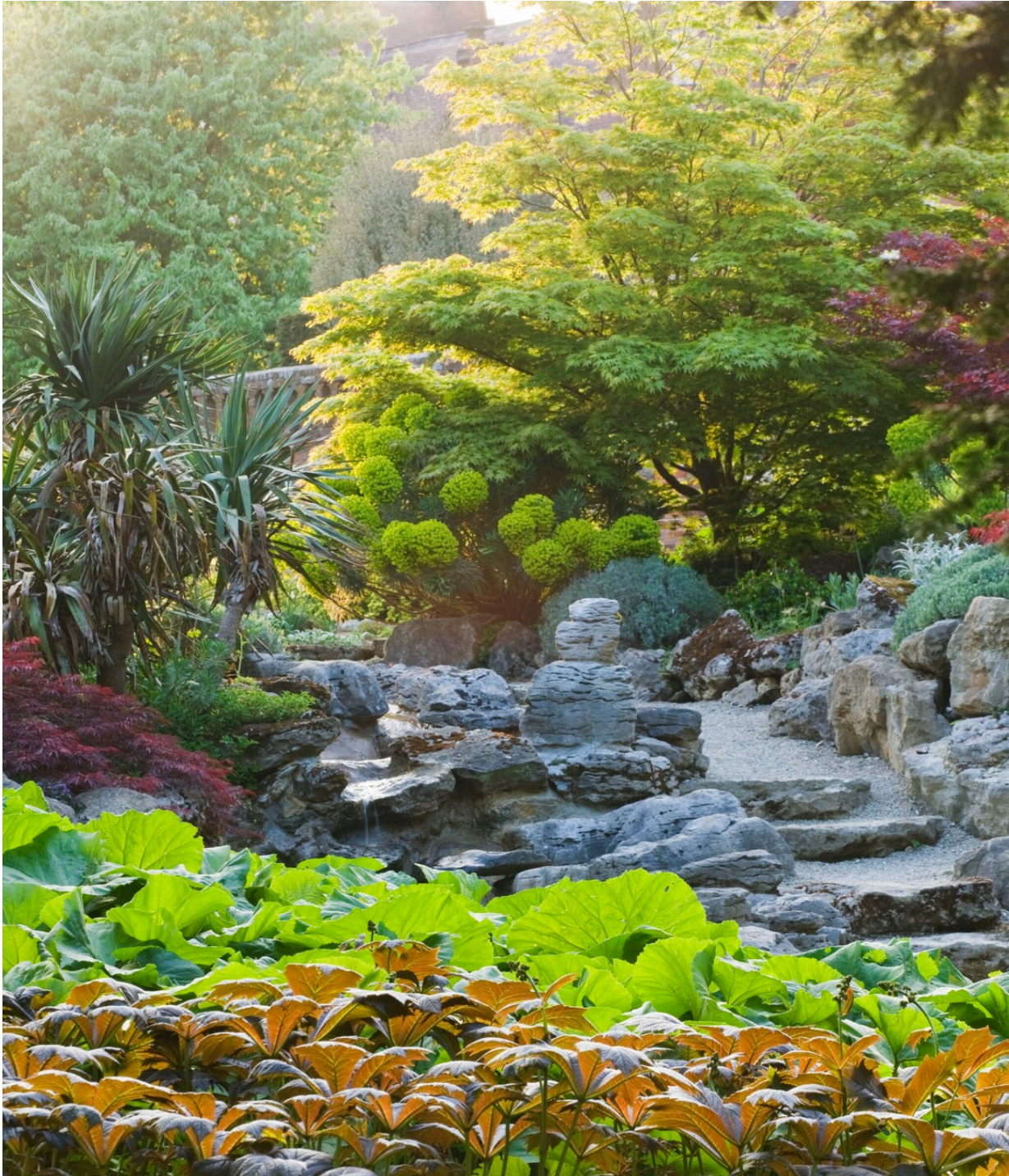




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Newsletter 124  
Autumn 2022



