August 2014

Issue no. 32

May: There's a place for us...

By Jackie Collings

It is always a treat to visit Place for Plants at East Bergholt. The plants are in such good condition and so temptingly displayed, and the staff very knowledgeable and helpful. This was confirmed at our March meeting, when Matthew Tanton-Brown from Place for Plants gave such an informative talk on fragrant shrubs. So we were a little worried when 20 members arrived on Monday evening to find the gates... locked!

Unfortunately, there had been a slight hiccough as Sarah Eley hadn't received Bill's e-mail confirming our visit. But it was a problem quickly solved and soon Rupert was his enthusiastic self, striding through the garden waxing lyrical over the marvellous trees and shrubs growing in the acres of garden.

There were some wonderful specimens, including a number of rare *Cornus* and *Viburnum*, a handkerchief tree in full bloom, and a stunning bog garden. It took some time to cover the whole of the garden and the light was failing as we finished the tour in the Eley's private garden, which is surrounded by the most immaculately trimmed yew hedge with topiary finials.

Above: Something for everyone in the stunning bog garden.

(Photo: Bill Baldry)

I'm sure everyone who came was duly impressed and the feeling was that a number of members would be returning to purchase plants from the nursery. Our thanks to Sarah & Rupert Eley, for dropping whatever they were doing to escort us through their gardens.

Jackie

June: Irises and more...

By Anthea Howard

Our June visit was to Hullwood Barn, the home of Sarah Cook and Jim Marshall in Shelley, near Hadleigh.

The main purpose was to visit Sarah's passion, her national collection of Cedric Morris Irises, but we were also able to enjoy their beautiful herbaceous borders.

The Irises were spectacular, all displayed in an informal setting and were much admired by all. They are allowed to seed around the garden at will so all sorts of new varieties are created.

The couple also have an extensive vegetable garden and Jim has the national collection of Dianthus Malmaisons* – how do these people do it?

We were also treated to Sarah's delicious home made cakes and tea.

Sarah had been filmed recently by Carol Klein and the BBC for a programme, to be broadcast next year, focussing on specific plant collections – watch out for it on BBC2.

Anthea

Right, upper: A fantastic display of 'Sir Cedric Morris' Irises.

(Photo: Michael Warren)

Right, lower: Sarah Cook - without an iris to be seen!

(Photo: Bill Baldry)

* According to Wikipedia - "Malmaison carnations - derived from the variety 'Souvenir de la Malmaison', growing to 70 cm (28 in), grown for their intense "clove" fragrance."

June: BBQ and Prize Draw

By Bill Baldry

The switch to a Sunday afternoon for this year's BBQ didn't bring the hoped for summer heatwave. So we started off disappointingly damp but the weather slowly brightened up as did the mood as everyone tucked into the wonderful food provided. With John, Stan and Jim operating the barbeques and the ladies bringing out a vast selection of delicious homemade puddings, everything turned out well.

Many thanks to everyone who helped on the day and in advance - especially to Gwynneth and John Hogger for letting us use their wonderful garden.

The Summer Draw, with over 50 prizes donated by Paul Hansord and Thompson and Morgan, was very successful and raised £850 which will be shared between the Gardening Club, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the East Anglian Air Ambulance. Thanks go to Paul for his generosity, Denis for acting as Promoter, the committee ladies for sorting and wrapping the prizes so well, and to everyone who bought and sold tickets for us. Thank you. Bill

Right, upper: Paul draws another prize-winning ticket for the Club's Summer Draw at the BBQ. (Photo: Michael Warren)

Right, lower: The boys of the barbeque. (Photo: Bill Baldry)

July: A Report on the 2014 Show

By Daphne Baldry

After a baking hot Friday, show day dawned wet but thankfully a bit cooler. The rain didn't stop the enthusiasm of the entrants as they brought all their wonderful exhibits - a record 600+. All was in place for the 12.30 pm judging and what a spectacle it was with the glamour of the show tent being extended to the outside by the pouches, pots and potatoes!

By 2 o'clock, when the marquee opened for viewing, the weather had improved and there was great excitement amongst the entrants looking for 3rd, 2nd, and, of course, much-coveted 1st prize stickers.

There was a steady stream of visitors throughout the afternoon, with some very complimentary comments being made. It was interesting to hear visitor's opinions of the judges' decisions. I was very excited to see that I had been awarded 1st prize for my photograph of Little Finborough Church but was quickly brought down to earth by overhearing "I wouldn't have given that one first prize, there's far too much of the seat in it. That one is much better!"

Special mention must be made of Gwynneth Hogger's prize winning potatoes which weighed in, incredibly at just over 17lbs thereby dwarfing the next heaviest (a mere 6lb). We'll all be queuing up for llama poo for next year!

Congratulations too to Helen Read who, having been encouraged by the last newsletter, did indeed redeem her reputation with a well deserved 1st prize for her Victoria Sandwich. And just to prove she hasn't lost her flower arranging skills she also won the BDGC silver salver. Well done Helen!

Finally, the Fete Committee asked BDGC to run the cake stall this year as our contribution to the fundraising. As always members and others rallied with some wonderful cakes and £138.70 was raised.

Well done to all concerned! Daphne

Gwynneth Hogger with her bumper crop of new potatoes from just three container-grown roots! (Photo: Paul Henson)

Below: The spectacular Show tent. (Photo: Bill Baldry)

The Show from an Organiser's Perspective…

By Bill Baldry

I've been in charge of seven Shows now and whilst some things are getting slightly easier, there is always a full range of emotions to go through before, during and after the event.

