

# NORTHERN Leaves

Issue No. 51

May 2023



**The Newsletter of the Hardy Plant Society  
Scottish and Northern Borders Group**

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## **The Hardy Plant Society**

**The Hardy Plant Society** was formed to foster interest in hardy herbaceous plants. It aims to give its members information about the wealth of both familiar and less well known plants and to ensure that all garden-worthy perennial plants remain in cultivation and have the widest possible distribution.

**HPS website: [www.hardy-plant.org.uk](http://www.hardy-plant.org.uk)**

**The Scottish and Northern Borders Group** has members all over Scotland and several in the north of England. The group organises garden visits in spring, summer and autumn, with lecture days in the winter, arranged at a variety of locations throughout Scotland. The group produces a magazine *Northern Leaves* in spring and autumn.

**website: [www.scothps.co.uk](http://www.scothps.co.uk)**

The next issue of *Northern Leaves* will be published in November 2023, please send any articles to be included in this issue to **Chris Sanders**, 3 Queen Street, Helensburgh, G84 9QH  
Tel. 01436 678028 e-mail: [chrislinda298@gmail.com](mailto:chrislinda298@gmail.com)

**It would be appreciated if members could set up standing orders or direct debits to pay their annual subscription promptly.**

We are grateful for the financial support of our advertisers and ask members to mention *Northern Leaves* when replying to advertisers by post or when visiting them to buy plants. Advertisers need to know that they are getting value for money from advertising in *Northern Leaves*.

### **Photographs on the covers**

Front Cover: Erythroniums at Glenarn  
Back Cover: Rhododendron at Glenarn

*Karen Beattie*  
*Karen Beattie*

## From the Convenor

This has been a mixed year for the Group as we hopefully move away from the effects of Covid-19 towards a new normality. We had unfortunately to cancel the Autumn Tints meeting but on the other hand the introduction of a January Zoom lecture has added a new dimension to group activities at a time when gardens are in hibernation. Attendance at meetings and trips is still down on previous levels but hopefully will grow during the year where an excellent programme has been produced by the Committee. Membership is approaching pre-Covid levels and hopefully with a bit of publicity from members we can bring more on board. Notwithstanding this the Group remains with a financial reserve and in a healthier position than a year ago.

The committee has welcomed new members in the last year and hopefully the AGM will result in more, an essential step in maintaining continuity. I would like to thank all the existing committee for their hard work. At this stage I would particularly like to thank Lesley Reid for her hard work on creating a new website for the Group which will be going live shortly. I would also like to thank Chris Sanders for his tireless work in producing a first-class product in *Northern Leaves*.

The Group has been in discussion with the National HPS regarding Scotland hosting the national AGM in September 2024. More to come on this as details develop.

One of the issues raised by members recently has been the information on the programme of visits. The Committee has now agreed a programme and dates for the next 12 months and will keep it rolling forward. It is on the new website and will be updated at regular intervals.

I look forward to us all attending more visits and events in 2023 and the Group continuing to grow (in all senses).

*Andrew Holmes*

## **From the Editor**

I would like to thank all those of you who contributed reports, articles and pictures to this edition; you are the life blood of *Northern Leaves*.

The trial of sending out *Northern Leaves* electronically to those people happy with this and on paper to the rest, which was implemented in the November 2022 edition, seems to have gone well. About a third of members opted for an electronic copy, leading to a significant saving in the costs of printing and postage. We have continued with this split distribution for this edition with slightly more people opting for an electronic copy.

The future of *Northern Leaves* is due to be discussed at the next committee meeting in August; I will let you know the outcome of these discussions. Many thanks again for your continuing support.

*Chris Sanders*

## **A Philosophy of Gardening**

Anthony Birch came across this quotation recently, which seems very relevant to our activities.

Knowing the number of plants that you would want, you need prick out no more than that number; but if you were to put out a thousand instead of six hundred, you might have some to give to a neighbour whose sowing might happen to have failed; and this, observe, is a thing by no means to be overlooked; for you will be a lucky gardener, indeed, if you never stand in need of like assistance from others; and this is one of the great pleasures of gardening, that one has almost always something to give away from one's superabundance; and here the gift is accompanied with no ostentation on the one side, and without it being deemed any favour on the other side.

William Cobbett, *The English Gardener*, 1838 edition: a comment on the philosophy of gardening contained in the paragraph on raising celery.



## Using Ornamental Grasses in the Garden

Ornamental grasses really do add a lot to the garden and borders and it's worth considering them when you are planning a border or looking to fill spaces. They provide varying colours, textures and movement, softening spaces between other plants and make wonderful accent plants. They look great with almost any plant and give long seasons of interest from new growth in spring to old flower stems left on through winter.



*Briza media*

It's important to choose grasses for your design that require the same conditions as their companions and where they will be going in the garden. There are grasses for damp or dry soil, shady as well as sunny situations. Many are ideal for gravel gardens, prairie planting, wildlife gardens and are great to add to the cutting garden; others perform well in containers. Ornamental grasses tolerate a wide range of conditions, but most like an open sunny position in light, moist but well-drained, moderately fertile soil.



*Carex dipsacea*

Grasses can also be used to create a temporary hedge through the growing season. Tall upright grasses such as calamagrostis work well for this. Their tall airy flowers provide a barrier but without being over-powering. Along the edge of a path smaller grasses such as carex or hakonechloa work well, softening the hard edges of paths and providing an edge to the plants within the border.

Unlike a lot of plants grasses do not need much feeding; this can encourage lush foliage at the expense of flowers. One application of a balanced fertiliser in spring is adequate. They are self-supporting, even the tallest molinias and

calamagrostis. The tallest ones growing here in the nursery suffer very little wind damage, they just go with the flow .....

Whether you want to use them as a filler, to add texture and interest or as a screen or focal point, you're almost certain to find an ornamental grass that is perfect for the job! By visiting the nursery gardens here at Quercus you will get plenty inspiration on how to use grasses and which to grow. We have a wide selection available to buy in the nursery.



*Deschampsia*

You can see our full list of grasses (with some variation as the season progresses) on our website plant page:  
<https://www.quercusgardenplants.co.uk/index.html>

If you are growing grasses in containers, use a multi-purpose compost and feed in spring. As with all containers and pots, keep well-watered, especially when the weather is dry or windy. Evergreen grasses such as carex combine well with winter bedding to give height and a contrast in texture.



*Millium effusum* 'Aureum'

Different grasses require different treatment once they've finished flowering. The foliage on deciduous grasses can be left until February for its structure and movement in the depths of winter when any contribution to interest in the garden is welcome. Evergreen grasses only require a tidy up, cutting out dead leaves and

trimming up the ends. A dog comb works well here, drawing it through the grass from base to ends taking the dead stems with it.

I've concentrated on grasses that haven't proven their worth here in the nursery at 850 feet above sea level on our cold clay soil.

