

November 2013

Issue no. 29



# Battisford & District Gardening Club

## From the Editor's Desk

This is the final newsletter of 2013 so it is time to reflect on another successful year for the Club. Bill and the 'old' Committee did a sterling job in putting on a great programme of talks and visits and organising an incredibly successful Annual Show. In addition, the Club continued to play its part in the 'Big Society' by maintaining the gardens at the Punchbowl and running the tea tent at 'Barclif goes Global'. There are still a few events to come before the year is out (see back page), but for 2014 it's 'onwards and upwards'... weather permitting of course!

George

## August: Hollow Trees Farm

By Denise Crozier

*Somewhere over the rainbow is a place called Hollow Trees. A long time ago two young newlyweds set up their first home by a hollow tree and this is where their story began...*

Monday evening, the gardening club set out for their visit to Hollow Trees Farm. As usual, there was a very good turnout of members in the pouring rain, but armed with brollies, a few raincoats and even fewer wellies, everybody was determined to have fun. We were met by Sally Bendall, who along with her husband Robert, farm 140 acres.

The farm is very diverse; they grow vegetables and produce meat for their shop. As part of a stewardship scheme, Robert farms for the benefit of the wildlife and the environment which includes seed crops to feed the birds in the winter and the restoration of the farm's natural ponds. Sally employs people to organise the frequent school visits which aim to educate future generations about where their food actually comes from!

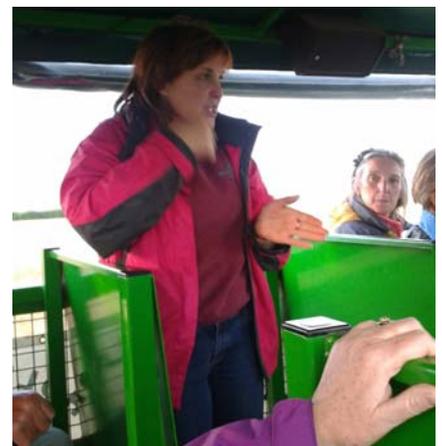
After our introduction, we had a tractor ride around the farm, met the farm animals, walked through the plant nursery and, of course, finished up in the restaurant. Sally served us tea and coffee with delicious homemade flapjacks and biscuits, Robert turned up in time to wash-up!

Denise



*Right: Tractor-drawn guided tour of Hollow Trees.*

*Left: Hardy members of the Club brave the rain to experience Hollow Trees Farm.*



For more information visit: [www.hollowtrees.co.uk](http://www.hollowtrees.co.uk)

## September: 'BarclifWent Global'

By Bill Baldry

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of Battisford declaring its independence, a few stalwarts from the village and a determined newcomer decided to organise a weekend of activities under the 'BARCLIF Goes Global' banner - and what a successful weekend it turned out to be. Congratulations to the organisers for a very well thought out programme of activities.

BDGC's involvement was to man the tea tent for the Saturday afternoon. Many thanks to everyone who helped to set up, supply cakes or keep the customers refreshed on a fine autumn day. The event was opened by BBC Radio Suffolk's Lesley Dolphin, who is pictured below visiting our stall which made £238 for club funds.

Bill



*Lesley Dolphin and Club volunteers consider Bill's comment about 'manning' the tea tent.*

## September: Trees!

By Bill Baldry

David Mitchell, recently retired Tree and Landscape Officer from Mid Suffolk District Council, came and gave us a very interesting talk about "Trees". He explained all the aspects that his former job covered, especially the need to try and reconcile developers' aspirations to squeeze in as much as possible and the need to have regard for the natural features on a site - especially any mature trees. He also covered other aspects of tree management, landscaping new developments, and tree diseases in a most informative talk.



David Mitchell talks about all things tree-related to an attentive audience.

Bill

[Why won't people sit in the front row? Ed.]

## October: Another Good Meeting

By George Bethell

This year's AGM saw an amazing turnout with 46 members packed into the Community Centre.

The evening started with an excellent presentation by Ian Burnett, Commercial Director of the Orchard Barn Community Interest Company. The not-for-profit organisation (Obee CIC) is responsible for the Orchard Barn Project in Ringshall where a veritable army of volunteers has completely refurbished a once derelict, 17th century barn which now serves as an education centre promoting the development of rural skills using natural materials. Ian spoke with both knowledge and passion about the history, present and future of the Project.

First, the Project has, from the beginning, incorporated the training of people into all its activities. For example, a recent programme supported by the European Social Fund allowed twenty-one local, unemployed people to gain valuable skills and, equally importantly, rebuild their self confidence.

Second, the Project is committed to authenticity in its use of traditional building techniques and materials. Ian waxed lyrical about 'hand converted' logs, cleft shingles and cob 'splat tests'.

Third, the Project uses its 'off-the-grid' centre to promote sustainable development. Indeed, Ian seems to have developed a somewhat scatological obsession and spent a long time singing the praises of composting urinals and long-drop toilets!

