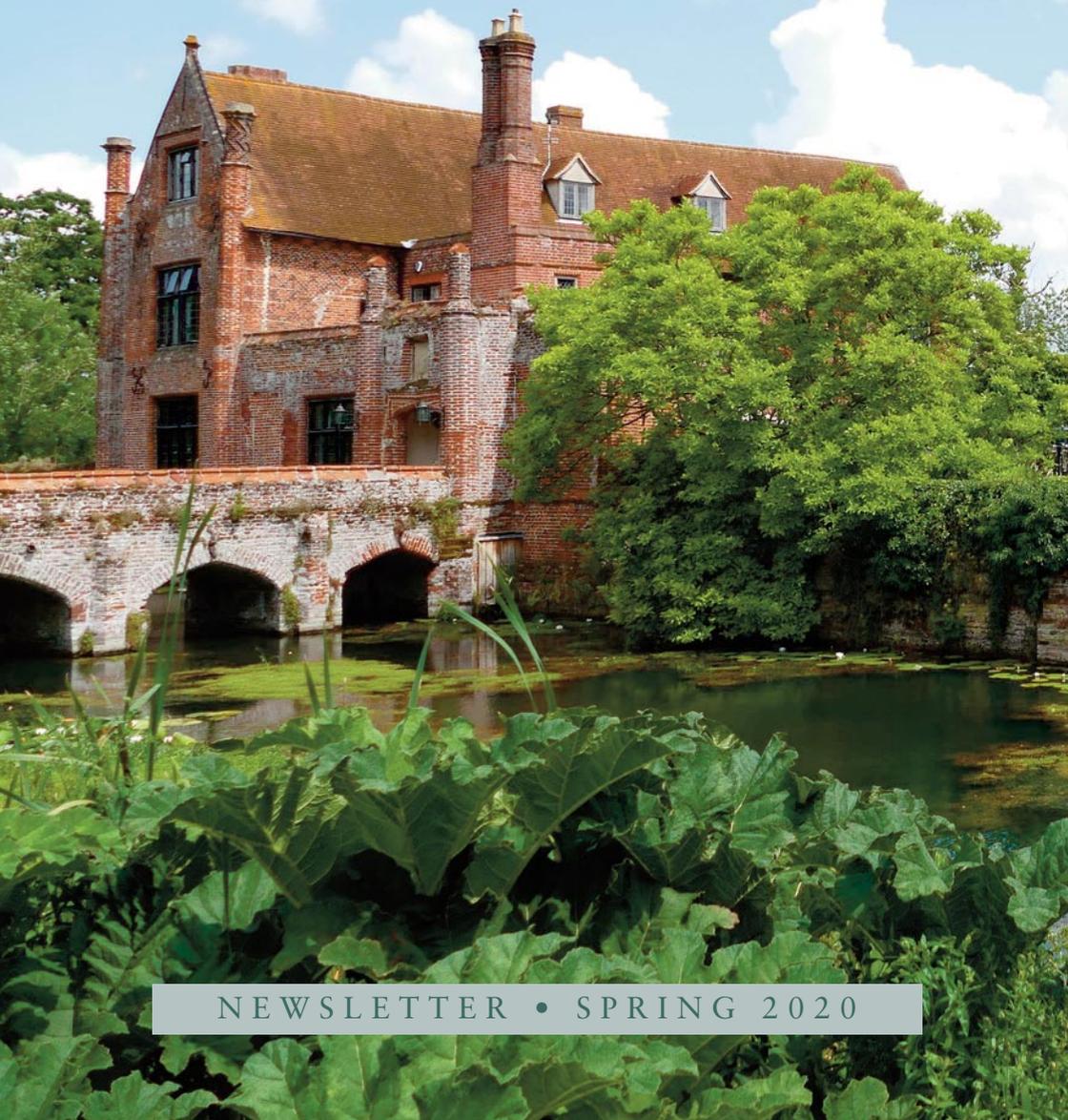

SUFFOLK

GARDENS TRUST

Reg. Charity No. 1044024



NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2020

**Suffolk Gardens Trust
SPRING 2020**

Newsletter 51

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**Contributions to the Autumn
Newsletter should arrive
no later than
1 September 2020**

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25th AGM 2020

Sue Paul

**To be held in
Offton Village Hall
Offton IP8 4RA
(See Events for more details)**

Saturday 13 June 2020 at 2pm

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence (Officers and Council only)
2. Minutes of the 24th AGM held at St Mary's Church, Bures, on 22 June 2019
3. Reports from the Council
4. Election of Officers and Council Members
5. Any other business (of which prior notice has been given to the Secretary)

From the Chairman

Welcome to our 25th anniversary year. The Suffolk Gardens Trust is now well established with over 300 members and some notable achievements under the guidance of five chairmen starting with the founder member, the late Paul Miles. Our patron, Lady Gabriella Marlesford, has been in office throughout – we are most grateful to her.

The past season of visits has seen us at the far reaches of the county, starting as we did at Somerleyton in April, when Edward Martin gave another of his Garden Archaeology Mornings, supported by the notable garden designer George Carter who re-designed the famous front parterre and is currently advising on further changes. It was a privilege to be shown the earthwork remains of Wentworth's Summerhouse Garden some way from the house and to which, in the past, guests would be taken by coach after dinner to enjoy dessert and the views from the elevated site.

By contrast, in September, the immaculate garden at Parsonage Farm at Helions Bumpstead held our interest. Lovingly created and cared for by Mrs Annie Turner and her long-serving gardener, this surrounds the 15th-century house. Other visits were to more central Suffolk (very broadly!) and from them we derived so much pleasure. Our thanks, as ever, go to our garden hosts for allowing us to visit them.

In November, at Kesgrave Community Centre, David Marsh skilfully held our attention over four illustrated talks that were instructive and amusing at the same time. David is a retired headmaster turned academic, a trustee of The Gardens Trust, and a prolific writer and speaker; he also gardens in France. Fortunately he enjoys a weekend in Suffolk too!

In our anniversary year the celebratory centrepiece will be the Garden Party at Crow's Hall at Debenham on 30 June (6-8.30pm). The change from a Saturday was rather forced upon us as so many otherwise suitable venues host weddings. Invitations will be sent to all members later but do please reserve this date in your diaries now! The ticket price will be subsidised from reserves.