*Rona Dodds*





*Molinias* at Scampston Hall



*Chionochloa rubra*



*Hakonechloa* at Scampston Hall



*Luzula sylvatica* 'Hohe Tatra'



*Molinia* 'Transparent' at Scampston Hall



*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caer.* 'Variegata'

## **Grasses for borders**

*Anthoxanthum odoratum*

*Calamagrostis x acutiflora* ‘Avalanche’

*Calamagrostis brachytricha*

*Chionochloa rubra*

*Elymus magellanicus*

*Helictotrichon sempervirens* AGM

*Juncus effusus* f. *spiralis*

*Melica nutans*

*Melica uniflora* f. *Albida*

*Milium effusum* ‘Aureum’ AGM (Bowles Golden Grass)

*Miscanthus sinensi* ‘Herman Mussel’

*Miscanthus sinensis* ‘Kleine Fontäne’ AGM

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *arundinacea* ‘Cordoba’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *arundinacea* ‘Fontäne’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *arundinacea* ‘Karl Foerster’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *arundinacea* ‘Transparent’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *arundinacea* ‘Windspiel’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caerulea* ‘Dauerstrahl’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caerulea* ‘Edith Dudszus’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caerulea* ‘Heidebraut’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caerulea* ‘Moorhexe’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caerulea* ‘Strahlenquelle’

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caerulea* ‘Variegata’ AGM

*Sesleria caerulea*

*Stipa gigantea*

## **Grasses for pots**

*Carex* ‘Ice Dance’

*Carex oshimensis* ‘Evergold’ AGM

*Carex buchananii*

*Carex dipsacea*

*Festuca glauca*

*Festuca glauca* ‘Elijah Blue’

*Stipa tenuissima*

### Grasses for shade

*Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Bronzeschleier' (Bronze Veil)

*Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Coral Cloud'

*Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Garnet Schist'

*Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Goldtau' (Golden Dew)

*Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Tauträger'

*Hakonechloa macra*

*Luzula nivea*

### Grasses for seasonal hedges, screens

*Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster'

*Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Overdam'

*Molinia caer.* subsp. *arundinacea* 'Skyracer'



*Molinia caer.* subsp. *caer.*  
'Variegata'



*Stipa gigantea*





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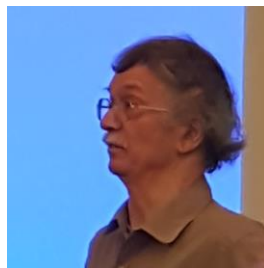
# LECTURE DAY – House for an Art Lover

## 12th November 2022

### In the Mountains of Circassia

*Michael Almond*

Dr Almond gave us a fascinating tour of the flowers to be found along the five different areas to the north of the shores of the Black Sea, north of Georgia, taken during a visit in 2012. He described the borders of the areas he visited as “a bit fluid”; you might be in the Russian Federation, Georgia or Ossetia. The key advice was not to stray where you don’t know! We saw some beautiful photos of the flowers he encountered and, by way of contrast, several photos of Russian bus shelters. All were well designed and beautiful to look at but apparently not particularly well built. Who knew there were two books about Soviet bus shelters – there’s a must for your next Christmas list!



Several of the plants encountered on the tour were recognisable to your scribe including euphorbia, ligularia, *Astrantia maxima*, *Rhododendron luteum* (as well as the dreaded, in this country at least, *R. ponticum* which apparently is much favoured as a food by cows!), *Primula venifolia*, *Campanula latifolia*, *Silene vulgaris*, aconitum. In fact, the list of amazing plants which we saw defied my ability to keep up with notes!

As you reach the plateau, 1800-2000m up, you come to the snow level where you can find aconitum, delphinium and marsh marigolds. He encountered five foot tall *Alcea rugosa*. As he said, these are very hardy plants that thrive in their native environment but whether you’d want them all in your garden is another matter. The views of Mount Elbrus (5642m) were stunning.

This was a very interesting talk that I fear I can’t do justice to in a write-up but hopefully give a flavour of the plants growing in this remote region.

*Pam Wortley*

## **My long term project to create a garden**

### ***Catherine Wilson***

Catherine Wilson is the longest standing member of the Scottish and Northern Borders Group having joined in 1973. She was a gardener as a child, growing delphiniums from seed and joining the Delphinium Society. Her early career was as a florist and she kept the trimmings from shrubby material and rooted them as cuttings as she doesn't like waste!



In 1985, Catherine and her husband, Alex moved into Kirkwood Farm, Stewarton, Ayrshire where the site was five acres exposed to winds from both west and east. There are wonderful views of the Isle of Arran but also plenty of rain, for which Catherine believes Arran to be responsible!

The garden Catherine built at Kirkwood was started from scratch, developing from grass fields over the years. From the slides she showed us and her descriptions, the result is a glorious garden full of colour and with an enormous range of plants to confirm Catherine's description of herself as a plantaholic. She keeps notes every year on how the garden develops and whether the plants flourish. If the photographs are anything to go by, Catherine succeeds with the majority, despite the winds! Of course, Catherine did not allow the plants to be completely exposed, building wind fences for shelter with netting above for climbers and planting trees.

Fortunately the soil is good and plants grow well and, as we know, Arran provides plenty of moisture. However, the north border can be very wet because the farm above does not take care of drain maintenance.

Given the limitations of the site, it is obvious that Catherine is a talented and perhaps more significantly, determined gardener. Lots of the plants she grows should not succeed, according to received opinion. However the plants have not just succeeded but flourished. It appears that if Catherine likes a plant, she gives it a go, despite being often told that some



plants will never grow in her garden, for example: roses (of which more later!).

Catherine showed us lots of glorious slides, full of plants which are obviously happy. Some of them are those which perhaps one might not expect to be suited such as eucalyptus, bronze fennel and acers.



The yellow border

There are her beloved delphiniums, grown from seed, *Paeony* 'Bowl of Beauty', *Cephalaria gigantea* and thalictrum – none of which are particularly fond of wind but doing well under Catherine's care. Tucked away in a sheltered corner are a group of yellows, acers and a golden hop, the latter climbing happily in its position out of the wind.

In early March, the garden is full of masses of hellebores, seeding prolifically and these are followed by *Iris sibirica* 'Silver Edge' and then hostas, taking advantage of the damp conditions.



Trilliums grown from seed

In the East Garden there are candelabra primulas and rodgersia, again enjoying the damp along with a lovely red monarda and also *Damara peltata*, the umbrella plant in whose leaves the birds enjoy a bath. Another damp lover is *Camassia* 'Electric Blue' which Catherine found in the Camolin Potting Shed in County Wexford. This is a variety which flowers later than normal. There are also masses of clematis and geraniums and red and yellow trilliums which Catherine obtained from the Rock Garden Club.

The East Garden is where some of her roses grow, the ones she was told would not survive – Buff Beauty, Ballerina, Docteur Jamain, Bonica, all doing exceptionally well!

