Battisford & District Gardening Club Newsletter February 2016

issue 37

Jim Buttress— '65 years in Horticulture'

Look out!

Judge Dread is coming

Tues 29th March 2016

7.30pm

One may not expect an individual who left school at 15 after a 'miserable' and 'chequered school career' and who, as an apprentice, failed their Royal Horticultural diploma, to become one of the countries most respected figures in horticulture. However, this is exactly what happened to Jim Buttress and he will be joining us to deliver a talk entitled "65 years in horticulture" on Tuesday 29th March at Ringshall.

This promises to be a fascinating evening and Jim will no doubt share with us his journey from naughty schoolboy, to royal gardener, to respected grow expert judge and holder of the highest accolade in horticulture - the Victoria Medal of Honour.

Jim was head judge for 'Britain in Bloom' for 25 years and was once dubbed 'Judge Dread' by the Daily Telegraph, an acknowledgement of his high standards and expert eye. More recently he has been a judge in the BBC's 'Great Allotment Challenge' and will doubtlessly provide useful tips for those preparing their vegetable patches for the growing season ahead.

Judging on the Great Allotment Challenge

For tickets contact Bill Baldry

01449 672168 *Cost: £10 guests*

£ 5 members

16th August 2015

Annual Barbecue

Although numbers were slightly down from the previous year, the event was great fun. The 'usual suspects' arrived and set up the marquees with military precision and, as in previous years, those who attended enjoyed an excellent spread. Paul provided a host of prizes for the raffle and the impromptu pop group formed by the 'washer uppers' should be encouraged to reform at the next BBQ.

Many thanks to Ian & Jo Pepper who held it in their garden, to those who provided the delicious salad and cakes and especially to Ian who slaved over the BBQ all afternoon!

Spot the 3 wise monkeys. Prize for 1st correct answer received

7th September 2015

Salvias Janet Buist

The Salvia guru', Janet Buist, from Pennycross Plants in Huntington, shared some of her considerable knowledge of Salvias, including tips on care and propagation. Her tips for winter care are to water if the leaves begin to wilt, not to re-pot into a larger pot just before winter and to keep the Salvias and greenhouse bench free of dead plant material to discourage Botrytis (blight) developing.

'The Hampton Hack' blog says prune Salvias after the first flush of flowers in early July (Hampton Court Flower Show time) to prolong flowering.

The Salvia River in Enköping, Sweden.

5th October 2015

Annual General Meeting

Many thanks to Bill who, despite announcing his retirement from the role of Chairman, was persuaded to stand again and was duly elected. Also special thanks to Debs who has agreed to undertake the role of Treasurer again for the forthcoming year. The Committee gives a warm welcome to the return of Sandra and Linda to the committee and new members Clive and Barbara..

5th October 2015

'Mini-Show

The Mini-Show was originally for members to bring fruit and veg that were not ready for the July Show but in the event we received many and varied entries. Paul Hansord was kind enough to act as judge - and the prizes were tickets for the raffle! As usual Mike Warren almost swept the board! Here he is with two of his onions! Many thanks to all those who made the effort to enter

Some other Mini-Show exhibits

2nd November 2015

Spring Woodlanders

Ben Potterton popped in to talk to us on Monday 2nd November on his way to Chester and Devon (Tues) Cologne (Weds) Czech Republic (Thurs & Fri) and wolf watching in Slovakia for the weekend. If that sounds exhausting, trust me, he is up for it. His talk entitled 'Spring Woodlanders' was energetic, entertaining and informative. Ben runs Cottage Garden nursery near Diss where they specialise in hardy herbaceous perennials (many unusual) and Shorelands wildlife garden which focuses on conservation. Both I am sure are well worth a visit – see his website for details. Ben is very fond of cranes and whilst talking to us he waved his arms and legs around rather like an excited crane himself!

