



WHALEY BRIDGE
Allotment & Gardeners'
 Society



OCTOBER 2017

Recent events.

Trentham Gardens 14th Sept 2017.



Sadly there were only 14 of us to enjoy this wonderful trip. The very changeable weather relented and it was mainly sunny albeit cool in the shade. Our guide, Clive, gave us a very interesting tour of the gardens and brief history of the house, now in ruins.



Already millions have been spent on restoring the gardens and there are plans for more major

expenditure on restoring the house over the next 10 years. Certainly there has been a great improvement over the last 10 years, with new meadow plantings around the mile long lake originally landscaped by Capability Brown. The historic Italian garden re-vamped by Tom Stuart-Smith with 80,000 perennials looked fine with fountains, topiary and statues, and a large area of prairie planting, by Piet Oudolf, featuring 'rivers of grass and a floral labyrinth' with drifts of grass seed heads swaying dramatically about in the breeze.



Some of the party walked the path around the lake while others enjoyed the café and interesting retail area or the extensive garden centre. Just after we re-boarded the coach a heavy shower arrived, thankfully too late to spoil the day.

Social evening 22nd September 2017.

A small gathering of 14 had an enjoyable and entertaining evening. A second light hearted slide show quiz was held due to the success of the one held last year. Teams of two competed whilst Dave Parker entertained them with his jests. The winning team was Roy and Rosemary who scored 20 out of 24. Quizmaster Bob apologised as the prize of small cyclamen had been left at home. Refreshments including wine ensured plenty of chat following the quiz. The raffle was won by Marion Parker and Jean Philbin's friend. A third quiz is available for next year when hopefully we will have a few more participants.

Talk on Japanese Gardens. 5th October 2017.

We enjoyed a very detailed and enlightening talk on Japanese gardens from Iain Davies who is principal for the NW region of the Japanese Garden Society. The illustrated talk covered just about all aspects exploring the history and culture of Japanese gardening traditions. It all began in the fifth century with Buddhist monks attempting to capture the spirit of nature. There are a wide range of types of these gardens but all have common features to inspire meditation in a peaceful setting. Features may include

rocks of at least three different sizes, raked gravel areas resembling water, zig zag stepping stones, cherry trees acers, topiary box and cloud pruned pines.



Probably the best example in this country is at Tatton Park. The JGS NW region maintain a Japanese garden at Sale and also various hospice gardens in the region.

Coming events.

Annual General Meeting. Friday 3rd November.

This will be at 2 p.m. at Whaley Bridge Uniting Church. There will be the usual refreshments and free raffle. ***Your annual subscription of £5 is due at the meeting or during November.***

It's your society.

It would be great to see lots of you at the AGM. The current committee are willing to continue but if you would like to become more involved please make yourself known. In particular Roger would appreciate suggestions for next year's talks or any subjects that are of particular interest to you.

Coffee morning. Saturday 9th December.

This will be held at the Mechanics Institute from 9.30

a.m. to 12 noon. Offers of help to Rosemary please. Donations of raffle prizes would be appreciated. There will be sale of potted bulbs. If you have any spare attractive pots suitable for planting up hyacinths or amaryllis these would be welcomed by Rosemary.

Store News.

The store is now closed but your out of season requirements can be directed to Dave Osborn. Delivery of catalogues for the new seed scheme from Dobies are imminent. If you have previously placed an order with Kings you will automatically receive a catalogue. New customers can request a copy from Dave Osborn.

Out and about.

Chapel garden club have talks on 27th October by Jeff Bates on alpine and rock gardening and on 29th November by Don Witton who we visited in May. Both are at Chapel Town Hall at 7.30 p.m. and cost £2 for non-members.

Whaley Garden Show was an enjoyable afternoon attended by many of our members. My granddaughter was delighted to win the trophy for best miniature garden – well done Freya. I'll be asking for a few tips for next year.



Allotment news.

Despite the work done some plots are still plagued by drainage problems. A working group has been set up and money from rental will be spent on improvements. There is still a waiting list for plots so perhaps share cropping might be a solution for anyone whose garden is getting a bit too much.

Feeding the birds.

In recent years the advice on when to feed garden birds has changed significantly. Once we were told to stop feeding during the summer; the advice now is to feed all year. There is a particular focus on what is known as "the hungry gap"; the point in spring when natural food sources are exhausted but birds still need to be in top condition for singing and egg laying. By planting bushes that bear edible berries, leaving seed heads over winter, reducing use of pesticides, having a small pond, compost heap trees and hedges – then the extra food you put out will be a boost in times of need.



Feeding stations attract birds to the same spot day after day so good hygiene is essential to prevent the transmission of disease.

The UK wild bird food market was estimated to be £200 million in 2016. Bob tells me that Rosemary is a substantial contributor to this total.