Guests from organisations with which we work will be invited. We are delighted that Mrs Gilly Drummond OBE has accepted our invitation. She is the doyenne of The Gardens Trust and founder of the Hampshire GT and a vice president of The Gardens Trust (formerly The Association of County Garden Trusts).

At Crow's Hall, part of the garden surrounding the moated manor house has been re-designed by Lady Xa Tollemache who will talk briefly about historic gardens of Suffolk before proposing the toast. A special, celebratory evening for us all!

We aim to use this anniversary to widen the interest in the Trust. To this end, an article is likely to appear in the May issue of The Suffolk Magazine and an exhibit is planned for the Flower Show of the Suffolk Show on 27-28 May. This will give opportunities to spread the word among gardening-minded people in Suffolk.

Previously I appealed for a Treasurer to succeed Tony Broster who has stood down after several years in office and for whose devotion we are most grateful. Rodney Baker-Bates very kindly offered to do this job and his appointment was formally ratified at the December council meeting. ■ **JD**

Honorary Treasurer

After several years of zealous accounting on our behalf, Tony Broster stood down from the position at the AGM last June. We are eternally grateful to Tony for his stewardship and, as a small token of our appreciation, gave him a present of a book when he attended his last council meeting.

Although it has taken time, we have been fortunate in recruiting as Tony's successor Rodney Baker-Bates who will take over on 1 April 2020 at the start of the new financial year. Tony has kindly continued in office meanwhile. As Rodney has various business commitments outside Suffolk, the council has agreed to the appointment of a near neighbour – Nicky Kinehan, as his paid assistant; this arrangement will be reviewed after a year.

Rodney's wife Gail looks after the bookings for the events and we now welcome her husband with our thanks – they will be a strong team indeed. ■ **JD**

Volunteers Wanted

For the first time ever, and as a part of the 25th Anniversary Celebrations, the Trust will stage an exhibit at the Suffolk Show held at Trinity Park, Ipswich IP3 8UH on 27-28 May in the Flower Show marquee. We will have the chance of promoting the Trust's objectives to an ever-widening audience and, with the flow of visitors through the show, we will have an invaluable opportunity to enthuse about our activities. The small formal exhibit will be staged at minimal cost largely by John Dyter and his garden helpers.

Volunteers will be needed to staff the exhibit from 9am-6pm on both days in accordance with the show rules and it will be absolutely essential to capitalise fully on this offer.

Some help with tickets will be available. Please try to be generous with your time – it is then so much easier to organise rotas and tickets. Good catering facilities are part of the Flower Show complex. I will happily co-ordinate the rota but cannot be on it, as I have other duties at the show.

Do please make your offers as soon as possible either by telephone 01394 383316 or by e-mail john@dyter.net

Thank you in advance – no one (least of all me) would want the embarrassment of having to cancel the exhibit because of staffing shortage. ■ JD

SGT Anniversary Celebration

30 June 2020

To mark the first 25 years of the Suffolk Gardens Trust we are arranging a summer's evening celebration at one of Suffolk's most romantic moated halls, Crow's Hall, Debenham. Invitations with full details will be sent out in due course, but mark the date – 30 June – in your diaries!

John Leland, the Tudor antiquarian, described the place thus: "This Manor Place about Debenham stonidith on a praty Hille and a Woode aboute it a little withoute Debenham Market Towne, and is caullid Crowis Haulle, For one Crow a Gentilman was Owner of it". Leland was right, for a John Crowe or Crowe and his wife Mary did own it in the 1280s. But apart from giving their surname to the property we know very little about them.

For most of the next century 'Croweshalle' belonged to the Talbots of Hintlesham, passing in the 1390s to John Framlingham, the son of Henry le Sergeant or le Surveyour of Framlingham Castle. Sir Charles Framlingham, who died in 1595 and whose stone effigy can still be seen on his tomb in Debenham church, was the last of the family to own the Hall. Their six generations of ownership do, however, have a lasting legacy in the buildings that still survive on the site.

Approached via a long avenue of stately oaks, the Hall, as it now stands, is only one surviving wing of a much larger original house that was probably arranged on a U-plan. Tree-ring dating has shown that this range was probably built around 1560, just in time for Sir Charles's marriage in 1561 to Dorothy Heigham from Barrow Hall.

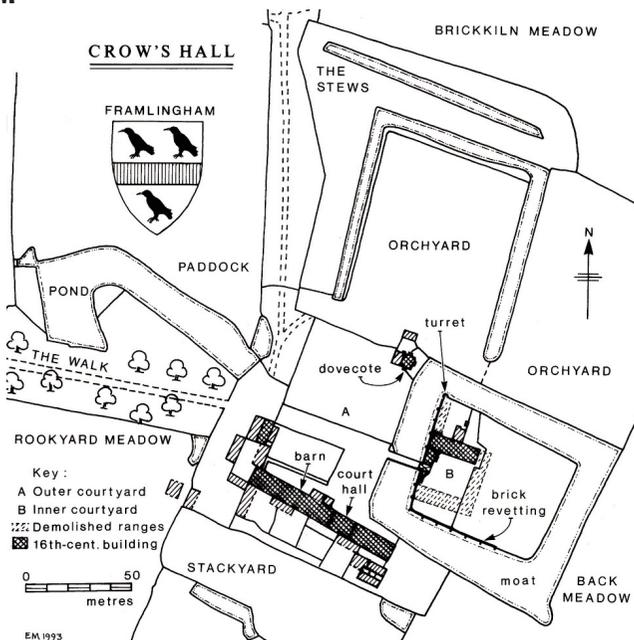
The brick front of the wing, bordering the moat, was however, rebuilt, around 1580. The gatehouse is probably contemporary with the wing, but was originally at least a storey higher. The barn and service range that forms one side of the entrance courtyard is exceptionally long and is probably the longest timber-framed structure in Suffolk.

It is not, however, all of one build – the two barn-like central sections have been shown by tree-ring dating to be close in date: circa 1476 and c. 1478. The western end, which has a brick facing that is ornamented with a diaper pattern and is inset with the heads of courtly fools in moulded brick, dates from c. 1561, while the eastern end, which may have contained a brew house or stable, dates from c. 1585.

