



Driftwood Open Garden

Geoff Stonebanks

Listed as a seaside garden to see by the Independent Magazine July 2011

Featured in Sussex Society Magazine May 2012

Gardener of the Year
Garden News
Media House
Peterborough Business Park
Lynch Wood
Peterborough
PE2 6EA

17th July 2012

Overall Gardener of the Year.

Hi, I'm Geoff Stonebanks and I have established a great coastal garden in Bishopstone, near Seaford in East Sussex. The house faces the sea and the attached plans of both front and rearspaces gives you a good idea of the dimensions and layout. The garden opens for the National Gardens Scheme 4 times this year and has had over 4000 visitors and raised over £10,000 for charity in 3 years!

I am a total amateur, having started gardening proper, after I retired and moved to Seaford in 2004. I began work on the garden in 2007 and have now created, in the words of a garden journalist, "*a garden that warmed her heart! It was immaculately presented and open for charity, but so filled with love and creative spirit that I'll never forget it! We're talking about a plot that's on a steep gradient and very close to the sea, but Geoff has worked wonders here ... so do go and visit if you can!*" The same journalist, Charlotte Weychan, said of it in June this year, "*Driftwood in Seaford is like a mini Giverny, giving a colour palette similar to Giverny.*"

The garden is quite remarkable, I am told, taking account of the prevailing salt laden winds and is an oasis in the landscape of conventional coastal gardens in the area. It is quite a shock to the system to walk up the side of the house and come across this riot of colour along with an eclectic mix of rusted metal objects. There are over 400 different plants at the back and several rooms in which to enjoy different views. It has also been remarked that the ability to closely contrast the coastal and cottage areas of the garden are quite imaginative and effective.

A visitor this year has said of it "*Beauty is something which this world values less and less. We are desperately in need of spaces like this.*"

The two spaces together work really well contrasting the exposed front of the house, now beach like, and the rear which in places is an absolute oasis and in others like a wind tunnel. A creative space, that needs to be seen to be believed.

I have also entered the best front garden and best small garden sections as well.

Yours sincerely



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Garden open 19th June, 1st & 22nd July & 12th August 2012