



Chairman's Notes – December 2007

Since our last newsletter so many exciting things have happened. The show went fantastically well and with three outings to report its been hard to fit in. Our new venture – the 4-day garden tour, mini holiday – was wonderful and plans are in hand to repeat this in 2008. Possibilities are Normandy, Somerset or Scottish islands. Attendance at meetings continues to rise – how many societies have 65 attend their AGM! Irene Spencer has ended her term as secretary but continues on the committee. John King has taken on this job. With no other volunteers the present committee is otherwise unchanged. Thanks to Pat, next year's events programme, opening with ITV's "Little Green Chillie Man", is probably one of the best yet. These are great social evenings too – *Barbara Kenny*



EVENTS 2008



Annual Dinner Fri April 4th

Evening visit Wed June 18th

Jaqueline Iddon's Garden at Bretherton

Summer Outing Sat July 5th

Holehird and Rydal Hall

Annual Show Sat August 23rd

Meetings: (3rd Wed of month)

(1) Chillies, Chillies, Chillies (2) The Design of a Mixed Border (3) Ferns (4) Growing Alpines and Hardy Orchids (5) Our Changing Climate & Plant Protection (7) The Gardens and Park of Smithills Hall (9) Collecting and Sowing Seeds (10) Vegetables for every taste (11) AGM, Seed Swap and social evening

CORRECTION – the AGM will be on the 19th November 2008 and not the 21st as on the Membership Card

See Web-site for talk summaries

Summer Outing - Normanby Hall gave us an interesting (and extended!) day out and the weather was very kind. We enjoyed a specially provided lunch at the nearby Golf Club, followed by a guided tour of the Victorian Walled Garden and a tour of the Hall itself. The Hall is set in 300 acres of beautiful parkland, woodland, deerpark and gardens. The Victorian Walled Garden first built in 1817 was restored and opened to the public in 1997. It is the only totally period-correct Victorian walled garden in Britain. Everything grown in the garden dates from 1901 or earlier. The gardeners use nineteenth century techniques wherever possible. Glasshouses line the one-acre garden on its warmest south-facing wall. The remainder is divided into four large vegetable plots by broad gravel paths.



Victorian varieties of vegetables are grown throughout the season. Sue Hoy, the Head Gardener, was very knowledgeable and interesting. Because of the size of our group she was kind enough to take us round in two groups. After a very enjoyable day out, it was quite a shock to have our snoozing on the return coach trip awakened by cries of smoke!

Supporting "the Barlow" - The Society was represented as one of the Users at the Barlow Institute Open Day on 24th November. The event was well supported and lively with plenty of interest in our stand where we gained 3 new members and 1 rejoin. It was amazing to see just how many different users there are in the Institute

Everyone had to disembark as quickly as possible and sit on the wooded embankment above the hard shoulder of the motorway. Very quickly the Police and Fire- Service attended and no harm was done. Whilst awaiting a replacement coach we enjoyed a very fine sunset on the motorway just outside Leeds and even more opportunity to chat to each other about the wonderful day out in sunny Scunny.

Annual Show - Despite the vagaries of the British weather the Annual Show was another great success. The Society and the people of Edgworth and surrounding areas joined forces to ensure 2007 maintained all the high standards of past years, and was also a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. The show continues to grow and this year the Barlow Institute was positively bulging. This year saw the introduction of a number of new classes, the most popular being Patio Plants and the Scarecrows. The scarecrow makers really excelled and have set a very high standard for the future. I heard that one scarecrow had to pay an entrance fee! The raffle raised £177, which has been



donated to The Friends of Turton Tower who are working to secure the future of the Tower, jeopardised by funding problems. We extend our thanks to all those who donated prizes and to all those who helped to make our Show such a popular event in the local calendar



Mini holiday to Gardens of the North East - On 3rd August, 28 enthusiastic members boarded our 52 seater coach (so lots of room for plants) for a long weekend visiting 8 gardens in the North East and what a wonderful trip it turned out to be. At most gardens we had a guided tour or an introduction from the owner, which personalised the visit. Everyone got on well together with many friendships made or strengthened. Even the hotel service at dinner left us all with some amusing anecdotes!