In 1657 Sir Charles Framlingham's great-great-grandson, Charles Gawdy, was married to Lady Mary Feilding, the daughter of the Earl of Desmond. The marriage took place at Euston, the bride's home, and a contemporary observer recorded that "when they cam hom, thay war met with in thre mils of the hous, with 6 scor [120] hors of the gentill men and youman, and at Debnham all the wemin with garlands and flours, and stowed them hom to the hous, whan my Lady and hur compeny and sarvants wated on hur, and the musick followed her".

Charles was made a baronet in 1661, but was forced, by debt, to sell Crow's Hall in 1697. It is probable that the young new owner, John Pitt Esq never lived at Crow's Hall and thus began its decline into a farmhouse. Pitt was a cousin of William Pitt the politician and later purchased Great Bealings Hall.

During its 300 years as a farmhouse, the Hall was reduced to its present size. This was restored in the early 2000s by the new owner, Caroline Spurrier, and the gardens were redesigned with the help of Xa Tollemache, who will be a guest speaker at our event. ■ EM



SAVE THE DATE

Suffolk Gardens Trust 25th Anniversary CELEBRATION GARDEN PARTY

Tuesday 30 June, 6 - 8.30pm

At Crow's Hall, Debenham

by kind permission of Caroline Spurrier

Speaker: Lady Xa Tollemache

Drinks and 'finger food' will be provided

Members £15 Guests £18

Please see the photograph on the front cover and read the article
by Edward Martin on the history of Crow's Hall on page 4

Invitations with full details will be sent out in May

The Founding of the Suffolk Gardens Trust in 1995

Edward Martin

The SGT was launched on the evening of 24 March at a meeting at Haughley Park Barn attended by 160 people keen to hear about an exciting new organisation. The idea of 'county garden trusts' had been sparked by Gilly Drummond, who had set up the Hampshire Gardens Trust in 1984, and she was there to congratulate Suffolk on being the 24th county to follow Hampshire's example.

The other main speaker at the event was the distinguished garden designer and writer Rosemary Verey, who spoke about her famous garden, Barnsley House, in Gloucestershire. Chairing the meeting was the late Paul Miles, the chairman of the steering group that had brought the new body into existence. The patron of that steering group was Lady



The cover of the first Newsletter published in Spring/Summer 1995.

Marlesford and we are very honoured that she is still our patron.

Unfortunately two of the other key members, Lyn Dicker (of Suffolk County Council's countryside section) as secretary and Guy de Moubray as treasurer, are no longer with us. The other members of the steering group were Edward Martin, the late Mike Eveleigh, Caroline Cowper, John Mosseson, Barbara Segall and Adam Paul, with Steve Coghill and Anne Harrington, both of Otley College, as co-opted members.

Barbara was the first editor of the SGT's Newsletter and we are delighted that she has very ably returned to that role. As Paul Miles noted in that first Newsletter, the launch of the SGT was the "fruit of an idea", the seed of which had germinated with the formation of the steering group eighteen months previously, but "for it to become a well established tree we must maintain it well". Wise words! To take the SGT to its 50th anniversary we all need to maintain it well!

The Glory of the Garden

John Dyter

In early November 2019 some 265 garden enthusiasts gathered in the Events Centre at Trinity Park for the 8th Biennial Gardening Conference of the Suffolk Agricultural Association (SAA). Many of the first-time attendees came from the Beth Chatto Educational Trust gardening course from just over the Essex border. Lucy Redman – a tutor there – is a Suffolk resident and long-term supporter of the Suffolk Show. As usual, the audience was drawn from not only Suffolk but also from the neighbouring counties. President of the Suffolk Show Stephen Miles chaired the event.

Under the title of "The Glory of the Garden" after Rudyard Kipling's poem composed in 1911, the event offered a wide and deep perspective on gardening. Why do we gain so much from a garden? What are the differences between some well known gardens and much more. In the poem Kipling wrote "that gardens are not made by singing 'Oh, how beautiful, and sitting in the shade'." In another poem, he wrote of

"six honest serving – men (they taught me all I knew) their names were What and Why and When and How and Where and Who..."

The first speaker Richard Bisgrove chose the teasing title of "Why is a garden?" (his paper is published in full in this issue). He gave us a background on how gardens have developed since the time of the Assyrians and posed the question about why we garden. His contribution was liberally laced with helpful images carefully culled from various erudite sources.

Stephen Lacy who, like the next two speakers, is a contributor to the gardening pages of the *Daily Telegraph*, had the audience scribbling down the names of all manner of his favourite scented plants - so vividly illustrated on the screen. Many were either new to most of us or had been overlooked.

After lunch, Tim Richardson gave us a tantalising tour of the Cambridge college gardens, revealing at the same time, that these are rather like 'military installations' simply 'off the map'. Tim brought copies for sale of his recently published book on the subject – they were quickly snapped up.

To set out to compare in public Highgrove with one's own garden requires a special confidence honed through long experience and this Bunny Guinness has in her favour. Widely known as a panellist on Radio 4's *Gardeners' Question Time* for the last 20 years, her main passion is designing gardens. Bunny talked about the methods HRH Prince Charles uses and how these can be used or adapted for smaller gardens and along the way the lessons that can be learnt by observing other gardens.

At the President's request, Bunny also spoke about the Horatio's Charity garden that she had designed for a Spinal Injury Hospital – one of six (so far) in similar hospitals for long-term patients. The flower beds are at waist height so that the patients can reach to work in them from wheelchairs and even from their beds.

Sponsors were Alitex Greenhouses and Suffolk Gardens Trust who staged exhibits as did several other exhibitors including, for the first time, Kiln Farm Nursery in Kesgrave, Ipswich. The Suffolk Agricultural Association is extremely grateful to everyone for their support of this popular event.

Why is a Garden?

Richard Bisgrove

What a strange question! But before an answer can be attempted it is necessary to ask an even stranger question – what is a garden? Surely we all know what a garden is, but in America people may have a garden in their yard while in England we might have a yard in our garden – so what is a garden?

In Assyria the fierce warrior rulers showed an odd combination of enthusiasms, in warfare and gardens. We are told that Darius spent his mornings studying military strategy and his afternoons indulging in his gardens. A later Greek chronicler, Xenophon, in 399BC noted “The great king ... in all the districts he resides in and visits... takes care that there are ‘paira daeza’ as they call them, full of all the good and beautiful things that the soil will produce.”