The Project site is now registered as part of the Permaculture LAND Network but Ian admitted that their gardening activities are 'in their infancy'. He invited anyone interested in helping to move things on to contact the Project Team.

([www.orchardbarn.org.uk](http://www.orchardbarn.org.uk))

The Project's interesting story and the optimistic messages within it were much appreciated by the large audience.

George



Ian Burnett explains how traditional woodworking techniques were used to restore Orchard barn to its former glory.



Sweet chestnut battens and 20,000 oak shingles provide the barn with its crowning glory.

### Committee Members from 7th October 2013

- |                          |                             |                               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ◆ Bill Baldry (Chairman) | ◆ Daphne Baldry (Secretary) | ◆ Debbie McDowall (Treasurer) |
| ◆ Paul Hansord           | ◆ Jim Henson                | ◆ Caroline Wicking            |
| ◆ Jo Pepper*             | ◆ Gwyneth Hogger*           | ◆ Denis Wicking*              |

\*appointed at the AGM, 2013

### Other points of contact:

- ◆ Webmaster: Denis Wicking ([denis@wicking.me](mailto:denis@wicking.me)) ◆ Newsletter Editor: George Bethell ([bethell.george@gmail.com](mailto:bethell.george@gmail.com))

## 2014: Whither the Annual Show?

By George Bethell

2013 has been a good year for the Club and the pinnacle was probably the Annual Show. The omens were bad with the Combs Fete moving to July coupled with several months of atrocious gardening weather but, with much cajoling from Bill and his team, a record number of entries were forthcoming and these resulted in a large, colourful show which was appreciated not only by Club members, but also by the fete's many visitors. However, putting on the Show is a Herculean task and the AGM was the right forum to discuss options for 2014.

To cut a long story short, there was overwhelming support for continuing our association with Combs Fete and so next year's show *will* be in July. However, it was also agreed that it would be nice to hold a 'small and intimate' competition for members at our September meeting. 'A Harvest Box' was suggested.

Each year, Thompson and Morgan (in the guise of the lovely Paul Hansord) generously give plants, bulbs, and seed potatoes in the hope that these will eventually be entered as exhibits in the Show's special classes. Unfortunately, many of these never reach the show bench and so Paul and the Committee are keen to explore 'incentives' to persuade us all to 'grow and show'. Watch this space...

Finally, the task of organising the Show has, in the past, tended to fall on the shoulders of Bill, the Committee, and a small band of loyal supporters. But the workload is immense, especially in the weeks running up to the Show, and we have to find ways of reinforcing the organising committee and press-ganging 'volunteers' so the load can be spread. Ask not what your Club can do for you...

George

## Permaculture explained...

Ian Burnett's talk about the Orchard Barn (Obee) Project included the term 'permaculture'. Everyone in the hall sort of understood what it meant but no-one (not even Ian!) could give a definition so here, straight from the website of the Permaculture Association ([www.permaculture.org.uk](http://www.permaculture.org.uk)) is clarification.

"The word 'permaculture' comes from '**permanent agriculture**' and '**permanent culture**' - it is about living lightly on the planet, and making sure that we can sustain human activities for many generations to come, in harmony with nature."

Permaculture in action is based on three basic pillars:

- adherence to an ethical framework;
- an understanding of how nature works; and,
- Adopting a 'design approach' to solutions.

Aspects of the Obee Project that resonate with the permaculture approach to the built environment are: green woodworking, timber frames, use of cob as a building material, rainwater harvesting and, Ian's favourite topic, environmentally friendly 'sewage' treatment!

The Obee Project is also registered as part of the permaculture **L**earning **A**nd **N**etwork **D**emonstration (LAND) project - a network of sites committed to helping people "learn more about what permaculture means and how we can live lightly on the Earth".

George



Prize winning vegetables at this year's show in July. What will you be able to present in a September 'Harvest Box'?

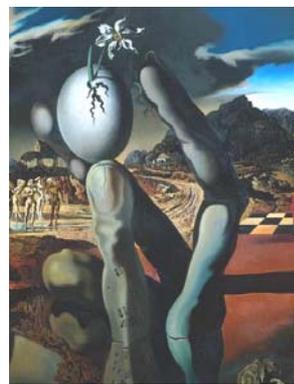


A bunch of daffodil questions...  
(Answers at foot of the back page.)

- 1: One of the most popular daffodil varieties is named after a king remembered for defeating the Vikings and, allegedly, burning some cakes. Who?  
A King Arthur B King Alfred C King Æthelred
- 2: William Wordsworth's 'host of golden daffodils' was probably of the native daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus ssp. obvallaris*. Their common name links them with which British town?  
A Corby B Whitby C Tenby
- 3: T&M's website says that 'Tete-a-Tete' is probably the world's most popular miniature daffodil. But, linguistically speaking, how should it be written?  
A Tête à Tête B Tête à Tête C Tête à Tête
- 4: In the 1947 film 'Black Narcissus' Deborah Kerr played what?  
A a spy B an opera singer C a nun
- 5: Daffodils are traditionally worn on St David's Day. When?  
A 1st March B 17th March C 30th November

6: Who painted this image inspired by the Greek myth of Narcissus?