## **EAGG Committee**

President: Maggie Thorpe

Chair: shared by:-  
Fiona Pearson  
and Erica Legge

Secretary: Liz Law

Treasurer: Louise Chambury

Website: Sue de Sabata

And  
Isobel Ashton  
Widget Fin  
Matthew Long

## **CHAIRMANS LETTER – Autumn 2022**

Dear Members,

What a challenging garden year we have had – extremely high temperatures, strong winds and an almost complete absence of rain! A few plants lost, and a terrible bare patch where once was grass, but nature fortunately gives us a break, and as temperatures cool we are blessed with rain once more!

Looking back over the last year, we have had our usual high standard of informative speakers - Andrew Ward, with Plants and Prejudice (and I still don't like bright yellow); Joe Sharman, Mr. Snowdrop, who

sprang into the breach when Anna Pavord was unable to come at the last moment; Timothy Walker showing us how to prune trees and shrubs; Michael Perry with his Houseplants, and as I write, we are anticipating an interesting talk from our Speaker at the AGM, Ed Berger and his talk on Herbs For Health.

Our visits have included the beautiful Childerley Hall and Gardens and Fullers Mill Garden at West Stow, but unfortunately we had to cancel Ulting Wick and Furzelea due to lack of support. On a perfect English summer evening we enjoyed our Summer Social in Sue de Sabata's stunning garden in Chelsworth, with generous quantities of food and wine. Our thanks to her for being the perfect hostess. The EAGG Garden Tour finally hit the road in September where about 30 members enjoyed a visit to six glorious gardens in Kent, where we were very lucky with the weather.

Looking forward we have a terrific line up of speakers for 2023, Steve Edney, Troy Scott Smith, Lucy Hutchings and more, and we will hopefully have some exciting news on a celebrity speaker soon. As far as visits go, we are hoping to reinstate the visit to Ulting Wick in Spring, see the restorations at Easton Lodge Gardens, and arrange a coach visit to Great Dexter Spring Plant Sale by coach, sharing with Boxford Garden Society, to spread the cost.

We hope you will all bear with us while we get our new subscription systems in place, and we apologise for any inconveniences caused by this, but it will all be much easier soon. We are also in desperate need of some new members on the committee, as we are losing our secretary, the amazing Liz Law, and technical genius Matthew Long. So PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE do come forward, without a committee there is no EAGG. We are a happy team and plan the speakers and visits, holidays and events, and we have good cakes! We need a Secretary, and someone who is good with setting up equipment for talks, and anyone who can manage web page technology, and if you would like to take on the plant stall, that is in need of someone too. Training and help is at hand, so don't be scared!

My thanks go to the whole committee who give up their time and energy to keep this running smoothly, particularly to Fiona Pearson who shares the Chairman's post with me. Thank you to everybody who helps behind the scenes, Nicholas Pearson with teas etc, and raffle ticket selling friends.

Jackie Rocker is giving up the plant Stall, which she has run uncomplainingly for a very long time, so we give her huge thanks for her supreme efforts there, and also not forgetting the mountain of meringues she makes for the Summer Social. Thank you to the members for your continued support, without you there is no EAGG! Thank you to Matthew, who gets us out of tricky set ups, where projectors or computers play up, we do hope that although you will give the committee meetings a miss, you will still be coming to the meetings, we may need you!

Finally a massive thank you to Liz Law, who despite being unwell has carried us through Covid and Zoom Meetings, sent out endless information for members, and who does so much more than we ever know behind the scenes to facilitate the smooth running of EAGG. We wish her better health and a good rest for recovery.

Good health and good gardening to you all.  
Erica Legge.

## **Friends lost**

### **Oswald 'Ozzie' Simpson**

A stalwart of the EAGG, sometime Chair and longtime committee member, always contributing to plant stall, tea delights and raffles, the book stall and anything else we needed help with. A great plantsman with a lovely garden full of well-grown tender perennials in which we held our summer socials. He bred Clivia, Agapanthus and Dahlias. Selling his excess stock to raise funds for the Church in Elmsett, as he was actively involved in all the communities he lived in. An antique dealer by trade he was a real life 'Lovejoy' never short of a good story from his varied and interesting life. His like we will never see again.

