

Plant Heritage

National Council for the Conservation of Plants & Gardens



SUFFOLK GROUP JOURNAL

Spring 2014



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*Cover photo: Papever Bracteata at Hullwood Barn photographed by
Alison Sargeant*

Cover design by Sally Geeve, www.sallygeeve.com

Layout courtesy Nicola Hobbs

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

JIM MARSHALL

Thanks to Sue Burton and her team of helpers, the AGM on November 9th at Lavenham Guildhall went very smoothly. As usual the food was superb and Jaime Blake's talk on Alan Bloom and his plant introductions was extremely entertaining and informative.

I will miss Sue who has now retired from the committee and her role as vice chairman. Her attention to detail and organisational skills have been invaluable, as has her friendliness. Patrick Palmer was elected as our new vice chairman; both he and his wife Margaret have been directly involved in increasing numbers at our Stowupland talks.

Our plant fairs at Helmingham were once again successful and we have negotiated a new two-year contract, based on existing arrangements. Thanks must go to Widget Finn and her committee for their wonderful organisation. However with Widget's retirement as chairman of the Plant Fair Committee the responsibility of its organisation, in conjunction with Helmingham, has been taken on by the Group's committee.

Anne Tweddle and Maggie Thorpe continue to lead the propagation team; by selling plants at events, plant fairs, Maggie's plant table in Boxford and at Café Knit in Lavenham, they have made a profit of well over £3,000 this year. This also serves the purpose of distributing rare and interesting plants throughout the county (and probably further afield). They continue to come up with new projects, so keep an eye on the journal and website!

Annabel Thorogood, our very efficient secretary keeps the website up to date so please whenever possible send her photographs taken at our lectures, workshops and garden visits.

Our talks and lectures at Stowupland continue to be of a very high standard. Sue Hamilton Blythe is already booking speakers for 2015 and would be pleased to receive suggestions for topics and/or the details of good speakers (contact Sue direct or via me)

Every successful organisation needs an efficient treasurer and Justine Corney certainly 'fits the bill': we are lucky to have our finances kept in such a professional manner.

You will have been aware that the journal has been including advertisements for the past three years. These provide a valuable source of

income to defray printing costs and enable us to include more pages of full colour. Ann Somerville took on the role of contacting potential advertisers and persuading them what an influential readership they can reach through the Journal. She has had to stand down as she is moving back to live in Rutland. We thank her most sincerely. The job of liaising with advertisers is now being done by Nicola Hobbs who has been responsible for the layout of the pages for the past 10 years.

I am certainly looking forward to my first year as your chairman and working with the committee. Please feel free to contact me direct if you have any suggestions or matters you would like to discuss.

TREASURER'S REPORT

JUSTINE CORNEY

Well I have been back for a full year and it is as though I never left! New faces, of course, on the committee but still some of the old crowd. Many changes whilst I had been away in the way that the plant sales are run which definitely makes the Treasurer's job easier and involves much less walking on the day and meant that I could enjoy the Spring sale and actually look around.

The finances are in good heart with plant sale receipts from the Helmingham Plant Fair, Stowupland talks, Maggie Thorpe's plant table at Boxford and the plant stand at Cafe Knit Lavenham increased from £4,068 to £4,616, thanks to the propagation group. Our 25% share of receipts from Helmingham also rose from £5,186 to £5,621 and this enabled us to match last year's donation to Head Office of £10,000.

Our funds in hand have decreased from £14,156 to £12,634 but this is still a very healthy situation. Included in this we hold a fund of £7,800 to support our county collection holders and also aid any new collections setting up costs.

The deadline for your articles, photos and ideas for the
Autumn 2014 Journal is 25 July.
Send them to widget.finn@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

HILARY DRAIN

I am frequently contacting Head Office with changes and amendments of email addresses and telephone numbers. That's good because it means we are keeping up to date! The problem is that not everyone is letting me know when they change their details - please do as I am not psychic! Send any changes to me by email at membership@suffolkplantheritage.com or post them into a new box that will be on the table at talks.

It is essential that we have this information for contacting you about any last minute cancellations of events, and a new service to you will be a quarterly email about events from Annabel Thorogood (in January, April, July and October). Please be assured that your details are for Plant Heritage only and are never passed to any other organisation by us.

Annabel has started both Facebook and Twitter for Suffolk Plant Heritage and Margaret Palmer is advertising well in local villages. This all helps to boost our profile! We are always going to lose some members through age, health and change of circumstances so we constantly need to recruit new members. Our number is currently 264.

Membership can be paid for by quarterly direct debit. At £7 a quarter it doesn't cost any extra and some people may prefer this option. Just contact Head Office 01483 447540.

NB. Give a Plant Heritage Membership for a special occasion: £28 single membership, £44 joint, student £15, friend £128. Contact Gill or Gillian at Head Office on 01483 447540!

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to everyone who has recently joined the Suffolk Group. Please introduce yourself to committee members when you come to our talks and other events.

Mrs. Anna Pitt, Lavenham
Mrs. Caroline Sherrod, Winesham
Mrs. Kate Elliott, Stowmarket

Mr. John Parry-Williams, Hadleigh
Ms. Catherine Harrison, Haverhill
Ms. Angela Ainger, Marks Tey
Mrs. Madge Pelling, Coddensham

Please contact the membership secretary Hilary Drain to find out whether there are other members nearby to share a lift to our talks and visits. Phone her (evenings only) on 01206 263223 or email membership@suffolkplantheritage.com

PROPAGATION OFFICER'S REPORT

ANNE TWEDDLE

A very big thank you to all the members who helped in countless ways with raising plant, and thus money for the group in 2013. Our turnover on the year was just under £4,700. We added a new outlet, CafeKnit in Lavenham, and Maggie Thorpe continued selling very successfully in Boxford. I began selling at my gate too. It was quite slow, but I'm told it takes time to get established.

Our sales at the Plant Fairs made up less than 40% of our turnover. We are diversifying and extending our money raising activities. Ebay is on the radar, which brings in sales from all over the country. Plants sold at group events have done well. Thank you everyone for buying plants. We plan to continue this, and try and have a couple of 'feature' plants at each event. Maggie or I will give a short description, and hopefully it will be something you can't live without.

We held three successful propagation sessions last year, all at Stowupland Church Hall. Thanks to Mavis Smith for putting it all together. One of the sessions was with Simon Weeks who came with material from his *Erysimum* collection.

In 2014 we plan to expand our propagation teaching, with an event in each month of the year. Full details on page 9. Booking is essential.

Narcissus project

The first plants we have to look forward to in January and February are the *Galanthus* and *Narcissus*. Our twin-scaling activities of recent years will be on sale. The *Narcissus* breeder William Backhouse will be centre stage

as the twin scaling we did in 2012 should be large enough for sale. There are give historic cultivars bred by him and registered in the 1860's.

Narcissus 'C.J. Backhouse'

Falls into group 2(a) and is yellow and orange.

Narcissus 'Gloria Mundi'

Registered in 1869. A group 2, large cupped daffodil. Flowers mid-late season 18".

Narcissus 'Duchess of Westminster'

Registered before 1869. It had received a FCC (First Class Certificate) in 1866. It is white on white, mid - late season, group 2, large cupped.

Narcissus 'Emperor'

Group 1 yellow on yellow

Narcissus 'Mrs Langtry'

Group 2, large cupped white on white.

There are limited numbers of each bulb. Our twin scaling in 2012 was not a successful as it has been in the past. We think we might have let the new chips get too cold, and many of them rotted. The bulbs that have survived will be available at group events in early in 2014.

Buxus

A visit was made to Ickworth in June to take some cuttings of cultivars in the National Collection. They were put into a raised bed in my vegetable garden. I have kept them covered with a cloche since putting them in. We have the winter to face yet, but if all is well, they should be potted up in the early summer this year. I hope we can undertake a similar exercise again in the summer.

