

CSGGA Newsletter

June 2023



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Summer outing to Beech House, Jordans

It is often said that we miss what is on our own doorstep!

With this in mind the Committee decided to visit Beech House in Jordans, part of the National Garden Scheme.

Despite the weather earlier in the week being distinctly gloomy, Thursday was gloriously sunny and our hosts Ray and Sue Edwards made us feel so welcome.

Initially left to our own devices, we wandered around the 2-acre site marvelling at the variety and usual plants. The wild flower meadow was indeed a sight to behold, and we were fortunate to see it in all its glory – including rare orchids. The tree that caught our attention was the *Dipelta Floribunda*. Although the tree had lost most of the beautiful clusters of funnel-shaped creamy-white flowers, there was an abundance of four-winged papery seed cases which were spectacular.

Ray was on hand to answer our multitude of questions and gave us a short history of how and when the site was acquired. At the tender age of 89, Ray maintains the grounds, the raised vegetable beds and an immaculate compost area!

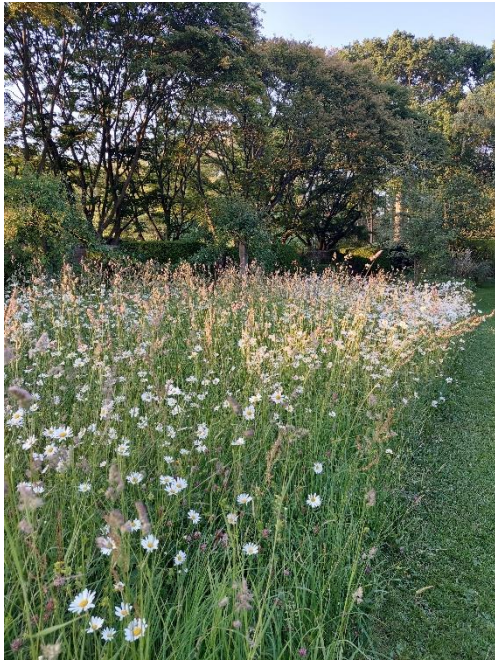
Those who attended, enjoyed the warm sunny evening, sitting on the lawn amongst friends and like-minded garden enthusiasts, eating the now legendary strawberry tarts and sipping chilled Prosecco or elderflower presse.

The National Garden Scheme opens over 3500 private gardens to the public and we were fortunate to be the only party ever invited to Beech House for a unique and exclusive visit. The NGS raises an impressive amount of money for a number of worthy causes. This year I was fortunate to visit RHS Chelsea and was given access to the show gardens to meet with the designers. Two such gardens in particular caught my attention, Horatio's Garden and The Natural Affinity Garden for Aspens.

Aspens is a charity that provides high quality care and support to people on the autism spectrum and those with learning difficulties. My soon to be daughter-in-law, Sophie



is a counsellor at Aspens and I am in awe of the dedication she gives to empower people to learn and grow, providing them with opportunities to enrich their lives and increase their independence.



Horatio's Garden was not only a recipient of a gold medal, it also received the accolade of best show garden 2023. Horatio Chapple was a young volunteer at a spinal unit in Salsbury. Whilst working there he noticed the lack of green space, and so put together the idea of a garden space for those recovery from spinal injuries. Tragically Olivia and David Chapple lost their son. Despite this loss, Horatio's parents decided to fulfil their son's vision. Olivia and David are truly inspiring individuals' and with a driven determination and support from NGS, they have successfully established eight gardens nationwide for the benefit of patients and NHS staff alike.

I would personally like to thank all those who attend the event on Thursday and in our own little way we are supporting many worthy causes and helping the Sophies, Olivias and Davids to carry on with the work that they do helping and supporting others. **Sumitra Patel**

Our Holiday in Devon

We were blessed with perfect weather for our holiday in Devon. Every morning we woke to perfect blue skies and sunshine but, fortunately, there was enough breeze to keep us cool and comfortable while visiting some magnificent gardens.

Following an early start, our first visit was Pythouse Kitchen Garden at Tisbury, a NGS garden, which is described as "south-facing paradise with a myriad of plants, fruits and vegetables to gaze at" and I'm sure my fellow travellers would agree that is exactly what it was. The original plan was to visit on our return journey but they are closed on Tuesdays, so we called in for coffee and were tantalised by the lunch menu that could have been! (However, we have plans to return – watch this space).

Our next stop was at Burrow Farm Garden, a garden with beautiful vistas into the Devon hills beyond. The garden is laid out as a series of rooms, including a peaceful millenium garden with a rill and a pond and the breath-taking scent of wisteria, a terrace garden, a rose garden where the roses were just beginning to bloom, an azalea glade, and a colourful wildflower meadow with over 250 wild orchids, We'd all recommend a visit.

Our hotel was in Torquay, right on the seafront and the beach at the far side of the bay. The staff were very welcoming and attentive and, while we had few initial issues with rooms, the food was excellent.