The field at the back was earmarked by Alex for a vegetable garden but when Catherine saw how good the soil was, the flower garden expanded into the area, although there is still room for vegetables. Here can be found *pulsatilla*, *Hemerocallis* ‘American Revolution’, *Crocsmia* ‘Lucifer’ and ‘Hellfire’, *Alstroemeria* ‘Indian Summer’, *Helenium* ‘Sahin’s Early Flowerer’, *Monarda* ‘Raspberry Wine’, *Lobelia* ‘Queen Victoria’. As can be seen this is largely a red border and it also includes *Sanguisorba* ‘Red Buttons’ and *Sedum* ‘Purple Emperor’. Largely red but not exclusively so as Catherine, pleased with how successful the red border had been, moved several white and silver plants down here where it was drier. These included *Artemisia* ‘Silver Queen’ and ‘Powis Castle’ and also *Artemisia canescens*. These now provide a lovely foil to the reds.



*Artemisia canescens*



Red border in July

Other treasures which Catherine is particularly proud of are a tulip tree, *Liriodendron tulipifera* (which has not flowered yet because it is not large enough although it was hoped that it might have done so last summer) and a liquid amber.

Catherine allowed us to enjoy so much colour and so many plants through her glorious photographs, taken at all times of the year. Her love of the garden and her plants shone through her descriptions and we were treated to an hour’s escape to an amazing garden full of colour with a huge collection of plants. Truly the garden of a plantaholic!

*Hilary Bayley*

## **The Gardens of Culzean Castle**

***Iain Govan***

The afternoon lecture was Iain Govan, Head Gardener and Groundsman at NTS Culzean Castle speaking about the challenges of managing a Heritage Garden.



Iain began by telling us about his gardening history having started helping out as a boy firstly at Dunskey Estate and then Logan House. He worked at Edinburgh Zoo whilst being a student at Edinburgh Botanic which included a year at Threave. He obtained a Diploma in Heritage Gardening. It was whilst working as first gardener at Crathes that he was offered the post at Culzean.

So in 2017 he returned “back home” – Culzean had had a difficult time, lack of investment and no head gardener for two years. Iain produced a master plan for restoring the four acre north wall garden to reinstate the long borders, produce a production garden, make a cut flower garden border for use in the Castle – 1500 tulips, 1000 iris, 1500 dahlias and gladioli. The scale of the walled garden presented the biggest challenge and part of it was given over to a mixed orchard, a nuttery, tea border down one side and a herbal border down another. The plant sale area was disbanded because it wasn’t viable.

There are eleven people working there plus three rangers covering 750 acres – seven gardeners and four groundsmen. The speed of the restoration was amazing, bearing in mind covid intervened during this period when only three gardeners were on site when they cut grass one week and weeded the second week. As you can imagine there were different opinions on the changes to the Heritage Garden. A hugely energetic and enthusiastic person, Culzean is fortunate to have Iain in charge. Time for another visit HPS? An excellent day of lectures and a huge thank you to Helen for organising it.

*Marjorie Allen*

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**A Year in John's Garden – Zoom Talk by Nigel Hopes**  
**17th January 2023**

In the middle of January, a low time of any year, we were joined by many members from other parts of the UK for a talk on John's Garden. This is a very special John – John Massey, founder and owner of Ashwood Nurseries and this is his private garden, considered by many to be one of the finest gardens in the country. The talk was given by Nigel Hopes, head gardener, with the help of masses of lovely slides which lifted our spirits and reminded us of the beauty of our own gardens.

Nigel did in fact start work experience at Ashwood Nurseries before becoming a student at Birmingham Botanical Gardens. He worked his way up at Birmingham for ten years, becoming Senior Outdoor Supervisor. During his time at Birmingham he enjoyed a placement at Wisley and joining a plant hunting trip to South Africa.

In June 2018 Nigel went back to where it all started and became head gardener for John Massey in his private garden. He gives guided tours of the garden on Open Days and it is obvious that he has an intimate knowledge and a deep love for the garden. It is also obvious that John Massey exerts a strong influence on the planning and changing aspects. In the Ruin Garden for example he insists that in the seasonal beds, something different is planted twice each year and so there is always a

feeling of experimentation. John's love of conifers, hepaticas and hellebores are seen everywhere and also his love of people, after whom certain parts of the garden are named.

## Winter

Nigel started his tour in winter and emphasised the importance of evergreens which provide structure.

The evergreens ranged from a pendulous form of the giant redwood to the charming *Abies* 'Koreana Kohouts Ice Breaker' which is tiny and has a home in a trough.

One border of the garden is the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal which besides being attractive in itself, is an effective barrier against deer.



Winter containers are augmented by sprigs of rosehips and miscanthus seed heads which, added to existing plants such as yellow hellebores, resemble a floral arrangement. Hellebores are everywhere and, as a speciality of Ashwood Nurseries, every bloom is inspected in case a special new one is missed.



Helleborus x hybridus  
Ashwood Garden's hybrids

Evergreens are used as a contrast to flowers, for example snowdrops are mixed with evergreen winter fern and *Polystichum setifera*.

*Hamamelis mollis* 'Wisley Supreme' which is always in flower for Christmas has a green backdrop provided by *Viburnum* 'Lisarose', *Pinus nigra* 'Bright Eyes' and *Pennisetum* 'Dark Desire' (which has so far been



hardy with them). Seedheads are left on plants for the winter, for example on teasel and echinacea.

## Spring

Deer may be discouraged by the canal but there are still the squirrels! *Crocus* ‘Spring Beauty’ is planted six inches deep in an effort to deter them. However there are some advantages as there is a lovely display of



*Tulipa* ‘Diamond Jubilee’

white fritillaries, planted exclusively by the squirrels! These are in the Christopher Lloyd bed, another area replanted twice per year – but without disturbing the fritillaries.

Other spring beauties are *Narcissus* ‘Sunshine’ and *Narcissus* ‘Englander’ also a meadow of *Anemone pavonina* which naturalises well in grass.

There is also *Corydalis solida* and *Paeonia mairei*, the first paeony to flower each year. In the rock garden are *Primula* ‘Snow Cushion’ and *Trillium nivale*, the trilliums planted at the bottom of a stone wall to keep them cool.

Tulips are planted 6-8 inches deep also to deter squirrels and encourage flowering next year. These include Diamond Jubilee – white, brushed with touches of pink and one of the last to flower.

In the Stumpery, with lots of ferns, Nigel shared the maxim of ‘plant one where it should grow, plant one where it wants to grow and one where it shouldn’t grow’. (Not sure whether he was talking about ferns or plants in general!)

There are lots of pots in John’s Garden with them being reviewed and changed regularly to keep the display fresh. Many of the pots are raised for ease of viewing and maintaining interest. Another of Nigel’s tips is to give



a dilute feed every time you water and also to think about changing plant food from time to time.