28th November 2015

Wreath making workshop

This Christmas craft session proved to be great fun, providing the opportunity for the twelve participants to not only produce a decorative fabric wreath but to also relax and chat. Kate Hansord, a textiles tutor, ran the workshop and provided a huge range of excellent materials to work with including pom-pom makers which proved very popular. Many thanks to Caroline for organising the workshop and to Anthea who served everyone with drinks and festive nibbles throughout the session.

Showing off their efforts!

Did you know?:

Originally a wreath was a circlet called a "diadem" and took the form of fabric headbands which were sometimes adorned with jewels. When the transition from head ornament to wall decoration occurred is unclear.

The Romans hung wreaths on their doors as a sign of victory and of their status in society.

In the early days in Europe, people would put wreaths on their doors to identify their home in the same manner that house numbers are used today. Each house would have a different wreath made of quite exotic flowers, most likely grown by the home owner on their own land.

The wreath has significant meaning for the Christmas season. It's circular shape represents **eternity**, for it has no beginning and no end. From a Christian religious perspective, it represents an unending circle of life.

Pests -The Rosemary Beetle

The rosemary beetle (Chrysolina americana), ranking at No.5 on The Royal Horticultural Society's ' top ten garden pest list and featuring in a quiz night question, is an invasive, non-

native species which attacks some of our favourite garden herbs. Originating in southern Europe, it appeared in London gardens in the late 1990s and spread rapidly.

Rosemary beetles and their larvae eat the foliage and flowers of various aromatic plants, such as rosemary, lavender, sage and thyme. Most damage occurs between late summer and the spring and infested plants can look very shabby but their appearance usually improves as new growth develops in late spring-summer.
The beetles are fairly easy to spot being 6- 7mm long, with metallic purple and green stripes on their wing cases and thorax whilst the larvae are greyish-white with darker stripes running along their bodies.

Infestations can be controlled with pesticides but plants in flower should not be sprayed to avoid harming bees and other pollinating insects. Hand picking can help to keep infestations at a manageable level and the beetles and larvae can be collected by tapping or shaking plants over newspaper spread beneath. For further advice visit www.rhs.org.uk

ROSEMARY— The Herb of love and Remembrance

For many centuries and in many cultures Rosemary has been recognised for its culinary, medicinal and symbolic properties. When mixed with garlic, it adds flavour to many a dish. It has a reputation for improving memory, relieving headaches and stress. It is associated with love, remembrance and is symbolic of faithfulness.

However there is a folklore saying which may be worth considering; "Where Rosemary flourishes, the Woman rules" , meaning that, Rosemary will not grow in the garden of a home unless the woman is boss!

Jo Pepper wrote this from the heart as she has them in her garden. It also infests Lavender, Sage & Thyme

7th December 2015

Christmas Quiz

Quizmaster: George Bethell

Christmas Quiz, lovely nibbles and seasonal ritual humiliation. 7th December 2015.

Q: Where can you find the naked torsos of Jean Claude Van Damme and Ross Poldark, alongside York shire's demurely clad Joe Root? (See what he did there?)

A: The Battisford and District Gardening Club Quiz.

Once again George set questions of great variety, all with a direct or tenuous link to gardening.

Professionally and imaginatively presenting, alternately teasing, cajoling and frankly bossing, the 7 quiz teams were putty in his hands. There was much hilarity, not at all related to the fast diminishing wine and beer in the bottles on the tables, but purely a response to George's witty repartee, with the banter bouncing back and forth between the quiz master and the quiz teams.

Initially tentative about his innovation, George introduced the Spot Prize between some rounds. This created more excitement and barracking, as the "almost as good as Grayson Perry's" pottery prizes were handed out to the "lucky" winners.

The interval food was delicious, thank you very much and the raffle prizes were gratefully received.

George's beautiful assistant Bill, tottered, sorry, totted up the scores with speed and accuracy and surprisingly announced at the end that he had known all the answers. The winners? Well, it is the taking part that counts, but if you would really like to know:

First: (by half a mark) The Infamous Five

Second: The Tinsel Tarts

Third: The Stinking Hellebores.

Many thanks once again to George for an excellent quiz and to the Committee for an enjoyable, happy evening and for all their hard work over the year.