### **Janet Allan-Henderon**

A pioneer of organic gardening thanks to Laurence Hills and the Henry Doubleday, when based at Bocking, Janet, who was well known as a potter, opened her very different and inspirational garden at Kettlebaston Hall. Always a magnet for interesting artists and gardeners, Janet echoed Cedric Morris for whom she weeded, and Beth Chatto for whom she was a special friend. Tony Venison always loved Janet's garden for the choice plants carefully tended, but intermingled within a barely tamed wilderness

### **Jan Cavell**

Nursery manager at Roger Harvey's, her ability to grow plants to the highest standard underpinned the many Chelsea Gold Medals won for their intensely planted woodland displays. Always caring, and generous with her time in developing any enthusiasm for gardening, she was instrumental in our attempting ambitious displays for the Suffolk Show.

## **POGRAMME OF SPEAKERS 2023**

**Saturday 4 February**

### **STEVE EDNEY HOW TO CREATE A HERBA CEOUS BORDER**

Do you long for inspiration to plan a flowerbed or plant your whole garden? Steve Edney will tell you everything you should consider, from the soil, site, proportions and size to predators, pests and companion plants. Gardening organically and experimenting with bold groupings he and his partner Louise created the longest herbaceous border in the UK – 100metres – from a field in two years at their No Name Nursery. Those who saw Steve’s glorious planting at the famous Salutation know that we’ll be in for a feast of ideas.

Saturday 4 March

### **TROY SCOTT SMITH A TALE OF THREE GARDENS Sissinghurst, Bodnant and The Courts**

Troy has spent three periods of his career at Sissinghurst, returning twice as Head Gardener and leading a project to revitalise it including the controversial re-creation of the Delos Garden. He also led the restoration of the great Welsh garden Bodnant and The Courts Garden. Troy reveals the challenges and successes of managing these iconic gardens.

**Saturday 1 April**

### **LUCY HUTCHINGS GROWING FRUIT AND VEG THE NO-DIG WAY**

Lucy Hutchings (@shegrowsveg) swapped a career designing couture jewellery for growing heirloom vegetables. She’s passionate about enthusing us all to grow our own food organically with the no-dig method, and shows us how easy it is to become partly self-sufficient. She grows several hundred varieties of fruit and veg in her allotment and back garden, and claims you can too!

Lucy had a show garden at Hampton Court in 2022 and recently appeared on BBC’s Gardener’s World.

She will be bringing plants for sale.

## **Saturday 7 October**

**JIM PAINE**

### **THE SECRET LIFE OF PLANTS**

How do plants tell the time? How and why do they communicate with each other? Did you know that some plants can generate enough heat to melt snow, whilst others nourish their young? Jim Paine of the well-known Walnut Tree Garden Nursery will tell us about these and other fascinating secrets about the life of the plants in our gardens and in the countryside around us.

Jim will be bringing plants for sale.

## **Saturday 4 November**

**TIMOTHY WALKER**

### **IN THE NOT-SO-BLEAK MIDWINTER**

We're delighted to welcome back Timothy Walker, lecturer, botanist and former Director of the Oxford University Botanic Garden, to inspire us in the bleak midwinter. Gardening books write of putting the garden to bed for the winter. While many plants become dormant during this cold, wet and dark time of year, some are providing fruit for the birds and other animals while others are flowering. Winter may not be the traditional season of big borders and drifts of different blooms but has plenty to offer the gardener. Timothy looks at the opportunities for bringing winter interest to your garden.

#### **Subscriptions and tickets can be done**

via our website,

or by cash,

or cheque to EAGG,

or via BAC

Bank: Barclays

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Acc name: EAGG

Acc number: 20344745

# CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm 2022

Monks Eleigh Village Hall IP7 7JL

£20 per person

Open to just 20 members and guests. Florist, Helen Newman, will show us how to make a beautiful Christmas door or table wreath. A lovely activity using wired moss wreath bases this year to be more environmentally friendly.