‘Paira daeza’ means just ‘walled around’. The paira daeza was a walled hunting park full of useful plants and exotic animals brought back from the king's military campaigns but, in the region in which the Garden of Eden is thought to have been, the corruption of paira daeza to Paradise and the connection to the Garden of Eden, to Heaven, is not difficult to see. The idea of a garden as an earthly representation of Paradise is a recurrent theme throughout garden history.

The Romans used the word ‘Hortus’ to refer to a small piece of cultivated land as distinct from ‘Agros’ for larger fields. Hence our modern words ‘horticulture’ and ‘agriculture’: the care for or cultivation of small and large parcels of land.

With the collapse of the Roman Empire and Europe in turmoil the garden survived by retreating behind the safety of monastery walls. Early monasteries were built on the same pattern as the great Roman villas: buildings grouped around a series of related open spaces. These spaces, within the encircling cloisters, were called ‘garths’, from the same root as ‘girth’, ‘girdle’, things which surround and hold in place. The plural of ‘garth’ is ‘garthen’ so it does not pose a major challenge to see where our modern word ‘garden’ originates. A garth is an enclosed space. A space for plants (herbs)

would be a wyrt garth, or wort yearth, or ort yeard, hence orchard.

Since at least 1066 AD, with England a single nation, successive kings and their aristocratic subordinates indulged in hunting and emparked, or enclosed, vast tracts of land to facilitate the hunt, just as the Assyrians had done 2,000 years earlier. The park was a source of great pleasure (for the privileged few) in hunting but as the landscape became increasingly populated, settled, farmed and safe it also became appreciated for its visual delight.

The evolving garden

At the end of the 16th century there was a sea change in people's outlook on life and in their gardens. Thomas Hill's *The Proffitible Arte of Gardening* (1568) shows a quite elaborate garden with elegant balustrades surrounding patterned beds but it is within a high protective hedge and the house plays no part in the picture. The garden is still a place to escape from terrible conditions within the house while remaining protected from the wild landscape beyond.

By 1618 William Lawson's *New Orchard and Garden* shows the house as the central feature from which the garden emanates. Similarly, John Gerard's *Herball, or Generall Historie of Plants* (1597) is concerned entirely with the medicinal and other practical uses of plants while John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris* of 1629 explores 'a garden of pleasant floures which our English aire will permit to be nourished up'. Even the title, *Paradisi (park) in Sole (in Sun) earthly Paradise* is a playful pun on his own name.

Apart from the rude interruption of the Civil War and the Commonwealth period, the 17th century was a century of increasing wealth and comfort for those at the top of the pile. Extravagant gardens based increasingly on French precedent were created by the Brompton Park nursery of George London and Henry Wise and illustrated by Johannes Kip and Leendert Knijff. By the end of the century, though, the rigid gardens of an autocratic monarch did not fit well into a rolling English landscape in which the power of the monarch was giving way to the combined power of the aristocracy.



Frontispiece of John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris* of 1629.

Merging park and garden

Stephen Switzer, a foreman working for London and Wise on the great gardens of Blenheim, sought a way out of the dilemma by proposing a system of ‘rural or extensive gardening’, essentially distributing the features of a garden – its urns and statues, seats and temples – throughout the estate so the whole landscape became a garden. Together with Philip Southcote’s *Ferme Ornée*, the ornate or ornamented farm, Switzer helped to merge the idea of the garden and the park into a single, sometimes vast, landscape garden. To cut a long story short, enter in to the scene one Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown, and the English Landscape Garden came into being, judged by many people to be England’s greatest contribution to the realm of art.



Rousham where the garden and park and landscape merge.

Since Brown’s death, the story of the English garden has been one of increasing democratisation. Humphry Repton’s designs for a new industrial elite, John Claudius Loudon’s *Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion* (1838), the *Gardens for Small Country Houses* of Gertrude Jekyll then John Brookes’s *Room Outside* (1969) mark a steady progression from stately homes for the few to patios and hanging baskets for the millions.

This rather long narrative may clarify or cloud our idea of What is a Garden? Hopefully, though, it prepares the way for that other question, Why is a Garden?

Purpose

A fundamental, and often still significant, purpose of a garden is to sustain us, to provide food and in early gardens, medicines, dyes and inks, fibres and other necessities of life. In the 21st century we think, too, of sustainability on a wider horizon, not only of ourselves but of the environment, the biodiversity, on which we depend for our survival.

Physical sustenance is fairly easy to comprehend but spiritual sustenance must rank

high in the function of a garden. In the Orient, the poet/philosopher's garden provided a means to contemplate the meaning of life, to consider our relationship with the universe and to achieve enlightenment and that has been an important, if understated, role of the garden throughout history, including into the 21st century with ideas of mindfulness and the garden as an aid to the solution of physical and mental illness and loneliness.

Perhaps linked to spiritual sustenance, though certainly less explicit in the 21st century, the garden can be a place of intellectual exploration and artistic endeavour. From Alexander Pope's exhortations to 'consult the genius of the place in all' and to define the rules of taste and beauty to Gertrude Jekyll's studies in colour, form and texture, 'the nearest we can get to the mighty force of Creation', and to Charles Jencks's *Garden of Cosmic Speculation* the garden has been an important medium for cosmic exploration and personal reflection.

On a more prosaic level, the garden has been an indicator of status. In ancient cultures the possession of a garden was restricted to the favoured few: to the pharaohs and high priests of Egypt, the rulers of Rome and the monarch and nobility of Europe. In 16th and 17th century portraiture the setting of the subject in a garden or with the garden as a background said clearly "I have arrived".

In the late 19th century Ernest Field, gardener to Alfred de Rothschild, "once heard it said that rich people used to show their wealth by the size of their bedding plant list: ten thousand for a squire, twenty for a baronet, thirty for an earl and forty for a duke". Rothschild had 41,000. Even now it is impossible to say, when we install our Lutyens bench or fill our containers with plants highlighted in last week's television garden makeover, how much of this is done to impress friends and neighbours.

