

Welcome to Mary's Garden – and you are so very welcome.

Thank you for supporting us and the Hospice in the Weald, a charity that is close to our hearts. If you have been here before, you will know the general set up: cakes, teas, crafts, plants, trees and exemplary people watching.

If you haven't been before, here's a brief history...



1935 - The Silver Jubilee

This house (originally a detached property with No.59), and the neighbouring house (63 & 65) were both built in 1851.

The first houses on Lavender Hill, we believe they were intended as out-of-town villas.

The start of the railway construction in Tonbridge the same year however, appears to have scuppered this plan and by 1853 they were semi-detached, tenant-occupied.

This house was then known as No. 3 Albion Villas.

Our predecessors, Josie and George, moved here in 1951.

They bought the neighbouring gardens, raised chickens and grew fruit and veg.

George was very proud of his Dahlias. They thoroughly enjoyed their garden, playing bridge and drinking homemade wine until the wee hours.

Their last land grab was 1970, making the end of the garden a substantial space.

It must have been quite the suburban small holding.



1963 – you can glimpse the garages on Drayton Road, and the houses on Goldsmid Road beyond

By the time we arrived with our four youngsters in 2011, it sadly was not quite as well kept, but still held a magical quality.



Our children chose the garden, we barely looked at the house.

Renovating the house was a necessity.

Renovating the garden was a passion.

It became our playground.

A place for our children to grow into, for any little (and not so little) one to explore, swing from trees, make dens in the shrubs. Watch the newts, learn how to grow beans and mow a lawn.

2011 – The house was a building site, the garden an escape

Teen hangouts were needed – and used to the max! A safe space to gather, doing whatever it is teens need to do with their friends on a Saturday night.

Gradually the garden was brought to life – we have planted trees, shrubs, perennials, 1000s of spring bulbs, built all manner of structures – every wild idea included.

We have experimented with growing all sorts of vegetables and fruit – the end of the garden began life as an edimental garden - kept chickens and quails, juiced our apples and made shoe tree jam.

2014 – The creation of the end of the garden commences





2017 – Our 4th Open Garden

The layout at the end of the garden was inspired by family holidays in Europe, relaxing in the shade in a village square, sipping something chilled and watching the world go by.

With the space to indulge our every whim, we have built, planted, seeded, pulled up, taken down, altered, tried, tested, hosted, celebrated and shared this space for over 15 years .

It will continue to change for the next 115.

A garden is a privilege and is to be enjoyed.

If something isn't working, don't despair, try something else.

Have fun doing it.

We hope you enjoy our garden – and that you will go home and enjoy yours.



Thank you for supporting **Mary's Open Garden** for