More beauties of the spring garden include *Tulipa sprengeri* growing in a grass bed, the glorious white of *Clematis* 'Broughton Bride' and *Rhododendron yakushimanum* 'Koichiro Wada', also white but opening from gorgeous pink buds in the spring.

## **Summer**

In the summer garden, the spectacular *Cornus kousa* 'Wolf Eyes' is good for bringing light into the shade with its variegated leaves and white flowers. The yellow *Paeonia* 'Bartzella' is another summer favourite.

When planning a new bed, John and Nigel try to get one season right before developing the planting for the other seasons. Some experiments which have worked well include rudbeckia with *Aster* 'Jungfrau', streptocarpus as summer bedding (ferns being particularly good with blue streptocarpus) and *Verbena bonariensis* with *Tagetes* 'Cinnabar' and dark leaved sedums. Some beds are enhanced with attractive pieces of driftwood, planted upright and joined with ropes.

## **Autumn**

As the seasons move on to autumn, the garden is full of *Cyclamen hederifolium* 'White Cloud' whose leaves are often variegated and silver. Also there are drifts of *Stenbergia luteum*, the winter daffodil.

More colour is provided by *Aster* 'Little Carlow' and *Calamagrostis* 'Karl Foerster', also *Sorbus* 'Autumn Spire' which has beautiful red autumn foliage and yellow berries. *Cornus sanguineum* 'Magic Flame' is another multi-season plant with yellow autumn foliage and startling red stems in winter.

Hydrangeas include Vanilla Fraise and Phantom. (I thought Nigel said these could be grown three plants in a container in which case I assumed a huge container or that I had misunderstood him! I did check with Nigel and he said a big container, such as a half barrel would be ideal).

This is a glorious garden and we are grateful to Nigel for his wide-ranging and informative talk. For some of our members, this talk brought back happy memories of a Scottish and Northern Borders Group tour on 2 September 2021 which visited John Massey's garden in real time, there is a group photo to prove it!

*Hilary Bayley*

**Visit to Carlisle and Lanark**  
**9th February 2023**  
*Or the visit that didn't take place*

Yes, not one member wanted to come. I am claiming this as a record for the first organiser of a visit that no one applied to join on the day. However, I thought you might like me to tell you about the gardens I planned to take you to.

The first garden was a **Victorian house in Carlisle** that houses the National Collection of Galanthus – 2000 varieties – they are one of 16 National Collection holders with scientific status.

The garden owners, David and Margaret MacLennan moved to Carlisle from their Essex garden in 2014. Their Essex garden was over seven acres and they began their snowdrop obsession there – they developed their collection by exchanging cyclamens for snowdrops with Anglesey Abbey and Beth Chatto. They became volunteers at Anglesey Abbey in charge of snowdrop propagation. Margaret originally came from Carlisle and they decided to return to the city before their Essex garden became too much for them.



The National Collection

The front garden was a mass of colour with cyclamen and spring bulbs. The snowdrops are all kept in a former tennis court in pots in cold frames with shading to cover them in the summer months. This arrangement meant you could see the distinct differences between each flower – David says that if they haven't got the snowdrop, it doesn't exist. They received the Brickell Award in 2022, Plant Heritage's highest prize for National Collection holders.

The turning to the street where the couple live was difficult to make sure you were in the right lane at traffic lights to make the turning – I did the run twice from junction 44 of the M6 down the A7 to the garden to count the number of lights but I got a different number each time so a relief not to be tested on that one!

The second garden was **Cleghorn at Lanark** – chosen so members were mostly part way home. This is the home of Richard and Nicky Elliott Lockhart. The 18th century garden is gradually being returned to its former layout. Lawns with mature trees and shrubs, an abundance of snowdrops and a woodland walk along the valley, formed by 12th century dams that were originally built to form fish ponds. The valley has been totally cleared in the last two years and the burn and snowdrops are now

visible from both sides of the valley. There was an absolute mass of snowdrops and a private family graveyard covered in the plants.



The Burn



The Graveyard

I visited when the garden was open for the SGS and as well as lots of snowdrops there were oodles of tea and cakes. I sat next to two ladies and almost instantly established with one of them that we both knew two HPS couples.

When I cancelled the visit to the gardens, both owners were utterly charming and a pleasure to have got to know.

*Marjorie Allen*

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The advertisement features a background of soft-focus pink flowers. The text is arranged in a clean, professional layout, with the company name 'Kevock Garden Plants' in a large, stylized green font.

## **The Snowdrop** (into Spring cautiously)

Out of a cold and hostile bed she rises,  
the first shy harbinger of coming Spring.  
In January her tiny head emerges  
supported by a slender stem of green.  
Now, when every other flower despises  
the frosts that chill birds seldom sing,  
is when bleak Winter's plucky pioneer  
whispers softly, 'Don't despair, I'm here'.

Fabled Persephone with Hades sojourns  
and Earth is dark and barren all the time  
broken-hearted Demeter still mourns  
the brutal seizure of her cherished child.  
Yet, from this desolation kindly comes  
the snowdrop, unheralded and mild;  
then bleak Winter's plucky pioneer  
whispers softly, 'Don't despair, I'm here'.

And breathing life into this frozen land,  
in gardens and in parks, in forest glades,  
a revelation, welcome yet unplanned,  
thick clusters of these modest, milk-white maids  
promising that warmer days will come  
and many flowers join the Spring parade;  
meanwhile bleak Winter's plucky pioneer  
whispers softly, 'Don't despair, I'm here'.

*May Howie*

# Snowdrops in Falkland

## 23rd February 2023

### Millfield House

The Scottish and Northern Borders group of the Hardy Plant Society visited Millfield House, Falkland, and was welcomed with coffee, scones, a useful map of the garden, and a brief introduction by its owner, Sarah Marshall. The house was built in 1789: two wings were added in 1896. It was used as the boys' dormitory for a neighbouring school before Rob and Sarah Marshall bought it in 2008. Work on the garden began in 2010, with the clearing of *Rhododendron ponticum*. The four-acre garden is on a north-facing slope and sees no sun for six weeks every year. The soil is sandy, free-draining and fairly neutral. Sarah, who was introduced to gardening as a child by an enthusiastic grandfather, describes herself as “a self-taught garden designer,” working out the plan of the garden on squared paper.



Snowdrops abound. While initially clumps were split and bulbs planted individually, they have bulked up over the years, and can now be divided and replanted several bulbs at a time. Sarah enjoys the massed effect of the so-called ordinary species, while her son Aaron has collected over a hundred different varieties, conveniently displayed at waist height at the edge of the front lawn, where Lady Dalhousie hobnobs with Desdemona and Mrs Macnamara. Aaron is also an alpine enthusiast: there is no designated rock garden – “Too much work!” according to his mother, but



alpine plants are grown in troughs and containers. Plants are propagated in the greenhouses and adjacent raised beds, where a line of seedlings were seen to be baby cyclamen. There were also some fine new amber-coloured hellebores in the raised beds, while other varieties could be seen elsewhere in the garden. Hellebore flowers had also been picked and floated in a large basin, standing on a Lutyensesque pavement of stone slabs and tiles set on edge.



