

August 2013

Issue no. 28



From the Editor's Desk

It may be hard to believe given the weather we've endured, but this *is* the summer edition of the newsletter. However, as you will see from this bumper issue, bad weather can't keep a good club down and there has been a lot of activity - including the annual show. You may also notice a greater variety of names than usual in our 'by-lines'. This is what we want so if you'd be willing to write up an event or submit a piece - please don't hold back. Our contact details are on the back page.

George

May: Rod and Jane Leeds' Garden

By Michael Warren

Rod Leeds, our speaker from September last year, kindly opened his garden at Preston St Mary for us on what one can only describe as a reasonable evening considering the number of colder evenings we've had since. And what a treat we had in store. To say the garden was looking immaculate is an understatement. Rod and Jane took us on guided tours, pointing out a wide variety of *fritillaria* species, bulbs and masses of perennials including *uvallaria* and *trilliums* plus alpines such as *anemonella* and *sebea* - their specialist interest being alpines and snowdrops. Sink gardens, too many to count, filled with exquisite alpines and quite a number of greenhouses sheltering plants from the weather rather than winter cold. As if maintaining this large garden to such a high standard were not a daunting enough task, the Leeds have taken over an area on the opposite side of the road, a narrow strip extending alongside a stream, in order to grow shade and moisture-loving plants.

Truly a delightful visit which ended with welcome coffee and Jane's home-made cakes. Visitors might have left the garden feeling depressed over their own efforts at home, but I for one came back inspired and have re-started a project with much more enthusiasm, building a raised area for my recently acquired sink gardens. Those who stayed at home missed a real treat.

Michael



May: Ickworth House Gardens

By Bill Baldry

When we had our May trip to Helmingham Hall in 2010 it was cold - but this year's May trip to Ickworth House gardens was even colder. It even managed to start out wet!

Sean Reid, Head Gardener, now Outdoor Manager, came and gave the club a talk back in February 2012 (it was cold that night as well) when he explained the ongoing work at the National Trust garden at Ickworth. Enthused, we arranged a guided tour to see the changes that he had described.

The garden, with its clipped bushes and hedges, is impressive and the lawn is now back in good order after having to be completely dug up and replanted, at great expense, due to an infestation of chafer grubs last year.

Sean explained how the layout of the Italianate garden reflects the layout inside the House with a long central avenue with "rooms" off it. The gardens were originally laid out with a light and darkness theme - light near the house, then semi-shade (where the spring garden was very colourful) to the darkness of the stumpery - and this idea is now being reinforced with new ideas and planting.

The stumpery was particularly intriguing. 250 tree stumps have been taken up from the adjoining parkland and incorporated into an enlarged stumpery with multiple pathways to view the different perspectives. (See picture below.)

A fascinating, informative and enjoyable evening - despite the weather - with birdsong from the tree tops throughout.

Bill



Above: Ickworth's Outdoor Manager Sean Reid tries to enlighten hardy members of the Club but, frankly, they look stumped.

Left: Spring colour in the Leeds' impressive garden.

May: Wild Flower Counting

By Helen Ashley

When, in September 2012, Martin Sanford of the Suffolk Biological Records Centre gave us a talk on the flora of Suffolk, he mentioned the importance of the small, protected roadside verges - including the one on Valley Road as you approach Hascott Hill. Well that's where, in May, I found Helen Ashley on her knees and looking very suspicious. Opposite you'll find her account of what she was up to... (Ed.)



"It's the time of year again for me to do the first of two annual Wildflower Counts for Plantlife. Equipped with a Wildflower ID Guide and a list of one hundred flowers, I make a start. Of course, not all the flowers on the list are in Suffolk, and not all are on my plots. It would be nice for Suffolk to score highly!! But it's a small plot, and Lesser Trefoil is *not* listed, -but Common Bird's-foot Trefoil *is*. Cowslips are still flowering, -just! And it's *not* Tufted Vetch, just Common Vetch. The real teaser is that buttercup; is it Creeping, Bulbous, or Meadow? By looking at sepals and lobes on basal leaves, I eventually get it sorted.

There are many interesting plants that are not yet flowering so I'll come back in a month or six weeks. And of course it's just as much about the flowers that are not listed as those that are!

If you would like to join in the Wildflower Count - the more records the better! Contact www.plantlife.org.uk or email your name and address to wfc@plantlife.org.uk."

Helen

Opposite: Skipper on Scabious - photo by Helen Ashley

June: Floral Cup Cake Workshop

By Denise Crozier

A lively bunch descended on Battsford Village Hall on Saturday the 1st June, for instruction on how to make a Floral Cupcake. Linda Clark had organised the morning and the hall was set up when we arrived; coffee on arrival was most welcoming. Jackie Collings demonstrated how to make a beautiful arrangement with such ease. She shared her wealth of experience with us with tips on the best flowers to use in an arrangement and how to treat them to make them last longer.

Did you know that Sheep/Cow Parsley stems need to be plunged into boiling water for a couple of minutes? This pushes the sap up and then the flowers will last longer. I know it's generally considered a weed, but a weed is only a flower in the wrong place - a mistake that Jackie never seems to make.