All the gardens we visited had their own character with different styles, ranging from the big scale of Alnwick Castle Garden to the smaller, privately developed gardens, such as, the Garden Station at Hexham.

Alnwick is a modern garden on a grand scale with fascinating water sculptures, fountains and a wonderful tree house with restaurant, but perhaps the most interesting was the Poison garden. I think we all felt wary in our own gardens after that experience!

Perhaps the unexpected delight of the trip was the tranquil Crook Hall Gardens in Durham, close to the city centre. It was divided into separate areas, each with its own theme. The owners were very trusting allowing people to browse around their 13th century home unattended. There was also a tea garden with everything homemade – what more could we want!

Other memories are: - Cragside with its deep, wooded valley and the innovative house; the extensive walled garden at Wallington Hall; the quiet, secluded, country setting of The Cottage Garden with its mass of planting and dry riverbed feature; Herterton House and garden where the owners had prepared precise records of every plant and its position in the garden! and Bide-a-wee Cottage (no toilets!) with a garden created from a field and quarry.

Thanks to Phil Broughton and Brightwater Holidays for a great time. - *David Spencer*

Wilf Scarlin - It is with great sadness that the Society reports the death of Wilf at the age of 90. Wilf was a keen member of the Society and in the past had served on the Committee for many years. He twice presented prizes at our Annual Show, once as Chairman of the Parish Council and once as a revered member of the Society. Wilf's horticultural passion was for his roses. Inheriting this from his father, he could at one time claim to have a rose tree for every day of the year, and a few more for the new year! Not surprisingly he won the Society's Bell Cup for roses on many occasions, including 2007. Despite suffering a stroke just before the Show in 2007, he was so determined to support the Society that he gave instructions from his hospital bed to his daughter Margaret on how to exhibit his roses. He will be sadly missed by the Society and our best wishes and condolences go to his wife Kathleen and to Margaret. Hopefully Margaret will be able to continue the family tradition of rose growing. In the meantime, I am sure Wilf is currently giving Harry Wheatcroft a few tips on rose growing! - *Barry Scanton*

Autumn Outing - On 29 September a near full coach set out from the society to visit Ness Botanical gardens on the Wirral. We had hoped to see the trees in their autumn colours for which Ness is renown, but due to the mildness of the weather they were not at their peak. However this did have its benefits because the borders were still very colourful and the weather was warm and dry. Following lunch we were given a guided tour of the grounds by one of the volunteers. We visited areas most of us had missed in the morning, and were given the history of the founding of Ness gardens. It was fascinating to learn that Arthur Bulley a Liverpool cotton merchant had created the gardens in 1898, stipulating that a portion of the garden should be open to local residents. Bulley was interested in introducing new species of plants from abroad and sponsored many expeditions to the Far East. Part of the garden was given over to propagating the seeds from these plants, from which the seed company Bees Ltd began. Ness gardens continue to be managed as a botanical garden but now have an emphasis on climate change education and the environment.



Welcome to new members!

Lorraine Berry, Fiona Berry, Irene Bromelow, Susan Donovan, Jeffrey Gilpin, Joan Gilpin, Jennie Gilpin, Kay Halliday, Susan Hill, Ron Knight, Mrs K Patrick, Keith Shatwell, Mary Stubbs, Jim Ward, John Wyncoll, Susan Wyncoll

Puzzle answers (from last issue)

- 1) PLAYERS PARSLEY 2) MADE NOTE NEMATODE 3) ALLURE LAUREL 4) WAGERED RAGWEED
- 5) RATES ASTER 7) STILLER TRELIS 8) CLIMATES CLEMATIS 9) BESTIAL ASTILBE
- 10) RATHER MOW EARTHWORM 11) AVAILS SALVIA 12) SH&DE E&DHS

If you found no.6) NEW JETSET HACK rather hard – it because I set it wrong. Apologies for all those hours of frustration! It should have been HECK A LATER JET (answer below)

LEATHER JACKET