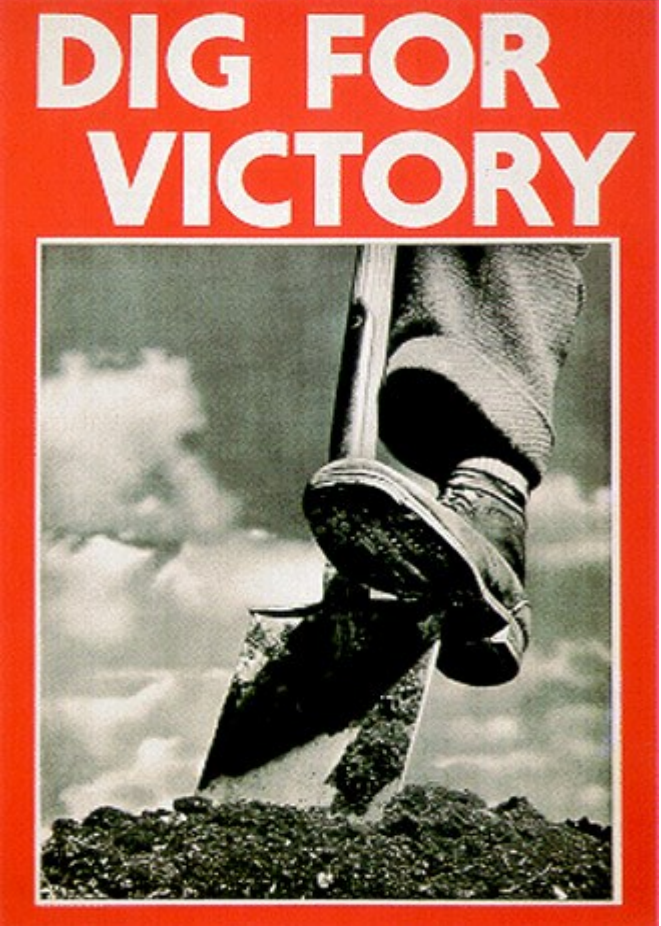




Batisford & District Gardening Club

Newsletter May 2016

Issue 38



This year the theme for the Combs Fete is the 1940s and the Gardening Club are going to reflect this in our Show, We plan to have a display of how gardens were used during the war, what vegetables were grown, food cooked, recipes etc. Some of us may wear clothes of the period!

Could you dig up this beautiful garden and plant carrots and potatoes?

That is what people were asked to do by the Ministry of Agriculture during WW2 when food became short and strict rationing was introduced.

By 1943 5 million private gardens had become vegetable plots and people were growing their own produce and sharing it with their neighbours



There was no ice-cream so the children were given Carrot lollies!

Friday 22nd January 2016



Annual dinner
Alder Carr Farm

Monday 1st February 2016



Butterflies in your garden
Rob Parker



Members and guests enjoy the annual meal at the Barn



Rob Parker Suffolk Butterfly Conservation Officer,

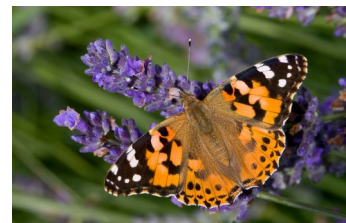
Starting with the most obvious of remarks; this was a very long talk and there were many people feeling empathy for the hungry caterpillar of summer as tea time came.....and went. Having said that, Rob really loves his subject and he imparted a huge amount of knowledge about butterflies and how to manage our gardens for their benefit. Suffolk has more acreage of gardens than nature reserves and Rob emphasised the importance of the gardener's contribution to their continued wellbeing. The mono culture prevalent in East Anglia is not great for butterflies, who need a variety of habitats and nectar sources. Rob told a sad tale of the tired migrant from Europe, such as the Painted Lady, searching for a thistle at the end of her long flight. In recent years, fewer species of butterfly have been recorded in Suffolk. This may be due to the mono culture, but it may also be due to a lack of reliable recorders. Any volunteers?

