

Plant Heritage

National Council for the Conservation of Plants & Gardens



SUFFOLK GROUP JOURNAL

Spring 2016



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Cover photo: Seedling Lupins at the Walled Garden. Photo Sue Wooster

Cover design: Sally Geeve, layout courtesy Nicola Hobbs

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

JIM MARSHALL

It has been an interesting and rewarding six months. After another Autumn Plant Fair we have just secured a further two-year contract with Helmingham Hall.

We are planning some exciting changes to the fairs, with the aim of bringing in new audiences who are likely to engage with gardening and other associated life styles. The intention is to have three distinct zones, GARDEN, which will contain nurseries and other exhibits, CONSERVATION, will be open to not-for-profit organisations, and ARTISAN will be for food and craft. The nucleus of the fair will however remain plants and gardens.

We will still require volunteers on the day, to help with the organisation, but more than likely jobs will change so as to cover the extended site. Our intention is also to run some children's events and therefore I will be pleased to hear from any member who has the necessary certification for working with children.

A free plant/bulb will still be available to a specific number of first arrivals to the fairs and we will be organising our own plant sales and marquee as before. The workshops are to be extended to include all topics within the three zones.

The high standard of lectures at Stowupland have attracted large audiences, and our sincere thanks are due to Pam Garside for arranging them. We are very fortunate to have Fergus Garrett of Great Dixter lecturing to us on 19 March, when we will be charging £5 for members and £10 for non-members. Entry will be by ticket only, please phone Maggie Thorpe on 01787 211 346 for tickets.

With the aim of maintaining its leading role in the conservation of cultivated plants Plant Heritage Council has recently agreed a policy document which will be made available to all groups. Consideration is now to be given to Plant Heritage's governance, and after discussion within our committee I have passed on some views to be considered by the Board in December.

Finally I must thank my fellow committee members for their support and hard work in particular Patrick and Margaret Palmer who are retiring from the committee.

TREASURER'S REPORT

JUSTINE CORNEY

The accounts for the year to 31 October 2015 were presented to the AGM in November. They showed a slight rise in subscription income as the membership increased during the year. Income from Helmingham increased at both the Spring and Autumn Fairs by £433 overall and donations from the lectures by committee members increased by £446.

Our overall income for the year was £15,219 (2104 £14,480) and our expenses were £14,961 (2014 £15,946) leaving a small surplus of £258 (2104 -£1466 loss)

We did however still manage to donate £10,000 to National Office at the end of the year as we have for the previous four years, but we will need to increase our income during 2016 to ensure that we can continue at this level. The last three years since October 2010 we have reduced the funds held by our group from £15,933 to £11,426 at October 2015 and obviously we cannot continue to give more than we are receiving.

We know that National Office relies on the amounts donated by the county groups for their finances but with overall falling membership and rising costs we must think of new ways to raise money and extend the knowledge about Plant Heritage. Please do bring your friends and neighbours to meetings if you think that they would be interested in the subject – you never know, they may become a member!

COLLECTING PLANTS FROM COVENTRY

Is there anyone out there able to collect some plants from Avondale Nursery in Badinton, Coventry, and bring them back to Suffolk? They have very interesting and rare plants for sale but alas they don't do mail order. If anyone could help, please contact anne@tweddle1.co.uk or 01473 737337.

PROPAGATION REPORT

ANNE TWEDDLE

Maggie Thorpe and I will be continuing our propagation events in 2016. We hold monthly sessions, on weekday mornings in Stowupland Church Hall. We start at 10 with coffee and are finished by 12.

What we achieve is pretty remarkable. All the plants we sell at talks, plant sales and other events are raised in this group. Justine Corney showed in her accounts for last year we raised not much short of £5,000 in selling plants.

The sessions are open to all members, it's friendly and don't be put off by not being confident. We will teach you. The only thing we ask, if you would like to come along, please let either Maggie or me know. We can't accommodate more than about 10 participants.



Above: Propagators at work.
Left: *Paeony Gansu* seeds being collected.



We use different propagating techniques during the year, so there is usually something new to learn. We try to have an occasional 'expert', and/or collection holder who

will show us how they propagate. It's all hands-on learning.

Dates for 2016 are:

January 19th Tuesday

February 18th Thursday

March 24th Thursday

April 12th Tuesday

May 11th Wednesday

June 14th Tuesday

July 20th Wednesday

August 17th Wednesday

September 15th Thursday

October 20th Thursday

November 16th Wednesday

Contacts: Anne Tweddle anne@tweddle1.co.uk

Maggie Thorpe maggiethorpe37@gmail.com



Nepeta cultivar being propagated.



Eucomis leaf cutting showing new growth.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome eleven new members who have joined Suffolk Plant Heritage since September.

Mrs L Blake, Boxford

Mrs J Cato, Rendlesham

Mr Brian Partridge, Hadleigh

Ms C Haynes, Culford

Mrs C Steward, East Bergholt

Mrs Sally Reeves, Stowupland

Mrs D Kirby, Langham

Mr and Mrs R Passmore, Stradbroke

Mrs Pippa Michelsen, Bradfield St. George

Ms Elaine Overnell, Little Whelnetham

The committee and other members look forward to meeting you at the Stowupland talks, please introduce yourself when you sign in at the membership table.

NATIONAL PLANT COLLECTIONS

DOROTHY CARTWRGHT

Suffolk has another National Plant Collection – Jan Michalak’s collection of *Muehlenbeckia*. It is a very interesting collection of plants – from climbing varieties to low growing types suited to gravel beds. Many of these plants are native to New Zealand and Jan has had to grow them from seed.

We were concerned about the *Hibiscus* collection which was held by John Woods Nurseries as they have had to close and all their plants were auctioned off. Thankfully, the Notcutt Family have purchased the *Hibiscus* plants so they are safe.

Two people who have had their proposals for collections accepted are working on making the full application for National Collection Status. Another proposal has been made and they are waiting to hear if it has been accepted.

There are obviously lots of people in Suffolk who love plants. Do contact me if you are gathering together a collection of plants and are interested in having a National Collection.

Three Collection Holders gave very interesting talks at the Suffolk Group AGM – Anthony Pigott on *Equisetum*, Simon Weeks on *Erysimum* and Melanie Collins on *Hosta*. Many thanks to them.

Do visit the collections they are all very interesting, but please phone in advance to arrange a time. Collection holders’ phone numbers are included in the listing of Suffolk’s National Collections.

To advertise in Suffolk Plant Heritage Journal

Contact Heather Medcraft gingeandh@hotmail.com or 01359 270721.

