

# Hill Rise Allotment Association

## St. Ives [Cambridgeshire] Gardening Club

### Newsletter

### April 2024

Hi Everyone, Is the weather on the turn for the better? Let's hope so, as I suspect many of you are, like me, about 6 weeks behind in garden jobs which have been deferred because of ground conditions. We at least have managed to have our Goat Willow tree coppiced, a job which needed doing maybe 10 years ago but I kept putting it off. It will spring forth with new shoots which will be managed and contained thus enabling the rest of the garden to benefit from the improved sunlight.



... and just one of the many beneficiaries, *Caltha palustris* (Marsh marigold) by our pond



Although a month early, our Tulips are now in full bloom, especially these Parrot Tulips



... and not wishing to claim any bragging rights, I thought I ought to put up this photo of one of our 2 lemons.



Those of you who attended the AGM in October may recall I brought one of our Spanish Beefsteak Tomatoes, weighing in at just under a 0.5kilo (1lb). I collected and dried off seeds from one of the other fruits and am pleased to record that I have had excellent germination (see photo overleaf). I am attaching as an addendum to this newsletter an e book produced by Envii, which if you are thinking of growing your own tomatoes this year you might find useful.



I may have 5 spare plants in 8 weeks time, so if anyone is interested in having one let me know, first come first served.

Now for a reminder for our next meeting:

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April: Buckden Towers History & Elizabethan Knot Garden,** A slice of history and the reconstruction of this garden. A talk by 2 of the Buckden Towers volunteers. Peter Ibett will give an outline of the history and Wendy Thelwell will talk about the gardens and the Elizabethan Knot Garden **Followed by visit Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 10.15am for 10.30am.**



The visit on the 1<sup>st</sup> June will comprise a guided tour of the buildings followed by a refreshments break and then a tour of the gardens with specific reference to the Knot Garden. The charge for this will be £12.00 pp payable on the day and in cash please. All proceeds go the Buckden Towers Trust. I will ask for a show of hands at our meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> April to give Peter and Wendy an idea of likely numbers attending. I will follow up with an e mail to everyone confirming all arrangements and requesting confirmation of attendance.

**Refreshments Team for the 17<sup>th</sup> April:** Jo Dyke and Gerry Swain

**Raffle Team:** Viv Park and Joan Walford

Whilst on the subject of the raffle, Diana Baldwin has donated a rather nice Portuguese hand painted pot and Saucer (see pictures below). I am of a mind to think this is a little bit special, and to that end I am initially going to offer it as an auction sale item via e mail bids. Should I get no bids it will then become the main raffle item at our 17<sup>th</sup> April meeting. Should this auction approach work then the takings will be added to our raffle income for 2024. If you are interested in making a single bid please send you bid to me at [robin.bletsoe@yahoo.com](mailto:robin.bletsoe@yahoo.com) no later than **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April (12 noon)**. I will notify the successful bidder on the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> and bring the pot and saucer to Wednesday's gathering.



Far left: The Pot

Left: The pot base

Below: The matching Saucer underside

Pot Height: 25 cm

Pot diameter (top) 25 cm



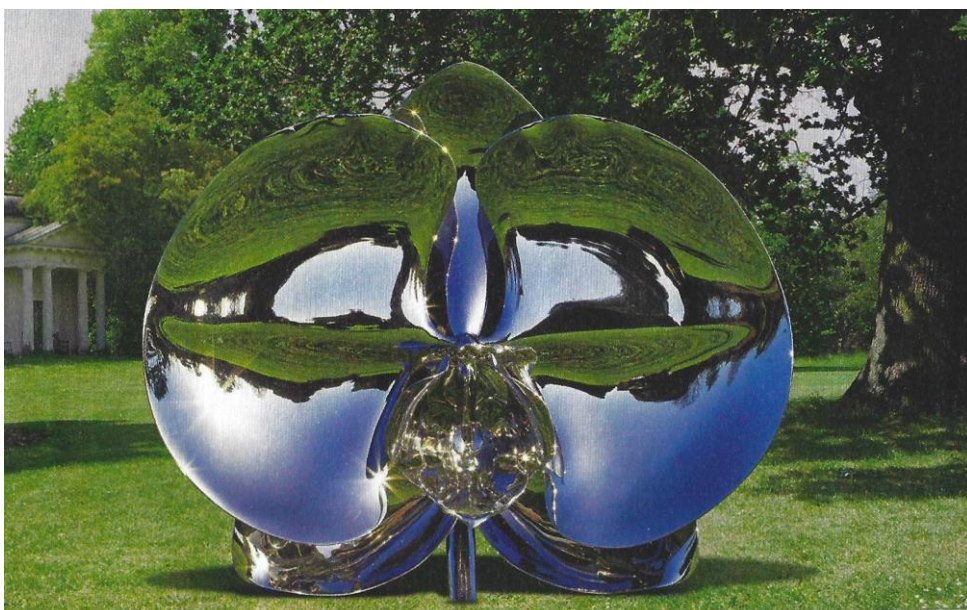
**Cranbrook Plants, Nursery Talk and Walk.** Purely by chance whilst putting this newsletter together I received a phone call from Dawn to let us know that She and Trevor are holding 2 general sessions open to all. The first being **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April at 11.00 am** with the second on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April at 2.00 pm**. If you have not been on one of these talk/walks before it is a great opportunity to see how a family run, plant nursery operates. Also a chance to get advice on plant selection and associated topics. Remember, also to get 10% discount off any plant material you buy. **Address: Cranbrook plants, Colne road,**

**Somersham PE283DQ.** This was our visit last year, with Richard (Trevor and Dawn's son) plant stocktaking. If you have not been on one of these visits before, they are very worthwhile and Trevor with Dawn will answer most of any questions you might have.



Which all leads nicely, to think about the June meeting 'Gardener's Question Time'. In order for me to prepare a suitable PowerPoint presentation I need you to start thinking what questions you might like answering. In order for the evening's subject to be worthwhile I need about 10 questions, depending on the complexity of each it might be possible to address up to 14. The average over the past 15 such meetings has been 9, ranging from 3 to 14.

For those of you who have reserved places for the Trip to RBG Kew on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July, now I have had confirmation from Kew as to their charges for April 2024 onwards, I will now be sending out final details and invoices at the end of this month and not early May as previously advised.



*Light into Life (Photosynthetic Form), 2024*  
by Marc Quinn

This Sculpture Exhibition by Marc Quinn will be on display when we visit on the 6<sup>th</sup> July. The exhibition runs from May to September.

See you all on the 17<sup>th</sup> April. Robin [robin.bletsoe@yahoo.com](mailto:robin.bletsoe@yahoo.com)