

**BATTISFORD & DISTRICT  
GARDENING CLUB  
NEWSLETTER  
*November 2019***

*Issue 51*



**Paul's tomato taste test**

Some 60 different tomato varieties were grown, 22 in hanging baskets, 10 in pots and the balance in grow bags. 22 varieties were selected for taste testing on the evening and the results were quite consistent with small cherry varieties being the most favoured. Sungold, Sweet Aperitif and a new variety Sungold Bush topped the taste test results. This new variety will be available next spring. It's very easy to grow, you do not have to remove the side shoots, just plant and leave, it's as simple as that.

Monday 2nd September

Visit to Paul's garden

'The New Venture'

Paul lives in Little Finborough with views of the open countryside from his garden. When the mini-show scheduled for the September meeting had to be cancelled, Paul kindly stepped in with the offer of a visit to his garden. The 40 members who attended not only enjoyed a beautiful and colourful display but new and interesting ideas to take back to their own gardens. Over to Paul:

I am sure many of you are aware I retired from Thompson & Morgan in March 2018 after 30 years service.

After a few months of relaxation and lots of holidays I soon came to realise that I needed to keep my mind active! So I decided to start a new venture called Eazy Gardening with a new Dip & Grow concept. The emphasis being, every product developed would enable gardeners and non-gardeners to be more successful.

My greenhouse and garden became my product development and trials area.

Following the cancellation of the mini-show I contacted Bill to see if he thought the garden club members would be interested in visiting my garden and the trials I had set up. I'd like to thank everyone who took the trouble to visit. For those that could not make it here follows a brief summary of what you missed.

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Also on display was the new concept for seed kits, where the seed and the fertiliser has been incorporated into a ball of moss or cocoa pellets, all the customer has to do is just add water. No more looking for a seed tray compost and a label and then trying to sow the seed evenly!

The Dip & Grow concept should be launched on a global scale in Spring 2021.

The trials also demonstrated how different organic fertilisers performed, sourced from Sri Lanka, India, China and France. The dramatic differences in the plants performance could be clearly seen.



Dip & Grow Seed Kit



Another concept shown was a 5 inch ball of field grown moss which incorporated organic fertiliser and 6 different varieties of lettuce seed. The seeds were selected from 150 different ones grown for flavour texture and eye appeal. The lettuce is ready for harvesting after about 60 days and could be cut up to 6 times through the season. Several club members said it was so pretty it would make an ornamental display on the patio.

Also on display was a self watering system for tomatoes in grow bags and patio pots for bedding plants. The trial concluded, that with the new water wick system you have only have to water once, compared to 4 times when the plants are grown in a standard growbag or patio pot.

As part of the product development I need feedback from a range of potential customers so if you would like to grow the new dip and grow products and then feedback on how they perform please drop an email to me at [phansord@hotmail.com](mailto:phansord@hotmail.com).

Paul Hansord



### BDGC AGM 7th October

Bill opened proceedings with thanks to the 33 members who were able to attend. He said that for the last 10 years he had been standing here saying that we have had a successful year but this year was going to turn it into a question "has your BDGC membership for the last year been a success for you?" and the answer from those present was a definite "Yes". It was another good year with enjoyable speakers and trips. We averaged 45 members at meetings and had that many at the January meal which is more than previous years. One trip attracted 35 members, another only 11 - does anyone have an idea for the difference? Bill thanked everyone for their support, including the non-committee members who help in any way to keep the club going. Thank you also to three long standing members -Linda, Paul and Anthea - who have stepped down from the committee after several years of service. Bill said "**We need a new Chairman**" but nobody agreed so you have got him for another year. Jim Henson volunteered to return to the committee. Linda has left us with a full and interesting calendar of events for the next year and I hope to see you at as many of those as possible. If you were not at the meeting and would like a copy of the next 12 month's plans email Bill at [bdgc@btinternet.com](mailto:bdgc@btinternet.com).

Bill Baldry



**LISTEN AND LEARN!**

# Monday 7th October

## Autumn planting bulbs for Spring colour

### Matthew Long

Matthew came to give his second talk this year, this time on spring bulbs. Matthew owns Riverside Bulbs at Monks Eleigh and almost all his sales are online, although you can visit if you contact him first. Matthew noted that bulbs are storage organs and to get the best from them you need to ensure the bulbs are able build up their stores for the next season. Matthew started with reference to cyclamen which are actually flowering now as autumn bulbs, but he then went through an illustrated chronological list of bulbs from the welcome early flowering Eranthis or Winter Aconite, which brightens up the garden from January, through to the summer flowering Camassia, Alliums and Madonna Lilies.

The bell shaped Leucojum or Snowflakes come in January to February, along with Galanthus or Snowdrops. There are so many different forms and he showed the variety of beautiful shapes and colours. The crocus should also appear in February. Matthew noted that Tommasinianus spreads well and has a pretty flower.