Stone benches at the top of the garden provide a vantage point to look down over the house and garden, or out to the wider view. Below, through a substantial gate and fence, which did not appear to deter roe deer, is a hazel walk and an orchard, underplanted with snowdrops. The walled garden, nearer the house, has scalloped yew hedges, and a lime stilt hedge. A south-facing wall near the house is warm enough for a fruiting fig. A small burn, with footbridges, flows to the east of the house. Above this stream garden is a knoll with three Scots pines, and some substantial rocks. Nearby, cornus, with different-coloured stems, have been planted in a circle, enclosing turf planted with snowdrops and mauve crocus. Several very chatty hens escorted us to a newly planted wooded area, again, underplanted with snowdrops. In front of the house, a spectacularly fragrant *Daphne bholua* could be appreciated from several yards away.



This is a comparatively young garden, but already a most attractive and interesting one. The various areas of the garden site are sufficiently intimate in scale that one can focus on a small part of the plan while still aware of the whole. A February visit was an opportunity to appreciate aspects of Sarah's design which might be less apparent later in the year, when deciduous shrubs and trees are in leaf, and her paeonies and irises in bloom. Falkland Village Gardens are open in June and should be well worth visiting then. Meanwhile, I shall copy one planting idea from Millfield House and add more mauve *Crocus tommasinianus* to my snowdrop beds.

*Mary Birch*

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# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Auchterarder  
11th March 2023

## Gardens of the Imagination

*Monica Wylie*

I believe this was the first talk Monica had ever given. It was titled 'Gardens of the Imagination' an intriguing title for a most informative talk.

Monica outlined the influences from childhood onwards that helped her become the successful garden designer and plant lover she is today.



Her parents taking her to Kelvingrove Art Gallery, holidays on the West Coast, visits to the Library, books including 'The Secret Garden' all made a significant impact on the young Monica. Certain paintings, particularly showing plant life e.g. Rousseau's jungle paintings and Monet's water lilies fired her imagination.

The way gardens relate to architecture was covered, particularly architects who managed to harmoniously combine the two. Some slides of properties designed by Geoffrey Bawa, a Sri Lankan native, showed gardens flowing from house then seamlessly into the jungle.

We then heard of gardens visited by Monica and Jamie on their garden tours. We were taken from Kerdalo in Brittany (there's a good YouTube video) to Mount Usher in Ireland with its wonderful collection of trees and gentle river. Across to England to Greencombe in Somerset, a beautifully planted woodland bordering the Bristol Channel. Ireland again: Ilnacullin a garden on an island with a strong Italianate feel, designed by an architect Harold Peto. Onwards to Devon, The Garden House which combines formality with naturalistic planting. Going further West into Cornwall lies

Lamorran, on a steep site overlooking the sea, again a jungle theme with palms, tree ferns and agave all flourishing in the balmy climate. Finally the most exotic garden on the British Isles, Tresco with its world-wide collection of plants.

Throughout Monica made reference to the therapeutic nature of both being in gardens and "working" in gardens. She also gave us this quote

*As long as one has a garden*

*one has a future*

*As long as one has a future*

*one has life.*

I think that well sums up Monica's philosophy; it shone through in this most interesting and thought-provoking talk.

*Oliver Miller*

## **Horticultural Highlights**

### ***Graham Gunn***

The afternoon talk at the 2023 AGM was given by Graham Gunn on Horticultural Highlights. Graham spoke about his career in horticulture which began when he was 14 and spans 24 years. He is now nursery manager at Kevock Garden Plants, though he said his real passion is organic vegetables.



His career began at S G Clarke Nursery in Surrey where he did his apprenticeship. He went on to WWOOF – World Wide

Opportunities on Organic Farms – which is a loose network of national organisations that facilitate home stays on organic farms which took him to France and Canada and from there he began his employment with Kevock Nursery. He bemoaned the fact that few people went straight in to Horticulture as a career rather than discovering it later in life.

The team at Kevock has two full time employees and is heavily supported by lots of volunteers. They have had stands at Chelsea, Harrogate and Scone Flower Shows – the latter two have lower prestige but he still considered it very important to attend. They have won Gold for their stand at Chelsea.

He has been on plenty of plant expeditions to Sichuan and Yunnan in 2016, the Alps in 2017 and the Caucasus Mountains in 2018. The slides of the flowers he saw were breathtaking. He finished by saying “Appreciate what is local”.

*Marjorie Allen*

## What’s your poison

If I were an oleander bush growing in a valley in Crete, with large herds of hungry goats who had constant designs on eating my beautiful shiny green leaves, I would consider it an excellent plan to have infused my leaves with poison. I could then sit back in the sun and wait for kindly insects to pollenate my lovely pink flowers – and the goats would leave me in peace and just go and eat someone else.

However, I am not an oleander bush – and sadly, I am definitely not in Crete. I am sitting in my small suburban garden in Helensburgh, where there are no ravaging herds of goats to eat my plants.

Certainly, there are family groups of hungry roe deer roaming the local streets. A neighbour took a photograph the other afternoon of a family of four deer happily munching his front lawn. (I suspect he’s not an avid gardener!) And according to my friend up the road, whose garden is not so easily protected as ours, deer will eat just about anything that grows. As she knows to her cost.



*Nerium oleander*





Blue Monkshood

However, as we recently installed 7' high garden gates, (and if we remember to close them), we should hopefully be protected on that score.

But realising just how many of the plants that we all grow in our gardens do actually contain poison is quite surprising. The RHS cheerily informs me that in Britain very few of our garden plants would actually kill us – unless we were really determined to stuff large amounts of digitalis flowers or daphne mezereum berries into ourselves. But actually, *Aconitum vulparia* (the lovely and useful blue monkshood) is easily the most

poisonous plant in our gardens. Even if you touch it with bare hands and then touch your face, or food, you could end up in hospital. The RHS then goes on to give a very long list of plants which are to some degree toxic.

Obviously, a small child would be more adversely affected by poisonous plants; and cats or dogs can be unpleasantly affected by different plants. Horses seem to have problems with a long list of British plants. So I suppose that it is fortunate that I do not possess a horse. Or a cat or a dog these days – though previous cats and dogs, not to mention children, all did manage to survive the plants in my garden.

So what plants are actually poisonous? Well, lots of them really!