Space

Another purpose of a garden is quite simply to give us space. An Englishman's (now English person's) home is his castle and the garden is his/her estate. The garden provides space for all the other functions of a garden and keeps the neighbours and the rest of the world at a safe distance so most of us will acquire as much garden as we can afford – until the pressures of an increasing frenetic life prevent us from maintaining the garden when we sacrifice space and invest instead in fence panels or Leyland cypress hedges. The ultimate expression of the seeking after space must surely be Frank Lloyd Wright's 'Broadacre City' of 1932 in which he sought to destroy the idea of the city by giving all its occupants an acre of land with the house in the middle of that acre.

In England especially, renowned as a nation of gardeners, collecting and cultivating plants becomes a key purpose of the garden. The wonderful Cruickshank cartoon of *An Exhibition Extraordinary at the Horticultural Room*, showing weird and wonderful people discussing and exhibiting their weird and wonderful plants with members of the newly formed Horticultural Society of London epitomises this characteristic perfectly. Even now, though, one doesn't need to look far in the garden literature or on television to come across people who have a national collection of a particular genus and there is an annual migration of gardeners every February to gardens in which 100, 200, 300+ cultivars of snowdrops can be seen – and bought.

Recreation

Lastly, but not least, the garden provides a place for recreation. In the broad sense much of the above is concerned with recreation, the ‘hobbies’ of exploring the universe or collecting snowdrops, but the garden, as a room outside, increasingly serves as a place for recreation in a more limited sense: the sandbox and climbing frame, the barbecue and, for the more fortunate, for swimming, tennis, croquet and football.



Gardens are for recreation: the little blond boy in the picture celebrated his 50th birthday in November.

In 1955 Thomas Church wrote a wonderful book, *Gardens are for People*. The significance of the title is that we have previously considered that the garden was for plants – an assembly of rose gardens, rock gardens, lily ponds and herbaceous borders. But gardens are for people and people are very different one from another. As I look across the road from our bus stop I can see a pair of semi-detached houses, one with a spectacular annual display of bedding plants (the postman tells me that the back garden is full of greenhouses) and the other is wall-to-wall gravel on which several large and expensive cars are parked.



A labour of love, with every plant in its pot on a garage roof.

One of my favourite gardens, though, is a charming cottage garden where strawberries and dwarf French beans jostle with petunias and marigolds leading onto a shaded woodland retreat – on a garage roof with every plant growing in a pot. It is a self-imposed labour of love and an ideal spot to contemplate the meaning of the universe.

(Richard Bisgrove was one of the speakers at the SAA Conference in 2019. See pages 7-8 for John Dyter’s report on the event.)

Wood Farm

John Dyter

The September visit was hosted by Paul and Merriel Gallifant, garden owner Emily Shelley's parents who were deputising while she was away on holiday. Some 32 members and guests were in our party.

In front of the mustard-yellow walls of the farm house there is a large cottage garden created in 2011/2 with a curving pattern of paths, providing spaces for planting (after improving the soil). The relaxed and informal style has been anchored with fastigate yews and amusing topiary pieces of birds, snakes, snails and other creatures, ensuring a long period of interest. A curving yew hedge provides a rich green backdrop to the garden.

The major feature of Wood Farm is the eight-acre meadow that lies on the opposite side of the house. This has taken some 12 years and much effort to fully establish. It is stunning from April through to late June. The movement and buzz of the insect life that the meadow must attract is a bonus.

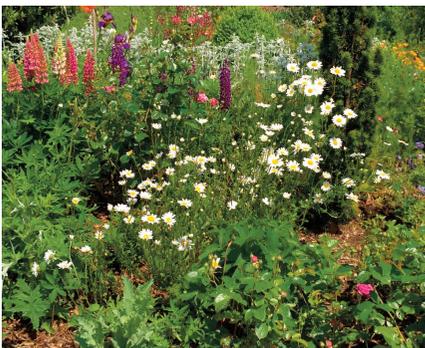
The vegetable garden productive and ornamental provides additional interest, while the connecting areas feature vigorous roses and climbers; elsewhere well clipped hedges and specimen trees add structure.

Wood Farm must surely be the only Suffolk garden in which one would find that help is provided by a former mountain guide from Nepal. Guru Sharma, who was on hand to answer our numerous questions, trained at Otley College, Ipswich, and seems happy enough with the contrasting flatlands of our county.

Paul Gallifant has been the main craftsman in re-building the spectacular barn with his specially made dining table large enough to accommodate two cricket teams (plus umpires and scorers).

It made the perfect place for the excellent tea that Merriel so kindly provided. The adjoining swimming pool was tempting too.

Another visit is already in some of our minds as the garden is open in early June under the National Gardens Scheme.



The Ramblers

John Dyter

Around 'The Ramblers' in Benhall, Saxmundham are nine acres of what is best described a garden arboretum. As the paths are narrow making it difficult for hearing a commentary, visitor numbers per party are understandably limited: our party was a manageable 23 in October on a weekend when the autumn colour is usually at its best. Cussedly, colouring was late last year but there was much to admire and names to absorb. The soil over a large part is suitable for ericaceous plants and these are seen in profusion. This is a plantsman's paradise created by Brian Humphrey and his wife Julie.

Brian was the Production Director at Hilliers Nurseries in Hampshire, before moving to Notcutts in Woodbridge in the same role. By the time he took slightly early retirement he had for some years specialised in bench grafting hard-wooded plants, making 30,000 grafts each year with large-flowered magnolias a speciality.

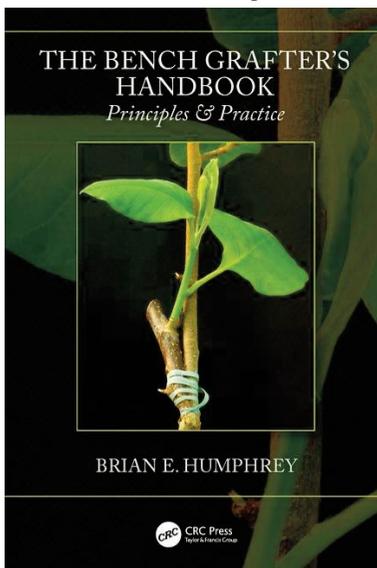
Brian's masterly definitive tome on bench grafting of 576 pages – the result of years of patient work, was published recently to acclaim, even the drawings are his own as are many of the photographs.

