

GROWING TOGETHER

The Self-Sufficiency Group

June 2024

Newsletter



GROWING TOGETHER Self-Sufficiency group exists to enable and encourage its members to practice self-sufficiency and self-reliance, and maintain a "sustainable life style" in a fast changing worldwide environment

View this newsletter at:-

www.ehss.org.uk

Indoor meetings are held at 19.30 on the 2nd Wednesday of the month in the:-

Triangle Centre, Liss. GU33 7DX

Contacts:-

President: Alec Fry

fry.alec@gmail.com

Chairman: Sally Elborough

sallyelborough@gmail.com

Membership: Ann Brockhurst

01428 653355

Treasurer: Andy Tate

ahjtate@gmail.com

Secretary: Frances Bassom

secretary@ehss.org.uk

Newsletter Editor :Dru Furneaux

07876731661 01730 814193

drufulneaux@btinternet.com

Our meeting in June: Wednesday 12th at 7pm, will be a visit to Cristobel Barren at Woolhouse Farm. We are invited to take our own picnic to enjoy while she tells us of her cheesemaking in earlier times. We are of course free to walk and enjoy one of the most beautiful places in the area. **AND YOU WILL NEED WELLIES! ITS WET THERE AT THE MOMENT AND SHE TELLS ME BY JUNE 12 WE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE THE BOG PIMPERNEL!** The name alone should tell you why.

So bring yourselves a picnic, and come!

Directions: Woolhouse Farm Stedham, Midhurst GU29 0QH. From the A272 towards Midhurst, (about ¼ mile before the 30mph sign) take the left turn to Woolbeeding and Redford. A couple of miles along the road on your left you will see a property with entrances to (1) a private road, (2) a property Wispers Lodge, and (3) a farm track and (4) a red pillar box. Turn left through (1) a wooden gate along a **private road**, at the end of which, turn right and follow the track till you get there! Google Maps **GU29 0QH** is exactly on the farmhouse.

Resume of the May meeting at Ramster Garden:

The house and garden have been in the same family for a hundred years. It is now run by the fourth generation of the Glaister's, Rosie and Malcolm. The sun shone! 9 of us and 3 well-behaved dogs enjoyed a visit to Ramster. What a truly lovely garden it is! And it was the perfect time of year to see the huge Rhododendrons and Azaleas.



As the garden is not open in the evenings, we decided to kick off our outdoor meetings with a Saturday afternoon. Not ideal for everyone

unfortunately, but then, often the evening meetings are not either.

It was a real treat for me to go there again as in my incarnation as an events photographer, I went there many times.

Apart from the rhododendrons and azaleas, there are 71 trees and shrubs numbered and described in a booklet. *Corylopsis pauciflora* has primrose yellow scented flowers on bare stems before the leaves appear in March. This was introduced from Japan by Robert Fortune in 1860.

That's the only one I am going to describe as I am unable to pick any others: and I am not typing out the entire list!



As so much of May has been disappointingly cold and dreary, we really were very lucky that day

I am informed the ground is both clay with pockets of sandstone, making it a wonderful habitat for all those spectacular plants. Although there were plenty of visitors that day, we didn't feel crowded in at all.

I, like the rest of us in the group are hoping for lots of lovely trips this summer, to set us up for a newsletter only winter.....so I will be looking for photos and descriptions of our visits to fill the cold dark months next year and perhaps some new ideas for useful/ helpful articles for this newsletter....just a thought!





In the first group photo you will see the dog I have with me, Bella is being investigated, (in a nice way,) by Barney. Shadow on the other side, is looking on with interest. In the second pic good behaviour reigns

THE COMPOST BIN

“Make friends with molluscs” says the RHS. “Don’t be ridiculous!” comments Alan Titchmarsh. My feelings entirely; right now, slugs and snails are the most serious threat to my growing crops and tender flower seedlings, worse than pigeons, squirrels and rodents combined. Having reached the end of my bulk supply of the infamous Metaldehyde I duly ordered a packet of nematode pellets from Amazon. As far as I can see, their main drawback is that I must wait a week or more after application before any visible effect is seen, so I quickly added to my order a packet of the ferric phosphate to “bridge the gap” – otherwise it’s out with the torch again on every damp night to chop up any slugs who may be immune to all my efforts.