Please bring any foliage to use if you can, although some will be provided. Also useful will be scissors, secateurs and something to cut the fine wire we will use to attach the foliage and decorations.

You are welcome to bring your own decorations and plenty will be supplied.

Tea and cake will be served. **Book via the website or by contacting EAGG**

**secretary Liz Law. – [lizz.a.law@gmail.com](mailto:lizz.a.law@gmail.com)**



## A FAVOURITE GARDENING BOOK

Recently I re-discovered 'Gardening Letters to my daughter' by Anne Scott-James on my bookshelves. Anne Scott-James was a pioneering woman journalist in the 1950s and 60s when women in Fleet Street rarely moved out of the typing pool. She became editor of Harpers' Bazaar, the leading fashion magazine, then women's editor of the Daily Express and had her own page in the Daily Mail, specialising in pithy comment on current affairs. If you're wondering how this qualified her to write on gardening, at aged 60 she retired from journalism to concentrate on her garden and garden writing in her cottage in Berkshire. She became a council member of the RHS and for many years was a judge at the Chelsea Flower Show.



She wrote a series of best-selling garden books including *'Sissinghurst, the Making of a Garden'*, *'Glyndebourne's Garden'* with no less a co-author than Christopher Lloyd, and *'The Pleasure Garden'* with her third husband Osbert Lancaster the Daily Express cartoonist and creator of Maudie Littlehampton.

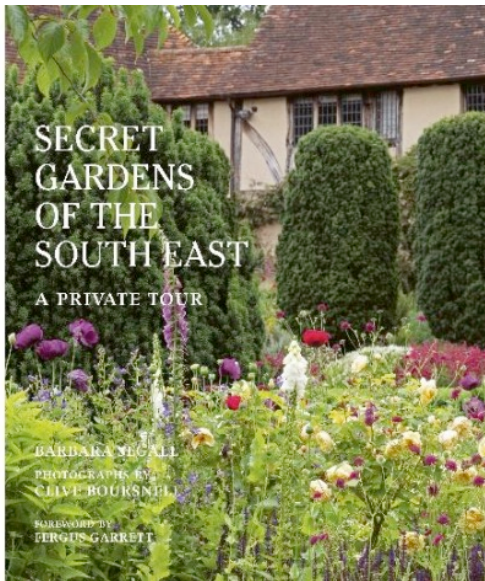
To get back to *'Gardening Letters'*, Anne and her daughter Clare lived next door to each other in a Berkshire village. An arch was cut out of the dividing hedge between their gardens, through which there was a two-way traffic of wheelbarrows, plants and refreshments. Clare was a relatively new gardener, and Anne's letters discuss the pleasures and problems she might come across. They're practical and reflective, suggesting ideas on plants, pruning and controlling moles, thoughts on the garden in winter and lots about wild flowers – clearly Anne was ahead of her time. Sometimes Clare answers back quite crisply – she doesn't let Anne get away with all the advice, but they obviously had a happy relationship of give and take.

Not all the letters are confined to advice – Anne rails against the municipal planting in France, and reports on visits to expert gardening friends including Roy Strong. The book inspires and instructs, and is written with style and humour. It reads as entertainingly today as when I was given it 45 years ago by my own mother who was a talented gardener. And now I'm passing it on to my daughter Emma, who is getting interested in her own garden, in the hope that she will get as much pleasure and information from Anne's writing as I have done.

*'Gardening Letters to My Daughter'* by Anne Scott-James is published by Michael Joseph, available from Amazon or look out for a secondhand copy in a charity shop.

Widget Finn

## A review of Barbara Segall's new book



**A tour of some of the UK's most beguiling gardens in the counties of Kent, Sussex and Surrey, the counties that exemplify 'the garden of England'**

In these three counties a wealth of history and horticulture has combined with geography in the shape of rolling landscapes, wooded valleys and meandering waterways, to provide an attractive and fascinating collection of gardens.