Iris

The iris project continues with growing on material. The cultivars we are growing have been submitted to the Plant Guardian scheme and all will be accepted into the scheme. Any member who has an iris from this project can also register the plant in the scheme under their own name.

This winter should see us going forward with the research into cultivars we wish to find.

Improvements at home

My growing area here is a poly-tunnel and gravel standing area. Not huge but big enough. It was rabbit fenced a couple of years ago, but now needs more attention. One side of about 30 feet is to have cold frames built. All the plants had to be moved. Anything slightly tender went into the poly-



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tunnel, along with all the material we will use next year for propagating. The rest will have to remain outside. Good for both disease resistance and hardiness. Much to my surprise there were 47 crates of plants.....

Propagation programme for 2014

Maggie Thorpe and I will be running propagating events on a monthly basis this year. The events will all be held at Stowupland Church Hall, and begin at 10am with coffee and finish at 12noon.

They are open to all but, please, you must register with us as we must limit the numbers to 10 per session. By doing this everyone who comes will have 'a hands on practical experience'.

We have invited two collection holders - Alan Shipp with *Hyacinthus* and Simon Weeks with *Erysimum* - to come along and give us the benefit of their knowledge. We will also be trying out *Eucomis* leaf cuttings, something we read about in PH blog. The collection holder has kindly given us the recipe. So there will be lots of variety in both plants and methods

To book a place at any of the propagation events below please contact Anne Tweddle, anne@tweddle1.co.uk, 01473 737337 or Maggie Thorpe, maggiethorpe37@gmail.com, 01787 211346

Date	Method
Tuesday 14th January	seed, root cuttings
Wednesday 19th February	seeds
Thursday 20th March	splitting, layering
Tuesday 8th April	basal cuttings <i>Erysimum</i> - Simon Weeks
Wednesday 14th May	stem cuttings
Thursday 12th June	stem cuttings, <i>Eucomis</i> leaf cuttings
Wednesday 16th July	iris division, semi ripe
Wednesday 13th August	Hyacinth, twin scaling, Alan Shipp
Thursday 18th September	Lily bulbils
Tuesday 14th October	fresh seed
Wednesday 12th November	to be decided

This is the first time we have run such an extensive programme and I do hope everyone interested in propagation will find something of interest. All the plants we raise go for sale and raise money for Plant Heritage.

PLANT COLLECTIONS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

DOROTHY CARTWRIGHT

Collection holders were very helpful at the Plant Fair at Helmingham in September - having plant stalls, providing photographs and plants for display to promote National Collections and being available to give advice to visitors.

In a more relaxed way, collection holders met at East Bergholt Place for a walk around the gardens with Rupert Eley. We saw the *Euonymus* collection which is always especially interesting in the autumn with their attractive seed cases. We also saw lots of other interesting trees and shrubs – the *Crataegus* were looking very good with their large fruits. There was some discussion about the best way to prune the lower branches of trees to allow space for other plants beneath them. We finished with lovely tea and cakes in the tea room.

Since then I have been meeting up with collection holders to find out more about their collections, asking about new plants they have found and if they have lost any plants. When talking to Sue Wooster about her

SUFFOLK'S NATIONAL COLLECTIONS

AESCULUS	Framlingham	Robert Grimsey, 01728 685203
BUXUS	Bury St. Edmunds	National Trust Ickworth Park, 01284 735819
CAMPANULA	Bury St. Edmunds	Sue Wooster, 07879 644958
DIANTHUS (Malmaison)	Ipswich	Jim Marshall, 01473 822400
EQUISETUM	Stowmarket	Anthony Pigott, 01449 766104
ERYSIMUM	Walpole	Dr Simon Weeks, 01986 784348
EUONYMUS	East Bergholt	Rupert Eley, 01206 299224
HIBISCUS	Pettistree	John Woods Nurseries 01728 745100
HOSTA	Stowmarket	Mickfield Hostas. 01449 711576
IRIS (Sir Cedric Morris introductions)	Ipswich	Sarah Cook, 01473 822400
SYRINGA	Stowmarket	Norman's Farm, 01449 781081

Campanula collection I discovered that after being involved at RHS Wisley with their *Campanula* trials she has been asked to do a mini trial for them of *Campanula lactiflora* 'Prichard's Variety'. She is also providing *Campanula patula* plants to a botanist at the National Botanic Garden in Wales for research.

Several people in Suffolk are interested in having National Plant Collections and are collecting plants and keeping records in preparation for applying to Plant Heritage HQ. We are waiting to hear if Kim Forester's application has been accepted for her *Thalictrum* Collection.

New criteria for collections

The requirements for new collections have changed and I attended a training day on the subject. I have started visiting people who would like to have a National Collection to explain the new way in which things are being done.

Now people who are starting to collect plants for a National Collection are asked to complete a proposal form and provide a list of plants they have, and are trying to find, for their collections. These will then be looked at by the Threatened Plant Project and Plant Conservation Committee and comments and suggestions made. This will enable collectors to make changes to their proposed collection at an early stage. It will also make more people aware of the plants that are being sought and they may then be easier to find.

Once the proposal has been made and agreed, collectors can then concentrate on collecting, propagating and researching the plants for as long as it takes to get the collection established. Once established they can then make an application and the next Plant Conservation Committee meeting will consider it and decide if it is ready. If it is they will soon hear the good news.

So if you are thinking about having a National Collection do contact me and I will come and discuss the procedure with you. Telephone 01473 289556 or email collections@suffolkplantheritage.com

Visiting National Collections in Suffolk

As Co-ordinator I am very lucky as I have visited all 11 National Collections in Suffolk. There is such a variety of plants and they are all very interesting. How many have you visited?

If you want to visit National Collections it's worth looking out for open days as they are held when the plants are at their best – you also have the advantage of seeing lots of other interesting plants in the gardens and refreshments are usually available. This year I went to three open days –

Campanula, *Iris* and *Dianthus* – and one open evening – *Aesculus*. All very enjoyable events.

Some collections are in places which are open to the public very often – *Euonymus* at East Bergholt Place (a RHS partner garden), *Buxus* at Ickworth and *Campanula* at Langham Hall Walled Garden. To view some collections you need to arrange a visit with the collection holder. These are listed on page 10.

If you have any queries about visits do talk to me at Suffolk Group talks at Stowupland – I am usually there with information about open days. The challenge is to see how many you can visit this year!

WANTED – another Co-ordinator for Suffolk

As lots of gardeners are showing an interest in having a National Collection the time has come to have two Co-ordinators in Suffolk. If you are interested in plants and gardeners, why not come and join me in providing information and support to gardeners with plant collections. It is a very interesting volunteer role. Contact me if you are tempted and I will explain more: Dorothy Cartwright, 01473 289556, collections@suffolkplantheritage.com

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PLANT HERITAGE SUFFOLK GROUP EVENTS 2014

JANUARY

Saturday 25 TALK 'The Story of Henstead Exotic Gardens and Exotic Gardening in the UK' by Andrew Brogan
2.30pm. Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ*

About the speaker: Andrew Brogan is the creator of Henstead Exotic Garden. It is one of the best known exotic gardens in the country and has been featured in many national publications and on television.

NB: Andrew will be bringing a selection of plants for sale.

FEBRUARY

Saturday 22 TALK 'Harcourt Arboretum: Past, Present and Future' by Ben Jones
2.30pm. Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ *

About the speaker: Ben Jones is Curator of Harcourt Arboretum, part of the Botanic Garden of Oxford University. Dating back to 1835, the Arboretum was originally conceived of as a Pinetum but has since been planted with a wide variety of trees and other plants. Ben's work is focused on conservation and renewal, both at the Arboretum and in projects as far afield as Ethiopia and Japan.