We all settled down to the task in hand, snipping and clipping, pushing and poking, chatting and admiring, sipping coffee and snacking on chocolate biscuits. Before we knew it two hours had sped past, but we each had two Floral Cupcakes and that wonderful feeling of sheer relaxation to take home.

Many Thanks to Jackie and Linda for a very enjoyable morning. What's next?

Denise



Captive workers in Battsford's notorious sweatshop for the production of floral decorations to grace the tables of the landed gentry.

June: Club BBQ

By Bill Baldry

Many thanks are due to Denis and Caroline Wicking for hosting this year's club BBQ on 3rd June in the spacious grounds of Field Cottage - complete with views across the fields to Ringshall Church and Wattisham Airfield.

A small party of erectors set up the gazebos during the day whilst a few others organised all the food, the raffle, etc. Thanks to all of them, but especially to Denis for 'cheffing'.

We hoped for better weather than last year and indeed it was dry with nothing in the sky except the setting sun and some cirrus spissatus! However, there was still a keen edge to the wind so it chilled off rather readily as it has done all this year - even on the warmest of days. Still, everyone tucked in heartily and a good time was had by all.



Revellers, gazebos and, apparently, cirrus spissatus.

Photo by Bill Baldry

Are there any offers to host next year's BBQ? There is a suggestion that we should go back to having it in July or August. Offers and opinions most welcome.

Bill

July: Green Farmhouse, Shelland

By Bill Baldry

Shelland is rural, bordering on remote. Although only a few miles from Stowmarket, it is tucked away down narrow, little-used country lanes which makes it quiet. The village church is a gem but we went to see the other gem which is the garden created by the charming Rosemary Roe at Green Farmhouse.

On a fine, warm evening 30 members visited the mixed two-acre garden surrounding the delightful thatched cottage. The setting is wonderfully open with views over the green to the front and, to the rear, across fields to the woods. A natural pond, with ducks, moorhen and a mole*, complements the borders, courtyard garden and other small feature gardens.

After having opened her garden for the National Gardens Scheme in June for the last couple of years, Rosemary is thinking of opening in September next year so that visitors may enjoy it at a different season.

* Sue Budd saved a young mole teetering on the brink from falling in the pond and removed it to an adjoining field.



A quiz to prove you know your lilies.
(Answers at foot of the back page.)

- 1: Only one of these 'lilies' is actually in the genus *Lilium*. Which one?
A Daylily B Regal lily C Toad lily
- 2: Who is the mother of 'Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily'?
A Peaches Geldof B Katie Price C Paula Yates
- 3: The greatest nemesis of lily growers is a beetle of which colour?
A scarlet B turquoise C emerald green
- 4: Who painted these water lilies?



- A Édouard Manet
B Paul Gauguin
C Claude Monet

- 5: The Scaffold, who had a number one hit with 'Lily the Pink', included Mike McGear. Who is Mike McGear's brother?
A Paul McCartney
B Roger McGough
C Michael McIntyre

- 6: Who, according to the Bible (Matthew 6:28), never looked as well dressed as a field of lilies?
A Herod B Joseph C Solomon

Not afraid to experiment and not afraid to leave a few weeds, Rosemary has created a very interesting and relaxing garden which we thoroughly enjoyed.

Bill



Club members at Green Farmhouse, Shelland... and is that the sun?

June 7th: Battisford and District Annual Garden Show 2013

After a poor spring and a summer of low temperatures and leaden skies, things did not bode well for the Combs Village Fete and the Club's annual garden show. But, would you believe it, an area of high pressure moved in just in time to give us a well-deserved scorcher! Good weather brought the crowds to Oaks Meadow and, in particular, into the marquee that housed the flower show (and the bar). And what a sight it was! Worried that there wouldn't be enough entries to fill a shoe box, Bill badgered members up to the last minute and was rewarded with over 600 entries. Vegetables, as expected, were hard hit but flowers stood up well and cookery and photography classes were very popular. However, even to my untrained eye, the stand-out classes were those for flower arranging. The standard was spectacular and the competition fierce with four different entrants taking firsts in the main 'themes'. (See photos.) Congratulations to Kathy Middleton for amassing most points in the floral arrangement classes and, of course, to all other prize winners. (See list opposite.)

Finally, many thanks to Bill Baldry and his indefatigable helpers for making it all happen - a great show from a great team.

George Bethell



- Top: Cottage Garden (Kathy Middleton)
- Middle left: Beside the Sea (Claire Nay)
- Middle right: 50 Shades of Green (Helen Read)
- Bottom Left: Tea Cup and Saucer (Claire Nay)
- Bottom right: TV programme 'Bargain Hunt' (Anthea Howard)



Kathy Middleton accepts her prizes with her customary humility.



Stuart Scarff takes his prize... and a cup for photography.



In a tough growing year, Jenny Forbes takes the Webb Cup for vegetables.



Paul Hansord displays his prize winning rhubarb.



Lynn Allen took first place with this specimen rose.



Arthur Brown clearly knows his onions... and shallots.