- A Pablo Picasso
- B Salvador Dali
- C René Magritte



## We welcome contributions to the Newsletter

Any suggestions or submissions for future newsletters to:  
George via [bethell.george@gmail.com](mailto:bethell.george@gmail.com) or in person.

## Coming events...

### Monday 4th November: Speaker Andy Wilkinson

Andy Wilkinson of 'Triffid Nurseries', Stoke Ash, Suffolk will talk on 'Carnivorous Plants'. ([www.triffidnurseries.co.uk](http://www.triffidnurseries.co.uk))  
7:30 pm at the Battsford Community Centre.

### Monday 2nd December: Quiz + free Buffet

Quiz Master George Bethell. Free buffet supper - bring your own drinks!  
7:00 pm at the Battsford Community Centre - *note early start.*

### Saturday 7th December: Christmas Workshop

Jackie Collings shares her amazing skills in another workshop. By the time you read this, it is likely that all tickets will have been sold. Special pleading and large bribes to Linda Clark.

### Friday 10th January: Annual Club Meal

After last year's successful event, this year's Club meal will once again be at the Alder Carr Barn Café. The menu will be circulated to members as soon as it becomes available.

### Monday 3rd February: Speaker Dave Coop\*\*\*

At the AGM great interest was expressed in the topic of compost and so, in a late change to the programme, Dave Coop of Westland Compost will be our speaker in February. He covers a variety of topics - as well as compost - so it should be an interesting evening. 7:30 pm at the Community Centre.  
(Mike Warren has kindly agreed to switch his talk on 'Climbers, Creepers, and Crawlers' to the September meeting.)

### Monday 3rd March: Speaker Matthew Tanton Brown

Matthew Tanton Brown of 'The Place for Plants' in East Bergholt will talk on 'The fragrant garden throughout the year'.  
7:30 pm at the Battsford Community Centre.

## T&M Seeds and Plants Order Urgent!

T&M's 2014 Seed Catalogue is out now and, as in the past, orders placed through the Club will attract extremely generous discounts - *50% on seeds and 20% on everything else.*

Tori wants to place a bulk order by mid-November so that seeds are received, with any luck, by Christmas. So, all orders (together with cheques made payable to Thompson and Morgan) must be handed in at the meeting on Monday 4th November or be with Tori by Friday 8th November. Don't delay!  
Orders can be dropped off in Tori's famous white bread bin (really!) at Poplar Cottage, Moats Tye, IP14 2EY.

Orders can be submitted on the official order form to be found in the T&M catalogue or on paper provided you list:

- ♦ product code (e.g. TM38788) ♦ product description
- ♦ page number ♦ quantity ♦ unit cost ♦ total cost.

If you have any queries, Tori's e-mail is:  
[whitehead380@btinternet.com](mailto:whitehead380@btinternet.com)

(There will probably be another seed order in early 2014 if you miss out on this one.)

## And finally...

### Linda Clark's Best Ever Xmas Cake Recipe

#### Ingredients :

2 cups flour	4 oz butter	1 cup water
1 cup white sugar	1 tsp baking powder	1 tsp salt
1 cup brown sugar	juice of 1 lemon	4 large eggs
Mixed nuts	2 bottles wine	2 cups dried fruit

#### Method:

- 1 Uncork the wine and sample to check quality.
- 2 Take a large bowl.
- 3 Pour out one level cup of wine and drink to ensure that it is of the required quality. Repeat.
- 4 Plug in food-mixer and turn on. Beat one cup of butter in the large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon sugar. Beat again.
- 5 At thus point, it is recommended to taste the wine again to make sure it is at the correct temperature. Try another cup just in case.
- 6 Turn off the mixer thingy. Break two eggs and add to bowl. Chuck in two cups dried fruit.
- 7 Pick the frigging fruit up from the floor. Mix on the turner. If the fried fruit gets stuck in the beaterers, just pry it loose with a drowscriver.
- 8 Sample the wine to check for tonsisticity. Next, sift two cups of salt. Or something. Check the wine.
- 9 Now shift the lemon juice and strain your nuts. Add one table. Add a sugar spoon, or somefink. Whatever...
- 10 Greash the oven. Turn the cake tin 360° and try not to fall over. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Finally throw the bowl through the window.
- 11 Finish the wine and wipe worktop with cat.
- 12 Go to Tesco and buy cake.

## Bingle Jells!!



**50% off seeds**

**20% off plants, etc.**

**Order now!**

If you haven't got a copy of the catalogue contact Tori or Bill and they will do their best to find one for you.

### Brain Teasels Answers

1: B  
2: C  
3: A  
4: C  
5: A  
6: B