We probably all know that lily of the valley are poisonous. But they aren't the only bulbs that could harm you if you were stupid enough to try eating them. Galanthus bulbs are toxic – our innocent little snowdrops! Scilla, tulips, hyacinths, or ornithogalum could poison you – or agapanthus, lilies, colchicum (autumn crocus), alstromeria or zantedeschia (Arum lilies). Early settlers from Europe took Arum lilies with them to New Zealand, the lilies adored the climate and spread rapidly – but unfortunately they turned

out to be poisonous to sheep. And at one time there were sixty sheep to every one New Zealander.



*Ornithogalum magnum*



*Colchicum macrophyllum*



*Amaryllis belladonna*

Amaryllis, with their spectacular red, pink or white flowers, also contain toxins. If you inadvertently get the sap of daffodil stalks in your eyes, you could end up in the eye hospital – one of my friends did. And if you have a dog that enjoys digging in your garden, daffodil bulbs won't be too good for it.

So, on the whole, as long as we stop ourselves actually eating the bulbs that we grow in our gardens, or rub our skin or eyes after handling them, we should be OK.

House-plants are not immune either – remember *Monstera deliciosa*, our trusty Swiss cheese plant, which decorated many a sitting-room in the sixties and seventies. Or the pretty leaves of the sweetheart plants?

Yuccas too can cause irritation. (Did you know that the botanical name for a yucca is *Yucca elephantipes?*)

The leaves of herbaceous plants contain poisons that could irritate skin or eyes. Lupins, dianthus, iris, hellebores, pulsatilla, tradescantia, physalis, delphinium, larkspur, anthriscus, polygonatum, Arisaema and ipomoea all contain toxins. Surprisingly, quite some time back, I did purchase a potful of water hemlock from an NTS garden – and that is quite poisonous. I did tire of it quite quickly though, as despite the pretty leaves, the white flowers went brown within a day. I have been attempting, in vain, to dig it all up ever since! A diminutive bit of root left in the soil will grow into yet another new plant.

**Climbers** are another source of possible irritation. Solanum, with pretty white or lilac flowers, is related to potatoes – parts can be poisonous. The handsome wisteria and the effervescent humulus lupulus (golden hop) both contain some poison – as do the colourful Virginia creepers. Ivy can be an irritant, but the butterflies and insects do really appreciate the late flowers and berries. We feed our garden birds, who kindly repay us by perching in our trees and depositing little packets of ivy seeds, surrounded by organic fertiliser, into the beds below. So we have lots of little ivy plants growing everywhere, along with tiny hollies and yews, not to mention extremely healthy bramble seedlings. The miniature (at the moment) horse chestnut was probably donated by our squirrel – though I’m not sure quite where the miniature hawthorn came from.



*Solanum laxum*



*Humulus lupulus* 'Aureus'

Did you know that the leaves of your cherished hydrangeas are full of poison? Poison is also contained in some part of hypericum, kalmia, rhododendron, azalea, euonymus, rue, genista, and pernettya, with its lovely pink and white berries. All parts of berberis plants are poisonous, *except* the berries. The red berries of the early-flowering and temperamental daphne mezereum are noted for being poisonous. A single leaf of oleander can kill a dog – or a child. Colorado State University’s website, talking about the effects of oleanders on the cardiovascular system, says succinctly: “Sudden death may be the presenting sign”. (Fortunately for parents and dog-owners, there are not too many oleanders growing in Scottish gardens.)

The milky sap from the stems of euphorbias is an extreme irritant to skin. I always meticulously wear gloves when cutting back euphorbia stalks. However, on one occasion, I was clearing up the trugs at the end of the day and having gone into the house to start the tea, I forgot to put the gloves back on. I didn’t notice that, as I picked up the handles of the trug, a bit of the sap from a protruding euphorbia stem was deposited between my fingers. The result was a really painful and itchy hand for well over a week.

Many trees also make use of poison to protect themselves – such as junipers, ginkgo biloba, *Prunus laurocerasus*, robinia and thuja. All parts of yew trees are toxic to humans, bark, leaves and berries. Yet, in autumn our thrushes, blackbirds and redwings absolutely gorge themselves on the yew berries on our venerable old tree – the poisonous seeds of the yew berries pass straight through the birds’ digestive systems and cause them no harm at all.

On reflection, for plants to use some kind of poison to protect themselves from the hungry animals and insects who want to eat them seems eminently sensible. It seems equally sensible for us to protect ourselves by wearing gloves while working in our gardens.

*Fran Scott*

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## Kogarah Episode 3

### Progress – Patios, Paths, and Planting Plans

I was reflecting that this now needs an introduction and context of who I am, where the garden is, and what's happened so far. Living here and looking at my garden every day, I've begun to lose objectivity. I'm so involved in the progress or sometimes lack of it, in making up future plans to bring my vision alive and slogging through what has to happen next that I need to step back and explain my progress. I've now a month-by-month project plan for the house and garden, been dreaming up planting plans with seasonal interest – and setting out a complete timeline and milestones. Can you tell I've some professional experience in project management? It means I don't always realise that this is not how readers in the HPS group newsletters interact with my short pieces, nor fully get my love for my childhood garden, rather than the usual excitement of taking on a new garden.

Map showing the position of Nairn within the United Kingdom



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So, to recap, I grew up here, and this is the story of my garden renovation of Kogarah in Nairn, 57.59° north in the Highlands of Scotland. My grandfather took it on 100 years ago, subsequently building his home in the middle. Close to the town centre and half a mile from the North Sea, there can be a bracing cold wind. It's certainly making itself felt this week, as all the winter clothing is back on, and the wind has burnt the flower buds on my red Camellia and the cold nights

have frozen them off. Winters are longer and colder up here. However, this last one has felt especially long as it was -8°C the other night only 25 miles away. I was hoping we were well past this but no. The beautiful tulips, planted by my late mother, are shivering in various overgrown borders. I've taken photos to record where they are, so I can incorporate into further plans – except the white border I want to create – I'm slightly vexed by the 15 lovely yellow tulips scattered through it. The front garden's pink camellia however is in a sheltered spot so is looking resplendent.



When I last wrote, I was hoping to make early progress with the landscaping – well, I had to wait ALL summer! It was worth it though, as a slot appeared in the last bout of good weather in early November. Excellent work by Dave Nicol and his wonderful team, created a huge transformation which makes me happy every time I look out the window. The structure is now almost right for moving forward – although, after this last cold week, I am rethinking the gaps in the fences as the wind whistles through them! It means I have safe level paths across the lawn, and all around the house for when I'm truly in my dotage. The star of the show is the most wonderful large L-shaped patio. Given that I had waited a year for them to come, I pushed the budget up, and renewed the side fence, got gates made and extended my plans further to include my long wished for Rose Walk. It will be a delight of colour, and perfume, but also a pleasant vista right down the side of the house as you enter the garden from the side or from the drive.



