



Newsletter

Nidderdale Hardy
Planters

Issue 6
Autumn 2008

Welcome back to another year full of interest.

We kick off in September with a virtual trip round Jacqueline Iddon's favourite plants and in October we have Jack Swan, lately of Jodrell Bank Arboretum, talking about The Beauty of Trees and Shrubs. Later in the year we have Wildlife Gardening, Miniature Bulbs and exploring with the plant hunters.

In February we are promised a very entertaining talk by Timothy Walker, Director of the Oxford Botanic Garden, with the rather surprising title *On top but never in control* – about the development of his wife's garden! In March and April we concentrate on polemoniums and fritillarias and finish up our winter season with the Plant Auction in May.

Garden visits report 2008

* Once again, the summer programme has proved popular with members. There is no ques- *
* tion that these trips provide good value for money and a comfortable, stress-less way of en- *
* joying a day out with like-minded people. We always make sure that we provide a luxury *
* coach, with loo and coffee stops as required. If you've never been on one of our summer *
* visits – think seriously about it in 2009: we haven't yet got to the stage of providing crates of *
* beer and a sing-along on the way home, but it is still a very enjoyable and friendly way of *
* spending a day. *
* We have already received suggestions for next year's trips, including Gardeners' World Live *
* at the Birmingham NEC in June, and several gardens in Northumberland. If you have strong *
* views about these or any others - let us know. *

In June we went to Tatton Park.....

Tatton Park has a wonderful combination of rolling parkland, lovely gardens and historic buildings. Highlights of the garden were Joseph Paxton's fernery and the pineapple house, with little fountains cunningly tucked away inside artificial pineapples, the rose garden and the walled garden. Best of all, perhaps, was the Japanese garden with its wonderful collection of maples, miniature lakes, stone paths and lanterns. This can be viewed from the perimeter but some of us booked for the guided tour which was fascinating.

Most of us visited the Old Hall, but we didn't get the promised guided tour because there was an amazing Medieval Fair on at the time which meant that tours were cancelled. However – looking on the bright side – the Fair was a colourful plus and we did in any case get to see the Old Hall.

It has to be said that the communication between Cheshire County Council – with whom all the bookings had been made – and the National Trust, which has charge of actually running the gardens and the Old Hall left something to be desired. It did mean that Paddy had some arguing to do with the gatekeepers, but in the end everything turned out fine. This included the weather, which was brilliant, and we all had a great day out.

In July we went to Kexby House and Hall Farm

Another fabulous day saw us at these two private gardens in Lincolnshire. As well as showing us her five acres of gardens, Jenny Whitton's hospitality at Kexby was second to none. She kept our packed lunches in the cool until we needed them; treated us to super home-made cakes and unlimited tea, coffee and cold drinks in her wonderful conservatory as well as giving us the run of the many shady sitting areas and what she called the garden shed, although it would be more appropriately called a little detached garden villa complete with kitchen and loo. We then went on to Hall Farm, smaller and more intimate than Kexby, very much a plantsman's (woman's?) garden and full of intriguing sculptures, including the enormous Caterpillar from Alice in Wonderland – all of which were for sale. Pam and Mark Tatam run a super nursery there and Pam showed some of us round the working parts – others could not be dragged away from the sales area until it was time to leave for home! These two gardens would certainly repay a visit (see the Yellow Book for details) and certainly be prepared to bring home great plants at great prices.

In August we go to The Ranch House at Calverley at the time of writing we have not yet been there.

Don't forget

First meeting of the new season is at 7.30 Tuesday 9 Sept. Jacqueline Iddon will give an illustrated talk - *Iddon Treasures* - on the wide variety of plants she loves to grow and the design and development of the garden she opens for the NGS. Look forward to seeing you there. www.jacquelineiddonhardyplants.co.uk



Your current committee

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Daphne Kent

Members will be sad to hear that Daphne, who had been a member of Nidderdale Hardy Planters since it started, died on Wednesday 6 August 2008.

Characteristically, she kept herself busy right until the end. Although she was not herself able to eat because of her illness, she so loved to bake that she continued to make wonderful cakes for her friends and neighbours.

AGM

The AGM will be held on Tuesday 11 November at 7.00pm before the speaker –Graham Porter, Horticultural consultant and BBC journalist - starts his talk on *Wildlife Gardening* at 7.30 pm

- ◇ Following last year's AGM at which you agreed to the new position of Membership Secretary, Jane Saxby volunteered to take on the task and was later co-opted onto the committee. We will ask you to ratify her co-option.
- ◇ This year Kathy Collett and Anne Wright reach the end of their term and so will be retiring. We would like to thank them for their service over the past three years.
- ◇ The other current committee members are eligible and willing to continue to serve to the end of their term.
- ◇ There will be two vacancies for new committee members at this year's AGM. Nominations should be given to Paddy Mayes by 14 October.

Getting involved

The current committee members want to encourage an injection of "new blood" into the committee. In 2009 Paddy, Ray and Liz will retire: unless we have some new members this autumn, the following year will have to start with only 4 experienced members.

In order to help us preserve and pass on knowledge to new committee members, this year we have put together a manual detailing all the activities and day-to-day working of the club. It includes details of constitutional matters, our financial arrangements, premises, the equipment we own and communications. This clarifies the activities of the club as well as the communal tasks and individual responsibilities of committee members. We hope that this will help us avoid constantly re-inventing the wheel.

In order to have some continuity we urge you to consider standing this autumn – by all means talk to any of the existing members, who will be happy to talk you through our activities and responsibilities.

Without wishing to be alarmist, we cannot stress too strongly that it really is necessary to have a strong and active committee – without it our club cannot survive.

Christmas meeting Tuesday 9 December.

We've taken on board your suggestion that we should have a lecture at our December meeting. Our member Ivor Fox will talk about *Miniature Bulbs in the garden*. See www.miniaturebulbs.co.uk.

We will also, of course, have the usual bumper raffle, festive refreshments and a chance to socialise. We hope that as many of you as possible will be able to come to this meeting, particularly since it is quite early in December this year and should not clash so much with your Christmas preparations.

If you would like to make any suggestions for improvements or future activities please put them in the blue file on the Treasurer's table—or tell any committee member.

If you have told us that you need a lift to or from meetings look in the blue file for details of members who have offered lifts.