They are in villages and towns, as well as in deep countryside, and all are privately owned.

Some have been in the possession of the same

family for many generations, while others have recently been transformed by new owners. Some open for the National Garden Scheme, while others are open privately and in some cases for just the occasional day for charity.

The stunning gardens explored by Barbara Segall in this visually rich guide include: Long Barn, Malthouse Farm, Denmans, Gravetye Manor, Munstead Wood and Sussex Prairie Garden. The book also includes visitor information about the gardens covered as well as location details of several others in this garden-rich area.

Filled with stunning, specially commissioned photographs by Clive Boursnell, *Secret Gardens of the South East* is a unique guide that opens the gates to the most intriguing gardens in this part of England.

## Snowdrop walks

For 2023 there is not a planned EAGG visit to Anglesey Abbey, but instead, a list of highly recommended places suggested which mostly have websites to find out more. Some are free too! It would be wonderful if members of EAGG could visit some of these and report back so that another year we might arrange a visit - do write a bit about the snowdrops, facilities etc and add in a photo or two.



**Christchurch Park, Ipswich:** Town-centre park is a great place to visit all the year round, 80 acres of lawns, trees and ponds, floral displays. It all starts with a fine display of snowdrops in January. **Blakenham Woodland Garden:** A few miles from Ipswich, this six-acre garden has a [snowdrop open day](#) as part of the National Open Garden Scheme, with teas, coffees, cakes and plant sales. **Bradfield Woods,** near Bury St Edmunds: Suffolk Wildlife Trust - ancient woodland, free to visit, known for its displays of wild flowers. The woods include five miles of walking trails, and have a free car park and a disabled toilet available. **Kentwell Hall,** Long Melford: Although the stately home does not open until April, its usually open outside to visitors during February half-term week. There is a snowdrop walk to explore, as well as woodland trails. **Marks Hall Gardens and Arboretum,** near Coggeshall: more than 200 acres, spectacular gardens include a snowdrop grove, with three varieties. Open from Friday to Sunday each weekend and daily in the February half-term. **Beth Chatto Gardens:** The Beth Chatto gardens, famed for their amazing range of plants, including many varieties of snowdrops, blooming from January right through to April. Open daily in February. **Ickworth,** near Bury St Edmunds: National Trust estate with snowdrops to admire from November onwards because it has a rare autumn variety and many that bloom in January and February. You can book a snowdrop walk in February.

And I would recommend local churchyards too – they often have spreading displays of snowdrops and aconites – **St Mary's at Thorpe Morieux** is one of my favourites – the challenge is to find it!

Liz Law

## Fullers Mill Garden

I first saw Fullers Mill garden when we met our friend Bernard Tickner walking at Lackford Lakes. Bernard guided us through a fairly secret entrance to his home and garden, where he took us to see some of his plants of the moment. For me that memory was again renewed on our group visit last August.

That private visit had been postponed due to the long heatwave in July, and the later August day was blessed with comfortably enjoyable

sunshine. In the shade of trees close to the bothy Madeleine told us some of the history of the garden that began 52 years ago in scrub next to gravel workings and developed to 7 acres, home to many unusual plants collected by Bernard and his wife Beth. Trees, all planted since the garden began, and the river Lark give an enchanting natural feel to the many and varied planting zones, so it is a garden through which to wander.

Crossing the weir that worked the old fulling mill, gives views along the river banks and a choice of pathways, to the Low Garden for Spring bulbs and woodland plants, the Mill Pond clothed with Iris, reeds and primulas, or to turn back to follow the river bank clothed with bamboo, gunnera, and spreading shrubs on one hand, and the Top Garden with its variety of trees and sun loving plants including some of the many extraordinary lilies found also elsewhere in the garden. Two more rustic bridges give opportunity to watch the water, and beyond is a newer developing garden with views towards Lackford Lakes. Whichever path we took we were likely to meet a plantsperson now considering yet another plant they could not name for certain. Such is the amazing variety and interest in this tranquil yet exciting garden.



