

Hill Rise Allotment Association

St. Ives [Cambridgeshire] Gardening Club

Newsletter

March 2024

Hi Everyone, Can we expect a glut of Basmati or Pilau rice being cropped in some gardens this year? If this weather continues unabated I cannot for life me see what else to grow. I think about 50% of our garden is bordering on swamp, meaning early spring ground preparations and cleaning is impossible. Enough of my garden woes, yesterday (Saturday 2ND March) 16 of us braved the elements and enjoyed a very interesting visit to Heath Fruit Farm orchard under the leadership of owner Rob Bousfield. It was so pleasing to hear how a local mixed fruit grower is managing to produce excellent crops of many apple varieties, pears, plums, cherries and apricots whilst still sustaining good environmental practices for the local wildlife. Pictures are Rob describing Apricot pruning, Apricot blossom and Rob Cherry pruning. Nb the bird netting.



Heath Fruit Farm will be supporting the National Open Gardens Scheme on Saturday 13th April 10am-2pm Adults £4 Children FREE. Heath Fruit Farm The Heath, Bluntisham PE28 3LQ. See Web Site: <https://heathfruitfarm.co.uk>

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 20th March as usual in the hall of the St Ives Free Church, 7.15 for 7.30 start. Our guest speaker is Ron Nunn, an amateur gardener from Cambridge whose talk will 'Explore the Gardens of Madeira'. I am optimistic it will be a very interesting presentation.

The Refreshments team for the evening comprise: Lyn Giles, Helen Hunter and Pat Synan. The Raffle Crew are: Sue and Dave Carter. We still have a good selection of prizes so no additions required at present.

Just a quick update on the Kew Visit on Saturday 6th July. I am pleased to confirm to those who have reserved a place or places for this trip that the cost will be £33.00pp for members over 65 and £35.00pp for those under 65. The cost is inclusive of coach travel, driver tip and entry into Kew Garden. I will be sending out requests for payment in late April /early May with individuals payment references, so please do not attempt payment until received.

I received the following e mail from Mary Slevin of Somersham GC on Thursday. Unfortunately, the Flyer she refers to gives no details other than 3 photos. Please note if you think you would like to join them for the trip PLEASE contact Mary at the e mail address I have provided at the end of her e mail.

*Hello Everyone, We are very pleased to advise you of our coach trip to RHS Hyde Hall on **Sunday 4th August** 2024 – please find all details in the attached flyer. (No Details on the flyer)*

*Would you kindly advise your members of this trip; we'd be very happy to hear from them. I'll send out payment options when I hear from people who would like to go on the trip and we would like to have payment by **Monday 25th March 2024.***

*The cost is just **£17 for non SGC** members so hopefully this will appeal to your members.*

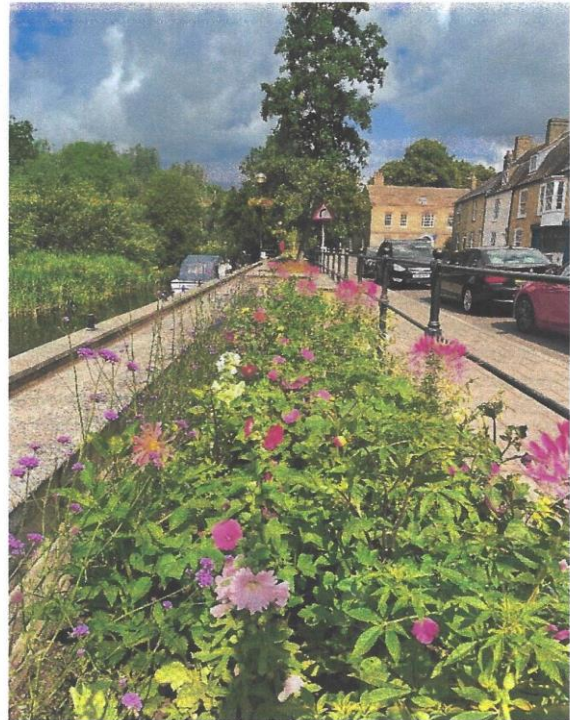
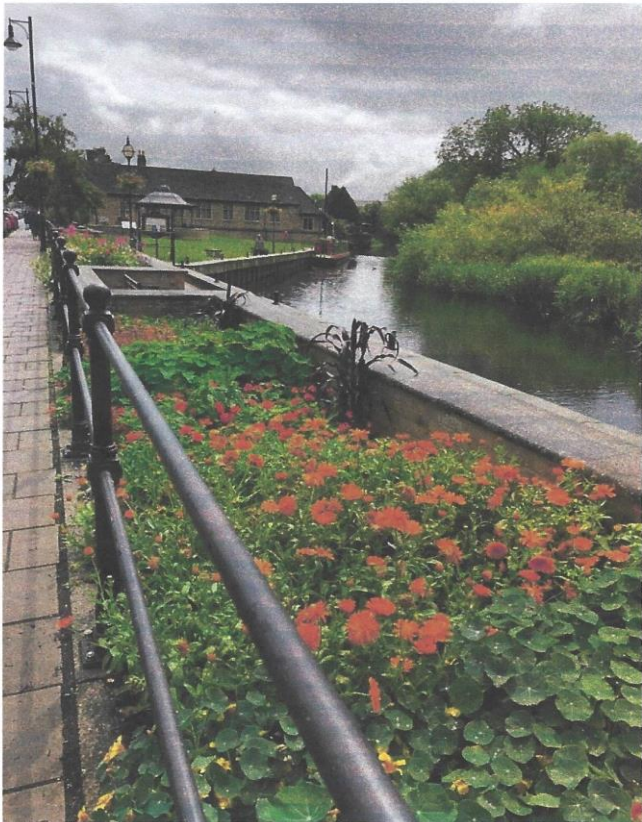
I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards Mary e mail Mary if you wish to join: mary.slevin@live.co.uk

As this was such short notice, I have decided best to get the invite out and those interested could contact Mary for the missing information otherwise it would have been another week before letting you know. I suspect they will be meeting up at the Somersham Quadrant/War Memorial, where they hold their plant sale and suspect an 8.15/8.30 departure targeting a 10am arrival at Hyde Hall.

As you are quite likely aware already, St Ives in Bloom will be entered into the National 'Britain in Bloom' Competition this coming summer and are actively getting involved of many local events and activities to promote both SliB and also the Britain in Bloom theme for 2024 '**Friendship**'. I am attaching a flyer which Hattie has put together for the Methodist Church '**Greener plants for a Greener World**' event being held on the 6th April.

I will be away on holiday at the time of this event, but I am sure a number of Garden Club members will support both Trevor's talks and other stands on display at the Methodist Church on the 6th April.



**Do you remember the summer display on The Waits?
Did you know it won gold and "Best Local Authority display" in the whole Anglia region?**

You have a chance to come and hear Trevor, from Cranbrook Plant Nursery, Somersham, explain how he designs the flowerbeds and chooses and grows the pollinator-friendly plants with both biodiversity and visual impact in mind.



Take home ideas for beautiful wildlife-friendly gardening by visiting: "Greener Plants for a Greener World" on Saturday April 6th, at the Methodist Church, The Waits, from 10am to 3pm (talks at 10.30am, 12 noon and 1.30pm).

Refreshments will be available. ALL WELCOME!!

Apologies for the print quality of the flyer but my printer is playing up!!! See you all hopefully on the 20th March, and maybe by then the weather will have improved. Robin 01480 380309 robin.bletsoe@yahoo.com