Welcoming path



L-shaped terrace with new fencing

I am now the proud owner of over 30 roses bought with my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday gift vouchers from David Austin and Peter Beales. I was out heeling them in a trench in the cold hard ground in a sleet storm in December and I have just taken the fleece off to photograph them for you today. As soon as I see I'm winning the battle with the dreaded ground elder, that's infiltrated the rear garden, in they will go. There will be one different rose at each upright and to grow across the horizontal spars and the dividing fence in time. I've got solar lights to go up on each junction to make it pretty in the long summer evenings and the dark winter afternoons. I'm going to start by putting in wire and vine eyes now in the hope it might deter the large pair of woodpigeons who adore their new complex of perches – I'm less keen on the enormous piles of guano they leave so they are going to be encouraged to choose the spars away from the paths and seat.



Twenty roses trenched in



The Rose Walk

I have a delightful Lutyens style bench for the end, which is a sheltered spot for the afternoon sun and a stone urn which I rescued from the undergrowth. It used to be home to a beautiful white trailing broom – although it had a short flowering season it looked lovely viewed at a distance from the front path. Any ideas for a replacement weeping plant, preferably with a longer flower period would be gratefully received. To cover the back of the Rose Walk, I will be training a stunning well-established Kiftsgate Rose, *Rosa filipes*, which grows through the trees to the left of it – although cut back for the tree removals, it still blooms up to 20ft high and 15ft across. The rose flowers with the most gorgeous huge



multi-flowered umbels, followed by wonderful hips in a cranberry colour. However, it has the most brutal thorns and I have old scars to prove it. I will fearlessly don the long rose gauntlets and fight it over the top of the rear cross bars. In time I hope it will yomp off across the whole 22 metres of the back fence and be better security than anything else I can think of.

Where the Kiftsgate will grow along the back fence, underneath I am toying with planting a long strip of *Cornus alba* ‘Sibirica’, with its brilliant red stems, or *Cornus sanguinea*, ‘Midwinter Fire’, with the orange yellow stems to brighten the back of the garden in winter. It’s still a thought, not a fixed plan. There are also more shade tolerant climbing roses to grow on the old side walls and a multi-stemmed birch tree, with its gleaming white stems as the focal point, of the new planting.

My vision is that, at the front and side of the house, the gardens will look a rather classic garden when finished preserving the mix of hardy shrubs and perennials but the rear will be the naturalistic perennial-led garden in the style of Piet Oudolf and Tom Stuart Smith. I’m already thinking of the planting list, and looking at the price of plants, considering my options for seeds to grow my own grasses and key perennials at scale.

Next up, will be reports on renovating more overgrown borders, and the design and planting of my shade border outside my kitchen window – all flowering shrubs, hostas and hellebores and then the front garden’s white border which is specifically to enjoy the glowing blooms in the long light summer evenings.

*Karen Tolmie*



## Rum happenings on Rhum

This is a strange tale, not least because of the strongly contrasting backgrounds and personalities of the two main participants, John Heslop Harrison and John Raven.

John Heslop Harrison was the son of a tool maker in a Newcastle iron works and the first member of his family to obtain more than elementary education. He had an early interest in botany and natural history and qualified as a teacher in 1903. After teaching in various schools he started lecturing in Newcastle University in 1917 and was appointed Professor of Botany in 1927, remaining there until retirement in 1946. One son became a noted entomologist and Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, another became director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. John Heslop Harrison was remembered by many students as an inspirational charismatic teacher, however he also held strong opinions on a number of controversial scientific subjects, including a belief that the long discredited Lamarckian inheritance of acquired characteristics was more important than Darwinian natural selection. More importantly for this story he also believed that there were plant communities in the western highlands of Scotland and the Western Isles that predated the Ice Age because these areas had not been glaciated. This idea was ridiculed by the botanical establishment, however Heslop Harrison answered his critics in the 1930s with a series of reports describing various plants he had discovered in the Western Isles and especially on the Island of Rhum (as it was spelled until 1991) in the Inner Hebrides.

John Raven came from a background that could be described as academic aristocracy. His father was Regius Professor of Divinity and Master of Christ's College Cambridge. His mother was descended from several generations of leading scientists and Fellows of the Royal Society. John himself was a classics scholar and Fellow of King's College Cambridge from 1948 to 1984, but was also a respected amateur botanist, publishing a number of scientific papers and co-authoring *Mountain Flowers* in the Collins New Naturalist series. His daughter, Sarah Raven, is a noted gardening writer and is married to Adam Nicolson, Vita Sackville-West's grandson.

Disquiet about Heslop Harrison's reports of the plants he had found in Scotland grew in the academic community throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Things came to a head in 1947 during a major botanical survey of Glen Affric that was being carried out before it was flooded by a hydroelectric scheme. John Raven took part in this as well as leading botanists from several universities and the British Museum, but not John Heslop Harrison. After much discussion, the consensus was that 'something should be done' to investigate Heslop Harrison's claims. John Raven volunteered to visit the Western Isles including Rhum to examine the sites of Heslop Harrison's discoveries, and obtained a £50 grant from his Cambridge College to cover the costs.

After carrying out inconclusive investigations on Harris and Raasay, John Raven decided that it was essential that he visit Rhum, to investigate the sites on one of the mountains, Barkeval, where John Heslop Harris had reported finding five plants previously unknown in the British Isles: *Epilobium lactiflorum* (milkflower willowherb), *Erigeron uniflorus* (one-flower fleabane), and three sedges, *Carex capitata*, *Carex bicolor* and *Carex glacialis*. However in those days visiting Rhum was much easier said than done.

Having been part of the lands of the MacLean clan since medieval times, Rum was sold to the Marquess of Salisbury, who converted the island into an estate for country sports. He imported Red and Fallow deer for the shooting and built a pier to improve access. In 1870 it was sold to Farquhar Campbell, who further developed the sporting potential but sold

it again in 1888 to John Bullough, a self-made millionaire and cotton machinery manufacturer from Accrington in Lancashire. After his son Sir George inherited the island, in 1900 he spent the vast sum of £250,000 building Kinloch Castle with elaborate Edwardian interiors, including the famous orchestration



Kinloch Castle

reputedly poached from Queen Victoria. Sir George was embarrassed at being called the 'Laird of Rum' so changed the name of the island to Rhum. The name was changed back to Rum by the Nature Conservancy Council in 1991.

Sir George died in 1939, however his widow, Lady Bullough, was still living in Kinloch Castle during the summer months and did not allow visitors to the island without prior arrangement. Also, because the ferry from Mallaig could not dock on Rhum, passengers had to transfer to a launch operated by Lady Bullough's factor, Duncan McNaughton, making it possible to control access to the island. As Lady Bullough followed John Heslop Harrison's advice on who should be able to land, this meant that he could prevent other botanists from visiting the sites of his rare plant findings.



