

September 2006



No. 60

# *PREVIEW*

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## **LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

It is quieter today after the rush of the past week pulling weeds, brushing paths and coaxing plants to be in good order for their public display day when the garden was open in aid of Caley funds. I feel that the whole initiative of opening gardens to the wider membership is worthwhile and I would encourage those of you who would like to be involved next year to get in touch with Irene Birse and have your name lodged on her list of willing members. I am grateful to all who were involved with opening their gardens this year and do hope that we can do the same at some future date. Next time (perhaps in 2008) the garden at No 52 will be opened in the spring so that it can be seen at a time when some of the spring flowering plants are at their best.

Have you all ordered your bulbs yet?? I have put in an order to R A Scamp and I am currently looking at other catalogues to see if Messrs Parkers and Walker can encourage me to

overspend. I love the anticipation of what is to come and what might be if only I can get the growing conditions right. We will see what happens. I do enjoy the challenge of the Spring Show and encourage you to support it through participating as an exhibitor and as a visitor. This year we are introducing a new class exclusive to Caley members (The R A Scamp Challenge). This will be a cut flower class based on one named variety from R A Scamp of Falmouth. Bulbs will be supplied to members free of charge and available for planting in early October so watch this space. We hope too to continue the School Bulb Competition and to enable us to help the individual schools produce bulbs in flower for the Show we need volunteers to act as mentors and supporters. Please think seriously about offering your time to help.

It has been a busy year since the Spring Show. The loyal group of helpers who make Gardening Scotland a success

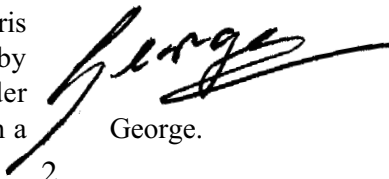
for all the visitors to the Show, the happy smiling Caley Volunteer Stewards have been given glowing reports at the various meetings I have attended with Rural Projects and other Directors of Gardening Scotland and so I pass on their congratulations and thanks to you for yet another Show well served. The weather was kind to us over the three days of the event and this was echoed in the cheerful welcome you The Caley Stewards gave to the visiting public. The Caley stand in the main hall was different this year and thanks are due to the wonderful support we had from Pentland Plants. The sunburst bedding display of Impatiens and Senecio was quite eye-catching and it helped to put out a positive message and attract visitors and potential new members to the Society.

Our Study Tour to Warwick was an outstanding success. The weather was set fair; the gardens we saw were just simply wonderful and the organisation from beginning to end was excellent. We need to thank all who were involved but particularly David, Sally, Heather and Bill our trusty, patient and careful driver. We took in some excellent garden views some delicious scones, enjoyed some outstanding company and shared a special time together.

Our planning for the celebrations leading up to 2009 are starting to take shape and may, if we get all in order in time, include a tour of gardens of Paris echoing a similar tour undertaken by Andrew Duncan one of our founder members in the 1800's. We also plan a

dinner in a prestigious venue such as Stirling Castle (where of course the ticket price would be prestigious also); we seek to have our logo as the centre piece of The Floral Clock; tree planting initiatives are planned for certain areas of Scotland and perhaps we might organise a show garden with a special partner at Gardening Scotland.

The work on the Organic Allotment at Bridgend Farm is still ongoing and the site was formally opened in June. The Caley have been allocated an area equivalent to three standard allotments and it is our aim to set this up as a set of demonstration plots where all the other allotment holders can gain advice and help with some of their problems. In this the first year we have concentrated on setting up the bed and path systems but now planning is required to organise a rotational system for vegetable growing and our top and soft fruit planting areas. The plots will need to be dug over during the winter to bring the soil into workable condition for next spring. If you would like to help with digging, weeding, planting, hoeing, watering, sowing, growing, pruning, learning and sharing please contact me. There is a small band of very keen and eager helpers already involved with the project but to make the load easier to bear they would welcome further help. Please volunteer and come along and join the 'Caley Allotmenters'.



George.