Moving into March, there is a wealth of bulbs to choose from and Matthew came to the "little blue bulbs", such as Anemone Blanda and Muscari or Grape Hyacinth.

Matthew recommended M. Baby's Breath, or M. Valerie Finnis, or the star like Chionodoxa, Puschkinia, or Scilla Siberica. These can be bell, flat or star shaped and are often blue.

The dwarf Irises also flower in March, as do the Fritillaria, such as Crown Imperials or the beautiful common form of Snakeshead Fritillary. March is thought of as the month for Narcissus or Daffodils. They originate from the Iberian Peninsula and there are now numerous forms. The Jonquils are highly scented and coming in the miscellaneous group, Tete a Tete is a very popular small daffodil.

Matthew recommended succession planting, for example for early in February try February Gold, Tete a Tete, or Jetfire, then Thalia or Pipit for mid-season and Poeticus for later flowering. Poeticus was one of the first daffodils to be cultivated. Erythronium or Dog's Tooth bulbs produce another pretty flower in March, with unusual swept back petals.

Matthew showed several Hyacinths and advised that the bulbs should be planted at a depth of 10". He recommended a visit to Alan Shipp's National Collection of Hyacinths at Waterbeach, near Cambridge. Matthew ended with Tulips. They originate from Central Turkey and their name is a corruption of "Turban", referring to their shape. The tulip is still prominent in Turkish art today. 5.5 billion tulip bulbs are sold each year. They can also be planted in succession, with so many to choose from each year. Matthew strongly recommended a trip to the Netherlands to the gardens at Keukenhof to see the annual display.

Finally, Matthew suggested that the best book to purchase to learn about bulbs is The Bulb Expert by Dr.D.G.Hessayon, for just £2.50. It gives a list of references and places to see the bulbs in flower. Matthew brought along some bulbs for sale and several members took home a good selection after an interesting talk.

Jane Pope.



Matthew Long  
Riverside Bulbs

The Flints, Monks Eleigh, IP7 7JG

Tel: 01449 741551

[www.riversidebulbs.co.uk](http://www.riversidebulbs.co.uk)

Some of the range of Matthew Long's  
Bulbs for Autumn planting



Tete Boucle



Fritillaria acmopetala



Galanthus Viridiapice



**BDGC Christmas Meal**

**Stowmarket Golf Club Friday 17th Jan 7 for 7.30pm**

**Starters**

Tomato and basil soup

Chicken Liver, bacon & caramelised onion pate  
served with herb crostini's

Warm portobello mushroom stuffed with a goat's  
cheese mousse topped with honey

Flaked salmon and crab salad served with crème  
fraiche

**Main Course**

Traditional roast turkey served with all the trimmings  
Cashew, chestnut and vegetable nut roast with all the  
trimmings and vegetarian gravy

Guinea fowl supreme served with sautéed potatoes  
and a port jus

Herb crusted haddock fillet with new potatoes, spin-  
ach and a vermouth sauce

Butternut squash, mangetout and pea risotto topped  
with parmesan cheese

**Deserts**

Christmas pudding with brandy sauce

White chocolate and cherry cheesecake served with  
cream

Apple and blueberry crumble served with custard

Warm chocolate brownie served with vanilla ice  
cream

Lemon meringue roulade served with a fruit compote

Coffee and mince pies to conclude

2 courses: 21.50 per person

3 courses: 26.50 per person

To book: contact Denis on [denis.wicking@gmail.com](mailto:denis.wicking@gmail.com)

## Out and about with The Baldrys!

### Hillside at Semer

A new garden opened locally for the first time for NGS in June - Hillside at Semer, so Daphne and I went and had a look and it was very good. The NGS booklet describes it better than I can - "This new garden has sweeping lawns running down to a spring fed pond. The formal garden has island beds of mixed planting for a long season of interest. The wild area of meadow has been landscaped with extensive tree planting to complement the existing woodland. There is also a small walled kitchen garden".

Sue and Neil Mordey provided visitors with a detailed sheet of the work that they have carried out since moving in three years ago and the result is a very pleasant, very varied, evolving garden that was a delight to go and see. Tea cups were rather small (we are used to mugs) but the slabs of delicious coffee and walnut cake were enormous.

Yes, I did ask if they have considered opening up for club visits but unfortunately not - so keep a look out for the 2020 opening day in the next NGS brochure.

Bill and Daphne



Hillside at Semer

## 'Bridges' at Woolpit



Back on the 1st September Daphne and I took a trip on a glorious day to Bridges in Woolpit having seen it advertised in the NGS booklet and elsewhere.