Battisford and District Garden Show 2013: The Prize Winners

BDGC Cup - heaviest weight of new potatoes: *Jeanne Lynch-Aird*

Webb Cup - for vegetables : *Jenny Forbes*

Win and Bob Rolfe Cup - for fruit: *Bill Baldry*

Portway Cup - for flowers: *Jackie Collings*

B.C.LF.R. Community Council Challenge Cup: *Kathy Middleton*

B.C.LF.R. Community Council Cup: *Sue Budd*

BDGC Salver – most points for flower arrangements: *Kathy Middleton*

BDHS Miscellaneous Cup - most novelty section points: *Bill Baldry*

BDHS Craft Cup: *Daphne Baldry*

BDGC Treasurer's Cup - for photography: *Stuart Scarff*

Edna Green Challenge Trophy - for cookery: *Sandra Henson*

BDGC Children's Cup - under 13 years: *Sam Johnstone*

BARCLIF 2012 Jubilee Tray - most points overall: *Bill Baldry*



Bill receives the Barclif Jubilee Tray from Ruth Hansord.

(More photos of Show and Winners on the website www.battisfordgardeningclub.org.uk)

Coming events...

Monday 5th August: ???

The planned visit to the 'Curious Plants Company' has been *cancelled*. Bill will let members know if an alternative can be arranged.

Monday 2nd September: Speaker David Mitchell

David Mitchell is the Mid-Suffolk Tree and Landscape Officer. He will be talking on "Trees – Veteran trees, garden trees, tree diseases, and woodland management" 7:30 pm at the Battsford Community Centre.

Weekend 6th-8th September: 'Barclif goes Global'

See details and appeal for volunteers opposite.

Monday 7th October: Annual General Meeting***

AGM with talk by Sarah Partridge of the Orchard Barn Project. Project information at www.orchardbarnproject.org.uk.

7:30 pm at the Battsford Community Centre.

Please note that annual membership fees will be due at the start of October - great, great value at just £11.

Monday 4th November: Speaker Andy Wilkinson

Andy Wilkinson of 'Triffid Nurseries', Stoke Ash, Suffolk will talk on "Carnivorous Plants". (www.triffidnurseries.co.uk)

7:30 pm at the Battsford Community Centre.

Monday 2nd December: Quiz + free Buffet

Quiz Master George Bethell. Free buffet supper - bring your own drinks! 7:00 pm at the Battsford Community Centre - *note early start*.

Miscellany...

Community Service: call for volunteers

As most of you will know, the Gardening Club has been involved with maintenance of the gardens at the Punchbowl since it reopened a couple of years ago. This will continue this year so once again Bill is looking for volunteers to fill a weekly rota for watering and weeding. The weeks beginning 26th August and 2nd September are still not covered, so if you are able help at all please let Bill know on 01449 672168 or send him an e-mail on wbaldry@btinternet.com.

August Bird Seed Order

Tori will, once again, be taking members' orders for bird seed at bargain prices. Details, including prices and the *last date for orders*, can be found on the order form downloadable from the website: www.battsfordgardeningclub.org.uk
Just click on the 'Seed Orders' link.



Barclif Goes Global

BARCLIF Goes Global, 6th to 8th September, is a series of events to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Battsford's Independence Day. An internationally themed weekend of events is planned on Battsford village green with BDGC involvement.

On Friday evening 6th September, Suffolk 'legend' Charlie Haylock will be coming to entertain. On Saturday 7th a Global Food Market will operate in the main marquee from 9.00am so come along and sample the wares. Then the main event starts at 1.00pm with a fancy dress parade from the Free Church to the village green followed by an afternoon of activities – including the Great BARCLIF bake-off. In the evening there is "BollyCLIF" – BARCLIF meets Bollywood – music and dance entertainment.

On Sunday 8th September there will be a "Harvest for the World" church service in the main marquee.

For tickets and more details about anything that is happening, please contact [Annie Hand 01449 775832](mailto:Annie.Hand@btinternet.com).

BDGC involvement is to man the tea tent from 1.00 pm to 4.30pm on the Saturday. So could I please ask for volunteers to a) make a cake and b) offer to do a spell serving teas/washing up in between enjoying all the activities happening in the main arena and around the green.

If you can help with either/both of these things please let me know as soon as possible. BDGC will get to keep any profits that we make on the day.

Thank you.

[Bill Baldry 01449 672168](mailto:Bill.Baldry@btinternet.com)



And finally...

Contributions to the Newsletter

If you would like to submit something for inclusion in a future newsletter, please don't hold back! Offers and/or submissions to George via e-mail [bethell.george@gmail.com] or by snail-mail to: Stone Croft, Valley Road, Stowmarket, IP14 2HH.

Photos of Club Events

If you would like a high definition e-copy of any of the photos featured in this newsletter, please let me know and I'll see what I can do. E-mail: bethell.george@gmail.com

Note of Thanks

The Club's newsletters are printed through the extraordinary generosity of **Mary Gregory**. All we can say is, "Thanks Mary - we appreciate all you do for the Club."

Brain Teasels Answers

1: B
2: C
3: A
4: C
5: A
6: C