1/4 page	black & white	£20.00	colour	£25.00
1/2 page	black & white	£40.00	colour	£50.00
Full page	black & white	£60.00	colour	£75.00



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Photo courtesy of Brian Ellis, Avondale nursery

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SUFFOLK'S NATIONAL COLLECTIONS

AESCULUS 685203	Framlingham	Robert Grimsey, 01728
CAMPANULA	Bury St. Edmunds	Sue Wooster, 07879 644958
DIANTHUS (Malmaison)	Ipswich	Jim Marshall, 01473 822400
DIANTHUS (Perpetual Flowering Carnations registered in the UK before 1970)	Ipswich	Jim Marshall, 01473 822400
EQUISETUM	Stowmarket	Anthony Pigott, 01449 766104
ERYSIMUM (perennial)	Walpole	Dr Simon Weeks, 01986 784348
EUONYMUS	East Bergholt	Rupert Eley, 01206 299224
HOSTA	Stowmarket	Mickfield Hostas, 01449 711576
IRIS (Sir Cedric Morris introductions)	Ipswich	Sarah Cook, 01473 822400
MUEHLENBECKIA	Burgate	Jan Michalak, 01359 783452
SYRINGA	Stowmarket	Norman's Farm, lilacprez@hotmail.com
THALICTRUM	Worlingworth	Kim Forrester 07796 183988

PLANT HERITAGE NEWS

FOR AN UPDATE ON WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NATIONAL OFFICE
VISIT THE CURRENT ISSUE OF NEWSLINES ON THE WEBSITE
WWW.PLANTHERITAGE.COM

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT SUFFOLK GROUP ACTIVITIES
VISIT WWW.SUFFOLKPLANTHERITAGE.COM

MUEHLENBECKIA – SUFFOLK’S NEW NATIONAL COLLECTION

JAN MICHALAK

Muehlenbeckia is a Southern Hemisphere genus, with hardy species that comprise the National Collection

I first became fascinated by *Muehlenbeckia* when I came across *M. astonii* at Wisley. I bought a plant purely on its decorative merits, then was able to observe the way it seems to form a twiggy ball with small round pea-green leaves, and then another around the first; growing larger, without seeming to grow at all. It is also surprising that the apparently stiff spiky frame is actually curiously rubbery.



My further interest in the genus arrived eventually at the more commonly seen climbing form *M. complexa*, which I’d seen before in botanical collections without taking much note. This plant is a most vigorous twining climber that will cover a tree stump or fence at remarkable speed (in fact, it can do the same to a house if neglected, but needs a support to



Top: *M. astonii*;
Left: *Muehlenbeckia* as topiary in Madeira;
Below: *M. axillaris* (large-leaf form);
Right: *M. ephedroides*.



twine onto), but it is often defoliated and set back by cold winters except in the South-West. I've found the variant *M. complexa* var *trilobata* much hardier; the leaf shape is fiddle-shaped rather than round, making it very decorative. Like *M. ephedroides*, *M. complexa* seems infinitely variable in leaf size and shape, so that claiming cultivar status is regarded as dubious, although some geographical variants seem to deserve their own varietal status. For this reason the large-leaved form of *M. complexa* is now recognised as var. *grandifolia*, and adds another sort of decorative possibility to the species.



In Felixstowe I came across a splendid 5-6m hedge growing from a single plant of *M. complexa*; indeed I later saw remarkable topiary in Madeira using the same plant.

Muehlenbeckia in climbing and creeping forms are enjoying some popularity in America, where curiously *M. compacta* is sometimes described as 10-15cm tall, unless supported. A description that might equally fit any number of very vigorous climbers! The fresh green dainty leaves - and the shiny dark stems of shrubby types work very well in modern settings, or as a foil to large leafed perennials. Both forms make excellent container plants.

REVEREND GEORGE H ENGLEHEART

ANNE TWEDDLE

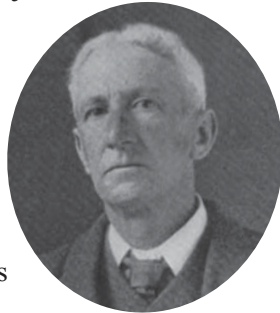
The Rev Engleheart (1851-1936) first featured in our Journal back in 2010, when we ran a little project where we propagated and sold five of his narcissus introductions. Since then he has been loitering in the background, while other breeders have come and gone. We have dabbled with William Backhouse and others but my fascination with Engleheart remains, and I have come up with an idea which many of us can take part in.

Rev George Engleheart was one of the most important narcissus breeders in the last quarter of the 1800's and the first quarter of the 1900's. He named and introduced more than 700 cultivars, and thus had a major impact on narcissus breeding in this country. What has happened to all these cultivars? Many of them lost forever no doubt.

My proposal is that members of the Suffolk Group establish and hold a dispersed National Plant Collection (NPC) of Engleheart's narcissus. So how will this work?

Firstly, I need to find members who would be interested in being involved. This process was begun at the AGM in November, when Maggie Thorpe spoke about the idea and a number of members came forward. I have all those details, but for any member who was not at the AGM and would like to be part of this project, here's your chance.

Secondly, I will arrange a meeting date for everyone interested, and ask Dot Cartwright, our Suffolk National Collection Co-ordinator, to come and explain to us how we go about it. Once we know what is involved, then we can get on with it.



A dispersed National Collection means plants in the collection can be held in more than a single physical location. Hence there may be the opportunity for members to hold plants in their own garden which are part of the collection. Establishing the collection is not a quick thing, we will have to grow the plants for several years, and have formal records meeting exacting standards before we can apply for collection status.

There will be jobs a-plenty to begin with. Researching, writing letters, searching databases, asking questions. Of the 720 odd cultivars listed in the Daffodil Register as being introduced by him, I have managed to trace fairly recent colour photographs of about 40. A small handful are available commercially. Many of the photographs are from USA, Australia and New Zealand. So it could be something of a treasure hunt. For those of you still reading, and would like to take an active part, let me or Maggie Thorpe know. Just your email details at this stage is fine. I will let you know the date of the first meeting, hopefully in February.

NEW ERA IN THE WALLED GARDEN

SUE WOOSTER

In winter 2015, Langham Hall changed ownership, ending several years of uncertainty and speculation. The Hall's future was finally secure, as was that of both the National Collection of Alpine Campanulas and Bellflower Nursery within the Hall's walled garden. The new owners are very supportive of what I do within their walled garden and I am delighted to report that in 2016 it is definitely business as usual and visitors will be welcome!