MARCH

Saturday 22 TALK 'Growing Flowers for Cutting' by Harriet Holt,
2.30pm. Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ *

About the speaker: Harriet Holt has worked with growing flowers for cutting for ten years and runs workshops for the Women's Farm and Garden Association, and for the National Trust.

APRIL

Saturday 26 TALK 'The Beautiful Flowers of Kashmir' by Chris Chadwell,
2.30pm. Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ *

About the speaker: Chris Chadwell travels extensively in the Himalayas collecting and photographing plants. He is a freelance lecturer, Himalayan consultant and proprietor of Chadwell Seeds.

MAY

Sunday 25 PLANT HERITAGE SPRING PLANT FAIR
10.00am-4.00pm, Helmingham Hall, IP14 6EF

JUNE

Monday 23 SUMMER GARDEN PARTY
6.00-8.30pm in the garden (indoors if wet) of Idrone
Brittain, Willow Farm House, Southolt, Eye IP23 7QJ
£10 per person to include wine and a light supper

*Booking for this event is essential. Please sign up and pay either at one of the Stowupland meetings or contact Maggie Thorpe
maggiethorpe@gmail.com or phone 01787 211346.*

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 6 TALK 'Salvias' by Janet Buist of Pennycross Plants
2.30pm. Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ *

About the speaker: Having started a small nursery growing hardy perennials about 16 years ago, Janet Buist 'became hooked' on salvias. Her collection has become so large she now restricts herself to the most garden-worthy of these lovely plants and has a specialist nursery. Janet will be bringing some salvias for sale.

Sunday 14 PLANT HERITAGE AUTUMN PLANT FAIR
10.00am-4.00pm, Helmingham Hall, IP14 6EF

OCTOBER

Thursday 16 STUDY DAY: 'Trees' at The Place for Plants, led by
Rupert Eley. 10.30-4pm.
Further details and booking jim@malmaisons.plus.com

Saturday 18 TALK 'Galanthus: Some Favourites Old and New' by
Rod Leeds, author, bulbsman and former chairman of the
RHS Rock Garden Plant Committee.
2.30pm. Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4BQ *

NOVEMBER

Sunday 16 AGM Venue and further details to be announced later

*Lectures marked * are free to members, with £4 entrance for non-members.*

MEMBERS' GARDENS OPEN IN 2014

GABLE HOUSE, HALESWORTH RD, REDISHAM, BECCLES
NR34 8NE Brenda and John Foster (01502 572598)

Sunday 23 February 11-4pm
Snowdrop and Hellebore Day

Sunday 1 June 11-4pm
In aid of The National Gardens Scheme

Sunday 7 September 11-5pm
Autumn bulbs and perennials

ROSEMARY, EAST BERGHOLT CO7 6TH
Natalie Finch (01206 298241)

Romantic garden with many flowering trees and shrubs, old roses and two bog beds

Easter Sunday 20th April 2-5pm Entry £3.50
In aid of the National Gardens Scheme

Sunday 1st June as part of East Bergholt Open Gardens
11-5pm Entry £6 to 15 gardens.

THE LABURNHAMS, ST. JAMES, SOUTH ELMHAM IP19 0HN
Jane Bastow (07968 226196)

Saturday 10th May 10-5pm
Plant stall, books, bar-b-q, Waveney Brass Band
Entry £2 including tea and biscuits
In aid of RNLI and other charities.

22 SHILLING STREET, LAVENHAM CO10 9RH
Sue Hamilton Blyth (01787 247613)

A hidden garden in the centre of historic Lavenham with many different rooms mixing classic cottage garden planting with a variety of small ornamental trees and drought tolerant grasses.

Bank Holiday Monday 26 May 11-5pm Entry £3.50 Home made teas.
In aid of the National Gardens Scheme.

6 COLLEGE LANE BURY ST. EDMUNDS, IP33 1NN
Isobel Ashton (01284 754993)

Sunday 15 June 11-5pm
as part of The Hidden Gardens of Bury St. Edmunds

A walled garden in the former exercise yards of the workhouse. Summer roses, sun and shade planting. Recorder consort in the afternoon. Plant Heritage plant stall.

Tickets £5 with entry to 30 gardens from the Tourist Information centre
(01284 764667)

SMALLWOOD FARMHOUSE, near BRADFIELD ST. GEORGE IP30
0AJ Widget Finn (01449 736358)

Three-acre garden combining traditional, contemporary and quirky styles. Cottage planting with old roses and clematis, an ancient meadow, potager and modern gravel garden

Sunday 22 June 11-5 Entry £4 (group opening with Smallwood House)
In aid of the National Gardens Scheme

Monday 23 June Evening opening 6-9pm. Entry £4 including glass of wine. In aid of Gedding Church

Groups welcome at other times by arrangement.

RICHMOND HOUSE, CLARE CO10 8NP
Catherine Horwood Barwise (catherine@richmondhouse-clare.com)

Half-acre walled garden in Suffolk's smallest town. Recently planted 'new perennial' parterre, informal wooded garden with species roses, formal vegetable/cutting garden, greenhouse with tender perennials

Sunday 27th July 2-5pm. Entry £4 In aid of the National Gardens Scheme
Group openings available May-August.

HULLWOOD BARN SHELLEY IP7 5RE
Sarah Cook and Jim Marshall (01473 822400)

Sunday June 1 Iris Sir Cedric Morris Introductions

Saturday July 12 for Dianthus – Malmaison

In aid of Plant Heritage
Contact sarah@malmaisons.plus.com in May for times

Gardeners' Fridays scheme

Four Plant Heritage members' gardens in West Suffolk open for the Gardeners' Fridays scheme from Friday 3rd April to the end of September:

- ⚙ Langham Walled Garden, Langham, IP31 3EE 10-4.30pm Entry £2.50
- ⚙ The Lucy Redman School of Gardening, Rushbrooke, IP30 OER 10-5pm Entry £2.50
- ⚙ Wyken Hall, Wyken, IP31 2TW 2-6pm Entry £4.50
- ⚙ Fullers Mill Gardens, West Stow, IP28 6HD 2-5pm Entry £4.50

For further information phone 07879 644958

It's not too late to tell our members about your open garden event. Email annabel.thorogood@googlemail.com or phone 07801 431427 so that we can put the details on the Plant Heritage website.

They can also be added to the National Open Gardens website (www.opengardens.co.uk).

SPRING PLANT FAIR 2014

SUNDAY 25TH MAY 10AM-4PM

Our plant fairs at Helmingham Hall are always exciting, stimulating, fun and informative events for experienced and novice gardeners alike, or indeed for anyone who likes a 'grand day out'.

Planning is well advanced – this year we are going to open half an hour earlier, at 10.00 am. This earlier start should help to reduce the queues as the sale opens. The leaflets were designed and ordered in mid November for delivery to Patrick Palmer in January. We are now sending out invitations to our regular exhibitors, and the popular 'first time' exhibitors from 2013. We have already had a number of exhibitors asking to come again in 2014, including the Tree Paeony Company who came all the way from Yorkshire.

The free plant at the 2014 spring sale is *Liatris aspera*, a close relative of the more commonly grown *Liatris spicata*. Flowering in late summer, it

has similar spikes of purple flowers, but the groups of flowers are further apart in the spike, giving a less dense and more graceful effect. The plants are drought tolerant and appreciate good drainage. It was used in the beautiful naturalistic plantings at the Olympic Park in 2012.

As usual the Plant Doctors will be on hand to diagnose all your plant problems and questions of identity. There will be a wide selection of unusual plants for sale in the Plant Heritage Marquee. Many of you are involved in helping to care for the stock plants from which many of the rare plants are grown, making this stall one of the first ports of call for all the visitors to the sale. A number of local plant collections have been invited to sell plants and we are planning a series of short lectures with an emphasis on different aspects of wildlife gardens.

The wide range of plant stalls will be supplemented by a variety of garden accessories, and, of course, food, drink and seating areas for when you get tired and hungry.