## Classified – Thanks

- Margaret Blackenbury thanks everyone who helped her with her new walking aid during the recent Caley tour to Warwickshire and the Cotswolds.
- On Friday 28th April a number of Caley members attended a Workshop at Suntrap given by June and Elizabeth Riches of Strathkinnes Herbs. We spent an hour or so hearing and asking about all sorts of herbs, not all culinary. Most gardeners know a bit about this, but it was good to learn how to do it well and of the subtleties of the techniques. We were then let loose to enjoy the practical side of propagation by taking cuttings. A mass of plant material in a wide range from Strathkinnes Herbs was provided, along with pots and compost. So at the end of the afternoon we had got to know both our herbs and our fellow gardeners, for it became very much both a fun social occasion and at the same time a learning experience. We each went off with a carrier bag (provided) with enough herbs of our choice potted up, to start a substantial herb garden. Our gardens and our dinner tables will be better for it. The charge by Oatridge College was a modest £5.

June and Elizabeth were clearly such horticultural enthusiasts that their desire to share their experience for our benefit clearly overrode rational commercial considerations, for which we were much the winners. I am sure we would all wish to thank them for their generosity. Those of you, who thought they might attend but did not, missed a good afternoon!

Ben Malcolm

- **Caley Open Gardens**

The Fundraising Committee would like to thank everyone who took part in the Caley Open Gardens this year, especially Trish and John Kennedy, Janet and Ben Malcolm, George and Gill Anderson, Helen and Morna Mulgray for kindly agreeing to open their gardens. We all had a great time going around the different gardens. There was a lot to see and admire with time to sit down and socialise with other members over a cup of tea and home baking. The event was a great success raising £337.50 for Caley funds.

We are now looking for volunteers who will open their gardens for us next year. If you are interested please contact me on 01968 660354 or email [irenebirse@hotmail.com](mailto:irenebirse@hotmail.com)

Irene Birse, Convenor – Fund Raising Committee

## Classified – Society Notices

- Tom Mabbott - Our Secretary has a new email address - [tom.mabbott@btinternet.com](mailto:tom.mabbott@btinternet.com)

# LECTURE PROGRAMME AUTUM/WINTER 2006

The lectures are given in the Main Lecture Theatre of the Royal Botanic Garden at 7:30pm.

Tuesday 3rd October

**Lady Juliet Edmonstone**      *Scotland's Gardens – East and West*

Brief history of the evolution of Scottish gardens – the context of the house. Followed by comparison of East and West climatic conditions, illustrated by slides of Scotland's best gardens from top to bottom of the East and West coasts.

Put off for life by gardening parents, Julie was thrust into horticulture on her marriage to an empty 20 acre Scottish garden peopled by dark brooding conifers. Their life expectancy was soon cut rudely short by the creation of an ornamental lake, bog and waterfall gardens. Warming to the subject after all, Julie took a Garden Design course at the English Gardening School and quickly became involved in the Scottish garden scene.

Over the years she has served on the Council and Garden Committee of the National Trust for Scotland, the RHS Scottish Show committee (one-time judge at Chelsea Flower Show), the garden committee of the Historic Houses Association as well as the Executive and Finance committee of Scotland's Garden Scheme and has just retired after 25 years as County Organiser. Julie is currently on the Councils of the National Trust for Scotland and the Scottish Historic Houses Association. She also lectures on Scottish gardens past and present, writes gardening articles for various magazines and is currently starting her 6th series for BBC 2 television, presenting the garden section of *Castle in the Country*.

Tuesday 17th October

**Billy Carruthers**, Binny Plants      *Star Performers*

A personal selection of some of my favourite garden plants that perform well in Scottish Gardens with a mixture of tried and tested varieties and species plus a selection of recent introductions.

On returning home to Scotland after living in London for 20 years and realising that there was a need for a more specialist nursery, Billy set up Binny Plants some 11 years ago in the old kitchen garden at Binny Estate.

Binny's reputation for providing good quality plants has resulted in many articles being written about the nursery by Roy Lancaster in the RHS Garden Magazine and Anna Pavord in *Gardens Illustrated*: appearing recently on Beechgrove Garden, he enthused on his great passion for Paenias and moisture-loving Irises.