So Plant Heritage members – why not come along to explore the walled garden and nursery this season? We will be open from mid March to the end of October on Thursdays and Fridays, 10-4. Groups are very welcome by appointment. Our National Collection is well worth a visit mid June into July (weather permitting of course).

Admittedly we are a little off the beaten track, much to the vexation of some visitors, but most tend to be forgiving when they discover the tranquility of the walled garden.



Campanula latifolia in the Walled Garden.

No tearoom, but The Leaping Hare at Wyken Vineyards is well worth a visit for a special treat (which coincidentally stocks Bellflower Nursery plants), and The Dark Horse café and restaurant at Stowlangtoft Hall comes highly recommended by customers.



Campanula zangezura, the free plant being offered to visitors to the Spring Plant Fair, grown from seed collected at the nursery .

Bellflower Nursery grows a varied and interesting range of hardy plants, including perennials, alpines, bulbs, climbers and shrubs, campanulas a speciality. It is definitely not an ‘A-Z’ nursery,

neither is the garden neatly clipped and manicured – gardeners, you will feel at home! Do come along and be inspired. We offer a garden design service and many of the plants growing in the beds and borders are available either potted or bare-rooted off-season.



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Directions are on the website, www.bellflournursery.co.uk.
Postcode IP31 3EE.

PS: The scree bed which is home to the National Collection is in need of an overhaul this spring. If any members can spare a few hours to help with this daunting task please do get in touch. Thank you!

MY FAVOURITE HOSTAS

YVONNE MILTON

My earliest gardening memories are of being allowed to plant pansy seeds under the roses my father grew in beds, and of a neighbour who had a huge area of self-seeding 'Love in a Mist' growing in her patch.

When I finally had a garden of my own, just about everything caught my eye. I visited Chelsea Flower Show and was seduced by the 'make-believe' gardens. Luckily I quickly realised that one decent reference book would help make sense of the sheer abundance of plants we are able to grow in English gardens. Then, on her return from a stay in the U.S.A. as a service wife, my friend gave me a division of *Hosta* 'Halcyon' from her magnificent plant, and I was hooked for life.

It quickly became a total obsession. Once I had exhausted those available here, sometimes in the most unpromising nurseries, I realised that a multitude of cultivars were arriving via the US. Having already joined the British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society (BHHS), I complemented this with membership of the American Hosta Society and was completely blown away. My annual treat was a consignment of plants from Peter Ruh in Ohio.



H. 'Halcyon'.

As time went on, it became apparent that there would be no end to the tide, with new cultivars becoming available continuously. I have often heard people say that all hostas look the same, but given the time to mature, nothing could be further from the truth. We have over

two thousand different species and cultivars in our Plant Heritage National Collection to date and have still not seen some of them in their mature state.

We grow them in pots here at our nursery, for ease of cultivation and transport to shows. If we ever do achieve the display garden we crave, we will finally be able to appreciate them in all their beauty. There are just not enough hours in the day to do everything we would like. Retiring from shows and leaving that task to our son and daughter, has freed us up to a degree, but since the nursery has to be open when our plants can be seen, this is our first priority.

My eye is constantly being arrested by something new but these are just a few of my favourites. First on the list is *H.* 'Moonlight'. It will grow to a height of eighteen inches, and has heart-shaped leaves with chartreuse centres, bordered by fine dark green lines and edged in white. The overall impression is of very neat, precise colouration.

By contrast, *H.* 'Jewel of the Nile' has quite random variegation to the lovely blue centred leaves. The margins are gold and 'bleed' down into the main leaf. Classified as a giant, you will need to allow plenty of space to appreciate this plant's true character.



H. 'Jewel of the Nile.

Ever since we obtained our first division of *H.* 'Paul's Glory', it has been Robin's favourite. It was our most expensive acquisition, since no-one had managed to cultivate it successfully from micro-propagation at the time. In the spring, it is certainly nothing to write home about, with almost plain leaves. As the season progresses, though, the pale green leaf centre turns gold and finally fades to parchment by the autumn. At a time when many



H. 'Paul's Glory'

hostas are preparing to go dormant, this one shines like a beacon.

The overall habit of a particular cultivar can also offer pleasing architectural effects. Stately examples, holding their leaves upright, include the species *H. fluctuans*.

This beauty has intense blue, cupped leaves, and is

very distinctive, making an excellent contrast to the more common bushy varieties. On the other hand some cultivars have a ground hugging habit. Once such is *H. 'Daybreak'*, which, although growing to a height of two feet, has wavy edged leaves the size of dinner plates, which cascade down to lie just clear of the ground.

Two cultivars for a small garden which have caught my imagination are *H. 'Grand Prize'* and *H. 'Slim and Trim'*. *H. 'Slim and Trim'* grows like wildfire and is therefore excellent for ground cover or for under-planting taller varieties in pots. It is classified as a mini and has delightful, silver grey, lance-shaped leaves. *H. 'Grand Prize'* holds your attention throughout the season, starting in the spring with heart-shaped leaves of bright green with custard yellow margins. When new leaves emerge during the year, the older ones have already developed startling white margins, giving you a very interesting effect. This cultivar is derived from our old favourite *H. 'Golden Tiara'*, but unlike the parent, this little beauty is hard to find and always in short supply.

For a prolonged period of interest during the summer months hostas offer total flexibility. If you are a lover of herbaceous beds and borders, most plants can be happily combined with them to make pleasing vistas. I love to see them grown in pots as specimen plants, to show off individually or allowed to compliment each other in single genus plantings. Whichever way you choose to use them they will bring you delight for years to come.

SUFFOLK GROUP EVENTS 2016

JANUARY

Saturday 23

* Talk: 'Bulbs at Kew' by Kit Strange.
2.30pm. Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ

About the speaker: Kit looks after the extensive bulb collection at Kew. She maintains the collections in the Davies Alpine House and also develops exhibits for horticultural and educational events at Kew and UK horticultural colleges. She has worked in the Falkland Islands and South Georgia producing plants for display at Kew and the DNA collection, as well as several projects in Spain and Tajikistan. More locally she organises the Harlow Early Spring Show for the Alpine Garden Society.

FEBRUARY

Saturday 20th

* Talk: 'The Narcissus (pre 1930 daffodils) Plant Collection' by Duncan Donald
2.30pm Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ.

