

# West Yorkshire Group Newsletter



*RHS Chelsea 2013 was a fabulous experience*

## Autumn 2013

# Welcome to the Autumn 2013 Newsletter

Where we review our packed summer events schedule and preview an equally stimulating autumn/winter programme in the accompanying events listing.

THANK YOU to the founding editor of this newsletter, Pat Inman, who has recently handed on the editorial baton. Pat is also the Group Secretary, organising the winter speakers, the summer garden evening visits, and day trips so we will continue to benefit from her unbounded energy and seemingly limitless knowledge and enthusiasm for plants and gardening. Pat was helped by her son Simon, a world-class designer, together formulating a stylish and interesting newsletter; grateful thanks to them both.



*Pat Inman, Group Secretary  
founded the newsletter*

## STOP PRESS: Autumn Flower Show Gold – Again!

Congratulations to the prize-winning team that put together the HPS stand for the Autumn Harrogate Flower Show. Once again they scooped a Gold Award!

Congratulations to Alan and Shirley Mitchell, Frances



*Photo courtesy Ruth Baumberg*



*Photo courtesy Ruth Baumberg*

*Dianthus 'Superbus' caught the eye of many visitors*

King, Maggie Sugden, Gloria Downey, Liz Hall and not forgetting Brian Dennison who provided much of the 'technical' colour information that attracted great interest from Show visitors.

# Summer Garden Visits

Once our winter/spring programme of speakers ended, we began four months of summer garden visits. The first was to Glen Garnett's garden in Marton cum Grafton. Glen has been gardening for 35 years on this 1½-acre village plot that encompasses exquisite beds and borders to the rear of the cottage, meandering out and up a slope to an orchard inhabited by chickens, ducks and geese.

Glen, a very hands-on gardener, explained that she preferred foliage to flowers, a confession one doesn't hear very often. Perhaps this explained the high proportion of red-leaved shrubs and trees that I had been admiring: a sumptuous red beech hedge, cotinus, various heucharas just to name a few. To the front of the house there are some quite stunning trees of great age. At the side and rear of the house is a gravelled dining patio; the army of flowering alliums here were a reminder to Glen of her daughter's wedding, for which they'd been grown a few years previously.



*A panoramic view of Glen Garnett's village plot, developed over 35 years, has a foliage palette that's quite inspiring*

Photo courtesy Ruth Baumberg



*Red foliage and perfect hostas*

Photo (Editor)

# Maspin House 11 July by Pat Inman

In the middle of the heatwave – too hot for many of us – a cooler evening visit to this terrific garden was just the ticket. What was originally a one-acre garden wasn't enough when Susan became a plantswoman in 1992. Buying a further two acres from the neighbouring farmer gave her scope to begin acquiring plants in earnest.

The garden has many different areas, each with its own theme, which are linked by a grass road which runs around the house and down through the orchard.

After losing my *Genista aetnensis* in the winter of 2010/11, I was envious to see Susan has got not one, but three in different areas. Still in bud on the 11th, they will be a glorious sight when in flower, the most graceful of the family.

*Clematis durandii* was much admired and I liked the white *Malva moschata* next to the white-flowered golden spirea in the



Photo (Editor)

bed behind the rill in the front garden. A large central wooden container in one of the 'rooms' held eye-catching plants in each corner of the blue *Elymus hispidus* (this is often confused with *Elymus magellanicus* but has stiffer blades than the latter).

A new summerhouse graced a meadow area, whilst a living willow structure sported lots of new growth. We puzzled over a large white umbellifer – the foliage smelt of carrot but it wasn't the biennial *Daucus carota*.

What a pleasant way to spend a summer evening wandering through the many different areas with a glass of wine in one hand admiring lovely plants.

*Two more summer garden visit reviews remain to illuminate the winter newsletter: Carol Newbould's packed town garden and James & Freda Fonquernie's suburban oasis.*



Photo courtesy Pat Inman

Eyecatching planting using *Elymus hispidus*

# Bridge of Time – RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2013

## ‘Our Show Story’ by Sue Gray and Pat Inman

*This is an extract from an article appearing in the next issue of the national Hardy Plant Society Newsletter.*

See: [www.hardy-plant.org.uk/publications](http://www.hardy-plant.org.uk/publications)

Question: what have the West Yorkshire Group & Steve Redgrave got in common? It would be wonderful if the answer was ‘the same number of gold medals’, but sadly we cannot emulate Sir Steve in that way. However, you may remember his declaration at the end of an Olympic Games’ rowing event that he was never going near a boat again, but next Olympics, there he was!