The first stop was to see the summer heather bed, still showing plenty of colour and foliage for contrast. A mature *Cornus* 'Porlock' laden with hanging strawberry-like fruit, soon caught the eye. Under the dappled shade of numerous forms of white-stemmed birch swathes of acers stood out, varying from the finest foliage to the much loved palmatum and in every conceivable shade of red and purple, including substantial shrubs and dwarf forms. *Hydrangea paniculata* in numbers added substance with their huge flowerheads and leaves and for a prolonged period as the

colours change, of midsummer through until late autumn. The newer introductions tend to have the largest flowerheads. *Corylopsis* and *Fothergilla* were beginning to colour.

Overhead, the larger acers, liquidamber, magnolia, nyssa, prunus and sorbus dominated the seasonal scene in contrast to the conifers which provide winter structure and varied habit with a fine specimen of the weeping *Picea breweriana* causing admiring comment.

The earliest of the *Camellia sasanqua* were in flower against a sheltered wall; their single flowers maybe quite small but they have much charm. Later the garden will be positively glowing with *Camellia japonica* forms and, of course, with the rhododendrons of every kind imaginable from February until June.



At the eastern end of the garden the soil type changes and there we saw the *Buddleja* collection, and *Cornus sanguinea* forms. *Cotinus* positively shouted its autumn colour at us, and remarkably on the dry land, several forms of shrubby willows, stooled down annually to produce the coloured stems for which they are known.

Although SGT has had a spring visit, there were requests to go again; this we will try to arrange in the next year or two.

Walled Kitchen Gardens Network

Adam and Sue Paul

The Walled Kitchen Gardens Network based their Forum in October 2019 in the Cranborne Chase area of North Dorset. The group met in the Cranborne Garden Centre where we had a welcome from Susan Campbell, the expert on Kitchen Gardens. After a talk by Patrick Fairweather who opened ‘Patrick’s Patch’ – a straw-bale walled garden on a green field site in Beaulieu, Hampshire, Charlotte Casella described her new role as Programme Manager for the Chalke Valley History Festival. She previously worked as the Project Co-ordinator for the restoration of the Luton Hoo Walled Garden.



The restored kitchen garden at Kingston Lacy.

After a coffee break we had a walk through the Cranborne Manor gardens and walled gardens. This was followed by lunch and two more talks. Richard and Jill Rallings described their nursery in the walled garden at Delbury Hall, Shropshire and Mark Pitman gave a visual guided tour of the walled garden at Longstock Park Nursery in Hampshire, which he manages. This is situated on the Leckford Estate, owned by Waitrose and Partners.

On the Sunday we visited the gardens at Edmonsham House which has been owned by the same family for generations. Vegetables have been grown there since the kitchen gardens were built. We then moved to Kingston Lacy, a National Trust property, to see the restoration of the ornamental glasshouses and walled garden. We were kindly given lunch at Long Crichel House and ended our weekend in the fine kitchen garden at Deans Court. This garden is now run by Sir William and Lady Hanham and has been in the family for nearly 500 years. This was the first organic kitchen garden in the country to be accredited by the Soil Association.

These weekend visits are most instructive and fun and we try and go on them each year. Keep an eye on the Walled Kitchen Gardens Network website and in due course the details of the 2020 weekend Forum will be posted on it.

News in **BRIEF**

FREE TREES FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

The Woodland Trust wants to make sure everybody has the chance to plant a tree, so are giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities. There are two deliveries a year, and currently, the Trust is taking orders for trees to be delivered in November 2020. All trees supplied are sourced in the UK or Ireland. For further information contact The Woodland Trust at Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincs NG31 6LL tel: 0330 333 3300 or email:enquiries@woodlandtrust.org.uk

CONGRATULATIONS...

To David Irvine, Bury in Bloom's new co-ordinator, who is pledged to maintain Bury's leading role in local and national competitions. His appointment in November 2019 closely coincided with the opening of a new visitor centre that will provide better storage for plant sales, as well as a general information point for visitors.

A 'LOST' PAINTING BY CEDRIC MORRIS

Foxgloves a previously unknown work by Sir Cedric Morris reached a sum of £160,000 on October 2 2019 at Sworder's Auction, Stansted Mountfichet. Part of the proceeds will go to the Benton End House and Gardens Trust, a centre for artistic and horticultural education (See Newsletter No.50 Autumn 2019). ■ **NS**

For the **DIARY**

- **Until 5 April**

The Garden Museum, 5, Lambeth Palace Road, London, SE1 7LB.

Sanctuary: Artist Gardeners 1919-1939. The golden age of garden painting will be celebrated in this new selling exhibition in partnership with Liss Llewellyn in support of the Garden Museum's education programme. It will showcase over 20 artists, who were also serious and active gardeners. The golden age of gardening includes works by Charles Mahoney, Edward Bawden, Eric Ravilious, Evelyn Dunbar, John Nash, Mary Nicholson, Kenneth Rowntree and Winifrid Knight. Further details 020 7401 8865 or email: events@gardenmuseum.org.uk

- **27 April-26 May The Alde Valley Spring Festival, White House Farm, Great Glemham, IP17 2LS.** A four-week celebration of art, food, farming, and the historic landscape, all of which make this part of Suffolk so special. Further details 01728 663 531 or email: enquiries@aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk

- **24 May Helmingham Hall in partnership with Plant Heritage, Spring Fair and Artisan Market, 10am-4pm.** An exciting day for experienced and novice gardeners alike, with specialist nurseries and producers, garden and conservation zones, and also entertainment and children's activities. 800 plants will be given away to the first 800 visitors to the garden to claim them. Further information from Sarah Cook 01473 822 400, Katy Day

01473 890 799, or email: events@helmingham.com

- **14-17 August University of Cambridge, Institute of Continuing Education, Madingley Hall. Caroline Holmes and Twigs Way, A floral feast: flowers in art, culture and gardens from the ancient world to the modern.** A celebration of flowers in science, as symbols of politics and power, in books and in borders. We consider the importance of flowers from the ancient world to the modern through floral art of all kinds, from the Elizabethan to the Impressionists, and from 18th-century botanists to contemporary designers. Further information and full course programme on 01223 746 262.