Tuesday 7th November

**Dr Madeline Harley** FLS, Kew      *Dust Fathers the Earth's Green Mantle*

To many, pollen is no more than dust produced by flowers with the sole purpose of making life miserable in early to mid summer. Until the moment of release pollen grains are enclosed beyond the accessible beauty of flowers that contain them, and few people are aware of their extraordinary beauty because they are too small (from

5 to 500 microns: 1000 microns = 1 millimetre) to be seen without a microscope. Nevertheless, these tiny and extraordinary forms have fascinated the scientifically curious since the seventeenth Century. After they are released from the flower the pollen grains will be carried by wind, water or animal vectors to achieve their purpose, procreation. The talk describes some of seemingly endless variety of pollen form, as well as addressing some of the key ways in which pollen impacts on our lives. Most importantly the remarkable events from pollination to fertilisation will be described.

Until retirement last May, Dr Harley was Head of Palynology Unit at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Internationally recognised for her work which is mainly concerned with the study of pollen characteristics in the field of flowering plant relationships and evolution; she is particularly interested in the pollen of palms and is currently involved, with 5 co-authors, on a new edition of 'Genera Palmarum' where she is responsible for the pollen data and the fossil record. She has authored or co-authored more than 70 research articles and her research results have been presented at many international conferences. In 2004, she published, with artist Rob Kessler, 'Pollen: the Hidden Sexuality of Flowers'.

Tuesday 21st November

**Catherine Erskine and Elliott Forsyth**

*Snowdrops and the Development of the Garden at Cambo*

The speakers will share the presentation. Elliott will discuss the naturalistic perennial planting and introduce and overview the layout and design work at Cambo. Catherine will explain the development of the gardens at Cambo made possible by the income from snowdrops.

Catherine started Cambo Snowdrops 20 years ago. Originally mail order, snowdrops in the green. Now grown into snowdrop business – NCCPG collection, snowdrop gift shop, damp-packed bulbs in autumn. Scottish Snowdrop Festival to be launched in 2007.

Elliott, head gardener at Cambo has visited key naturalistic gardens in Germany and Holland

Tuesday 5th December

**Heather Reid, BBC Scotland Television Weather Presenter**

*Weather Forecasting for the 21st Century*

The Sun's energy warms the Earth and causes air within the atmosphere to rise. It's this simple scientific process coupled with the Earth's Rotation that eventually leads to complex weather systems on a global scale.

Predicting the weather has challenged meteorologists for centuries. The UK's Met. Office was founded way back in 1854 but modern day weather forecasts now rely on the latest supercomputer technology, observations from around the world and a network of meteorological satellites.

This technology revolution along with a better scientific understanding of our atmosphere, has led to significant improvements in forecast accuracy. The days of

damp seaweed are long gone!

Every forecaster has access to computer model predictions, satellite images, radar pictures and real-time observations.

However, our climate now appears to be changing and global warming may yet provide the greatest challenge to the world of weather forecasting.

Heather Reid has been a weather forecaster with BBC Scotland since 1994 and regularly contributes to science festivals, university events and seminars across the UK. She also serves on the Board of Trustees at Glasgow Science Centre.

Heather has a BSc(Hons) in Physics from Edinburgh University and is a Fellow of the Institute of Physics and the Royal Meteorological Society. She has an honorary lectureship in the Physics and Astronomy Dept at Glasgow University and is President of the Association of Science Education, Scotland. Heather was awarded the prestigious Kelvin Medal from the Institute of Physics in 2004 and also holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Paisley.

Note that she has amended her title since printing the syllabus.

Tuesday 19th December

### **Member Lecturettes**

**Margaret Forrester**

*The Reluctant Gardener*

Margaret will share joys, laughter and failures as she trips down memory lane: 60 happy years of gardening – the child taking over father’s garden, the young bride in India, a spell in England and then back to her roots in Scotland - with much still to learn.

For nearly 22 years, a Church of Scotland minister in an inner city parish. The only woman Convenor of the Board of World Mission.

**Anna Buxton**

*Bhutan: Plants, Monasteries and People*

A showing of photographs taken on a visit to Bhutan April/May 2006

Anna, an antiquarian book seller, has been a member of the Caley for a long time and is now a Vice-President.