The most important things for a butterfly to live a full life cycle are shelter from the wind, nectar all the year round, a larval host plant, (for the caterpillar) and a refuge for the winter. It doesn't sound much to ask. Different butterflies get themselves through the winter in different forms and we can help by leaving areas of longer grass in the autumn and making sure there are rough and untidy patches to provide shelter. The ideal excuse! The Tortoiseshell, Peacock and Comma like brown leaves in erratic shapes for instance. Nettles are a favourite for hanging up the pupae until the adults are ready to emerge and start to feed.

Butterflies are predated by birds and suffer poisoning by herbicides. If they survive all this, they can live longer than we think. The Peacock can live for up to 11 months. Rob gave many suggestions for flowers to feed the butterflies; Erica attracts the Silver Studded Blue, the Orange Tip likes Jack in the Hedge and the Buckthorn is good for Brimstone. Early in spring, the catkins provide a feed, but daffodils, sweet peas and fuchsia have no nectar. In summer, grassland is one of the best habitats, but to be most beneficial needs to be mixed with wild flowers, such as Knapweed, Scabious and Hemp Agrimony. A pond edge is often the best place to see butterflies, with many different nectar sources. The rotting fruit of a bramble hedge and all the herb flowers, such as Mint, Rosemary and Lavender are brilliant places for nectar. Many nectar plants have an ultra violet colour we cannot see, but the butterfly can. The heathlands around Ipswich sustain many butterflies with the varied flowers and nectar sources. Don't forget the Battsford Play area, which has various habitats for butterflies too.

Finally, Rob recommended a walk through a woodland ride in summer to enjoy the clouds of butterflies dancing in the sunlight. A sight worth preserving and the gardener can play a part in protecting the many butterfly species we are fortunate to have in Suffolk.

Jane Pope



Right: a painted lady

7th March 2016

Judith & Steve Thompson
Jenny Grainger

Danecroft Cottage Garden
The Gables

As most of you were there I don't have to tell you what an amazing, entertaining and unique evening we had with Judith, Steve & Jenny
Here are some photos to remind you of that evening



The Team

The large mystery object when uncovered was revealed as Elvis who is apparently alive & well- if rather wooden - and living in Stowmarket with Judith & Steve.
Elvis helped with the proceedings though didn't say much

Workshops & Charity Donations

Judith ,Steve & Jenny hold many and varied events during the year, raising money for various local charities, including Somersham Ward, Ipswich soup kitchen & the Churchill Special School

Next workshop—Saturday July 16th—Patches, Pockets & Pouches—Contact Judith for details:01449 675900

News of their events can be found on a poster at the end of their drive, at Gardening Club meetings or if you send Judith your email address she will contact you.

Previous workshops include, working with willow, sewing techniques, sketch & draw, perfume making, preserving, Christmas crafts and many more.

Is there nothing they can't put their hands to?



I don't think our guest speakers have ever danced for us before!



Judith in full flow

Last newsletter— Did you guess who they were?

The 3 not so wise monkeys

Hear no Evil—Joe Whitehead See No Evil—Denis Wicking

Speak no Evil—Jim Henson

Danecroft - A little bit of history

Between the Finborough Road and the Rattlesden River, at about TM403583, there used to be a spot known as the 'Dane Croft', which was believed to be the site of a Danish encampment during their battles against King Edmund, and from which they attacked the Saxons in 869 AD, driving them out of their camp at Haughley. An old house called Danecroft, as well as the modern roads Danescourt Avenue and Danes Close still occupy the area. A few parishes west, the Danes are even supposed to have sailed up the little river and established the village of Rattlesden itself

Tuesday March 29th 2016

Jim Buttress

Gardening club members and guests came to Ringshall Village Hall to enjoy a talk from Jim Buttress about his life and life long interest in gardening. It all started when having misbehaved in class he was sent to work in the school's walled garden

He spoke for 90 minutes without notes or slides and kept the audience entertained with many amusing anecdotes & stories

I started to make notes to write this article but was soon so engrossed that I stopped writing so you will have to wait for details in the publication of his autobiography, The People's Gardener in May 2016



Monday April 4th 2016

Jaime Blake

Jaime Blake has been head gardener and curator of Bressingham gardens for over 25 years. He is also the son-in law to the late, great, Alan Bloom.