About the speaker: Duncan trained at Wisley and was Curator at Chelsea Physic Garden before becoming Head of Gardens of the National Trust in Scotland. Since 2006 he has worked as internal plant registrar for the RHS with a particular responsibility for clematis and lilies. Whilst doing this he has developed Croft 16 Daffodils an outlet for selling surplus plants from his and his wife's private collection of pre 1930 daffodils. This is now the designated National Plant Collection held by him and his wife.

MARCH

Saturday 19th

Talk: 'Succession planting in the mixed border' by Fergus Garrett of Great Dixter Garden.
2.30 Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ.
Members £5, visitors £10. Tickets from Maggie Thorpe phone 01787 211346 or at Stowupland talks.

About the speaker: Fergus trained at Wye College and became head gardener of Great Dixter garden in 1992. Great Dixter was the

garden of Christopher Lloyd and he made it a charitable trust in 2003 with Fergus becoming CEO in 2006. The Trust enables the garden to open to the public and develop educational programmes for all age groups. Fergus has been awarded several honours and has also been the recipient of the RHS Veitch Medal.

APRIL

Saturday 23rd * Talk: 'A cornucopia of fruit and vegetables grown within the Walled Gardens at West Dean Gardens, West Sussex' by Sarah Wain.

About the speaker: Sarah Wain has gardened in Australia and England for 40 years, she has worked as Gardens Supervisor at West Dean Gardens with her husband Jim Buckland since 1991. (see article on page 21)

MAY

Sunday 29 PLANT HERITAGE SPRING FAIR
10am-4pm, Helmingham Hall IP14 6EF
Entrance £7

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 18 PLANT HERITAGE AUTUMN FAIR
10am- 4pm, Helmingham Hall IP14 6EF
Entrance £7

Saturday 24th * Talk: 'Attracting beneficial wildlife to your garden with flower power' by Marina Christopher
2.30pm Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ

About the speaker: Marina studied Botany, Marine Biology and Ecology followed by three years postgraduate research, then became a nurseryman in 1984 and founded Phoenix Perennial Plants in 2002. Phoenix earns medals vicariously by supplying some of the top garden designers with unusual plants for the Chelsea Flower Show and has won 'Best in Show' for the last three years! Marina became an author in 2006 with her book 'Late Summer Flowers' published by Frances Lincoln in the UK and by Timber in the US.

OCTOBER

Saturday 22nd

*Talk 'Orchids and other plants in habitat; Africa and the Islands'. A journey through Southern Africa by Johan Hermans
2.30pm Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ

About the speaker: Johan Hermans is Chairman of the Royal Horticultural Society Orchid Committee, Chairman of the Advisory Group on Orchid Hybrid Registration as well as a member of the RHS Horticulture Board. He is a Trustee of the World Orchid Conference Trust, President of the European Orchid Council, a Fellow of the Linnean Society, an Academic Advisor to the Cecilia Koo Botanic Conservation Centre and an Honorary Research Associate of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew.

Lectures marked * are free to members, with £5 entrance for non-members.

THE FREE PLANT AT THE SPRING PLANT FAIR: CAMPANULA ZANGEZURA

MAGGIE THORPE

This little known campanula (previously known as *Symphandra* or Rock Bellflower) deserves to be better known and what better way than to give it free to the first 800 visitors to Helmingham Plant Fair on 29th May. It was given to me by Liz Wells, another Plant Heritage member who is a very keen gardener and collector of unusual plants and it grows over a low wall in my garden (see photo on page 14). The lilac bells are borne on delicate wiry stems and it flowered all summer long without any special treatment. It needs fertile well drained soil but can also be grown in containers.

Sue Wooster, our Campanula Collection Holder, has supplied the seed which has been germinated and is being grown on to be ready for delivery to Helmingham. Getting a plant out into wide distribution is the best form of conservation and to be able to say that it came from a Suffolk Plant Heritage Collection Holder makes it even more special.

Sarah Wain will be giving a talk to the Suffolk Plant Heritage Group at Stowupland Village Hall on 23rd April about the vegetable garden at West Dean where she is the supervisor.

GARDENING AT WEST DEAN COLLEGE

Australian Sarah Wain started her horticultural career in Melbourne, Australia, in the 1970's studying at Burnley Horticultural College. She moved to the UK in 1979 to work at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew.

During her three year stint there she worked in the temperate nursery (known as the pits) with many plant collections: first, Australian plants destined for the Australian House, then propagating the collections within the soon-to-be-restored Temperate House and finally as the propagator for the Palm House specialising in tropical palms. She met her future husband Jim Buckland who was a student studying at Kew at the time.

Jim and Sarah have worked together in the UK since 1987. After being inspired by the Victorian Kitchen Garden television programme hosted by Peter Thoday they restored a kitchen garden in Hampshire called Lockerly Hall. Since 1991 they have managed the gardens at West Dean near Chichester, West Sussex.

They are ably assisted by a team of seven full time gardeners, a trainee and several volunteers, who look after nearly 100 acres including 50 acres of arboretum, 30 acres of pleasure grounds, other areas and a completely restored two and a half acre walled garden with 13 Victorian glasshouses and four sets of frames. Here many crops, edible and ornamental, are grown outside and under glass - chiming with the activities of the late nineteenth century.

To support the activities of the gardens financially, Jim and Sarah set up annual garden shows at West Dean reaching a maximum of five per annum including the original West Dean Chilli Fiesta in 1996 which now attracts 25,000 visitors over three days each August.

For more about the garden at West Dean visit www.westdean.org.uk





Photos courtesy
Peter Kendall.



2015 AUTUMN PLANT FAIR AT HELMINGHAM

PLANT HERITAGE COUNCIL REPORT

ANNE TWEDDLE

November saw the third and final Council meeting of 2015. The year-ending finances were expected to be at ‘about break-even’, an unexpected legacy and successful funding application putting the charity into the black.

Mike Buffin, Chairman of Trustees, presented his Conservation Strategy document. This piece of work was undertaken at the instigation of the Board, and outlines the organisation’s conservation strategy. The three main planks of the strategy are:

- i. Increase the number of plants being conserved, through ‘Living’ collections, NPC and Plant Guardian scheme.
- ii. High standards of record keeping to be maintained.
- iii. PH to have a voice and influence in all the conservation work being done anywhere with cultivated garden plants.

The charity’s Treasurer Alan Ratcliffe presented a paper for discussion on organisation and governance. The charity needs to be more efficient. There is a pressing need to reduce the bureaucracy. There is also a need to spend some of our reserves on ‘what we do’. Plant conservation needs to be more at the forefront of all our work. Currently we have 2.2 full time staff employed on plant conservation. This is not enough to move the organisation ahead.