**Haldane Tait**

*Musings*

Musings can be difficult to conjure up some months in advance. It is possible that Haldane will talk on ‘Ancient Egyptian Gardening’ - if he can dig up suitable material Haldane claims no relevant qualifications to speak on gardening matters. Nevertheless, a wit, sharpened and refined by a life-time career in the legal profession and an enviable gift for words, guarantees a memorable presentation.

### **LOGO MERCHENDISE**

Logo badges will be for sale at all the lecture meetings. We will also have some sample logo garments on display and we will be taking orders. Please enclose payment with order form. Our first order will be sent to the manufacturers at the end of October.

**Fund Raising Committee**

# 2007 Spring Flower Show

## Dates for your Diary

The Caley's Spring Flower Show will take place next year on 24 & 25 March in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh at the Caledonian Hall.

## Show Schedule

Copies of the Show Schedule are not being sent out with Preview, as only a small proportion of the membership actually enter exhibits. However, everyone who has entered the Show in the past three years will be sent a copy, as will anyone who requests a copy from the Show Secretary (David C Sinclair, 12 Jock's Hill Crescent, Linlithgow EH49 7BJ Tel. No: 01506 844107 Email:davidsinclair@btinternet.com)\* Copies will also be available at all Caley Lecture meetings. In addition, the Schedule will be able to be downloaded from the Caley's website:

**[www.royalcaledonianhorticulturalsociety.org](http://www.royalcaledonianhorticulturalsociety.org)**

Because of the decline in the number of entries in the Handcraft Section at recent Shows, it has been decided that this Section should be replaced in 2007 with the return of a Floral Art Section adding additional interest to the Show. There will also be a new Class, the RA Scamp Challenge which will be restricted to Caley members, who will have the opportunity to grow on bulbs of one Cultivar ('Foxhunter'), exhibiting a single bloom at the Show. The President has negotiated the supply of 50 Bulbs for this Class from RA Scamp of Falmouth and he will confirm details at the Lectures in October. Otherwise, get in touch with the Show Secretary\* if you are interested in taking part in this Class.

## Trade Exhibitors

Macplants, Binny Plants, Lilliesleaf Nursery and Hawthorn Castings & Plants have all booked space already at the Show in addition to the Caley's own plant sales area.

## Course for Exhibitors

To encourage members to get involved in exhibiting, either for a first time or for those who prefer to work with others to get their bulbs ready for the Show, a short Course will be held at Suntrap from 2.30 p.m.– 4 p.m. on Wednesday 25 October 2006 to plant the bulbs and plunge them, and on a subsequent afternoon early in February 2007 (to be arranged) to take the bulbs out of the plunge and learn about their display. The only cost involved will be for the bulbs, compost and pots supplied and this will be paid on arrival at the Course. Please let David Sinclair know if you are interested in attending this event, (See address etc above\*), and he will send you full details nearer the time. You can also book a place at the Caley lectures in October.



# SUNTRAP



## *Garden Centre For Life Long Learning*

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e-mail: [suntrap@btopenworld.com](mailto:suntrap@btopenworld.com)

(in association with the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society)

Sign up now for the following Autumn 2006 Classes & Workshops

### Classes 7pm-9pm

**Amateur Gardening** - (10 weeks from 28th Sep-30th Nov 2006) **£95**

**Garden Design** - (11 weeks from 4th Oct-13th Dec 2006) **£65**

### Workshops

(all from 10am-12 Noon Fee £5 each + cost of materials where applicable)

**(On Saturday mornings)**

***Brighten up Winter with Hanging Baskets*** **Saturday 28th October**

(creating & caring for baskets & containers;  
Plants & Containers supplied or bring your own)

***Approaches to Garden Design*** **Saturday 18th November**

(Aimed at anyone wanting to take a fresh look at  
their existing garden or taking over a new one)

***Christmas Decorations*** **Saturday 16th December**

(Make Floral Displays & Wreaths for the home;  
all materials supplied)

**To book call:**

**Moira at Oatridge College - 01506 864807**

**(email: [mmontgomery@oatridge.ac.uk](mailto:mmontgomery@oatridge.ac.uk))**

*or*

**Suntrap garden - 0131 339 7283**