# Summer Afternoon

*'Summer afternoon, summer afternoon, to me these are the two most beautiful words in the English language.'* Henry James.

I have to agree with Henry James, although I must say I am surprised that he confined himself to two words when most of his sentences consist of several hundred.

But with the arrival of June, gardeners are revelling in the crowning glory of the whole year; this is as good as it gets. Now at last, it is the time for the floral aristocrats; roses and irises, poppies and peonies. These flowers look as if they are cut out of rich fabrics; silks, taffeta and velvet. The garden is spangled with opulent colours and exquisite scents. And of all the June blooms the rose is the undisputable queen.

Many years ago I visited the garden, Lime Kiln, Claydon, which belonged to a fanatical rosarian, Humphrey Brooke. He grew over 500 roses in a wonderful setting of 12 acres of woodland and ancient chalk pits. Mr. Brooke was very old when I visited him and his roses had grown unchecked for many years. He told me that he didn't believe in pruning, feeding or spraying. He only grew roses that were capable of thriving without aid. And thrive they did. He had the biggest *Rosa filipes* 'Kiftsgate I have ever seen and you know how big that gets. The garden was wild and neglected, but such a magical place of enchantment and the fragrance everywhere was amazing.

It was about this time that I discovered Vita Sackville West's descriptions of her old-fashioned roses which were absolutely beguiling. I visited Sissinghurst and studied her way of growing roses over igloos made of hazel benders. I made a rose garden and each year I sprayed, fed and pruned my roses, renewing their climbing frames. It looked wonderful, but it was incredibly work-intensive. Now I am a bit more *laissez-faire* when it comes to training roses. I let them do what they want; if they want to tumble about or climb trees then I let them, otherwise I just give them a bit of support if they want it. I do feed them because I like them growing in abandoned luxuriance. But I don't spray them and any hypochondriacal prima donnas that always look sickly with black spot or rust are simply evicted. Of course, you never get rid of black spot completely, but as the famous rosarian, Jack Harkness once said: *'What's a bit of black spot between friends?'*

Actually, I once read that Christopher Lloyd claimed to have totally eliminated black spot by having a three inch layer of grass cuttings round each rose. This makes sense as the spores lie around on the ground. Nowadays, we have wonderful David Austin roses which are just as beautiful as the old –fashioned ones beloved by Vita. Many of them have the beautiful quartered flowers and the fragrance of old roses but they have healthy foliage and many are repeat flowering. There are so many fabulous David Austin roses that picking favourites is difficult.



I will just mention a few that I am particularly fond of. First of all is '**Grace**' as it is such a delicious shade of apricot.

Next I love '**Gentle Hermione**' as the flowers are the most delicate shade of pink and the foliage is always so healthy. Amongst the rich deep purple shades I love '**Munstead Wood**'.

But as I am writing I can think of many more which should come in the top three. The rich, deep, terracotta flowers of '**Summer Song**' always get the attention of visitors to the garden. And I have to mention '**Lady Emma Hamilton**' because her stems and foliage are attractive as well as the gorgeous, tangerine flowers. I love single roses and my favourites are the lovely China roses which start blooming early and carry on for most of the



summer with just little rests now and then. I grow *Rosa x odorata* '**Mutabilis**' which has blooms that look like swarms of butterflies in pink and honey yellow. *Rosa x odorata* '**Bengal Beauty**' is red and just as pretty.

For healthy foliage and a long period of blooming then **Rosa 'Sally Holmes'** is unbeatable because with dead heading she goes on and on.as you keep on dead-heading the white flowers, she goes on and on.



For a really eye-catching bright red single rose then **'Sharlachglut'** is unbeatable. I have seen this trained as a climber and it looked wonderful.