Plans are underway to make an application to the Heritage Lottery Commission for a substantial grant to help fund this work. Making an application is a lengthy business.

A nominations committee has been formed. Its role is to match skill sets and people. New board members are being sought, with expertise in IT and fundraising. All groups have been asked to search locally for suitable candidates, so if you fit the bill and would be interested in sharing your expertise please let us know.

Changes and developments will continue well beyond 2016. It does feel sensible and positive to have a board who see the future for Plant Heritage clearly, and has put plant conservation at the head of all its work.

Hedgehog Plants & Gardens

'The interesting plant nursery'
is now at Risby Barns

Award winning growers of unusual hardy
shrubs and woodland plants.

We also have a gift shop stocking artisan
garden metalwork, ceramics & local produce

Risby Barns, Risby, Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk. IP28 6QU
01284 811055



Fullers Mill Garden at West Stow

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WEST STOW IP28 6HD
www.fullersmillgarden.org.uk
email: fullersmillgarden@perennial.org.uk Tel: 01284 728888

(Fullers Mill Garden is owned and managed by Perennial a registered
charity and remains fully funded by its maker Bernard Tickner).

PERENNIAL
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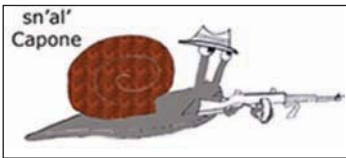
A DECLARATION OF WAR ON SLUGS, SNAILS AND VINE WEEVIL

MELANIE COLLINS

Pest control is best begun early: have your very own St Valentine's Day Massacre! First of all, make sure you know your enemy – what is actually eating your precious plants?

Slug damage is indicated by holes in the leaves on emergence, which quickly heal. The slugs that do the damage emerge from hibernation at the same time as your plants and the only things on their minds is food and reproduction. They are best targeted before emergence.

Snail damage shows as large lace-effect gashes in the leaves



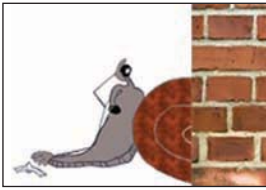
throughout the season. Snails are lazy feeders and will stick around a source of food, creating quite a mess if not found and dispatched quickly. They feed at night and cannot often be found in daylight – you will need to go

looking in the coolest, darkest and dampest corners of your garden.

Vine Weevil damage shows as notches nipped out along the petiole and leaf edges. This is done by the adult weevil, which feeds at night and does not fly. Its larvae feast on plant roots to devastating effect to many perennials, although we have found them to only be a problem on small plants with fine root systems. The larvae are white, about ½” long, with brown heads. We have found that they are most likely to cause damage to container-grown plants, probably because they like the friable soil. To combat this we always add 20% sharp sand to our potting mix. It is wise to re-pot any plant purchases just in case they have become a new home to vine weevil since they were last potted on.

Nematodes - In the past we have used Nemaslug to great effect. Indeed it gave us two seasons of control in one application. It is a common misconception that control only lasts for the six week life cycle of the nematode, since during this time the creature produces and its progeny take over the task, if there are enough slugs left for them. However, the nematode is temperature dependent. Prolonged

drought or cold spells will make it necessary to re-apply. Nemaslug also produce a nematode solution for Vine Weevil.



Slug Pellets - It is really important that you follow the manufacturer's guidelines when using slug pellets and we suggest the following hints to using them:

- * Start using your chemical (metaldehyde-based) or organic (iron phosphate-based, such as Ferramol) pellets early on in the year, when the first warm weather hits.

- * Use your pellets wisely, don't scatter widely and wantonly, remember slugs and snails hunt by smell so you risk attracting more of a problem than you need to solve.

- * Keep your pellets dry by putting half a teaspoonful of pellets in a jar (on its side) hidden among the foliage. This keeps the pellets effective for longer and any slugs in the vicinity will snack on them, in preference to your plants.

Think like a snail and put your jars where you would choose to hide to avoid the sun.

Water - Water treatment can be very effective against both vine weevil and snails, as both pests need air to breathe, so submerging any plant found to have an infestation in a bucket of water for around 10 minutes will bring them to the surface, ensuring you have found all the potential nibblers.

Standing your container-grown plants in shallow dishes, or trays, and keeping them topped up with water does three key things:

- * It is a natural barrier against pests

- * It encourages your plant to send its roots down to the source of moisture, thereby encouraging strong root development

- * It takes the guess work out of watering – the plants will only take up enough water for their needs and you do not risk over or under-watering your plants. It is very difficult to re-hydrate a root system once starved of water.



Cartoons courtesy Mel's son Andrew.

COLUMBINE HALL AND ME

KATE RUSSELL

For the past 18 years, I have been lucky enough to work as a gardener at Columbine Hall, a 14th century moated manor house in Stowupland, Suffolk where the Plant Heritage AGM was held in November.

Starting with only the most basic knowledge, hard but enjoyable work, and the love of what I do has led me to become head gardener of this famous garden.

I started working at Columbine Hall when I was just 16, straight from school, having heard about it from the local post-mistress who had spoken to the owners Hew Stevenson and Leslie Geddes Brown on a village garden open day, cheekily suggesting that they needed a gardener! She knew I longed for such an opportunity, so I immediately made the phone call. It was the best phone call I ever made. As I went along, I met other gardeners and learnt a lot from them.

The grounds cover 29 acres, five of which are cultivated garden, including a bog garden, Mediterranean garden, ponds, orchards, herb





Above: Kate in the greenhouse;
Left: Vegetable garden.

garden, cutting garden and a wild flower meadow.

My great passion however, is the walled kitchen garden inspired by the one at Chateau de Bosmelet in Normandy. Ours is not only productive but ornamental. There are four large rectangular beds, each colour themed: one is red, another blue and purple, a third brown and amber, the last yellow and green. I grow unusual varieties of vegetables to get these colours. These include cabbages and kales of all sizes, such as 'Black Tuscan' and 'Redbor' and artichokes, which help make up the colours of the blue/purple section.

The red section is planted with tomatoes, rhubarb chard and 'Bull's blood' beetroot. There are lettuces, Turk's Turban squashes and bronze fennel in the brown/amber bed. Last of all, yellow and green courgettes, white stemmed Swiss chard and salads feature in the remaining bed.

I have a large lean-to greenhouse, which I fill to bursting every spring, as nearly everything is raised from seed. Inside I grow cucumbers, chilli peppers and lots of rare tomatoes such as 'Black Krim', 'Matt's Wild Cherry' and 'Green Sausage'.