Jane Pope

The Infamous Five

Looking pleased with themselves!

Chelsea Physic Garden

Jim Henson

The Physic Garden in Autumn:

Three BADGC members visited on Friday 9th October only to meet another member in the restaurant (proves some members will venture outside Suffolk). It costs a bargain £5 entry and home cooked food is available from the restaurant. As it was sunny we enjoyed sitting outside.

The Physic Garden was founded in 1673, as the Apothecaries Garden, with the purpose of training apprentices in identifying plants. The location was chosen as the proximity to the River Thames created a warmer micro-climate. Thanks to the heat island effect of the city, coupled with river thermals and the Garden's walls, they have one of longest growing seasons in the country.

Mexican Salvias that are rarely grown elsewhere in the UK, thrive here, and you will also find the largest olives and grapefruit in the country.

Guided tours are free (meet at Sir Hans Sloan statue)

Much to see here, and well worth a visit - we spent 3 hours and did not see it all.

www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

HELIANTHUS 'Lemon Queen'

Contact the editors

If you need to contact the editors with queries, questions or for your quiz/ three wise man answers

email or call us on:

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Daffodil planting around Combs & Battisford
Bill Baldry

Over the years many of you have participated in the reduced price bird seed order that John Davey/Tori have been running. John (from Gt Finborough Garden Club) has been giving any profits to local charities and decided to return £100 to BDGC to spend. The committee decided to spend £50 on daffodil bulbs to be planted around Battisford, Combs and Little Finborough and as a result more than 2,000 bulbs have been planted at over 25 different sites during November and December. We hope that they will be a cheery sight to locals and visitors this spring and for many years to come.

A big Thank You to everyone who helped. The committee will decide what to do with the remaining £50 in due course.

Back breaking work! – do you see Bill digging?

no he was taking the photo!

Newsletter

Many thanks to George for his much appreciated hard work in producing twelve excellent editions of the news-letter over the past three years. Although George has stepped down from the position of Editor in Chief, he has kindly agreed to organize printing.

A newsletter requires material and input and thus to ensure there are future issues, volunteers are needed to help with this task. If you can offer help in this area please speak to Anthea or Jo.

QUIZ: Find the Flowers

Find the Flowers

1. Too shy to dance?
2. Turn one an me round for this flower
3. Sounds like you are getting hitched to bullion
4. Spread the first part on your toast and then have a drink in this
5. She'll look neat on a bicycle made for two
6. Wordsworth wrote of these
7. Did this ascend prudishly?
8. Remember me
9. Does Reynard wear these on his paws?
10. Cute vegetable
11. Is this sad when it rings?
12. We'll gather these in the spring again
13. Found in Flanders Fields
14. Saffron comes from this flower
15. Does these actually come from Amsterdam
16. Is this a vehicle belonging to the people?
17. Red berries & wine
18. Sounds like an ill fruit
19. A bovine's mouth?
20. Mix love - it will provide the answer

Send me your answers to:

anthej@btinternet.com

Saturday 2nd July

9th Annual Show 2016

Its early days but time to start preparing for the show!

The Schedule is finished and available and you will find that the classes are much the same.

However why not have a go at entering a class you have never entered before?

Paul and Thompson and Morgan have again generously donated entries - Plants available at Feb meeting, collect one of the leaflets for details.

The same rules for children apply this year – any child within the age groups who has a relative who is a member of the Gardening Club or lives in the Barclif area may enter classes in section K or L

Please encourage them to enter

Any questions or queries should be directed to

Anthea: anthej@btinternet.com 07958223265 or

Caroline: caroline@wicking.me 01449 770980

past times

Combs Hall

Jackie Collins

On Wednesday 28th October, a number of members of the Gardening Club attended an open meeting of Stowmarket Inner Wheel at Cedars Hotel. After a tasty meal, Edward Martin archaeologist and landscape historian, gave an interesting talk on “Lost Houses & Gardens in Mid Suffolk”

He informed us there used to be a large hall behind Combs Church, Combs Hall, owned by Orlando Bridgeman. During his brief time at Combs Hall during the 1700’s he laid oust extensive gardens, damned the river to form a lake and planted an avenue of trees from the Hall to what is now Poplar Hill. Then from the rear of the Hall to Combs Wood. As the land sloped he had terraces in the Italian style with numerous statues. His wife, Alice, was the niece of Charles Blosse of Abbot’s Hall.