Choosing ramblers can be tricky as so many of them have designs on your whole garden and those of your neighbours too. I

fell in love with the apricot flowers of **'Treasure Trove'** before I realised that it was a child of the infamous **'Kiftsgate'** which everyone knows is probably capable of taking over a whole village if given its head. **'Paul's Himalayan Musk'** is very pretty with masses of pale pink flowers but it too has territorial ambitions. More sedate is **'Goldfinch'** which was a particular favourite of Vita Sackville West who said it is *'a darling, she is my pet, my treasure; a mass of scrambled eggs'*. I couldn't agree more and it is very fragrant too.

My favourite rambler is '**Phyllis Bide**' which has masses of pretty flowers of pink and apricot. It is one of the few repeat flowering ramblers.

Amongst my climbers I love the blowsy, apricot heads of '**Lady Hillingdon**' although she does seem incapable of holding them up. The colour looks as if they have been dipped in tea, but as she lolls about so, perhaps it is something stronger. But I mustn't malign her namesake, Lady Alice Hillingdon. The famous words about closing her eyes and thinking of England whilst suffering unwanted attentions from her husband came from her journal from 1912. I'm sure she was too prim to take anything but tea.

If you grow lots of roses then you often find seedlings appearing and they are worth growing on as you never know what you will get. I have a huge rambling rose which has reached the top of a large holly. I think it is a child of *Rosa filipes* 'Kiftsgate', it certainly looks like it. Another very vigorous one which I found near '**Treasure Trove**' has clusters of single flowers with long golden stamens.

When I am too old to garden, I shall fill my garden with roses and let them do their own thing and scramble everywhere. I shall be known as that 'Mad Old Rose Woman'. Actually, I probably already am as my front garden is already getting there with roses gradually taking over.

Liz Wells

## **EAST ANGLIAN GARDEN GROUP HOLIDAY IN KENT**

**6<sup>TH</sup>- 8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2022**

The weather forecast was not auspicious but at 9.00am sharp 26 of us boarded our bus, a huge 52 seater, with our trusted driver Dee at the wheel.

Maggie and Erica had chosen a wonderful selection of gardens for us to visit and the first stop was **Great Comp** near Sevenoaks. It is a garden of about 7 acres surrounding a 17thC Manor House. The entrance to the garden presents one with a tempting selection of Salvias. Great Comp is famous for its Salvias and has one of the most extensive collections in Europe. The lawns directly in front of the house are edged with borders full of herbaceous plants



and ornamental grasses. With your back to the house there are sweeping lawns with shrub and flower borders and specimen trees in which there are woodland paths, one of which leads to the romantically planted ruins. It was a glorious start to the tour, and to top it off the sun shone.



Next it was Sittingbourne and **Doddington Place gardens**. The looming Victorian house was in total contrast to the gardens. Through the entrance to the gardens one is met with an expanse of lawns with spectacular Wellingtonias (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) which form a woodland walk. In May and June this is full of

Rhododendrons and Azaleas which is very surprising up here on the chalky North Downs, but the discovery in 1960s of a three acre patch of acid loam kept moist in the central section by underground springs, enabled this planting. From here one wanders into the Spring Garden and then the Pond walk where one can access the Folly walk. From this grandeur one enters the Sunken garden which is enclosed by long borders. In the centre there is formal pond which has four square beds around it. Here the season starts with a mass of spring bulbs, followed by alliums, roses, euphorbias and an interesting variety of herbaceous and perennial plants. In each border there were vivid dahlias which added Autumnal zing. Up some steps to the grassed South terrace. On the wall are the plaques in memory of all the family dogs. Then down into the Rock Garden which retains its original frame-work but was renovated in 2007/8 by removing many of the trees, shrubs and plants which had become overgrown, thus exposing the shapes of the rocks to which new stones and rocks have been added. The original series of descending pools has been restored and a new viewing area built over the largest pool. One side of this pool has been built up to form a quarry face with water trickling down. The planting is a mixture of grasses, shrubs and trees. There are beautiful views over the Kent Downs. A truly special place.