One of the most renowned gardens in East Anglia, Bressingham is famous for its island beds, Bloom's nursery and Bressingham Steam museum.

Alan Bloom was a distinctive figure at Bressingham, with his long hair, earring and penchant for steam. Most know something of this horticultural legend, but I am sure many had not realised quite what a force of nature he was.

Having been brought up in the Cambridgeshire countryside Alan quickly realised a passion for growing. With market gardening roots he migrated to perennials, always on the look out for business opportunities. Following a fortuitous sale of plants Alan purchased a farm on the fens. Waterlogged and overgrown, he set about reclaiming the land to grow crops during the second World War. He installed ditches, cleared woodland and recovered bog oaks. Jaime played some cine-film footage which recorded some of the methods employed to achieve this – explosives no less!

The time spent on the fens achieving what many others had previously thought of as hopeless, is a great example of the spirit of Alan Bloom. He was undaunted by challenges, seeming to actively seek them out.

However, not every endeavour was a success. A disastrous trip with his young family to farm in Canada was an example. We heard tales of attempts at logging the huge red cedars common place in that part of the world, as well as fishing amongst a pod of killer whales in only a rowing boat!

In 1946 Alan brought Bressingham hall. Jaime told us how his infectious enthusiasm rubbed off on his employees who would do

a days work at the nursery only to return after hours to help Alan tend to his other great passion - Steam engines.

Jaime also recounted stories of Percy Piper, Alan's famous plant breeder. Percy Piper assisted Alan in his 170-odd plant introductions at Bressingham. Percy was incredibly private about his work, never sharing his notes. Alan respected this and supported Percy's work, focusing always on the end result.

Having worked in the nursery and garden by day, and having tended to steam engines in the evenings, Alan would then retire to his study where he would write. He wrote over 30 books.

Jaime titled his April talk 'Alan Bloom – a thinker and a doer' and its fair to say that this title is entirely apt - for such an inspiring, passionate and hardworking man.

Lucy Skellorn



Jaime with pot of Saga, Alan's favourite rhubarb



Alan driving one of his beloved steam trains



Beautiful Bressingham Gardens

Flower of the Month



May

Convallaria (Lily of the Valley, May Lily or May bell)

Denotes: Humility, Chastity & Sweetness

Also known as Our Lady's Tears or Mary's Tears from Christian legend. It was believed that these names resulted from the Virgin Mary's tears during Jesus' crucifixion or Eve's tears when she was ejected from the Garden of Eden.

Sweet smelling & delicate but watch out it's poisonous!

The plant contains three glycosides; convallarin, convallamarin, and convallotoxin. Convallotoxin is one of the most active natural substances affecting the heart. It causes irregular, slow pulse rates and can cause heart failure. In addition, the plant contains saponins which cause gastrointestinal poisoning.

Folk Lore - or is it?

Anyone planting a bed of lily of the valley will be dead within twelve months. (oh dear I have just bought some!)

My front garden in the 1980s

Tom Jones



Amazing fuchsias! This is member Tom Jones' garden in the 1980s when he says he was younger and had more time!

Did You Know?

- ☑ Fuchsias are also known as lady's teardrops
- ☑ Fuchsia is one of the most misspelt words in the English language
- ☑ All parts of the fuchsia are edible
- ☑ The oldest known fuchsia still alive was planted in 1899!

Spot the flower

Can you identify the flowers below—prize for 1st correct answers received.