Orlando Bridgeman sold Combs Hall in 1730 to the Cowley family. Rich merchants from London and Kent. The Cowleys had inherited Barking Hall and were not interested in owning two mansions in Suffolk, so had Combs Hall demolished, just keeping the estate. They were keen to buy land and also acquired Badley Hall, with its famous dovecote and charming church. The Hall is still occupied to-day but is in a sad state of repair. Barking Hall, however, was also demolished with just the coach house remaining which is now a nursing home.

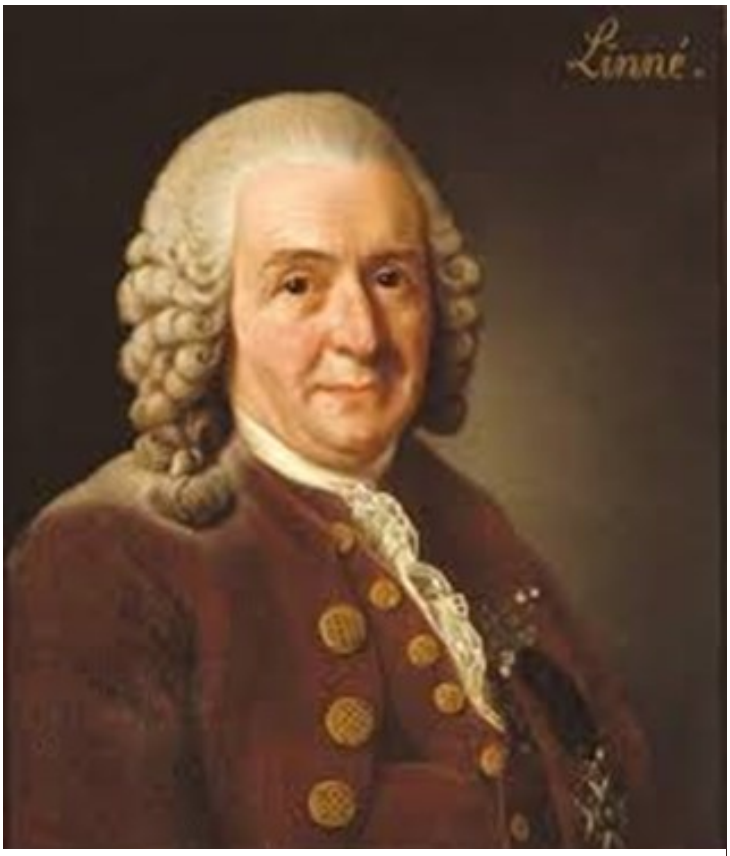
I was amazed to learn that at one time Suffolk had a great number of palatial houses and estates, sadly most of them now demolished. They were surrounded by gardens, orchards and parkland, some of which was designed by Capability Brown. Henry VIII’s sister, Mary Tudor, lived at Westhorpe Hall, died in 1533 and is buried in St. Mary’s Church, Bury St. Edmunds. Other mansions mentioned by Edward Martin were Hoxne, Redgrave, Thornham, and Brome Hall

“Gardens are not made by singing 'Oh, how beautiful!' and sitting in the shade.”

Rudyard KIpling

The Botanical Pornographer!

Jim Henson



Carl Linnaeus, also known after his ennoblement as Carl von Linné, was a Swedish botanist, physician, and zoologist, who laid the foundations for the modern biological naming scheme of binomial nomenclature.