- **20 September Helmingham Hall in partnership with Plant Heritage, Autumn Fair and Artisan Market, 10am-4pm.** See entry for 24 May.

EVENTS 2020

SATURDAY 4 APRIL 2pm SB

Rydal Mount Wissett Near Halesworth IP19 0JP

By kind permission of Kathleen and Alan Witherby

Named after Wordsworth's house because of the plethora of daffodils, this is a spring garden full of daffodils, crocuses, primroses and other spring flowers; hopefully the flowering cherries should also be showing.

Set round the house both formally and informally the gardens extend to other areas of woodland and pasture. Alan has agreed to accompany us to explain his methods of encouraging natural growth and biodiversity by control and ingenuity. Teas provided.

Cost: Members £7 Guests £9

Directions: Wissett lies to the northwest of Halesworth. Arriving from the south on the A144 which starts off the A12 north of Darsham, take the Halesworth Bypass. At the third roundabout continue north uphill for 100 or so yards and turn left to Wissett. Go through the village, past the pub, and take a turning to the right, Grays Lane, up the hill. Rydal Mount is on the left hand side after about ½ mile.

SATURDAY 16 MAY 2.30pm JD

Trinity House Rectory Gardens Beyton Bury St Edmunds IP30 9UZ

By kind permission of Barbara and Graham Jones

A small, peaceful garden surrounded by mature trees. Meandering paths wind around beds of shrubs, ferns and unusual perennials. A fruiting kiwi vine and climbing hydrangeas adorn the

house walls. Summerhouse, greenhouse and conservatory with exotic plants.

Teas provided by SGT in the adjacent church hall.

Cost: £7 Guests £9

Directions: Beyton is 6 miles east of Bury St Edmunds. From west A14 exit J46 then right at the Green, left at White Horse into Church Road. After ½ mile park at the church on left and follow signs for garden. From east, A14 exit J46 right at T junction and follow road to the Green then left and left again at the White Horse. A second garden nearby may also be open at the same time.



SATURDAY 13 JUNE 2pm AGM and Garden Visit JD

The AGM (members only) will be held in the Offton Village Hall, Offton IP8 4RA

Directions: from Needham Market take the B1078 to Barking Tye. There is a

huge open green on the right (and 30mph limit). Where this road turns sharply right at the end of the green, go straight on to Willisham. Descending a long hill, there is another 30mph sign and 218 yards past there (literally) and just round a corner, is a concealed right-hand turning to Offton. This is easily missed; turn by the pub, if you overshoot. At Offton, with the church on the left, bear left at the mini green into a "No Through Road". Take the second turning on the left after passing an open square of houses on the left. The Village Hall stands on high ground and is both visible and signed from that point.

Coming from Bildeston direction on the B1078, through Nedging Tye, very shortly after passing the Tollemache Business Park sign, turn right, just before the Red Lion pub. See above for directions on reaching the church on the right.

There will be tea (kindly donated) after the AGM. A garden visit is being arranged; details and directions will be available later.

Cost: Members free Guests £8.

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30 JUNE 2020
Crow's Hall, Debenham
(see display panel on page 6 for full details)

SATURDAY 11 JULY 2.30pm JD

**Silverstone Farm North Elmham
Dereham Norfolk NR20 5EX**

By kind permission of George Carter Design Ltd

George Carter was described by the Sunday Times as "one of the best garden designers in Britain". This visit is to his own garden. Here there is an 1830s farmyard and formal gardens in 2 acres. Inspired by C17 formal

gardens, the site consists of a series of interconnecting rooms with framed views and vistas designed in a simple palette of evergreens and deciduous trees and shrubs such as were available in that period.

Homemade teas provided.

Cost: £10 members £12 Guests

Directions: nearer to Gateley than North Elmham. From North Elmham church head N to Guist. Take 1st left onto Great Heath Road. Left at T junction.

Take 1st right signed Gateley. Silverstone Farm is 1st drive on left by a wood.



Saturday 19 September 2.30pm SP

The Old Rectory Nacton IP10 0HY

By kind permission of Mr & Mrs
Wellesley Wesley

A garden created over 30 years by the current owners, with an increasingly interesting range of plants. The garden is divided into distinct areas, vegetable and picking garden, large herbaceous borders that are still vibrant in September, a damp natural 'bog' garden with a spring whilst there is box

(we hope!) and yew hedging and topiary throughout, that lends structure throughout the year. The emphasis is on texture and colour whilst the aim is to provide a wonderful habitat for butterflies (very present on a sunny September day) bees and birds.

Homemade teas provided

Cost: Members £8 Guests £10

Directions: Go through the village of Nacton, turn right by the War Memorial and continue to The Old Rectory on the right. Park on Church Road opposite the drive way.



WINTER LECTURES 2020/21

Saturday 21 March 10am for 10.30am start

The History of Oaks by Jim Payne at Elmswell.

Saturday 7 November 10am for 10.30am start

The Italianate Garden by Advolly Richmond at the Ipswich Club.

Full details for the March 2020 lecture are in the last newsletter and also on website. Full details for the November lecture will follow in the autumn newsletter.

Winter Lecture 2021

Saturday 6 February 2021

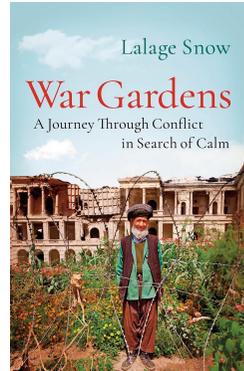
A combined event with EAGG at Bildeston by Mark Spencer.
'Plants tell stories.' This will be in the afternoon.

Book **REVIEWS**

War Gardens: A Journey through Conflict in Search of Calm by Lalage Snow, Quercus 2018, Hardback, 373 pages, ISBN 978 178747 068 2, with colour photographs, £20. Reviewed by **Sue Paul**

Lalage Snow is an award-winning photographer, filmmaker and writer who has covered conflict and unrest since 2007. *War Gardens* is a surprising, tragic and beautiful journey through the darkest places of the modern world, revealing the ways people make time and place for themselves and nature.

The areas covered are in the Palestinian territory, Israel, Afghanistan, the Arlington Cemetery, Washington DC and the Ukraine. Each of the stories provides sobering thoughts as to the turmoil against which local men and women try to establish gardens and grow plants in the most unlikely places, never knowing how long the future may be. Their stories are heart-warming and the struggle against which they make their gardens is remarkable.