We are hoping for another year of successful plant fairs, which not only raise valuable funds, but also give a wonderful boost to the profile of Plant Heritage and enable us to show a wide audience the value of Plant Heritage to the conservation of British garden plants.

If you have a little spare time and would like to help us make this event even more successful there are a number of ways you can help. You might be able to help on the day, if so please contact Hilary Drain (membership@suffolkplantheritage.com).

She is looking for people to help at the entrance, on the free plant table, the Plant Heritage plant stand and the Plant Heritage membership table.

We are also looking for volunteers from all over Suffolk to make sure we distribute poster flyers and leaflets as widely as possible.

If you feel you could help make sure your local villages/town know about our plant fair please contact Patrick Palmer (patrickjohnpalmer@gmail.com)

The Quay Theatre's 13th Annual

PLANT MARKET

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**Bank
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10.am
Market Hill
Sudbury



Nurseries from across East Anglia
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PERENNIALS ~ SHRUBS ~ HERBS ~
PELARGONIUMS and more.....

NATIONAL PLANT HERITAGE WEEKEND & AGM

9-12 MAY - NORWICH

Our neighbours the Norfolk group are hosting this year's national AGM which is always part of an action-packed weekend for members including garden visits, talks and a great opportunity to meet each other.

Delegates will be staying in the heart of the city of Norwich at the historic Maids Head Hotel in the centre of the medieval quarter. On Friday afternoon there will be a private visit to the 3-acre garden of the Bishop of Norwich which nestles in the shadow of the Cathedral. Its footprint dates from the 12th century.

On Friday evening Alan Gray, owner of East Ruston Old Vicarage, will describe how he and his partner have developed this famous and flamboyant garden over 30 years. Saturday's events include a tour of the late Alan Bloom's The Dell garden at Bressingham, led by Jaime Blake the curator and a visit to Dr. Janet Sleep's garden The Harrolds.

Professor Tom Williamson is the after-dinner speaker on Saturday evening, an expert on 18th and 19th century landscapes. The weekend ends with a visit to East Ruston Old Vicarage on Sunday which will be opened exclusively for delegates.

To find out more about the weekend and to book your place contact www.norfolkplantheritage.org.uk

PLANT HERITAGE COUNCIL REPORT

ANNE TWEDDLE

As Suffolk Council representative I attended three meetings during 2013. The chairman, Michael Alder will be serving his last year with us in 2014. He will have served two 3-year terms, and wishes to stand down at the end of the year. A vote for a new chairman will take place during 2014.

A new treasurer has been appointed by the Board: he is Alan Ratcliffe, based in East Anglia. At the time of going to press we have not yet heard

the final financial figures for 2013, but are expecting the deficit to be a very small one if at all.

Genevieve Melbourne Webb, the Executive Officer, had just announced she would sadly be leaving Plant Heritage at the end of December. Genevieve has been with Plant Heritage for 11 years, and she will be missed. She is very competent, good natured and always with a positive view on whatever lands on her desk. She has moved on to new challenges as business manager of a Primary School. We wish her well.

The Threatened Plant Project, is to be job-shared between Sophie Leguil, the current incumbent, and Kalani Seymour, who looked after the project before taking maternity leave a year ago. You can read more about the TPP and the Plant Guardian Scheme on page 241.

The Threatened Plant Project has received £36,000 this year, of which the Appeal launched at Longstock in April raised £12,000.

The Hampton Court Flower Show raised £13,000, just under half of which came from the Seed Shop sales.

Obtaining money from charitable trusts continues to be difficult, but there have been some successes.

Membership is up by 1% at 3,991. We appear to be losing fewer members than in recent years.

Recruitment of new members continues, with the web and Twitter, bringing in marginally more new members than plant fairs or events. Suffolk retains its second place ranking for group size. We also jumped from eighth to fifth for number of new members recruited within the group. So well done to everyone who introduced new members.

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

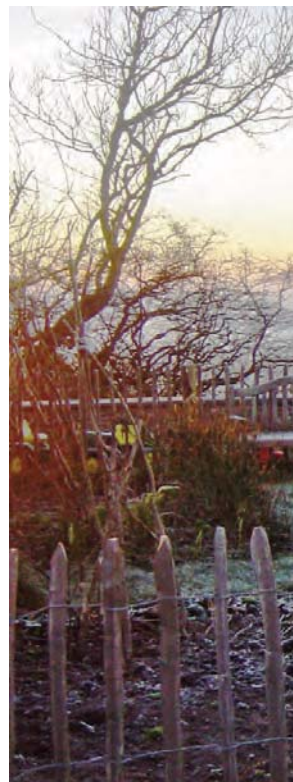
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VISIT WWW.SUFFOLKPLANTHERITAGE.COM**



Primula Sieboldii are among new National Collections (page 25).



Iris 'London Pride' bred by Olive Murrell ((page 7)





Narcissii twin scaled by Plant Heritage members which will be on sale this year, from top left: 'C.J. Backhouse', 'Mrs Langtry', 'Gloria Mundi', 'Duchess of Westminster' (page 6).

Below: Winter vegetable garden above the clouds at Tair Ffynnon. Far left: Box balls in the meadow above the house (page 34).



PLANT GUARDIAN SCHEME

ANNE TWEDDLE

The Plant Guardian Scheme is intended as a way for members of Plant Heritage to conserve small numbers of rare plants. The scheme has been set up and is run by the National Office, and it is linked into the Threatened Plant Project.

If you have a rare plant growing in your garden, and you would like your plant to be registered in the scheme go to www.nccpg.com. This will take you to the home page of the National Office website. Here you will see a tab 'Guardians'. First you must register yourself. To do this you will need your membership number. Once registered you can register your plant.

How do you know if your plant is rare enough?

To be registered for the scheme the plant must be deemed as 'Threatened' or at least that it has two or fewer suppliers in the current RHS Plantfinder. You can ask either Sophie Leguil or Kalani Seymour, at the National Office if your plant is suitable. They can be contacted on tpp@plantheritage.org.uk

We have a number of plants that meet this criterion for sale at events. They are plants we have received through the national Plant Exchange and been assessed for the Threatened Plant Project. Any plants we sell with RED labels have been assessed as 'threatened in cultivation'

How does this help Plant Heritage?

It helps conserve rare plants, which is what we do. It also demonstrates a membership which is active in conservation.

What are your obligations?

You agree to allow your email or phone number to be made available to enquirers who may be interested in your plant material. You are under no obligation to sell or give any material away. It is your plant.

Can several people register the same cultivar?

Yes,

What happens if the cultivar status changes?

The cultivar may become more widely available and thus no longer deemed threatened. It will be removed from the scheme.

If you would like to take part, your participation will be appreciated.

NEWS OF NEW NATIONAL COLLECTIONS

Plant Heritage has announced several new National Collections recently, including *Primula sieboldii*, Japanese cultivars, which has been created by Penny and Melvyn Jones in Hasworth, Devon. They first fell in love with the plants when setting up a specialist and alpine nursery in 1997, and currently have 75 cultivars in the collection and are sourcing nine new ones from Japan in 2014. Melvyn says it has not been easy sourcing new varieties “Japan is a difficult exporter, but we have not given up.”

Primula sieboldii, commonly known as the Japanese Primrose or Cherry Blossom primula, is endemic to east Asia and was mentioned in Japan’s first ever gardening book published in 1681, though it was not until the mid-19th century that botanist Dr. Philip Franz von Siebold introduced the species to the western world.

The collection can be viewed by appointment at Staddon Farm Nurseries. You’ll find details of the nursery and collection at www.pennysprimulas.co.uk

A brand new collection of *Eucomis spp* has been established in the grounds of Hardwick Hall, the dramatic National Trust property in Derbyshire, by Outdoors Manager Ian Hunt.