He was born in 1707 and died in 1778

Linnaeus split plants into 24 classes, based on the anatomy of the male parts inside the flower, the stamens. Each class was further subdivided into the orders based on its number of pistils (the female parts). That might have attracted little attention if he had given them relatively dull names. But Linnaeus decided to make things memorable. The front half of the names for his plants simply told naturalists the number of male parts, but the second half was the Latin word for 'husband'. His orders followed the same logic, pairing the number of pistils in a flower with the Latin for "wives".

Which meant that anyone using the Linnaean system to study, say, a plant in the Triandria Monogynia, wound up discussing "three husbands sharing one wife" contemporaries were not amused, calling the system "loathsome harlotry" and him a "**BOTANICAL PORNOGRAPHER**". But the system was better than any other classification system at the time, and became the accepted method of organizing plants.

Over two decades Linnaeus revised and expanded *Systema Naturae* and by 1753 he had developed a two-name convention thus the formal name for the tomato went from *Solanum caule intermi herbaceo, foliis pinnatis incisis, racemis simplicibus* (the solanum with the smooth stem which is herbaceous and has incised pinnate leaves) to the more concise *Solanum lycopersicum.* We still use the Linnaean genus-species binomial today.

2016 Programme of events

Monday 7th March: Judith & Steve Thompson

Two Club members will tell us about their small-holding on the edge of Stowmarket and the charity events they organize

Tuesday 29th March: Jim Buttress

'65 years in Horticulture'

Monday 4th April: Jaime Blake

Alan Bloom 'A thinker & a doer'

Monday 16th May Garden visit from 4pm

Following their talk in March this is a not to be missed visit to Judith & Steve's garden at Danescroft Cottage, off Beaumont Way, Stowmarket, iP14 1PZ and also to view their neighbours collection of 500 rhododendrons

Monday 6th June 7pm

A visit to Wood Farm, Back Lane, Gipping, IP14 4RN courtesy of Mr & Mrs Shelley to view their garden and 8 acre wildflower meadow

£5 with tea and cake

SATURDAY 2ND JULY

9th Annual Show at Combs Fete

Other dates for your diary

Monday 4th July

Alan Seager: BEES

Sunday 14th August - BBQ

Monday 5th September

Maggie Thorpe – National Plant Collection

Sunday 11th September

Battisford garage trail

Monday 3rd October - AGM

Paul & Ruth Hansord on safari

Monday 7th November

Alan Shipp – Hyacinths

Monday 5th December

Annual Quiz

Jaime Blake 4th April

Head Gardener at Alan Bloom's garden at Bressingham in Norfolk

Jaime Blake has been head gardener/curator of Alan Bloom's garden for more than 25 years now and is responsible for the care of his historic collection of 5,000 plants in their Island Beds. He tells us that although his responsibilities are considerable, he still gets to do the weeding! He is past chair of Norfolk Plant Heritage and has been part of the RHS Herbaceous Plant committee for the past 6 years and involved in trials assessments for 8 years. Currently he is involved in the Agapanthus trial.

Visit to Judith & Steve's garden 16th May From 4pm

At Danescroft Cottage, off Beaumont Way, Stowmarket IP14 1PZ and to see neighbours Jenny and Colin's collection of 500 rhododendrons. No parking near the cottage except by prior permission from Judith or Steve – 01449 675900. Park in Beaumont Way or West View and walk down the track on the corner. Donations of £5 with assorted refreshments to buy. Open to visitors any time from 4.00pm with guided rhododendron tours from 5.30pm.

Gipping Wildflower Meadow 6th June

The hay meadow and bordering hedge were sown and planted in 1999/2000. It has taken 15 years for it to establish itself until 2014 when at last it was exactly as was planned with Cowslips then Meadow Buttercups followed by Ox-eye daisies, Ragged Robin, Wild red clover, Common Sorrel, Ribwort Plantain, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Common Knapweed, Betony, Yarrow and Lady's Bedstraw covering the whole meadow

Did You Know?

That a little baking soda sprinkled on the soil can help your tomatoes taste sweeter?

That tomatoes may keep longer if you store them with their stalks down

Green tomatoes will ripen if you store them with apples