The NGS description is "An C15 Grade 11 terraced house in the centre of a C12 Suffolk village with walled garden to the rear of the property. Additional land was acquired 20 years ago, and this garden was developed into formal and informal planting. The main formal feature is the Shakespeare Garden featuring the bust of Shakespeare, and the 'Umbrello' a recently constructed pavilion in an Italianate design". That sounds a dull and dry description of what is a very interesting and colourful garden with something growing away on every conceivable surface be it horizontal or vertical. I have never seen so much use made of garden walls, and low growing espalier fruits were another feature.

We thought it was a great garden to visit - it will not open for a club visit so look out for its NGS opening again next year and make a visit.



The 'Spotty Dotty' (*Podophyllum Versipelle*) One of the exotic plants at Bridges

## A blast from the past

### Jackie Collings

I thought this might be of interest to members:

When Stuart & I moved to Suffolk in 1973 there was a flourishing horticultural society in Battisford and just like BDGC we met at the Community Centre once a month.



Those featured in the photograph are from L, Winnie Rolfe (a very efficient secretary) Billy & Elizabeth Hammond. Next are Joan & Les Fowle (my parents) who moved to Battisford at the same time we moved to Combs, my father was Chairman of the Club. Ruth Mudd is far right and at the back is Les Hill and Len le Grice (right)

The picture was taken at the annual social held, I seem to recall, in St Peter's Church Hall, Stowmarket. The evening featured 'proper' dancing and a buffet supper. Billy and Elizabeth and Jon & Les are being presented with shields for the best kept garden. 3 members of the Committee visited member's gardens unannounced on 3 separate occasions to judge the best kept garden. It was divided into 2 sections—large garden with help and small garden. The club also held an annual show in the Community Centre, and local gardeners usually wiped the board with their magnificent vegetables & flowers. Some of the trophies are still presented to winners today.

Just like today outings were arranged to visit gardens and places of interest—although fewer gardens were open then.

Winnie Rolfe was a very ambitious secretary and also arranged trips abroad. I recall a trip to Holland and also one to Jersey. We flew from Southend Airport which in those days was very basic.

The Club closed in the mid 80s - I suppose the Committee & members were getting older and most younger people were working.

However I have many happy memories. My father was an avid photographer, but had no system for sorting his slides. One evening the speaker didn't arrive so my father popped home and brought his slides & projector. If he showed one slide of the poppies in his garden he must have shown 30 or more! In the end the audience shouted 'More poppies' - it was great fun.

In between the poppies were some fantastic photos of Chelsea. He had a friend who had a stand at Chelsea so could go when the Queen visited and the marquee was almost empty

Jackie Collings

Editor: Thank you Jackie. How scary, the judges visiting your garden unannounced! – don't get any ideas Bill! If anyone else has memories of this era please let me know .

#### The Newsletter

Despite the rumours this is not the last newsletter—what I said was that I would be happy to hand it over to someone else if they would like to have go. So far no one has stepped up so let me know if you are interested. What would be really helpful is for more people to contribute. There are a handful of members who do so regularly and I am very grateful to them. However more of you could contribute. Just offer to write about a speaker or garden visit or anything else that you think may be of interest to other members.

## Future events

Monday 4th November

Andrew Sankey '6 of the Best'

(Gardens he knows)

Saturday 30th November

Wreath making workshop

10am—1pm, £15 per person

Contact Caroline Wicking to book—01449 770980

Monday 2nd December

Annual Quiz with George Bethell

Arrive 7pm

Bring own food & glasses & plate of food to share

Friday 17th January 2020

Annual dinner at Stowmarket Golf Club

Arrive at 7pm for 7.30

Details on page 5

Monday 3rd February 2020

Edwina Hughes from 'Colour Naturally'

Plants & Colour

Monday 2nd March

Ken Abel—'Hostas'

This popular speaker talking about his other love

(apart from Pelargoniums)

If you would like information about Battsford & District Gardening Club please contact Bill Baldry

12 Tannery Road, Combs, IP14 2EL. 01449 672168

Or go to our website:

[www.battsfordgardeningclub.org.uk](http://www.battsfordgardeningclub.org.uk)



## Bosch tools to win for a £1!

### Win some tools and help the club.

Bosch have given us a cordless shear set RRP £59 and a corded grass trimmer RRP £39 and it was decided to have a raffle where you choose a numbered square (or as many squares as you like) for just £1 each. Many thanks to everyone who has participated at the last couple of meetings but there is still time to join in and win these donated prizes. The draw will take place at the December 2nd meeting. So, if you can't make the November talk or the December quiz but would like the chance of winning (for yourself or a generous Christmas gift to someone else) call Bill on 01449 672168 and he will put your name in one of the remaining squares. Open to family and friends - the more squares we sell the more we make for the club. Thank you, Bill



Win one of two prizes

Cordless shears set

Corded grass trimmer