The gardens had included a number of hardy *Eucomis* in its herbaceous borders since 1985 and Ian and his team have built on this to create an extensive collection under glass in the nursery. New material is sourced from UK-based specialist nurseries as well as Kew Gardens for some of the more unusual cultivars. In order to complete the collection Ian is keen to source *E. Reichenbachii*, *E. Schiiffii* and *E. Grimshawii* and would love to be contacted if anyone can help him in the search.

Eucomis originates from South Africa and is a genus of flowering plants in the family Asparagaceae, commonly known as the pineapple flower due to its stout stems covered in star-shaped flowers. The name *Eucomis* stems from the Greek, meaning ‘pleasing hair of head’ referring to the tuft of leaves which comes out of the crown of the plants.

Hardwick Hall gardens and park are open every day except Christmas Day 9-6pm. More details at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hardwick

Photographs of two of the Primula sieboldii varieties are featured in the centre pages of this issue.

PLANT HERITAGE: CONSERVING PLANTS FOR THE FUTURE

A PLANT COLLECTION HOLDER'S VIEW

SARAH COOK

Plant Heritage raises money in different ways, one of which is via donations from local groups, of which the Suffolk Group is one of the major donors (contributing the magnificent sum £10,000 in both of the last two years). All our Collection Holders are very lucky to be in the Suffolk Group as we are supported both locally and by National Office which makes holding a collection much more rewarding. Plant Heritage is one of the foremost organisations in the world to be involved in the conservation of British garden plants, and the work it does is the envy of many other nations.

Purely from a gardener's perspective, having spent much of my career working in historic gardens for the National Trust I am very appreciative of the work of Plant Heritage. In order to preserve all the different garden styles for which British gardeners have been famed over the years, 'historically correct' plants must survive. Plant Heritage is at the forefront of this conservation work. Where would Sissinghurst be without the old fashioned shrub roses which Vita Sackville West popularised in the 1930s, or the late seventeenth century Dutch Style garden at Westbury Court, without access to period plants?

On a personal level, without the national and local structure of Plant Heritage I would never have made my collection of Sir Cedric Morris irises. It was our previous Collections Co-ordinator Christine Mole who cajoled me into turning an idea into reality, while our current Co-ordinator Dorothy Cartwright is currently helping several more collections in Suffolk join the scheme.

Once my irises were accepted as a National Collection the advantages multiplied. Plant Heritage headed paper and the words National Collection encouraged Botanic Gardens, both in Britain and abroad and also private individuals to part with rhizomes of their own irises. This alone has probably helped me secure the return of at least 10 Cedric Morris irises to Britain, which would otherwise have been lost to us all.

Plant Heritage insists on a rigorous but simple method of keeping records, a discipline which has mitigated my natural chaos. It has given me a useful focus to the collection. The regional co-ordinator organises

regular meetings with other Collection Holders, and head office staff provide mutual support and also up-dates on pests and diseases, import regulations and other legislation which can affect us.

Plant Heritage centrally organises training days on a wide range of topics, for example propagation, including micropropagation cuttings and grafting. I found a recent course on making herbarium specimens (pressing and colour charting) particularly useful for my records, as well as being very enjoyable. Hopefully I will be able to help others identify irises in the future from my colour notes and pressings of all the collection as well as photographs.

The Heritage Marquee at Hampton Court Flower Show is another real bonus, especially for collections which are not in flower at show time. We are occasionally able to base an exhibit on photographic material. A stand at Hampton Court gives the opportunity to show and sell to a very large audience (a welcome source of income as keeping a collection can be expensive as well as rewarding), and the feedback at shows can lead to finding another plant for the collection.

All National Collection Holders have to be paid up members of Plant Heritage, and being a member of the Suffolk Group is an added bonus. The local group has funded display boards and labels for Suffolk collections. We all enjoy the Suffolk Group Journal (I may be biased, but it must be the best), an excellent range of talks (shame they sometimes clash with Ipswich Town playing) and a number of other events, including workshops. I personally very much enjoyed the day on Ferns given by Anthony Pigott, National Collection Holder of *Equisetum* (horse tails!), who is applying for a National Collection of *Dryopteris* (fern) species.

In addition, for many years the Suffolk Group has been the very best in involving members with practical conservation, and facilitating connections between local members and collections. There are great opportunities to become involved in plant propagation and first hand plant conservation on an individual scale. Much of this is arranged by Anne Tweddle, watch out for the twin scaling days and the rare bulbs she and others grow by this method (she has an ongoing rare narcissus programme, among other projects)

Dovetailing the national/local structure of Plant Heritage could be a challenge, but the Suffolk Group has played to its advantages, may it long continue. I would certainly recommend becoming a collection holder. However, all members can become directly involved in plant conservation by becoming a 'Plant Guardian', another aspect of head office work which, with the Threatened Plant Project, should deliver another layer to the conservation of our threatened garden plants.

GO NORTH FOR GARDENS

ROSIE ANSELL

“Go West, young man,” they say, and many of our great gardens are in the west, but here are just a few that we enjoyed this summer in the north. Due to the late season we had, in early July, the colour and scents of mid June wherever we went.



Dunham Massey, near Altrincham, is one of the National Trust's flagship properties in the north west and the warm and sunny day we visited had brought out the crowds. There is a large area of garden to the north of the house, with lawns and trees, an orangery and a stream planted with moisture loving plants. A particular feature at the time of our visit was the flowering of the *Cardiocrinum giganteum*, which looked spectacular. However pride of place must go to the new rose garden, newly planted and opened only a month earlier by Rachel de Thame.

A series of delightful beds, arranged according to colour and including Peter Beales' new rose called Dunham Massey, surround a metal arbour, covered in climbing roses. Two of the sides of the garden also consisted of metal arches for more roses to be trained up and there are obelisks in the beds. In a few years, when the roses have grown, it will look and smell even more spectacular.

Felley Priory in Nottinghamshire is within a mile of the M1, but its location is so secluded that you would never know it. The two and a half acre garden, which is 600 feet up, is on the site of the original priory church and the house is on the site of some of the priory buildings. The present layout dates to 1976 and the main part of the garden is shaped by a series of yew hedges, laid out to provide shelter, and some of it made into topiary.

Running down from the house are splendid herbaceous borders with a view out into the countryside (you can just see the M1 if you look carefully!). There is also a rose garden, recently replanted, a small white garden, a knot garden and pergolas covered in climbing plants. In the bottom corner of the garden is a large pond and in the opposite corner an orchard which is carpeted with daffodils in spring. Many of the plants in the garden are available at the attached nursery and there is a tea room. They also hold plant fairs.

Wentworth Castle Garden is almost as close to the M1, though rather further north. In this case you would never know it is so close to Barnsley! Wentworth Castle, an early 18th century mansion designed by Thomas Archer, is now a college, and you get a very good view of its position in the landscape as you make your way to the gardens. There are 60 acres of formal gardens, set in a wider 600 acre park, which has an extensive collection of historic monuments, meaning that the park is Grade 1 listed.

You would not realise that, by 2002, many of the buildings and landscape features had fallen into a state of dereliction caused by neglect. The programme to restore the gardens and the landscape featured in an edition of the first series of Restoration: although a finalist it did not win. The £16 million needed for the restoration came from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and Yorkshire charities. The most recent structure to be

restored was the Victorian Conservatory, which was due to open just a few weeks after our visit.

The walk through the gardens starts uphill through the Union Jack Gardens and the Victorian Flower Garden until finally you reach Stainborough Castle, a folly built in the 1720s for the owner's children to play in. You pass views over the wider parkland, now green and covered with trees after years of mining in the area. The route back to the visitor centre, and the all important tea room, is via Lady Lucy's Walk through the wilderness and the shrubbery. Wentworth Castle Garden is home to three National Collections – species magnolias, *Camellia x Williamsii* hybrid and species and hardy hybrid rhododendrons, so spring would be a good time to visit.