The parterre, which is a part of the platform area within the moat, has eight formal beds filled with cubes of planting such as box, *Geranium* 'Johnson's Blue', *Helleborus argutifolius*, *Iris* 'Deep Black', *Liriope*, *Stachys byzantina* and *Lavendula* 'Hidcote', designed for year round interest. Cardoons, figs and vines surround the house. We work to an overriding principle that there should be subtle but never garish colour to stay in character with the house.

Beyond the moat it is less formal and here you will find the bog garden, with plants including Rodgersias, *Gunnera*, ferns and of course columbines, growing by a stream. The idea being that this area is natural, where plants are left to self seed to their own devices.



Of course, no garden is ever finished and the bog and Mediterranean gardens are still being planted. We are planning a new fern and hosta garden too. For me, the gardens are a pure labour of love and I can't imagine working anywhere but at Columbine Hall.

(See page 40 for garden opening dates).

LADY BYNG: PLANTS OF AN AMATEUR GARDENER

JAN MICHALAK

When Viscount Byng, hero of Vimy Ridge, Governor-general of Canada and head of the Metropolitan Police died in 1935 his wife respected his wishes and supervised the burning of all his papers and letters. Clearly impressed with the idea, she supervised the burning of her own prior to her death in 1949.

When I accepted the job of researching and restoring the Byngs' gardens at Thorpe-le-Soken in Essex, I was presented with a Heritage Listing that described a locally well-known and historically interesting garden designed by the Viscountess between 1913 and her death, and important as a green space in an embattled part of Essex.

What followed very rapidly was a mixture of deep research and those marvellous coincidences that so often occur during research. During a talk I was giving on the influence of William Robinson on natural gardening I showed a print from his book 'The Wild Garden' and saw what could have been a view of the Thorpe gardens. In an article for the RHS by Lady Byng (Thorpe Hall; an Amateur's Garden) I found references and expressions of gratitude for the contributions made to the gardens by Gertrude Jekyll and E. A. Bowles, the great nurseryman Amos Perry, garden designer and lily expert Robert Wallace and alpine expert Will Ingwersen. A Perry catalogue of 1932 contained a picture of the Gavin Jones rock garden at Thorpe, and a day at the RHS Lindley Library in London produced a fragile letter from Lady Byng to William Robinson singing the praises of his gardens at Gravetye.

The new evidence portrays a garden of great ambition and national fame; a 'wild' garden of 12 acres planted around a series of beautiful lakes, planted by a woman who had travelled the world, and populated the site with plants she brought back from her travels.

Lady Byng seems always to have had an interest in irises, and the earliest example of one dedicated to her is 'Lady Byng' a stately, pale-blue tall bearded iris bred by Arthur Bliss in 1923. We were pleased to find this surviving in the National Collection of Bliss Irises and to be able to return it to Thorpe. By the 1930s Lady Byng had exhibited many irises, including Canadian cultivars at RHS shows, and in 1937 showed six Siberian irises with the prefix 'Thorpe' – the one surviving by the lake is almost certainly 'Thorpe Azure' and is very beautiful.

The peony 'Lady Byng' was grown by a Canadian breeder around 1923, and was thought to have died out, but the digging-up and cultivation of a dense and withered plant on the rock garden has produced a vigorous, blowsy dark-cerise peony.

In the 1930s Amos Perry advertised *Hemerocallis* 'Viscountess Byng' and *H.* 'Byng of Vimy'. Both plants have



Right: Viscount and Viscountess Byng in 1926.

miraculously survived half a century of neglect and then close-mowing and now live in the gardens again (and look fondly at each other across the lawn in my own garden). Both are ‘spider’ types with narrow petals; her Ladyship is a pale lemon/silver of average height, the General a strong terracotta growing very tall. Perry probably grew them for the Byngs, and certainly produced *Hesperantha* (*Schizostylis*) ‘Viscountess Byng’, with pearly, narrow pointed petals. We do not know the origins of the diminutive pink-flowered *Primula allionii* ‘Viscountess Byng’, but a couple of alpine growers have it - it needs winter protection.



From left: *Paeonia* ‘Lady Byng’, *Hemerocallis* ‘Byng of Vimy’, *Iris* ‘Lady Byng’.

Re-discovering these plants has been a joy and has ensured their continued survival by propagation – hopefully by next spring they will gradually become available to gardeners. But the story hasn’t ended there for me. Only very recently I spotted a reference in W. J. Bean to the fact that *Phygelius aequalis* was exhibited in the early 1930s by Lady Byng after a visit to South Africa, and was awarded the RHS Award of Garden Merit. The plant in my garden was taken from the original at Thorpe and I now know it has a noble heritage; as does *Escallonia rubra* var. *uniflora*, which turns out be one of the plants collected by Harold Comber on his 1920 expedition to Patagonia and given to Thorpe by Sir Thomas Hanbury after Lady Byng stayed at his great garden in Italy – La Mortola.

This story, I think, endorses the aims of Plant Heritage by showing examples of old varieties durable enough to survive, and decorative enough to be valuable in the garden. I’ve moved easily from the Byng connection to the plants of Perry and Bowles; I’ll need to give R.W.Wallace a bit of thought – his contributions to the wild garden include Japanese Knotgrass, Giant Hogweed and Giant mare’s Tail...

ULTING WICK GARDEN – A FLAVOUR THROUGH THE YEAR

NEIL BRADFIELD

A garden can sometimes become typecast; weighed down by a single, well-known image. Mention Ulting Wick, near Maldon in Essex, to many people and their reaction will be, “Oh yes, the tulip garden”. A few might add, “and dahlias”. However, woven around the listed farmhouse and black painted, timber barns is an haute couture gown of dynamic planting. This is a vibrant, ever-changing garden that experiments with colour, form and context. Owner, Philippa Burrough, is passionate about planting with ‘wow’ factor, be it bold or breathtakingly airy.

Although enchanting at Ulting Wick, the tulips are relatively fleeting. Soon *Alliums* take their place, together with early flowering grass *Helictotrichon sempervirens*, invaluable *Tellima grandiflora* and elegant *Orlaya grandiflora*. For those who like a garden to have a romantic flavour, the two acre wild flower meadow is dreamy in June. A sinuous path with scattered bays is mown and tables and chairs placed out for visitors to indulge in afternoon tea immersed in the meadow.

