



Oxenhope

Gardening Club News

March 2024

Welcome to the March newsletter.

It was such a pleasure to welcome you all back last month, to what was a stimulating and enjoyable evening. We were particularly pleased that we were able to welcome Kathryn and Harry onto the committee, so thank you all for supporting their nomination, I know they will be a great addition to our already hardworking committee. At the meeting it was suggested that we might arrange a visit to Goldsborough Hall, which is near Knaresborough. So to whet your appetite, here is a brief description of the gardens. **Sandra**



The 12-acre garden at Goldsborough Hall is situated in the grounds of the Grade II* 17th century home. The land was formerly a deer hunting park, but in the mid-18th century the formal landscaped gardens were laid out by Richard Woods in the style of Capability Brown.

More recently the hall was home to HRH Princess Mary, the late Queen's aunt and daughter of George V. Princess Mary came to live at the hall following her marriage to Viscount Lascelles, son and heir of the 5th Earl of Harewood. From 1922-30 Princess Mary made many changes to the house

and garden. The hall was re-modelled by Leeds architect, Sidney Kitson, while in the gardens a vista was created to the south with the planting of a walled terrace and a beech avenue with herbaceous borders centred around Princess Mary's sundial. The Lime Tree Walk was begun with the first tree planted in 1922 by Princess Mary and Viscount Lascelles with the remaining 33 trees planted by honoured guests, including King George V and Queen Mary, while the copse of five Japanese cherry trees were given to Princess Mary as a wedding gift by the Emperor of Japan. The gardens were first shared with the public on July 4th 1928 when Princess Mary opened them as part of the newly created National Garden Scheme taking £180 13s 6d on the day!.



Since then, in 2014, the long borders and rose garden were replanted in the style of Gertrude Jekyll featuring the new rosa 'Yorkshire Princess' named after HRH Princess Mary.

A guided tour of the gardens, combined with a cream tea, would cost £17. To also include a tour of the house would bring the total to £22. (Members of Historic Houses get in free). We are proposing a visit in late June or early July. TBC. To ensure a booking, we would need the full amount by the May meeting. If

you are interested, could you give your names to either Joan or Debs at the next meeting so we can judge if there is enough interest to go ahead.

An interesting anecdote: A previous owner, Mary Wharton, married her first cousin Robert Byerley who took over the hall and estate. Robert Byerley bought a very rare Turkish horse through his marriage and it became Byerley's war horse and ended up saving his life in 1690 at the Battle of the Boyne in Ireland. The horse, named Byerley Turk, retired to a life of stud at Goldsborough Hall. This horse is also crucial to thoroughbred horse history as it is the first of three stallions that make up all thoroughbreds in the world today. The famous horse died in 1706 and is thought to have been buried in the grounds under a tree.

Welcome to this month's speaker: Samantha Hopes



Samantha initially trained and worked as a Geologist but soon found herself distracted by the plants growing on and around the rocks, more than the rocks themselves.

Following this growing interest, she became a student at Birmingham Botanical Gardens, and Pershore College and then moved to RHS Garden Wisley, specialising in Rock and Alpine plants and she also worked for short stints at Kew and Great Dixter. Samantha then went to work alongside John Massey at Ashwood Nurseries. At first she looked after the Hepatica collection, but breeding Roscoea has become another passion. Now, together with husband Nigel, they have created and built their own garden, propagating and growing a range of

unusual plants at home. Samantha will be speaking about some of Ashwood Nurseries specialities, and talking about the plants she raises with her husband Nigel. She will be bringing plants for sale to the meeting.

Plant of the Month. Sollya Heterophylla

In 1830, the plant physiologist, Richard Horsman Solly, while plant hunting in the wilds of Australia, discovered the two species of the genus that were given his name, **Sollya Heterophylla**. No-one could fail to be flattered to have a plant named in their honour, but some plants are more attractive than others and Sollya heterophylla or as it is commonly called the Bluebell Creeper or Australian Bluebell, is a charming plant. It is evergreen, with leaves of variable size and shape, hence its name heterophylla, meaning various-leaved, with woody, climbing stems which will weave through a pergola, a trellis or up a warm sunny wall. The startling sky-blue flowers are its crowning glory, and are freely produced



from April to September. The flowers are shaped like the skirt of a crinoline ball gown, with a minute calyx and five broad, overlapping petals about 1cm long. It provides a marvellous summer display in both borders and large containers, as the bees, butterflies and other pollinators visit for a tasty, nectar-rich treat. Birds will enjoy the fruits in autumn and winter, (which, apparently are edible)



Sollya Heterophylla prefers to be grown in a sheltered spot in well-drained soil in sun or part shade. Reaching a mature height of 2m, and spreading to 1.5m, it has an RHS hardiness rating of H3, so will require winter protection as temperatures dip below zero, or it can be grown in a conservatory. However, in sheltered urban gardens or warmer areas of the UK it can survive outside, scrambling through an evergreen shrub or cascading down from the top of a wall.

Hopefully, I will be able to see this plant in its native surroundings in one of the many gardens that I hope to visit on my trip to Australia and New Zealand this March, which is why I won't be at the March meeting! However, I have ordered this plant from a nursery in the UK to plant in my son's garden near Pontefract when I return, so it will be interesting to see how it fares. I'll keep you posted! Stockists include: Sarah Raven; Thompson & Morgan; Crocus.

April's speaker will be Dr Andrew Ward from Norwell Nurseries & Gardens.

Gardening news and events:

RHS Harlow Carr: Bath House Japanese Shop open until May 5

Scampston Walled Garden: opens again on Wednesday, March 27 10-5

Scampston Walled Garden: Charity Spring Fair Friday, March 29- Sat March 30
10.30-3.30. Free entry

**Once again, thanks to our volunteers who help with teas
and coffees!**



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