live and love being in.

We have built our reputation and business on word-of-mouth, developing strong relationships with our clients and our colleagues in the industry. We simply could not do what we do without this.

## THANK YOU EVERYONE!

From all of us here at Mary Mary – **Happy Christmas and bring on the New Year!**

Wishing you all a wonderful festive season and a merry Mary Christmas!  
Stay happy, stay healthy and always  
be kind.

See you in 2022!!