Climbing roses twine around the barns and the front border is hazy with Umbellifers, grasses, *Scabiosa*, *Ornithogalum* and early *Salvia*. Recently we have



created an ellipse of wild flowers and un-mown grass within the main lawn. This acts as a contemporary wild planting around a beautiful abstract sculpture entitled 'Twist'. By using mainly annuals dropped into the grass we are able to change the atmosphere of this planting every year and create new horticultural interpretations to embrace Twist.

The heat of summer brings growth and maturity to the Old Farmyard, where massed exotic and tender planting has replaced spring displays. By September,



Leonotis, *Ricinus*, *Tithonia* and *Musa* ebb and flow wildly through swathes of exquisite Dahlias. Lush foliage is lit up by countless flowers on *Rudbeckia* and *Cosmos*, while crinkled *Miscanthus* plumes translate the slightest breeze into movement. The extraordinary *Nicotiana glauca*, growing up to 10 feet in one summer, arches over the path, draping panicles of tubular yellow flowers. Seen in isolation, this is a gaunt giant of a plant with small flowers, which seems impossible to place. Yet worked into the edge

of jungle-like planting, it dissolves the boundaries of the horticultural environment and stretches the border into the viewer's domain.

Another favourite is *Tagetes linnaeus*; at about 2 feet tall and covered with typical French marigold flowers, this is a *Tagetes* for a chunky border. Philippa particularly values it for its ability to brighten the sultry shade beneath *Musa* with flashes of toning colour. However *T. linnaeus* serves equally well neatly lined out in clay pots, acting as organic whitefly deterrent among the tomatoes in the greenhouse.

In September, the softer light plays beautifully across the Pink Garden. In its glow *Asters*, *Chrysanthemum* 'Clara Curtis', *Echinacea*, *Sedum* and *Penstemon* blend and pose with charming femininity. However, lurking among their roots, dormant, but soon to

stir, is a kaleidoscope of over 1000 tulips. Their radiant shades of pink cover the spectrum in late April and return us to the popular symbol of this garden.

There are many other tulips, features and fascinating plants at Ulting Wick. It is a garden that changes dramatically through the year, never stands still and that is prepared to take chances. Every year we grow thousands of plants from seed and cuttings to meet the seasonal requirements of the garden and for sales. All proceeds from garden openings are shared between the National Garden Scheme and Ulting Church.

In 2016 Ulting Wick is open 24 and 29 April, 8 and 13 May, 16 June, 11 and 16 September. Private groups are welcome by appointment. For further information contact www.ultingwickgarden.co.uk

BOURTON HOUSE GARDEN

BRYAN THURLOW

When visiting the Cotswolds Hidcote and Kiftsgate are a must but on a recent trip I discovered another gem, the Bourton House Garden, an award-winning three acre garden surrounding an 18th Century Manor House.

On entering the garden one is immediately struck by the sheer artistry, not only of the layout and attention to detail, but by the sumptuous, planting within its borders. Visiting in early autumn all the expected late September herbaceous perennials were in evidence but it was the vast array of tender plants that caught the eye. Salvias and *Argyranthemums* in every colour you care to mention; huge specimens of *Tibouchina*, *Brugmansia* and abutilons which were flowering profusely. Statuesque *Melianthus* and *Tetrapanax* only added to the tropical feel of this wonderful garden. A recent article in *Country Gardener* confirmed my suspicions that many of these plants are lifted and replanted each June. A very labour intensive exercise but well worth the effort from a visitor's point of view. It was



SUCCESSION PLANTING IN THE MIXED BORDER



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or at Stowupland events.

**Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ
Saturday March 19th
at 2.30pm**

unsurprising to discover that the head gardener, Paul Nicholls, used to be head gardener at Hidcote. A white garden, a Chinese inspired knot garden, a topiary walk, a shade house, a potager, a parterre and an impressive 16th century stone tithe barn in which to enjoy refreshments. Bourton House Garden has it all.

www.bourtonhouse.com

IRIS UNGUICULARIS ‘OXFORD BLUE’

JIM MARSHALL

I was given this plant over thirty years ago by the late Brian Halliwell who was then the Assistant Curator Herbaceous at Kew Gardens. In recent years I have become aware of its' confused nomenclature as there is a recognised cultivar named 'Oxford Dwarf' but there is no reference to 'Oxford Blue'. The former has predominantly white falls, tipped lavender with purple veins while my cultivar has deep violet flowers. On checking Brian Mathew's authoritative book on Iris it could be the cultivar '*Speciosa*'.

Whatever its correct name it is a very worthwhile cultivar of *I. unguicularis*, dwarf in habit, dark green leaves flowering from November throughout the winter. We have a number planted in our house borders but also it does well in a more open position. For propagation it responds to division of the clumps in autumn or spring.

SUDBURY PLANT MARKET

The Quay Theatre's annual plant market will be taking place on Sudbury's Market Hill on Monday 2nd May from 10.am. A great event for plant lovers with over 20 specialist nurseries from across East Anglia. Now in its 15th year, Sudbury plant market offers a wide range of plants including shrubs, herbs, pelargoniums and unusual perennials.

AMONG MY FAVOURITE GARDENING BOOKS....

KIM FORESTER

‘THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY - PRUNING & TRAINING – THE DEFINITIVE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PRUNING TREES, SHRUBS, ROSES AND CLIMBERS’ BY CHRISTOPHER BRICKELL & DAVID JOYCE. PUB. DORLING KINDERSLEY

Thinking it would be a useful reference hub for a gardening course, I purchased this book in 2006, whilst studying for my RHS Certificate. It was useful then, but has since become my ‘go-to’ book for almost every plant that is too lovely or productive to lose, but can quickly get too big or dominant for its allotted space. A few simple diagrams and some useful tips help me to keep the fruit cage abundant, the roses whip free and some rather hefty inherited shrubs quite within their boundaries.

Okay, so it’s not really a bedside read, but it is cleverly laid out to cover plant dictionaries, basic and special techniques and plant by plant groups. The diagrams and format of the book are easy to dip in to and follow, with step-by-step instructions to guide me and clever ideas to inspire me into using the plants in my garden in new ways, such as growing unwieldy shrubs and climbers as standards and using ivy as topiary.

As a rather lazy gardener, I couldn’t imagine being without this book, it reduces my workload (and occasionally panic) to manageable proportions. Put simply, it is an absolute fount of knowledge for someone who is reminded that gardening experts like Christopher Brickell and David Joyce have probably ‘forgotten’ more about horticulture than I will ever learn!