Renishaw Hall is another garden within a few miles of the M1, this time in Derbyshire. The Italianate plan, outlined by yew hedges and interspersed by statuary, was laid out in 1895 by Sir George Sitwell, and much of what you see today was restored by the late Sir Reresby Sitwell and his wife. The gardens slope away from the hall and look over several lakes nestled in mature woodland. The main lawn, with magnificent herbaceous borders on either side, is flanked by two smaller enclosed gardens. On the lower level are three more enclosures, two containing formal ponds.

The whole can be seen from the south front of the house, or from the flag border to one side, which is lined with roses. Outside the ballroom is another enclosed garden near to a magnificent cut leafed beech at the edge of the woodland close to the house. The National Collection of yuccas is displayed in a converted orangery. Renishaw also has one of the most northerly vineyards in the country.

And I have not even mentioned Biddulph Grange, the walled garden at Norton Priory, or the terraces of Haddon Hall!

www.nationaltrust.org.uk www.felleypriory.co.uk
www.wentworthcastle.org www.renishaw-hall.co.uk

Help at Helmingham!

Please spare an hour or so to help at the Plant Heritage
Plant Fair at Helmingham on Sunday 25 May.

People are needed to work at the entrance, at the free
plant table and in the members' marquee.

All helpers get free admission to the fair.

Contact Hilary Drain by phone 01206 263223 (evenings only)
or email membership@suffolkplantheritage.com

FULLERS MILL GARDEN

JOHN WEEKS

Carved from poplar plantation, set around a reclaimed millpond and extending between the banks of the River Lark and Culford Stream, Fuller's Mill Garden will have been known to some Plant Heritage members for half a century as an atmospheric and horticulturally distinguished private garden, one of Suffolk's finest. The creation of Bernard Tickner, the garden has of late been administered by a Trust and, in 2013 was gifted to Perennial, the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society, guaranteeing the foreseeable future of its seven peaceful acres and a welcome for the visiting public.

Those visitors will find a garden, in Bernard's words, immeasurably better maintained than ever before, by an expanded team of gardeners led by head gardener Annie Dellbridge and augmented by nigh-on a score of devoted volunteers. The Bothy houses offices, a tea-room (with fabled cakes) and reception area. A Friends' Group hosts a growing programme of events.

Much indeed has happened in the last five years but the spirit of this tranquil hortus inclusus, the "wild place by water" that Bernard sought and found in 1958, is undisturbed. Moving among the shrubs and hardwood trees of the Top Garden or over the bridge, drawn down into the folds of the Low Garden, the impression is of soft harmony: winding grass paths and rounded beds, hummocks and fountains of foliage, gentle rise and fall, muted shades and natural transitions. Satisfying vistas, orderliness without order, art concealing art. There is a controlling vision but it is one that begins by putting the best plant in the best place with space to develop naturally, and which, when looking to add to the texture that has been created, goes literally with the flow.

So to those best plants. The established planting strands within the garden may be familiar from past visits. Snowdrops bloom from October to spring (although in 2011 *Galanthus reginae-olgae* was in flower in August!). A fine collection of lilies opens in succession, the martagons giving way to *L. regale* and to charmers like *Lilium* 'Lake Tulare' with the most delicate pink flowers. Autumn hosts drifts of colchicum, among them *Colchicum* 'Waterlily' and *C. speciosum*, with the grandee among the forms *C. speciosum* 'Album' last to appear. There are collections of shrubby willows from Norway, alliums and iris, beds of hellebores and around 70 varieties of Euphorbia.

Against this changing tapestry individual specimens and plant groupings delight in season. Two tiny narcissus, *bulbocodium* and *cyclamineus* are dainty treasures in the spring grass. At the other end of the scale, in moist conditions under the high shade of the cricket-bat willows, *Cardiocrinum giganteum* var *yunnanense* imagines it is in the Himalayas and this summer developed five stems of chartreuse lily flowers before its destined immolation. The mill-pond is always of interest as it gathers the reflections of its marginals - *Primula japonica* and *Darmera peltata*, *Gunnera* and *Rodgersia* and the showy skunk cabbage *Lysichiton* - or, in winter sun, the intense orange Chinese lanterns of *Physalis alkekengi*. There are fine trees and larger shrubs - a huge and joyous yellow *Hamamelis*, a splendid *Ceanothus* in the Outer Quandary (one of the more open areas of the garden) which provides a cerulean backdrop for spring flowers, the impressive stand of *Betula* 'Silver Grace', a possible *pendula-utilis* cross which originated in the garden and offers straight white stems with a more delicate canopy than the form *jaquemontii*. Then there is the curious toothwort - but in truth the list of potential favourites one can discover at Fullers Mill is endless.

Not least because the garden - and Bernard - never stand still. There is always something happening - a new opportunity to be taken, a new enthusiasm to pursue. In the first category would be the development in the last few years of the Strip, an open piece of grassland between Culford Stream and Mill Deep, the privately owned lake that closes the view at the bottom of the garden. To the Beth Chatto Bed, where *Euphorbia* and *Bergenia* underplant a specimen of *Betula utilis* var. *occidentalis* 'Buddha' grafted from a tree in the Mount Everest Forest Park, has been added The Patch. This larger bed, developing apace brings together the different *Dipelta* forms with plants such as *Romneya coulteri*, *Cistus*, *Berkheya purpurea*, *Penstemon* 'Connie's Pink' and *Ageratina athissima* 'Chocolate'. All flourish around a very young Valonia Oak, *Quercus ithaburensis* ssp *macrolepis*, growing from an acorn collected in Crete (and in truth with some way still to grow).

And the latest enthusiasm? *Arisaema*. Bearing out the words of Graham Stuart Thomas - "Intriguing even if not of overpowering beauty they prove fascinating to their devotees" - Bernard has added several more species to the garden this year. Besides *A. speciosum*, *A. tortuosum* and *A. candidissimum*, you can now find *A. flavum*, the tall *A. exappendiculatum* and the similar species *Pinellia pedatisecta* (cut like a bird's foot!).

Come and see it all.

www.fullersmillgardens.org.uk Fullers Mill is part of the Gardeners' Fridays - see page 18. John Weeks is a volunteer at the garden.



Bernard Tickner with Annie Dellbridge and *Cardiocrinum giganteum yunnanense*. Photo courtesy Colin Hambidge, freelance garden writer.

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THE GARDEN IN THE CLOUDS

SUE HAMILTON BLYTH

If I were to write my own version of Rupert Brooke's 'These I have loved' poem, near the top of my list of things that most lift my heart would be the sight of England's patchwork landscape. Living in Suffolk, the best view of this I get these days is usually circling before landing at Stansted Airport when returning from a holiday. And with my nose glued to the window I find myself thanking my lucky stars that I live in such a beautiful country.

It was to a different part of this beautiful country that I turned my nose last summer when I spent a week in the Black Mountains, bordering Herefordshire and Monmouthshire. And I might never have visited this exquisitely patchworked area had I not come across, a couple of years ago, Antony Woodward's book *The Garden in the Clouds*.

The book is one of a kind. It is not really a gardening book, or even a book about a garden, because Antony is quite clear that his property is not really a garden – indeed, he calls it 'a not garden'. It is more the story of a grand project, a dream put into practice, a crazy idea.

Having spent most of his childhood constrained by the needs of a wheelchair-bound mother, what Antony wanted most of all was to live up a mountain where he could see and walk for miles without any restrictions. And so, when he and his wife Verity found a tumbledown house surrounded by several acres of neglected fields more or less on the top of Hatterall Hill at the southern end of the Black Mountains, they gave up their jobs and home in central London and moved with their young family to their dream spot.

And almost in defiance of the enormity of the task of making the place habitable, the Woodwards decided they wanted to be accepted by the National Gardens Scheme to open to the public. They wanted to be the highest NGS garden in the country.