Rapid growth: compare this photo of our new vegetable plot with the photo in an earlier issue! Broad beans now well up, carrots inside the fly-proof tunnel need “singling”, and the runner beans are starting to climb their new supports.



Experimenting time: I ran a side-by-side comparison with the rather clumsy folding “Roottrainers” when sowing my climbing beans in the greenhouse this year. The other candidate consisted of loo-roll centres – but with a difference. Previously I just crammed them into seed trays, with the result that they softened and fell apart. This year I found that they are a precise fit in those trays of round seed modules (which we bulk-ordered for members some years back), as these space them slightly apart. As a result, they held their shape. Compared with the much-acclaimed flimsy plastic pots they proved to be a clear winner – long enough for the required root growth, environmentally friendly *and free!* When the beans are six inches high you can either cut the cardboard “pots” along their length and put the remains on the compost heap, or even plant them out complete with the loo rolls!



That’s all for now, as I have just returned from a week’s welcome break near Bridport, quickly arranged through Airbnb, so there’s so much else to

catch up with. Next month I'll give a summary of the hints and tips we've been exchanging through our increasingly-popular WhatsApp group so that nobody need feel left out – but if you do use a mobile phone I urge you to contact member Antonia Taylor (Toni) on 07771 927903; she'll explain how it all works and add you to the list. As for me, I would be interested to hear members' experiences with slug control – through our WhatsApp group of course!

--Alec

Dru's world....

Seems to have a momentum of its own, which I do not necessarily favour.....

Out yesterday at a fete and in search of stock, I now have an Edwardian chair in Barry's car which I need to get out and somehow into his shed for renovating, before he gets home from a well needed break fishing with a friend. His fracture in the lower part of his back causes pain and must not be made any worse by lifting and carrying. This also resulted in me cleaning both the cars this morning and cooking him a nice omelette before he went out. Spoilt or what? And of course the old gentleman I work for has caused me extra hours away from home and lots of extra work as in up and down to hospital, keeping the garden in check and then once home trying to persuade him that gardening alone was not such a great idea...all to no avail. He is, I am happy to say, fine, although a little too thin. His foot has healed, the bacterial infection gone. He is not driving at present...don't ask...so trips to buy plants and compost and plant out all under way. Planning for next summer already. That's how you get to be 95!!!

My house refurb is going slowly as the garden has sort of taken over at the moment. It is actually in its most beautiful state....late May and June, all the flowers in such abundance that I keep finding a new treasure every time I look.

Bought two bearded Iris at Ramster and another one yesterday at the fete. They will be planted under the dining room window as it gets lots of nice baking sun there.

My annual climbing plants like Morning Glory and the cup and saucer vine are ok, but the nights are still cold and holding them back.

I spent two days on and off getting the summerhouse fit for habitation as a friend arrives on Tuesday for a couple of days and she is happy to

sleep in there. It does look beautiful! All spiders out, cleaned and aired!

First of my fete committee meetings tomorrow night: Trotton fete 14th September. I expect to be running the bricabrac again...maybe for the last time.... then book club Tuesday eve. Village Hall agm later in the month and JOY! Trip to Chichester Festival Theatre. Going to a matinee...bet that resonates with some of our older members!

Harting runs film nights, including plays from the National Theatre. £12...amazing! I saw a rather avant-garde play, Vanya, a retelling of Uncle Vanya. One man performance on stage for 2 solid hours, playing all the parts. It left a lot of people puzzled and bemused...and I found I understood it much better on reflection than at the time.

Lots of friends have been away and continue to make trips of varying lengths, so dogs come and go with revolving door consistency. Having said that, no one here at the moment.

I am intending to send this newsletter out shortly, but just right now we have almost no internet....now what????

Dru