EMAIL ADDRESSES

If you have changed your email address recently please tell Jim Marshall (jim@malmaisons.plus.com) so you can receive all the information that is sent out to members.

MEMBERS GARDENS OPEN

GABLE HOUSE. HALESWORTH RD, REDISHAM, NR34 8NE
Brenda and John Foster 01502 575298.

Sunday 14 February 11am- 4pm. Entry £4 in aid of NGS.
Snowdrop and Hellebore Day. Large collection of snowdrops,
aconites and cyclamen in a one-acre garden. Soup lunches and home
made teas.

Sunday 5 June 11am–5pm. in aid of NGS. Entry £4
Flowering shrubs, roses, perennials, water feature.
Salad lunches and home made teas.

Sunday 4 September 11am–5pm.
Autumn bulbs and perennials
Collections of cyclamen, crocus, colchicums, fritillaria, erythroniums
etc. Free entry. Teas.

RAINBOW FARM, Halesworth Road, Beccles NR34 8NE
Anne and Michael Broadhurst Tel. 01502 575404 email:
broadhurst320@btinternet.com



Plant Centre, Garden & Café

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to climbers, roses, herbaceous, ferns, grasses, alpines
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Garden open March-September
Groups welcome and guided tours available.

The Place for Plants,
East Bergholt Place, Suffolk CO7 6UP
Tel: 01206 299224 E-mail: sales@placeforplants.co.uk
www.placeforplants.co.uk

An extensive collection of snowdrops planted in a new garden. Could be combined with a visit to John and Brenda Foster's garden in Redisham. Please phone or email beforehand. List of plants for sale available by email or post.

THE OLD VICARAGE, SILVER STREET, OLD NEWTON IP14 4HF
Libby Brooks 01449 775334

Sunday 24 April 1pm-5pm, in conjunction with Hill House, Church Road, Old Newton. Entry £4 for NGS. A small garden for plant enthusiasts developed since 2006 with many interesting ornamental trees and shrubs. The informal beds are packed with herbaceous perennials

FULLERS MILL GARDEN, WEST STOW, IP28 6HD
Perennial - Gardeners Royal Benevolent Society -
www.fullersmillgarden.org.uk 01284 728888

Sunday 1 May 2pm-5pm

In aid of Age UK Suffolk. Admission £4.

Sunday 15 May 2pm-5pm In aid of NGS. Admission £4

Sunday 17th July 10am-5pm

Suffolk Nurseries Plant Fair - Admission £4 (Fair and Garden)

Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 September 11-5pm

Heritage Open Days. Free Admission.

Homemade cakes and tea/coffee at all events. Plants for sale.

RICHMOND HOUSE, 20 NETHERGATE STREET, CLARE CO10
8NP Catherine Horwood Barwise, 07961 828598,
catherine@richmondhouse-clare.com

Sunday 15 May, 2pm-5pm in aid of NGS. Entry £3.50

Species roses, peonies, irises and spring bulbs.

COLUMBINE HALL, GIPPING ROAD, STOWUPLAND, IP14
4AT Hew Stevenson and Leslie Geddes-Brown 01449 612219
Head gardener: Kate Elliott. 07730 922530
www.columbinehall.co.uk

Sunday 22 May 2.30-6.00pm. Admission: £4 children free. In aid of the NGS. Plant sales, teas and homemade cakes. Disabled toilets

Saturday June 11th 2-5pm in aid of the British Red Cross
Sunday 19th June as part of Stowupland Open Gardens and also open by appointment (01449 612219).

Gardens surround a medieval manor house (not open) and its large moat. Formal areas have been designed by Chelsea gold medallist George Carter. Elsewhere bog and Mediterranean gardens, colour-themed walled kitchen garden, orchards, ponds and wild rose beds. Featured in *Gardens Illustrated*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The English Garden* and *Suffolk magazine*.

OLD NEWTON OPEN GARDENS

Sunday June 12. 11am-5pm. 12 to 15 gardens of differing styles along with a scarecrow competition. Refreshments and plant stalls. Contact: Libby Brooks 01449 775334 familybrooks@btinternet.com

BOXFORD GARDENS OPEN, BOXFORD, CO10 5JT

Sunday 5th June. 11am-5pm. More than 20 gardens in Boxford, Edwardstone and Groton (including Plant Heritage members' gardens) - cottage, courtyard, riverside, contemporary. Plant and cake stalls. Free shuttle bus to outlying gardens. In aid of Boxford St Mary's church. Entry £5 (children free). Programmes/maps available from outside church on the day or from the first garden you come to. Contact Angela Tolputt, 01787 212264, Angela@tolputt.com

6 COLLEGE LANE, BURY ST EDMUNDS, IP33 1NN

Isobel Ashton 01284 754993

A walled garden in the former workhouse exercise yards. Summer roses, sun and shade planting. Suffolk Plant Heritage Plant stall.

Sunday 19 June, 11am-5pm, as part of 30th year of The Hidden Gardens of Bury St Edmunds. Tickets £5, giving entry to 30+ gardens, available from The Apex, Bury St Edmunds and, on the day, from marquee on Angel Hill. Details: www.hiddengardens.co.uk

CHELSWORTH OPEN GARDENS Chelworth IP7 7HU

Sunday 26 June 11am-5pm Entry £6. Children free. In aid of All Saints Church, Chelworth. Contact Alison Russell alison@alison61.wanadoo.co.uk 01449 740438.

SMALLWOOD FARMHOUSE, nr. BRADFIELD ST. GEORGE,
BSE IP30 0AJ Widget and Tim Finn (01449 736358)

Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th June 10-5pm as part of Felsham and Gedding Secret Gardens. Tourist ticket £5 at each garden or Felsham Village Hall. Three-acre garden combining traditional and contemporary styles. Cottage planting with over 60 old roses, ancient meadow and modern gravel garden. PH members and groups very welcome at other times by arrangement. Featured in BBC 2's '*Great British Garden Revival*', *The English Garden*, *Country Living*.

BALE TOMATOES - *Result!*

Remember Mavis and Lawrence Smith's article in the autumn 2015 Journal about an experiment they did with growing tomatoes in straw bales? It was a great success, and here is the proof - the last picking, on November 7th. Altogether twelve plants yielded around 60lbs tomatoes Worth a try?



The last straw!

The final stage of the Straw Bale Tomato saga: shredding the straw which is breaking down beautifully and will then be bagged and used as a mulch when required.

Contributions to the autumn edition of Suffolk Plant Heritage Journal are wanted by 29 July. Please send to Widget Finn, widget.finn@gmail.com.

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