

Over the FENCE

...Continued

Thank you all for coming!

Just before we closed last month, Kristen from California and her family booked a visit to the garden and they fell in love with it. She asked if she could take some cuttings from one of my fuchsias back to the States with her. I'm expecting pictures of her success next year!

We've had a large number of figs on the tree in the centre of the garden. Despite picking and eating quite a few, there have still been many remaining for the birds. A cheeky starling was caught in the act!

Over 400 visitors booked to visit Driftwood, helping us donate £4,500 to the National Garden Scheme. It has amazed me how lush the plot has looked and is still looking. It certainly was a distinct advantage to have made all the changes I did five or six years ago to try and make the garden more drought tolerant. With a long-standing hosepipe ban here in Sussex, watering was thankfully much reduced.

One of the standout plants in the garden is the amazing eucomis, or pineapple lily. I have four containers sitting around the central steps up to



Geoff Stonebanks

A seaside garden in East Sussex that opens for charity, featuring sculpture and reclaimed objects.

the green folly door. The stems have grown really tall and are quite spectacular. Visitors have loved seeing them, with quite a few unfamiliar with them.

One of the ceramicists whose work I was selling, Chris Murphy from Brighton, had some pretty small pots, two of which I bought. They work really well with small succulent plants, sitting alongside a trio planter I bought from him several years ago.

On the north wall at the rear of the house, I have over 20 large planters containing a variety of plants. There's a large conifer, a white camellia, several hydrangeas and some pretty fuchsias. Thankfully, being a north wall, it rarely sees sunshine, so it's not been necessary to water continually.

The heat has certainly encouraged the growth of the boundary hedges and ivy; so



Kristen and family from the States



I see you, starling!

much so that I had to get a contractor in to trim them back in mid-August. Normally they'd last until the new year but I felt they were looking very unsightly. Sadly, with an upcoming operation and/or steroid injections on both hands, my ability to have a go myself disappeared. I daresay it will still want doing again in spring.

After we had closed, we had a long weekend away in Hampshire and visited Hinton Ampner gardens, which, despite the



North wall planting

parched landscape, were still very enjoyable to wander around. We also went to a garden I hadn't heard of, Houghton Lodge gardens near Romsey. The Oriental part of the garden was so very pretty.

One of my all-time favourite plants is *Erigeron karvinskianus*.

Earlier this year I discovered 'Lavender Lady', different to the white/pink flower I knew. They've done really well through the summer in small containers on the patio behind the house.

Read more of Geoff's garden at driftwoodbysea.co.uk or follow both him and the garden on social media.



Succulent containers

Erigeron 'Lavender Lady' was a wonderful discovery



I love the eucomis

My highlight

Eucomis stems dazzling in pots on the central steps.