

# Gardening was obvious choice for Dr Neil's niece

Dr Neil's Garden next to Duddingston Kirk is a well known 'secret garden' in Edinburgh. Sarah Stewart knew all about the work of her great aunt and uncle Andrew and Nancy Neil who created it.

Sarah, 45, has had many jobs in her time but she decided to study something she really loved and signed up to the Scotland's Rural College course in Garden Design.



PHOTO Chris Watt

She had meant to do an HND part-time but studied for the full-time BSc Garden Design course.

"Coming from a family of garden lovers, I've always enjoyed being outdoors and am at my happiest pottering around my garden," she said.

"I didn't ever have the opportunity to garden with my aunt and uncle, although we would always visit the garden on its open days.

“My grandad was also an avid gardener, helping Andrew and Nancy in the garden and also keeping his own garden impeccable with his champion sweet peas and manicured lawn. He was gardening right up until he died at the age of 93.

“My dad caught the gardening bug and took on an allotment at a time that they were really not cool.”



### **Sarah as a child on her father's allotment**

As part of her course, Sarah is working in a team to design a front garden for College Street – part of this year's Gardening Scotland show in Edinburgh.

SRUC will occupy six plots on College Street with teams of students from its Edinburgh, Elmwood and Oatridge campuses submitting gardens which use practical and creative ideas to make streetscapes more appealing.

Gardening Scotland, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, takes place from Friday 31 May to Sunday 2 June at the Royal Highland Centre Edinburgh.

For more information about studying Horticulture and Plantsmanship at SRUC visit: <https://www.sruc.ac.uk/courses>



Sarah Stewart PHOTO Chris Watt