When we last did Chelsea on behalf of the Society in 2010 we, too, had

a ‘never again’ moment but during a committee meeting last year we got round to wondering whether anyone had agreed to do a display as it was the Centenary Chelsea. Enquiries were made and apparently no group had volunteered so if we would like to have another go ...!

With the aim of the HPS being to keep garden worthy plants in cultivation it seemed an obvious choice that the display should involve an element of plants that have stood the test of time



*The orange end of the 2013 plant selection.*

Photo courtesy Wendy Platt

Photo courtesy Wendy Platt



*Contemplation!*

Photo (Editor)



*Chelsea show visitors were amazingly generous with their comments about the HPS stand. THEY LOVED IT!*

Photo courtesy Wendy Platt



*Allan tidying up under the watchful eye of Sue*

during the hundred years of the Chelsea show. Half the stand would reflect plants that were available to gardeners then and the other half would include plants that had become available more recently, be they newer varieties of old favourites, or species newly-introduced to Britain. The two halves of the display would be linked by a willow structure and so 'The Bridge of Time' started to take shape.

Lists were prepared asking members to provide plants if they had them in their gardens and we were also deciding upon which newer varieties we might use. Little did we know the weather conditions we would face in the following months that would affect normal growth and flowering patterns! We gradually began to gather plants together and were fortunate to again have the use of a polytunnel kindly provided by Harrogate Council.

Then, suddenly it seemed, it was May and we were off to Chelsea. We arrived in the Great Pavilion; there's our space. No, it can't be our stand – it's the wrong size. Oh yes it is our site – get the RHS joiners in and they start again so the base is to the specified size and fits the edging board which we'd had made. The van arrives with the plants and willow structure and all

the paraphernalia needed to produce the display and we are up and running!

Monday saw the arrival of the judges – what would they make of our efforts? Tuesday, the day of reckoning, arrives. A Silver-Gilt medal. Are we disappointed? Of course we are – there’s no point in all that time and effort if you’re not aiming for Gold. But then the public arrive. How many times did we hear “the best exhibit in the Pavilion”; one garden designer even said it was the best exhibit in the whole show.

One of the judges said that the RHS hopes the HPS will continue to exhibit at Chelsea as ours are very popular exhibits and so it proved: Visitors loved it. So perhaps for an amateur group at Chelsea, 200 miles from home, Silver-Gilt isn’t so bad after all!



Photo courtesy Wendy Platt

*You thought it was just flowers didn't you?*



Photo (Editor)

*The pink end of the 1913 plant selection*

# Going on a Summer Holiday: Part 1

*Everyone who ventures onto the Group's June 5-day bonanza bus tour usually vows to book again quite soon in to the trip. Visiting three or four gardens and/or nurseries each day is just too luscious to forsake it seems. The 2013 trip to Kent organised by Sally Robinson did not disappoint. There were wildly different garden styles eliciting some quite strong reactions. As you will read, in this issue and next, each garden had attributes that were admirable.*

## **The Manor House, Stevington by Pat Clarke**

Kathy Brown, her husband and their Jack Russell, Pandora, were waiting to greet us when the coach drew up in the quintessential English village of Stevington. We were guided to the gates of the Manor House for the first visit of our 2013 Garden Holiday.

There was enough time to sit in the sun and absorb the tranquil ambience of the place before sampling the delicious homemade cakes. I tried the Rose Petal Sponge flavoured with rose water and the crystallized petals of the highly scented roses adorning the house. Rosa 'Gertrude Jekyll' and R. 'Madame Isaac Pereire' were in magnificent full bloom and were trained to perfection.

The south gable was the background for the most formal planting in the garden. The main features were two circular pools,



Photo (Editor)

trimmed box and lavender hedges, Lilium regale was not yet in flower but you could visualize the coming effect and Rosa 'Veilchenblau' was trained to the wall.

Quirky features were in evidence eg. painted and planted egg shells in a stand and containers planted with succulents and looking like giant cupcakes. This was a garden shaped to the owner's individual interests. The Hepworth Garden, the Monet Border and the Mondrian Wall and Border reflected her interest in Art. The flower borders and the Pictorial Meadow catered for the bees, which product the honey, which is well used in Kathy's super cakes.

This was a garden to delight in. I will remember it because I loved it and wished I had a little more time to explore.



Photo (Editor)

*Definitely quirky!*

## Daisy Roots Nursery by Judith Ladley

Our first opportunity to purchase plants. We piled eagerly off the coach, purses at the ready, to avail ourselves of the waiting baskets. Daisy Roots was stocked with well-grown and displayed perennial plants and we sailed up and down the sales area searching for that special something – or anything else that particularly took the eye.