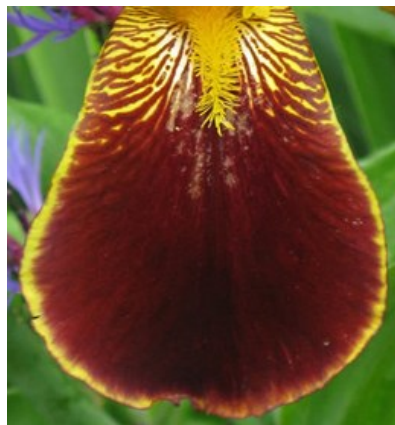
1



2



4



5



6



7



8

Email your answers to Ant: anthej@btinternet.com or call me on 01449 675161

A Trip to Holland

Mike Warren

I have just returned from a hectic three days in Holland. Highlight of the trip for me, organised by Amsterdam Marketing, was a visit to the spectacular Keukenhof gardens, open only for two months where millions of Tulips and other bulbs are planted in the Autumn, in three layers (depth) to give a continuous display. In addition to this highlight for a garden photographer, I sampled the latest cuisine by top chefs who are using more and more vegetables and less meat and fish. Vegetables included marinated tulip bulbs, very tasty and crunchy. Tulip beer, brewed especially for the tulip season from a new brewery located in a redundant church, river boat trip to an Island where Lilac is grown, lifted and forced for the cut-flower trade and visits to Royal FloraHolland, the worlds largest flower auction, Frans Hals and Rijksmuseum to see flower paintings and the gardens around them. Plan ahead and try it yourselves next year, under an hour from Stansted



Carolus Clusius 1526—1609

Despite this the Dutch fascination and love of tulips continues to this day and they are responsible for ensuring that standards are preserved and new healthy species developed. In the early 1900s the Royal Dutch Bulb Growers Association was formed to maintain and enforce the high standards. Currently 3,500 tulip cultivars are grown in the Netherlands

The Tulip Breaking Virus

The most sought after and valued tulips during the early 17th century were those with the multi-colour effects on their petals. The patterns came in a wide variety increasing their rarity.



Semper Augustus

One of the most famous of these tainted tulips was Semper Augustus, also known as 'The Viceroy' shown above in an anonymous 17th painting. There were said to be only 12 examples of this in existence with a single owner who would not sell. Eventually when he was persuaded to sell a bulb went for 5,500 guilders and one was offered for 10,000 guilders a sum which would have bought a large house on a grand canal in Amsterdam or fed & clothed a Dutch family for half a lifetime. Tulips with a 'broken' effect are available today but are stable variants and the result of breeding not viral infection

The History of Tulip in Holland

The Tulip was first introduced to Holland from Turkey and the central Asia region by Carolus Clusius, a French born Botanist who in 1593 was appointed as Director of the Botanic Garden in Leyden, Holland. By then he had been growing & experimenting with tulips for some years, mainly for medicinal purposes as he originally trained as a doctor. Having written a book on tulips, he planted some in the Botanic garden and they became so popular that the garden was frequently raided and the bulbs stolen. By the time he died in 1609 their popularity had increased to unprecedented heights and later **tulipmania** was born. If at first the interest in tulips was mainly scientific by 1630 it had become financial. Bulbs and plants were bought and sold for extraordinary sums by speculators and traded on the Dutch stock exchange, as well as those in Paris & London. Prices could increase 20 fold in a month and by Feb 1637 was 10 times the annual salary of a skilled craftsman. Tulips were traded all over the world and by 1636 the tulip bulb became the fourth leading export product of the Netherlands, after gin, herrings and cheese .

Anecdotes developed such as the man who mistakenly ate a valuable bulb thinking it was an onion and was imprisoned. In fact tulip bulbs can be quite toxic.

However like all 'bubbles' it had to burst and in 1637 the market collapsed and many lost their money. It caused mild economic depression in the country that lasted for several years.

A great success!

Bill Baldry

Members of BDGC planted several hundred daffodil bulbs all round Battsford & Combs. Despite being planted late the bulbs have done very well and will be even better next year.



