



FANSHAWE GATE HALL

Press release

Friday 13th March 2009

National Gardens Scheme award for owners of Derbyshire garden

John and Cynthia Ramsden, owners of Fanshawe Gate Hall in Holmesfield, Derbyshire have received an Exceptional Service Award from The National Gardens Scheme (NGS), the charity behind the public opening of over 3,600 private gardens in England and Wales. The couple were presented with their award in London last month by Zac Goldsmith, President of the NGS during the event to mark the official launch of The Yellow Book 2009. The event was hosted by TV Gardener and presenter Joe Swift.

The success of the NGS as the leading charity for garden visiting is largely due to the hard work of thousands of volunteers like John and Cynthia Ramsden, who are the first garden owners to receive the NGS award. Chosen from nominations around the country, the Ramsdens were singled out for their continued dedication to fundraising over 15 years and for providing visitors of all ages with a friendly, hospitable welcome. Fanshawe Gate Hall is one of the most popular and beautiful historic gardens in Derbyshire.

Valerie Caldwell, Head of Marketing at the NGS, said, "Without our volunteers the NGS could not exist. Mr & Mrs Ramsden epitomise the heart of this wonderful charity with their tireless work, bringing so much enjoyment to thousands of visitors over the years and raising money for such worthwhile causes."

2009 marks 50 years of gardening at Fanshawe Gate for the Ramsdens, from providing a robust space for five boisterous children, through special projects to mark family weddings, into the present garden which is made up of several 'rooms'. To commemorate 50 years of living and gardening at Fanshawe Gate, John and Cynthia are planting a new border and Cynthia will publish a final chapter to her book 'A Garden in my Life' (2001).

"I feel that this award is deserved by the many helpers and volunteers who have made our open days possible since 1994," says Cynthia. "Their friendship, and that of many hundreds of visitors, has made Fanshawe Gate a very special place to care

for and in some senses, protect. Gardens and gardening touch people's lives in many different ways; for me it was a place of recovery from cancer 11 years ago; for children a place of discovery and fun. This year will feel like one, big party!"

Fanshawe Gate Hall garden opens for a Spring Special on Sunday 26th April to support Christian Aid, and again on Sundays 21st and 28th June and 5th, 12th and 19th of July. In addition to a 50th anniversary themed Children's Garden Quiz there will be a Story Corner, as well as sales of the new Emma Bridgewater mugs specially designed for the NGS. Private visits for groups of 10 or more can be arranged by appointment.

**Photo: Cynthia Ramsden with TV Gardener Joe Swift
(Permission of Mark Ramsden, Grafika Ltd.)**



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1. Founded in 1927, The NGS has raised more than £25 million for charity in the last 10 years. Copies of The National Gardens Scheme Yellow Book 2009 are available from all major bookshops. Further information at www.ngs.org.uk
2. Fanshawe Gate Hall garden opens on selected dates from 11.00am – 5.00pm and tickets are available at the entrance. Adults £2.50, children under 16 free. Home-made refreshments include morning coffee, ploughman's lunches and afternoon teas. Details at www.fgh.org.uk. Call 0114 289 0391 for private visit bookings.
3. Follow directions to Fanshawe Gate Hall along the B6054 from Holmesfield and from Owlbar. Car parking is available at the Hall and disability access is provided to the main areas of the garden. Tel: 0114 289 0391 or go to www.fgh.org.uk for directions.
4. Release issued by Integra Communications: 0115 912 4350. Interviews and photography available on request.