Campanulas of many types were looking their best and our fellow traveller Maggie soon spotted a very good ‘cup and saucer’ type white which I know at least one of the party strongly coveted. Many dianthus varieties were available and these proved popular and were good value. My chosen plant was a dark leaved agastache (Cana-hybrid ‘Bolero’) which I thought would go well with my new scheme of chocolate and lime green, although why I did not also purchase an unknown (to me) variegated *Briza media* I do not know.

All in all a good start to our spending spree, helped by the advice of the nursery owner and her doggy companion, Myrtle.



Photo (Editor)



Photo (Editor)

# Merriments Garden Centre & Nursery, Hurst Green, E. Sussex by Diane Rawnsley

First impressions on arriving at Merriments Garden and Nursery could be ... 'Oh, just

orange escholzias with vivid blue salvias, then there were the formal beds with box parterres punctuated by clipped domes and pyramids which were filled with either Heuchera 'Sweet Tea', Brunnera 'Jack Frost' or Carex 'Evergold'.



Photo (Editor)

another garden centre' ... Well, how wrong could you be! This is an inspirational four-acre garden designed to display the plants in the excellent well stocked garden centre which is part of the same complex.

On the beautiful, sunny day that we visited, it was a riot of colour and heavy with the scent of roses like 'Graham Thomas', which was flowering profusely over a large framework. Entering the garden you are first drawn over to a circle cut into a yew hedge, through which you see a stone urn with a bubbling fountain and a vista to the unexplored garden 'rooms' beyond.

Sweeping, curved lawns are edged with colour-themed beds; there is a golden border, tropical border, a blue gravel garden, a pond with a huge Gunnera and yellow flag irises and a blue Monet-style bridge, and the 'hot' borders where we all fell in love with Rosa 'Scarlet Fire'.

There were fabulous colour combinations such as bright

There were so many beautiful plants like the oriental poppies and a huge specimen of Paeonia 'Bowl of Beauty' and an 8ft brilliant white Aruncus, but I think it was the roses in particular at this time, that left the most impression on us.

The wonderful experience however, didn't end with the garden ... we all found far too much to spend our money on in the nursery and then we sat down on the sunny terrace and had a delicious freshly prepared lunch. On my table we all had the 'Merriments Famous Prawn Cocktail' which was HUGE and a large jug of elderflower cordial to share whilst we discussed all the wonderful things we had seen in the garden.

Definitely one not to miss if you are in the Kent/East Sussex area!



Photo (Editor)

# One Dering Road, Ashford by Denise Dyson

Before entering the narrow gateway, we stood outside 1 Dering Road observing a pyracantha hedge so thick it seemed to fill the space right up to the front door. Ice blue Clematis Perle d' Azure scrambled through making a quite striking feature. Moving on to another such, we were greeted on the pathway by a vision in purple topped with a rose-like bloom edged with silver leaves. From the lobes dangled silvery bell-like buds and all this was just our hostess Claire de Souza Barry!

From the purple of Claire's blouse I caught sight of the deep magenta, heavily-scented rose Munstead Wood and at this moment I realised we were in a garden which made my overstuffed plot seem positively sparse.

Interesting plant combinations became evident as we followed the paths; the greeny-yellow Primula Francesca partnered with Podophyllum 'Spotty Dotty', with the apricot climbing rose Evelyn draped behind, looked very pleasing near the house. A line of Dicentra Spectabilis Alba growing in a narrow bed gave gentle relief from the many colours by which we were beginning to be engulfed.

By now I realised that, to appreciate this heavily-planted garden, it was necessary not so much as to abandon the rule-book as to throw it out altogether!



Etoile Violette, Bill McKenzie and Gravetye Beauty were just some of the many clematis finding their way up the walls and pergolas. Added to these an orange Eccromacarpus twined through a nearby Akebia on the house corner (hardly any wall was left uncovered).

Draped under a window, the softly-scented Dregea sinensis sat above a line of rich red dianthus 'Rebekah' with the almost black viola 'Molly Sanderson' growing just below. Altogether a most pleasing combination.

Water features, 'jewels' and 'insects' in paving, mirrors hiding the greenhouse, chimes for sound-effects and even tables and chairs all combined to elicit various reactions from our party. But, despite this assault on our senses, Claire's face shone with enthusiasm and love of her plants and that is something to which we can all relate, however we design our own plots.



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