Daffodils by the Combs Jubilee bench, Tannery Road.

Windfall Marmalade—Judith & Jenny

(makes about 9lb/4kg)

2 grapefruit non waxed

2 lemons non waxed

2lb windfall apples

5 pints of water (we usually do a pint

less water as it takes so long to reduce

5lb granulated sugar/preserving sugar

Wash citrus fruit, pare off the rind and cut into fine shreds

With a serrated knife peel all pith from the flesh and chop flesh roughly.

Peel, core and chop the apples and put into a preserving pan with the water, citrus peel and flesh.

Tie the citrus pith, pips, apple peel & cores into muslin and add to the pan (we don't use all the peel as the bag gets too big)

Simmer gently till the mixture has reduced by half.

Lift out the muslin bag and squeeze well against the side of the pan to extract all the liquid.

Add the sugar and stir until dissolved

Bring to a good rolling boil and cook rapidly until setting point is reached

Allow marmalade to stand for 15 minutes before putting into sterilised jars

Hint: dip your wax discs into a bit of brandy to sterilise them – then you can drink the brandy!

EAT & ENJOY



RHS Top Pest of 2015

Box Tree Caterpillar (*Cydalima perspectalis*)

Its coming our way!

This pest prompted the most enquiries to RHS Gardening Advice Team in 2015. The moths arrived in the UK from Asia in 2008 and the first caterpillars were seen in the London area in 2011 and have now reached the south of Essex.



The Moth 1¼" long with brown or brown bordered wings



Caterpillars can reach 1¼" and are greenish/yellow with black heads

The pale yellow flattish eggs are laid sheet-like, overlapping each other on the underside of box leaves



The caterpillars cause severe defoliation. Control is by picking them off or treating with various pesticides (see RHS website) Unfortunately they are difficult to exterminate as they can survive harsh winters and can re-produce 3 times a season

Drastic measures might be required!

If you find any of these pesky caterpillars please let the RHS know ASAP



Find the Flowers—Answers

- 1. Wallflower. 2. Anemone. 3. Marigold. 4. Buttercup.
- 5. Daisy 6. Daffodils. 7. Primrose 8. Forget-me-not. 9.
- 10. Foxgloves. 11. Sweet Pea. 12. Bluebell. 13.
- 14. Poppies. 15. Crocus 16. Tulips. 17. Carnation.
- 18. Hollyhock. 19. Cyclamen 20. Cowslip. 21. Violets

Winner : Sandra Henson



A Visit to the Cardiff Show

Jo Silburn

Future RHS Shows 2016 : Chelsea 24th—28th May

Hampton Court 5th—10th July

Having been to Chelsea and Hampton Court in the past my friend and I decided it would be nice to use the Cardiff



show as an excuse for a girlie weekend away! We were not disappointed and if anything preferred the ease with which we were able to get round the whole show site and view all the exhibits without the continual shuffling along in a queue. The only disappointment for me was that there were very few show gardens – however I include this photo of the

fun design for a celebration of Roald Dahl's book Charlie and The Chocolate Factory, complete with chocolate pond!

(Did you know that Dahl was born in Cardiff 100 years ago?)

The marquees were glorious as ever with lots of focus on alpines and woodland plants. We had travelled to Cardiff by train and so both managed to resist the temptation to buy any plants, just noting down a few ideas – especially for my troublesome dry shade!



resist the temptation to buy any plants, just noting down a few ideas – especially for my troublesome dry shade!

No trip to a Welsh flower show would be complete without a few daffodils – it's a shame I couldn't capture the scent for you.