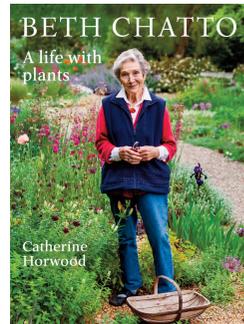
Beth Chatto A life with plants by Catherine Horwood, Pimpernel Press Ltd 2019, 288 pages, ISBN 978 191025 882 8, illustrated, £30. Reviewed by **Paul Clarke**

Published a year after Beth Chatto's death in May 2018, this book draws on Catherine Horwood's regular trips to Elmstead Market to interview her and the many photos, letters, planting lists and all manner of records which Beth gave her. The result is an insight into Beth Chatto's personal life as well as her many achievements with plants, whether as a flower arranger and demonstrator, gardener, garden designer, nurserywoman, exhibitor, writer or lecturer.

Though the story of Beth's development of the garden and nursery on her husband's fruit farm is well known, this book provides a detailed account of how she continued to find new ways to develop and share her enthusiasm for plants. From teacher training college where she and fellow students used the cultivation of a vegetable plot as the outdoor classroom for teaching primary school children maths, poetry, singing and dancing, through her early days as a flower arranging demonstrator (her first assignment being in Saxmundham for the inaugural meeting of the Aldeburgh, Framlingham & Saxmundham Flower Decoration Club in October 1953) to her later lecture tours in America and Japan.

Catherine Horwood intersperses her own text chronicling Beth's life with extracts from Beth's diaries and notes kept during her travels – staying at Château Mouton Rothschild as a guest of Baron Philippe in 1981; her first trip to the US in 1983 and tours visiting gardens with Christopher Lloyd.

The book reveals a woman driven to strive for more, unable to rest and often at odds



with others because of her high standards, though fiercely loyal to her staff and always keen to share her passion for plants and design. I found it a fascinating read for the personality it revealed and the many local connections.

Wilding and Well-being: The Gift of two Suffolk Nature Reserves, edited by Rose Battye and Janey Cullen, Suffolk Flora Preservation Trust 2019, paperback, 107 pages, ISBN 978 191131 156 0, illustrated, £14.

Reviewed by **Stephen Beaumont**.

When a current topic appears both on *The Archers* and *Desert Island Discs* you should start paying attention. The latest book from the Suffolk Flora Preservation Trust (SFPT) is entitled *Wilding and Well-being* and carries a contribution by Isabella Tree, the subject for *Desert Island Discs*; some of you may have come across her book *Wilding: The Return of Nature to a British Farm*.

The brief history is that the founding trustee of SFPT, Francis Simpson, bequeathed the two small Suffolk Nature Reserves now owned by the Trust. These are the Fromus Reserve in Kelsale and Orchid Glade in Hasketon. The Fromus Reserve is the larger but still only covers 27 acres. An earlier book *Barons to Botanists* places the Fromus Reserve at the centre of Kelsale Park – a medieval park created by the Bigod family for the keeping of deer and a source of meat generally.

Each year the Guardians of SFPT publish a book that records the beauty, historic and ecological interest of the reserves and this year's is very interesting. The term (Re)Wilding is now widely used but possibly the truest meaning is alterations in land-use practices to maximise the influence of natural processes.

The book, edited by Rose Battye and Janey Cullen, covers many examples both in the two SFPT reserves but also in Orwell Park and Somerleyton. Lord Somerleyton refers to The Wild East and is creating a 1,000-acre wildland reserve on his own estate; here Welsh Black cattle, Black Welsh Mountain Sheep, large Black pigs, Red and Fallow deer and Exmoor ponies will all roam free.

On the Fromus Reserve there is a small herd of British White cattle and on one single day 32 different species of birds were noted. The book is lavishly illustrated with photographs and paintings of the various plants and flowers, animals, birds and butterflies that flourish in the reserves.

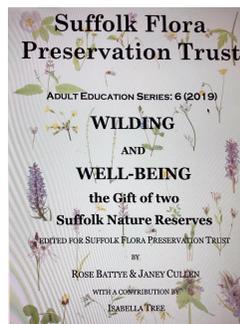
The longest chapter is reserved for various personal expressions of the benefits of well-being brought about by visits to the reserves, when peace and calm improves the sentient charm of these natural areas.

I notice a number of SGT members are amongst the SFPT Guardians who contribute both financially and practically to the maintenance of the reserves.

If you are interested do contact www.suffolkflora.org for further details.

SFPT arrange Open Days for the Public to visit both reserves. They recommend 13 June for the orchids in Orchid Glade at Hasketon, and 18 July for summer meadow flora at Fromus Reserve.

Opening times: 10am-1pm.



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News from The Gardens Trust

Conservation Cases

If you are interested in Conservation Cases around the country check out the weekly list published on The Gardens Trust website (thegardenstrust.org) which notes all the consultations logged but not necessarily engaged with. It makes for fascinating reading (bit.ly/2tzMeNw). The link here is for the week 2 February 2020. You will note that the proposals are likely to affect historic parks and gardens.

Unforgettable Gardens: save our heritage

From 2020 through to 2022 The Gardens Trust (GT) will be celebrating Unforgettable Gardens – what they mean to us, the threats they face, and how you can help save them for future generations. GT is on a mission to rescue them. Ways of helping include: organising an event that highlights a phenomenal but vulnerable garden; writing the story of a lost garden that will never be forgotten, hosting an exhibition of old garden photographs, offering an outing for families to a public park they may not have visited before or putting together a volunteer group to help look after your local threatened landscape.

If you would like to help organise something please email lindengroves@thegardenstrust.org.

As this collaborative celebration starts to take shape, GT is hosting a **Unforgettable Gardens brainstorm in London on 16 April 1.30-4.30pm** for anyone who is interested in getting involved and would like to discuss their ideas or possibilities. Book your place on the brainstorming session (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-collective-brainstorm-for-unforgettable-gardens-save-our-heritage-tickets-93941398251>), or follow what is happening using the Twitter hashtag [#unforgettablegardens](https://twitter.com/unforgettablegardens).