Wednesday – The weather was rather unsettled but off we set to **Pashley Manor** near Ticehurst. Pashley Manor is still a family home and has a lovely feel to it. We arrived on the opening day of their Dahlia Festival and fortunately we were ahead of the crowd. A short talk and then a walk around the borders led by the head gardener. All the dahlias are planted out after the tulips have been lifted, and then the dahlias are lifted and stored over winter - a mammoth task. Bloms had a marquee there where one could order dahlias (very tempting and expensive). Other delights included an enviable vegetable/cut flower garden, an espaliered rose walk, an historic walled garden, and lawns with borders running down to the lake with a majestic water feature and woodland walks



In the afternoon we headed off to Cranbrook and **Goddard's Green Gardens** which are owned by John and Linde Wotton, who are friends of Erica. The gardens of about 5 acres surround a beautiful 500 year old Clothiers Hall House with an awe-inspiring roof line at the rear of the house. The bones of the garden are from the 1920s but over the last 27 years John and Linde have created a modern fountain and rill linking to the original water garden, and a late summer perennial and grass border which combines traditional and modern planting. They are huge fans of Fergus Garrett at

Great Dixter. John is a passionate arborist and has created a proper old fashioned mixed orchard with apples, plums, cherries and cobnuts - a heartening sight. John has also recently planted an arboretum, with 80 species of trees including Oaks, Acers, Prunus, Conifers and many more.

The house is not normally open but we were treated to tea and cake in the magnificent Great Hall. A real treat.

Thursday – Our final day took us to **Long Barn** near Sevenoaks. It is tucked away down a narrow lane and we would not have got there without the exceptional skill of our driver Dee. Long Barn refers to the Sixteenth Century barn that was brought up from a local



farm and added on to the 14thC house by Vita Sackville West and Harold Nicholson. They lived there 1915 to 1931 when they moved to Sissinghurst Castle, but did not sell Long Barn until 1945.

Long Barn is the garden created by Vita and Harold where they experimented with the mixture of architectural lines and planting that they are now best known for: Striking yew and crisp hedges, vistas, romantic woodland areas, and lush borders. The house is now owned by Lars and Rebecca Lemonius. Rebecca greeted us and explained that much of the garden is original and she follows Vita's mantra of cram, cram, cram, but is sympathetically curating the bones of the garden, but with some new ideas.

One enters the garden around the side of the house through a winding path through clipped box at hip height, so it is almost like a maze. Just before one arrives at the terrace from the L-shaped house one is able to look down on a square of water with a fountain surrounded by paving stone and a tall clipped box hedge - just perfect. On the terrace there are pots and large bowls of succulents. The South-facing sloping garden is sculpted in lawns with retaining stone walls and South facing borders. If one stands in the centre of the lawn and looks up the slope the strong East/West lines of the garden are evident, but this is dissected by the rose walk running North/South. Turning East there is the orchard which in Spring is full of bulbs. This leads off to the pond and woodland walks. Turn South and there is the double of row of Irish yews standing like sentinels. There is a set of steps taking one down to the lower terrace which has oblong borders bursting with herbaceous plants. Quite breath-taking.

It was a treat and a privilege to be allowed to visit the garden which has been such an influence in the story of gardening, and one hardly noticed the rain. I fell in love with the *Actis Autumnalis* in the South facing gravel border.

Now it was homeward via **Eltham Palace**, once a huge medieval royal palace and then a Tudor residence. It fell into serious disrepair, but by offering to save the Great Hall, Stephen and Virginia Courtauld gained permission to turn the rest of the building into an Art Deco home of extraordinary lavishness. There is a quirky mix of medieval and modern in the gardens, woven in and around the medieval ruins with herbaceous borders, a rose garden, and a rock garden with pools and cascades.



It was a coach load of tired but happy people heading home. For me Long Barn was the star of the trip. Again, a huge thank you to Maggie and Erica for organising us ,and to Dee for driving so safely, and to all my fellow companions who made the outing so enjoyable.

Fiona Pearson