I would certainly recommend Cardiff and the RHS show there as a place to visit



Gardener's Days Out

Jo Silburn

While visiting an old college friend near Brighton we took ourselves off to West Dean Gardens near Chichester and enjoyed a thoroughly gorgeous Spring day exploring the gardens and parkland. The gardens have been restored over many years by Jim Buckland and Sarah Wain and include very impressive walled gardens, hot houses and formal areas which look out onto the extensive parkland on the rolling hillsides of the valley. In one of the orchid houses we met a young lad in his second year of an RHS course, who confided that daily watering was one of his least favourite jobs (nothing new there!) Obviously lots of the beds and borders were not in full swing yet, but we were impressed with the beautifully pruned and trained fruit trees, such as this one trained in the historic Goblet shape. The Spring bulbs were well ahead of ours at home and most of the daffodils were already going over, but in the walled garden we found this colourful display in pots.



We wandered across the parkland with impressive views back to the house, returning through the extensive Arboretum. We thought this was a great day out, including a lunch in the café, and would certainly visit again in different seasons. West Dean College offers both long and short courses in horticulture, arts and conservation.

<https://www.westdean.org.uk/gardens>



'Thing's with Wings'

Denise Crozier

On Saturday 16th April several of gathered together for one of Judith & Jenny's mini-workshops

It was held, with many treats and a tasty two course lunch, in the idyllic surroundings of Danecroft.

Outside the rain was lashing down but inside it was warm and relaxing. Under the skilful tuition of Judith & Jenny we were able to discover the qualities of card, fabric, wire, willow and an amazing cellophane called Angellina.

At the end of the day we had quite an exhibition of flying creatures and they were all unique. We did not realise we could be so imaginative.

The day was very enjoyable and one of the best parts was that we were raising money for charity.



Two Water Gardens to visit—Jackie Collins

Fairhaven Water Gardens, near Acle, Norfolk, NR136DZ

A delightful garden with its own private broad and numerous tributaries which you cross by way of little bridges. You can take a boat trip round the Broad and there is a little café. In May/June the garden is bursting with candelabra primroses

Gooderstone Water Gardens—near Swaffham, PE33 9BP

A tranquil water garden, little streams crossed by bridges and a number of small lakes, all beautifully planted with moisture loving plants. There is a large bird hide where you can watch for kingfishers



2016 Future Events

Monday 16th May—Visit to
Judith & Steve Thompson
Jenny & Colin Grainger

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

Saturday 2nd July—BDGC Annual show at
Combs Fete

Monday 4th July— Alan Seager
The Queen Bee

Sunday 14th August; Annual BBQ at
Blenheims, Bildeston Rd, Combs, courtesy of
Ruth & Paul Hansord

Monday 5th September—Maggie Thorpe
Plant Heritage—The Work we do in Suffolk

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.

Willow & woodland walks, ponds and wildlife habitats, Fergus the vintage tractor, old & new garden tools and machinery, pygmy goats, rare breed sheep & piglets, hens,

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

BDGC 9th Annual Show, Saturday 2nd July

We are looking forward to receiving your entries by **Weds 29th June**—see schedule for details or email me with queries anthej@btinternet.com.

I know the growing season has started late and you may feel things are not ready on the day but don't be proud—enter whatever you have—remember it's the taking part that counts!

Our theme is the 1940s so if you have ideas for this please get in touch

Monday 4th July—Talk by Alan Seager on Queen Bees

Those of you who were fascinated by Alan's previous talk on bees will not want to miss this.

Monday 5th September—talk by Maggie Thorpe

Among other things, Maggie is President of the Suffolk group of Plant Heritage and will talk about the Suffolk collections. There are 15 collections in Suffolk, including, Alpine Campanulas, Euonymous, Hosta, iris, Syringa

Did you know?

- ◆ Daisies make up 10% of all the flowering plants on earth
- ◆ They belong to the family 'vascular plants' because they circulate water & nutrients throughout the plant
- ◆ They are found everywhere on earth but Antarctica
- ◆ They represent purity & innocence
- ◆ The leaves are edible, related to the artichoke & are high in Vitamin C
- ◆ Their medicinal properties include relieving coughs & indigestion and aching backs
- ◆ They are actually two flowers—the white petals and the tiny yellow disc petals that make up the yellow centre