The Garden in the Clouds tells of how this project unfolded. Of dry stone walling, planting meadows, the search for suitably rustic gates, planting an orchard, importing beehives, long battles with wily sheep repeatedly found wandering around fields in spite of six-foot high boundaries. Of unearthing and treasuring as rural objets d'art a collection of ancient rusted farming paraphernalia – ploughs, troughs, massive chains, derelict tractors. Of the planting of their 'infinity vegetable garden', sited on the very edge

of a scenic drop just as enticing as any luxury swimming pool. Of placing large box balls strewn across a field of meadow with paths mown so that they look as if they had been rolled down hill ...

... and of the frankly bonkers acquiring of a twenty tonne railway carriage from the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. Due to be scrapped, this vast and derelict wagon took two years, a fifty tonne crane, three tractors and a JCB to get it up the hill and destroyed several hundred yards of dry stone walling along the sides of the access road on the way. Now restored, it serves as one of what must be one of the most beautifully situated studies it is possible to imagine.

I was captivated by the book and arranged a holiday in the Black Mountains to coincide with the NGS open day of Tair Ffynnon, which is what the Woodward's property is called. I was accompanied by my daughter, Tanya, and friend and fellow Plant Heritage member Barbara Segall. Serendipitously, not long before our trip both Barbara and I met Antony at a gardening event and he generously invited us to visit on our own rather than on the official opening day.

Infinitely more fun than air travel, getting to Tair Ffynnon is nevertheless quite an undertaking. The lanes are long, vertiginously steep, narrow and high-sided. In places bordered with massive hedges clipped like the side of a mushroom; at times the wing mirrors almost grazing along rough stone walls; and occasionally with the sides of tree trunks literally sliced off to make the road wide enough for a car to pass. Eventually, ears popping, one emerges onto high common land, with bracken and heather and above the tree line, stopping to open and shut gates, dodging sheep quite oblivious of our human quest.

And at the top it has to be Tair Ffynnon as there isn't anything else for miles around – and in any case there is the railway carriage and the piles of rusty ironmongery. And Antony rushing out offering us wine and a personal tour.

From here one looks down on the patchwork countryside for miles and miles in every direction without needing to be in an aeroplane. The views are simply breathtaking – in both scale and beauty. What it is like living there none of us visitors could imagine – it is remote, hugely impractical, totally exposed to whatever the weather throws at it. But we were bowled over by it. And whenever I arrive at Stansted in future and give thanks that I'm returning to our lovely East Anglian patchwork I'll send a thought westwards to the garden in the clouds.

For more information on Tair Ffynnon and dates of opening in 2014 www.ngs.org.uk. Photos are included in the centre pages.

PLANT HERITAGE GARDEN OPENERS NEED YOU!

MARGARET PALMER

If any of you've opened your garden for charity, I wonder if like me, you suffer from last minute angst? There's so much to do to prepare: paths to sweep; lawn edges to sharpen: a last minute weed eradication check: the process of titivation to ensure sufficient plant interest. So the pressure is already rising, but once all is prepared there's always a bit of last minute fingernail biting: will anyone turn up, will the weather be kind; will I remember any of the plant names when asked?

That's the way it is for me and it's always such a comfort therefore, when a friendly Plant Heritage member arrives assuring support and appreciation of just how much goes into creating and maintaining a garden. Nerves are steadied by such stuff!

I'm sure Widget Finn doesn't suffer from such qualms and quandaries, but nevertheless it was in the spirit of taking an interest in the efforts of a Plant Heritage colleague that I embarked on a visit in June 2013 to Smallwood Farmhouse. Now for some reason I look for themes in a garden and in Widget's garden there are themes a plenty!

On arriving the initial impression is of a garden with timeless rural tranquillity, and the beautiful old farmhouse, nestling in the dip of a small Suffolk undulation, with its large pond and weeping willow in front is central to this effect. This would be enough but there is so much more to the garden that makes it unique.

One of the first things I noted was the use of structures within the garden either as a backdrop to accentuate planting and/or as a focal point. Of particular note are the black painted walls of the barn (once cow sheds) and nearby fencing, which provide a perfect foil for the sulphur yellow of the *Humulus lupulus* 'Aureus'. Similarly, the silver metalwork cow parsley, again in the barn area, which mirrors cow parsley growing in the adjacent wild meadow. There is also the slate plaque which tells us the story of how an ancient tree met its maker leaving *Rosa* 'Wedding Day', which it hosted, to live on.

Another example, the more formal herb garden within a mellow paved area that contrasts with informal planting elsewhere. Then there is the subtly painted blue trelliswork that is a backdrop for climbers galore: roses,

clematis, honeysuckle to name but a few. The rustic bridge crossing a tiny stream too contributes to the variety and interest which Widget has created through artistic and purposeful use of garden design.

Vistas are something else Widget uses to very good effect. Revisiting the barn area again the eye is drawn to a window in the fence overlooking ancient meadowland, the senses receiving a further burst of stimulation from the sculpture of an owl in flight, perfectly placed to attract attention. Another path through the meadowland and orchard beckons, leading to a rose bower at the garden's furthest reach. And what about the splash of an effervescent orange honeysuckle, on the trellis surrounding the herb garden, acting as a real head turner?

A further example, the way that informal planting, seamlessly gives way to meadowland, intensifying the sense of expanse of the bucolic idyll. And what do those distant pennants signify, I just had to take a look? Oh yes, a vegetable garden beautifully laid out to make the garden complete! Vistas certainly are the 'business' in this garden.

Informal block planting is another theme, which enhances the garden: the beautiful border of *Cotinus* 'Grace' under planted with geraniums; the vibrant reddish violet blooms of *Rosa rugosa* 'Hansa' hedging; the border to the side of the house replete with *Centranthus ruber* and blue and white *Campanula persicifolia*; the blue and white *Polemonium caeruleum*, lighting up the area to the rear of the house. Similarly, the promise of all those ramblers and scramblers and other bush roses, which at the time of visiting were on track to bombard the senses very soon. Maximising impact through planting en masse is definitely an idea to embrace.

Widget's garden is an interesting admix, it blends ancient and modern, traditional with the idiosyncratic, naturalistic with subtle artifice, it really is a work of art. Like many gardens there is a story behind its evolution and the owner's willingness to share this with visitors really adds to the pleasure.

So if you have a free afternoon this summer spare a thought for Plant Heritage members who are opening their gardens, go along and discover the beauty, the romance, the nuances, and the stories. Whether anxious or otherwise garden owners will be pleased to welcome you and grateful for your support.

Details of this and other members' garden openings are on pages 16 and 17. They are also updated on the Suffolk Group website

SUFFOLK GROUP ROSE STUDY DAY

ANNABEL THOROGOOD AND HEATHER MEDCRAFT

Jim Marshall and Sarah Cook ran a very enjoyable and informative Rose Study Day in November. They were warm and welcoming hosts who had planned the day so that there was plenty of information and tips, and opportunities to ask them about their own rose-growing experience. After a short introduction from Sarah, Jim talked about ‘Growing Healthy Roses’ covering soils, mulching, nutrition, stimulants, pruning, pests, diseases and rose replant. Get these right and get the best from your roses!

Sarah followed with an in depth discussion on ‘Pruning Roses’ including the aim and general principles of pruning roses, timing and the different methods of pruning for the different groups of roses. Outside we were split in to four separate groups studying different pruning techniques on a variety of roses in a variety of different situations. Who would have imagined ramblers up washing line poles or shrub roses trained in to a fence!

After a tasty lunch Jim and Sarah talked about their favourite roses accompanied by a wonderful selection of photos.



Filled with inspiration, lots of new techniques and beautiful roses to ponder over, we came away with the phrases ‘good care is the key to a healthy rose’, ‘know your rose’, ‘be adventurous’ and ‘there is more than one way to prune any rose’ ringing in our ears.

