

# Garden Volunteer Taster Day

## Pentillie Garden History:

Pentillie's gardens were originally laid out in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century when Sir James Tillie built his house in a prominent position above the Tamar Estuary. The walls at the top of the American Gardens are thought to be some of the earliest walls built to separate a 'garden' area from the surrounding countryside.

The gardens also came to the fore in 1810, when Humphry Repton was given free reign to cast his designs across the surrounding landscape. Much of the ground was planted with trees, and hedges removed, to create his vision of landscape perfection. Lewis Kennedy's designs for the American Gardens followed shortly thereafter and eventually led to many 'American' plants being imported into this area to create areas of great interest and beauty.

Over time, much of the finesse of Pentillie's gardens has been lost to rampaging laurel due to reduced gardener numbers following the World Wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and to a reduced interest in the 55 acres of woodland garden.

When the current Coryton family inherited Pentillie in 2007, they also inherited a tax bill of nearly £5m, meaning that their financial focus was on the house rather than the gardens. Therefore, head gardener Chris Duke was left alone to manage the wilderness as best he could. He retired as Covid-19 hit in 2020, and so the plan to recruit his replacement was put on hold until now.

So, while we have our eyes peeled for the 'right' new senior gardener, we also have a great team in place, who are working to develop a longer-term strategy for the garden alongside a new garden volunteer programme.

## The Garden Volunteer Programme:

With 55 acres of woodland gardens and herbaceous borders, the list of jobs to do within the gardens is long to say the least! Following the recent return of Sue Bryant, who has many years of experience looking after volunteers and teaching young adults in gardens, we thought it was time we looked at starting a volunteer programme in the gardens here at Pentillie.

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Volunteers will be invited to assist in the maintenance and development of the Pentillie gardens through various planned tasks and activities. Achievements will be notable through the development of new areas, and the presentation of the beds and visitor areas.

No previous gardening experience is required, but please bring your own gardening gloves and we will provide plenty of tea, coffee and biscuits.

To register your interest for our first garden volunteer morning on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April, from 9am until 12 noon, please complete the [form](#) on the button below.

We envisage regular garden volunteer mornings at Pentillie, possibly once or twice a month depending on volunteer numbers, skills and the weather. If you cannot attend on the 30<sup>th</sup> but you are interested, please still complete the form and we will be in touch with an alternative date.

## **Mission statement:**

To give members of the community the opportunity to make a real difference in an historic garden while learning more about the plants and gardening techniques at the same time.

## **Our Goals:**

1. To recruit up to 10 volunteers to assist with the gardening programme.
2. To train volunteers in how to undertake various tasks including plant identification, bulb planting, propagation of cuttings, maintenance of flower beds, mulching and winterising etc.
3. To teach volunteers how to identify plants and techniques of their care.
4. Job opportunities may arise for the right volunteers.