Day 2 took us to RHS Rosemoor and a journey across the beautiful Devon landscape from South to North. I've waited a long time to visit to Rosemoor and it was certainly worth the wait, it has it all – an orchard, a potager, fruit and vegetable gardens, exotics, arboretums- they are all there but for me the best was the new cool garden. After leaving Rosemoor



we ventured into the moors and visited Sutton Mead, another NGS garden owned by a charming couple who gave us a guided tour.

We had a change of pace on Day 3 with some free time to wander around Dartmouth before catching the ferry to Greenway, the former home of Agatha Christie, now owned by the National Trust. The views along the river Dart were spectacular and we enjoyed visiting some of the fictional crime scenes. Many of us were inspired to re-read her books.

On our last full day in Devon, we travelled first to Coletton Fishacre, another National Trust property, previously owned by a celebrity of his time with links to Chalfont St Giles. It was the holiday retreat for the D'Oyly-Carte family and it was, I think, everyone's favourite garden, it was so well designed to take advantage of the landscape, climate and sea views. The 1920's Arts and Crafts house deserves a mention too. It was cosy, elegant and full of Art Deco furniture and features.



We ended the day with a visit to a specialist orchid nursery, where we were given a talk and tour by the third generation owner and were able to indulge in some last minute retail therapy.

On our return journey, we called at Cannington Walled Garden. Formerly part of medieval priory, the gardens had retained their peace and tranquility, though I don't expect that is always the case. The gardens form part of Bridgwater College and are the training ground for many RHS apprentices. The different areas and greenhouses, were planted with unusual plants helpfully labeled and the sales area proved far too tempting for some of us!

In five days, we had visited some of the outstanding gardens of Devon. We would all highly recommend each and every one of them.

Next year will be staying in Wrexham and visiting the gardens of North Wales, Lancashire and Cheshire from 23rd to 27th June. If you are interested in joining us, and I do hope you will, then put the dates in your diary!

Thursday, 13th July, 2023

Gardening Without Plastic – Sally Nex

Earlier this month it was the UN's Environment Day and their theme for this year is Beat Plastic Pollution, so it is appropriate that Sally Nex is going to tell us how we can alter our gardening to use less plastic and promote a healthier environment in the garden. In a departure from our usual format, Sally will be joining us in the Memorial Hall via zoom. **For those who wish to attend the format will be the same as usual but we will be watching Sally on the screen. Those who want to log in to the zoom and watch it in the comfort of their own homes, should let a member of the committee know and we will send you the zoom link.**

M's Action Diary for June

- Cutback to ground level hardy geraniums aquilegias, pulmonarias and alchemilla mollis.
- Dead head pelargoniums to allow plants to use more energy to produce a bigger flowering plant.
- Remove spent flowers from rhododendrons and azaleas.

- Trim hedges and feed with a good fertilizer.
- Prune spring and early flowering shrubs such as deutzia, forsythia and philadelphus.
- Divide bearded irises after flowering.
- Cut euphorbias and oriental poppies down to ground level. Fresh leaves will grow and some poppies will flower again.
- Continue keeping an eye open for lily beetles and vine weevils.
- Birds still need feeding and a supply of fresh water to drink and bathe in.

Green Gardening Tip – Planning Ahead

This is a good time to sow biennials for next year's flowers – many biennials flower early in the year to provide food for bees and insects. Biennials useful for wildlife include:

Foxgloves - an important source of pollen for bees. The species has evolved to be especially attractive to long-tongued bees such as the common carder bee. The brightly coloured flowers and dark spotted lip attracts the bee, while the lower lip of the flower allows the insect to land before climbing up the tube.

Night scented stock and **evening primrose** - great for night-time pollinators such as moths and, in turn, provide an evening snack for bats.

Teasels - extremely attractive to bees and butterflies, and the foliage is a magnet for aphids, which in turn attract ladybirds. If left to seed, the brown seedheads are a magnet for goldfinches, but also work well in dried flower arrangements.



Native **primroses** flower very early in the year and can be divided now. They provide a nectar source for pollinators like, s pollinated by bees, butterflies and other long-tongued insects, including the bee fly brimstone and small tortoiseshell butterflies.

Resist the temptation to deadhead all your **roses**, the hips will provide essential food for many animals and birds to help them prepare for the winter ahead. Thrushes, blackbirds, redwings, fieldfares and waxwings, as well as small mammals like bank voles, will feed on rose hips during the autumn and winter. Of course, the best roses to grow for pollinators are the single open flowered varieties such as Blush Noisette (climber), Rambling Rector (rambler), Angel Eyes and Bright as a Button (bush roses), Happy Days (patio).

Your CSGGA Committee

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New Committee members are always welcome. We are a friendly bunch! Please contact a committee member to find out more if you're interested in joining us.