The orchestrion

To overcome these difficulties, in August 1948 John Raven initially enlisted the help of John Lorne Campbell, the laird of the adjacent island of Canna, who landed Raven and a friend on the west coast of Rhum one night. However it rapidly became clear that searching the 40 square miles of Rhum for five inconspicuous plants was totally impractical. He therefore decided, with some misgivings about the deception, to adopt a more direct approach and asked his father, the Master of Christ's College, to write to Heslop Harrison an apparently innocent letter saying that his son was interested in botany and would like to visit Rhum. Heslop Harrison responded that he would be glad to show Raven the sites of interest on Rhum, but emphasised, several times, that no accommodation and no food were available; Lady Bullough also gave her permission.

After John Raven had finally arrived on Rhum, John Heslop Harrison took him to the stream in a corrie on Barkeval where the plants he had

discovered were growing, and then left him alone for the rest of the day, allowing Raven to carry out a full survey of the area. It was immediately apparent to Raven that the plants he was investigating did not ‘look as if they had occurred naturally’. However, much more significantly, several of the clumps of sedges and other plants contained two weeds common in domestic gardens, *Poa annua* (annual meadow grass), and *Sagina apetla* (dwarf pearlwort), which never occurred in mountain habitats. This and other evidence convinced Raven that the plants that Heslop Harrison claimed to have discovered, had been raised in a domestic garden and transplanted to Rhum. He considered that Heslop Harrison was responsible for this.

John Raven then wrote to Heslop Harrison revealing the true purpose of his visit and outlining his opinions of the origin of the plants he had examined. Heslop Harrison replied with a furious letter, complaining, with some justification, of Raven’s deception but also dismissing his comments as coming from an amateur who did not know what he was talking about. After some further correspondence, Heslop Harrison refused to respond further. In December 1949 John Raven then wrote a formal letter to *Nature*, the preeminent scientific journal, casting doubt on the origins of Heslop Harrison’s discoveries, but making no accusations about who might have been responsible.

To justify his £50 grant from his Cambridge college, John Raven wrote a full report of the episode including his belief that Heslop Harrison was responsible. This was lodged in the college library and no further action taken. However John Heslop Harrison’s reputation in the botanical world was damaged and scientific journals no longer published papers he had submitted.

Things remained like this until the 1980s when journalist and science writer Karl Sabbagh came across an obituary of John Raven, which mentioned his dealings with Heslop Harrison. Sabbagh followed this up, located Raven’s full report in the college library and interviewed those participants that were available. He eventually published his account of the events ‘*A Rum Affair*’ in 1999, which laid the blame clearly with Heslop Harrison and also discussed a number of dubious entomological

experiments that Heslop Harrison had published in support of his belief that Lamarckian was more significant than Darwinian inheritance. As a result of the publication of this book, more evidence turned up, which Sabbagh incorporated into the greatly expanded second edition which was published in 2016, with an introduction by Adam Nicolson. This is what I have used for the basis of this article.

*Chris Sanders*

*A Rum Affair*: Karl Sabbagh, Birlinn 2016, ISBN 978 1 78027 386 0  
Further information from Wikipedia.



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## Visit to Rhu:26th April 2023

The reports from the visit to Rhu will be included in the next edition. The images below give a flavour of the gardens visited.



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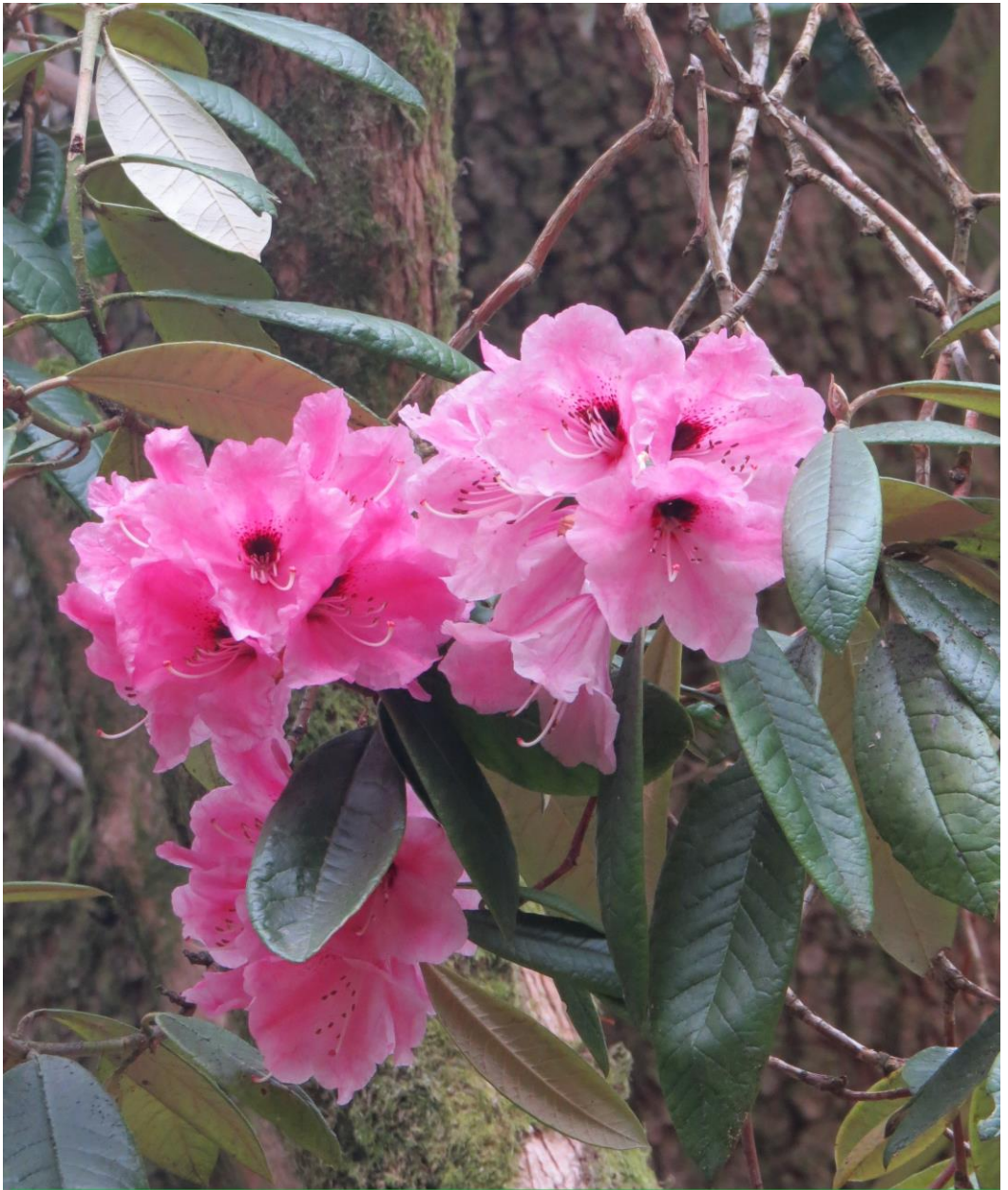
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