The work starts far in advance of Show Day. After having decided that we are going to put ourselves through it again, we organise discussions to decide on the classes to be included before we design and print the schedule. There then follows a fairly quiet period just keeping in touch with the Fete Committee as to any changes they are planning. In the early years the Gardening Club paid half the cost of the marquee to put on the Show but now this comes from Fete funds which is why I always try to encourage attendance at Fete fund raising events.

As Show Day gets nearer the worries start… Will people take part? Is everything in place for it to run smoothly? And far more besides!

The answer to the first question is "Yes" - we certainly put on the biggest Garden Show for many miles around with over 600 entries this year. However, with success comes work. Each entry needs a show card which means A LOT of writing. Well it did until this year when George and Denis computerised the label printing and scoring. Many thanks go to them.

The second question is more problematic and so many thanks go to the Committee members (and many non-committee members) who help to make sure the answer is "Yes – we are ready to roll!"

Special thanks must go to Paul Hansord for everything that he does, from supplying us with plants to giving us a very considerable amount of T&M vouchers as Show prizes. We must be the best sponsored gardening club in the country - make the most of it while it lasts. And last, but by no means least, special thanks to Daphne for all she puts up with when I'm getting anxious!

Finally, if all the preparations have gone well, there is time to relax, enjoy a beer and have a good look at all the fruits of your efforts. It is immensely rewarding to enjoy the tremendous display that we put on and to see the enthusiasm of our entrants and all those who visit the Fete.

And next year? We'll see…

Bill

Was it worth it? Check out Michael Warren's beautiful photos on this page and then decide! Ed.

Annual Show 2014: And the winner is…

Photos by Michael Warren

1: BDGC Cup - heaviest wt. of new potatoes: *Gwynneth Hogger*

2: Webb Cup - for vegetables : *Jenny Forbes*

3: BDGC Salver - flower arrangements: *Helen Read*

4: BCLFR Community Council Challenge Cup: *Paul Hansord*

5: Portway Cup - for flowers: *Arthur Brown*

6: BDGC Treasurer's Cup - for photography: *Daphne Scarff*

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

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

Other winners not shown:

BCLFR Community Council Cup: *Jeanne Lynch-Aird*

BDHS Misc. Cup - most novelty section points: *Sue Copps*

BDHS Craft Cup: *Judith Thompson*

Win and Bob Rolfe Cup - for fruit: *Michael Warren*

And finally… *Michael Warren* (left) this year's winner of the much coveted BARCLIF Jubilee Tray for the most points overall finds it difficult to prise it from the fingers of last year's winner!

(Photo: Daphne Baldry)

Photos of Club Events

If you would like a high definition digital copy of any of the photos featured in this newsletter, please let me know and I'll see what I can do.

George

(bethell.george@gmail.com)

Coming events…

Monday 4th August: Visit to T&M

A BDGC *exclusive* offers members a rare chance to visit Thompson and Morgan's Trial and Development Centre. Paul Hansord and plant breeder Charles Valin will be on hand to tell us of their work there.

Details of the venue will be revealed on a 'need to know' basis so if you are interested, either e-mail Bill for directions at wbaldry@btinternet.com or meet at the Community Centre at 6:15pm for directions and car-share.

Monday 1st September: Speaker Mike Warren

Our very own Mike Warren will talk on 'Climbers, Creepers and Crawlers'. 7:30 pm at the Battisford Community Centre.

In a new departure for the Club we will have a small competition on the evening. You are invited to bring along a basket/ tray (maximum size 18" x 12") of garden produce to showcase the results of your summer's work.

Monday 6th October: AGM

The AGM will be held at the Battisford Community Centre from 7:30pm. In a change to our previously advertised programme, our speaker will be local member Lucy Skellorn with a talk entitled "Abbots Hall Walled Garden at the Museum of East Anglian Life - Its history and development to date."

Friday 14th November: Roy Lancaster

The Club's Committee has done it again and has enticed a very big 'name' to spend an evening with us. Roy Lancaster CBE, popular broadcaster, plantsman extraordinaire and modern day plant collector will talk on "'A Plantsman's Garden", all about the making of his garden. Ringshall Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £10 each and are available from Bill and Daphne on 01449 672168 . This talk will undoubtedly prove popular so book early to avoid disappointment.

Is your knowledge of fruit just peachy or are you a rotten apple? (Answers at foot of page.)

1: Which of Henry VIII's wives had a pomegranate as her heraldic device?
A Catherine of Aragon B Anne Boleyn C Jane Seymour

2: Which of these fruits is likely to suffer from 'shanking'?
A strawberries B grapes C pears

3: The original Bramley apple tree is found in which county?
A Devon B Kent C Nottinghamshire

4: In the film 'The Godfather', which fruit was Marlon Brando's character Don Vito Corleone tending when he died?
A lemons B tomatoes C grapes

5: In Chris Stewart's best selling book of the same name, where were the protagonists 'Driving Over Lemons'?
A Andalucia B Provence C Tuscany

6: Which fruit would you expect to harvest from a tree in the genus *Cydonia* ?
A mulberry B medlar C quince

7: With which sport is the late, great Shirley Crabtree associated?
A wrestling B tennis C baseball

Sunday 31st August: Specialist Bulb Sale

Not a Club event but… the mid-Anglia branch of the Alpine Garden Society is holding a *specialist* bulb sale.

See details below.

Brain Teasels Answers

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