Anyone interested in learning more about how to grow and train roses would really benefit from attending one of these sessions. Another Rose Study Day is planned so look out for further announcements on our website www.suffolkplantheritage.com

BRESSINGHAM PLANT INTRODUCTIONS

JIM MARSHALL

Those of you who missed Jaime Blake's talk at the AGM missed a treat. The list below of the Bressingham plant introductions which he highlighted in his talk was requested by many of the members who attended. We are hoping that Jamie will write an article for the Journal in the near future and return to give us a full lecture, with the fascinating cine footage of Alan Bloom which included exploding trees – not to be missed'

Trillium grandiflorum 'Flore Pleno'
Campanula latiloba 'Percy Piper'
Erigeron 'Dignity'
Heliopsis 'Bressingham Doubloon'
Kniphofia 'John's Olympic Torch'
Kniphofia 'Bressingham Comet'
Chrysanthemum 'Peter Sare'
Schizostylis 'Coccinea Major'

Primula sieboldii 'Cherubim'
Campanula latifolia 'Gloaming'
Dactylorhiza 'Bressingham Bonus'
Achillea 'Moonshine'
Crocasmia 'Lucifer'
Chrysanthemum 'Peterkin'
Phlox paniculata 'Eva Cullum'

EUPHORBIA STUDY DAY

Wednesday 26th March 2014

**RHS Gardens Wisley, Hillside Event Centre & Trials
Field 10am–4pm**

An opportunity to find out all about Hardy/Herbaceous *Euphorbia* and visit the *Euphorbia* trial at RHS Gardens Wisley. Information and talks from National Collection Holders Tim Walker and Don Witton, RHS Herbaceous Plant Committee members Bob Brown and John Fielding.

Subjects covered will include botany, cultivation, uses in the garden, companion planting, plants in the wild and what it means to be a National Collection Holder. Pictorial displays and expert advice will be at hand.

This study day will be suitable for the *Euphorbia* expert and novice alike. There is no charge (once inside the gardens).

Further details: <http://www.rhs.org.uk/Shows-Events/Specialist-society-days>

HONEY FUNGUS – THE HIDDEN KILLER WITH THE SWEET NAME

WIDGET FINN

If you haven't got it, you certainly don't want it – and if you have got it, there's not much you can do. Honey fungus is the common name given to several different species of fungi that attack and kill the roots of woody and perennial plants. It's a heartbreaker, killing much that is beautiful and well-loved in our gardens including beech, apple, buddleia, lilac, viburnum and sorbus which are all particularly susceptible.

You may spot a white fungal growth between the bark and wood of trees, usually at ground level, or clumps of honey-coloured toadstools on stumps in autumn. But no toadstools doesn't mean no honey fungus as it may already be active in the soil. Symptoms include branches dying back gradually, smaller and paler than average leaves, premature autumn colour and cracking and bleeding of the bark at the base of the stem.

Underground there will be dead and decaying roots with sheets of white fungus material between bark and wood, smelling strongly of mushrooms. This can often be detected at the collar region at ground level.

If you discover you've got honey fungus, the even worse news is that there are no chemicals available for its control. The only effective remedy is to excavate and destroy all the infected root and stump material by burning or landfill. You could try to prevent honey fungus spreading to unaffected areas by creating a physical barrier such a deep vertical strip of pond lining rubber or heavy duty plastic sheet buried in the soil which will block the rhizomorphs. It should protrude 3cms (about 1in) above soil level.

The better news is that there are plants which are more resistant to honey fungus, including *Acer negundo*, *Buxus sempervirens*, *Clematis*, *Quercus ilex* and *Hypericum*.

*For more information and advice on honey fungus contact
www.apps.rhs.org.uk*

To advertise in Plant Heritage Journal contact Nicola Hobbs at
plantheritage@nicolahobbs.com, 01473 738267

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WANTED - MORE SHOW JUDGES

NICOLA HOBBS

The tradition of showing flowers and vegetables is alive and reasonably well in Suffolk. But the Suffolk Horticultural and Produce Association (SHAPA), which supports some 50 shows around the county, is having problems in meeting all the requests it receives for judges.

Seminars are run by SHAPA to train new judges who are also encouraged to go round to shows with some of the experienced judges. Anyone who might be interested in becoming a judge should contact Jan Lovell on 01728 830699. Anyone interested in finding out about shows around Suffolk in 2014 can check by going onto the Grundisburgh Burgh & Culpho Horticultural Society website (www.gbchs.org.uk) from March.

Affiliated to the RHS, the organisation was originally founded as the Village Produce Association in 1941 to support the war effort when people were being encouraged to 'Dig for Victory'. Now, as well as the judging service, SHAPA provides good value insurance cover for shows and advice on all aspects of showing.

WANTED: RESEARCHER

Is there a Plant Heritage member with an academic bent who would be interested in researching plant varieties grown in the gardens at Redgrave Hall in the 18th and 19th centuries? Tim Holt-Wilson holds nurserymen's invoices which are part of the Redgrave Hall archives for trees, vegetables, fruit and ornamental plants. If you're interested and would like to learn more, contact him on 01379 870411 or timholtwilson@ontel.com

THE YEAR OF THE POPPY

Our stunning cover photograph by Alison Sargeant is a reminder that 2014 is the centenary of the start of the First World War. Several Chelsea Flower Show gardens will commemorate the conflict, and poppies will be everywhere – but you saw them here first!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Here are some more plant events for your diary. Please let us know about anything which you think would be of interest to Plant Heritage members throughout the year. Contact widget.finn@gmail.com for inclusion in the journal or annabel.thorogood@googlemail.com who will put it on our website.

Saturday 8 February Harvey's Garden Plants Snowdrop Event details www.harveysgardenplants.co.uk

Sunday 13th April Suffolk Wildlife Trust Spring Plant Sale. 10-3pm at Redgrave and Lopham Fen. Contact Deborah Key 01379 688333.

Sat/Sun 26th 27 April Essex Plant Heritage Spring Plant Fair 10-4pm RHS Hyde Hall CM3 8ET

Sunday 27th April 'Celebrating Gardening and Country Crafts' 10-4pm Wyken Hall, IP31 2DDW. Organised by SWWAG (Stanton Woodland and Wildlife Action Group). Contact Mary Jane Toulson 01359 259646.

Sunday 4th May Norfolk Plant Heritage Spring Plant Sale 10-1pm at Hethersett Village Hall, near Norwich. The plant focus this year is Erysimums and there will also be flower arranging demonstrations.

Monday 5th May Sudbury Plant Market 10am in aid of Quay Theatre. Contact bryan_thurlow@hotmail.com.

Saturday 17th May Hadleigh Show www.hadleighshow.co.uk

20th-24th May Chelsea Flower Show www.rhs.uk/flowershows

Friday 9th-Sunday 11th May National Plant Heritage Weekend and AGM, Norwich. Includes visits to notable local gardens, a Plant Exchange and Conference dinner with guest speaker Professor Tom Williamson, an expert on historical landscapes. Contact: www.norfolkplantheritage.org.uk

Sunday 1st June Boxford Gardens Open 11-5pm Boxford, near Sudbury CO10 5JT. Twenty gardens (including Plant Heritage members' gardens) – cottage, courtyard, riverside, contemporary. Plant and cake stalls, quilting exhibition in church, free shuttle bus. Contact Angela Tolputt phone 01787 212264 email angela@tolputt.com

Saturday 14th-Sunday 15th June 2-6pm Hidden Gardens of Grundisburgh Burgh & Culpho, wide range of village gardens open near Woodbridge. Teas. Plants. Contact nicola@nicolahobbs.com.

Sunday 20th July 10-4pm Suffolk Nurseries Plant Sale Fuller's Mill, West Stow IP28 8HD. A selection of local nurseries and craftsmen. Tea, coffee and homemade cakes. Contact simonmcwilliams@hotmail.co.uk

SUFFOLK PLANT HERITAGE

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