

## **Trellis 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Networking Conference: 17 March 2010 Perth Concert Hall** **Tending Body & Soul: Gardening & Health**

### **Speaker Biographies**

#### **Pierre Bernard, Lilybank Resource Centre, Forfar**

Pierre Bernard is a Day Centre Officer at Lilybank Resource Centre in Forfar for adults with learning disabilities and has been in post since October 1995. In 1996 Pierre was asked to take part in a gardening group to support service users and develop their skills and knowledge and in the process he has developed his own skills. In April 2006 he started working for the biodiversity team at Lilybank and this has grown from strength to strength, being nominated for a number of local and national awards

#### **Patricia Payne, Annie's Garden, Bandrum Nursing Home, Saline**

Member of Chartered Management Institute and owner of Bandrum Nursing Home, a family run facility in Saline, Patricia is Chair of the Fife Branch of Scottish Care and finalist in the Scottish Care annual awards in categories "Care Entrepreneur of the Year" and "Specialist Services Provider." Says Patricia:- "Our residents and staff have always been very close to my heart and my aim is to maximize the enjoyment and benefits of our grounds and gardens. If I also manage to find time to indulge my hobbies which include horses and dancing, then I consider myself very lucky indeed."

#### **Stephanie Elder, Manager, Silver Birch Scotland**

#### **Mark Williams, Senior Support Worker, Silver Birch Scotland**

Stephanie joined Silver Birch in 2005 as temporary Development Officer, bringing with her experience in business and marketing. In 2006, Stephanie was promoted to Manager and has helped the organisation to develop, including the overseeing the build and relocation of the project, generating new income & funding streams and supporting the Client Manager to develop client services. Mark joined Silver Birch in 2007 to help develop a new work experience opportunity in garden maintenance. Following a pilot, the focus was changed to site maintenance, allowing clients to gain a wider variety of skills without the time pressures of customer expectations. Mark continually looks for new and unusual ways to develop the 11 acre site, including a Japanese garden, living wall and a grass sofa.

#### **Norma Forbes, Southton Smallholding, Perth**

Southton Smallholding is situated on the estate of the Bield of Blackruthven, a Christian retreat, on the outskirts of Perth. The smallholding is a charity which offers therapeutic voluntary work to a group of adults with learning disabilities. The work includes animal care, horticulture and farm maintenance. We strive to create a more inclusive community with the help of a team of volunteers from the local community. Norma has worked here for four years after an earlier professional life in Careers and Employment Services.

#### **Dr Richard Simpson, MSP**

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife. Dr Simpson was previously MSP for Ochil in the first session of Parliament and has lived in the Stirling area for most of his adult life. Richard is Shadow Public Health Minister, calling on his experience as a former GP and psychiatrist. He has had a long-standing interest in the hospice movement and was a founder member of Strathcarron Hospice. His hobbies include golf and gardening.

#### **Andrew Anderson, Centre Head, Maggie's, Edinburgh**

Andrew Anderson is a Registered General Nurse who trained at Queen Margaret College in Edinburgh. He then went on to specialise in cancer nursing and worked for 11 years in the Western General Hospital Oncology department. For the last 10 years he has worked for Maggie's Centres and is the Centre Head for Maggie's Edinburgh.

**John Smith, Suntrap Lifelong Learning Centre, Edinburgh**

John's gardening career started with a council summer job. After college he managed a plant nursery, gardened in Saudi Arabia, grew test plants for SASA, and worked as a propagator at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. John introduced the first landscape courses in Scotland while at Oatridge College and currently uses Therapeutic Horticulture in teaching gardening to a wide range of students.

**Margaret Teale, Royal Caledonian Horticulture Society**

Margaret Teale is a member of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society and sits on its Council and Education Committee. A retired senior manager in Community Learning and Development, she spent most of her professional life in the field of adult education, with a specific interest in Adult Literacies, community-based adult learning and staff development / training. An enthusiastic but not very knowledgeable amateur gardener, she is also on the management committee of Bridgend Allotment Community Health Improvement Project. She is going to attempt growing vegetables this year for the first time as a result of being inspired by the allotment movement!

**Max Blinkhorn, Photographer, Edinburgh**

Max Blinkhorn began his career in I.T. but felt he needed a change and spent three years as a Technical Instructor working in the Occupational Therapy Department Garden at Astley Ainslie Hospital. During this time, he also worked as a reviewer during the Edinburgh Festival and found himself well-placed to take pictures of performers to support his reviews. Eventually, the photography replaced the reviewing and he began working as a photographer, professionally.

**Helen Thomson, Placement Support Officer & Niall McShannon, Project Manager, Clydesdale Community Initiatives, South Lanarkshire**

Niall is Project Manager for CCI and Helen Placement Support Officer. CCI was set-up in 2002 to enable young people at risk and adults with mental health issues to develop a derelict site in Lanark. Since then CCI has developed one of the most innovative and successful social inclusion models in Scotland, providing opportunities for people experiencing social exclusion and significant disadvantage to participate in real work. CCI has a portfolio of landscaping, horticultural and woodworking projects.

**Fiona Thackeray, Development Manager, Trellis****Jenny Simpson, Information Officer, Trellis**

Fiona Thackeray is Development Manager for Trellis. She has worked in therapeutic gardening for 14 years, with learning-disabled people in Bristol and visually impaired students in Brazil (with whom she built Brazil's 4th sensory garden) before returning to Perthshire to support Scottish therapeutic gardening projects. Jenny Simpson is the Information Officer for Trellis. Previously, as a University of Stirling researcher, Jenny was involved in range of projects within the Institute of Education; Department of Applied Social Science and with the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration. Jenny also has a small business growing and selling herbs and salad plants at Farmers Markets.