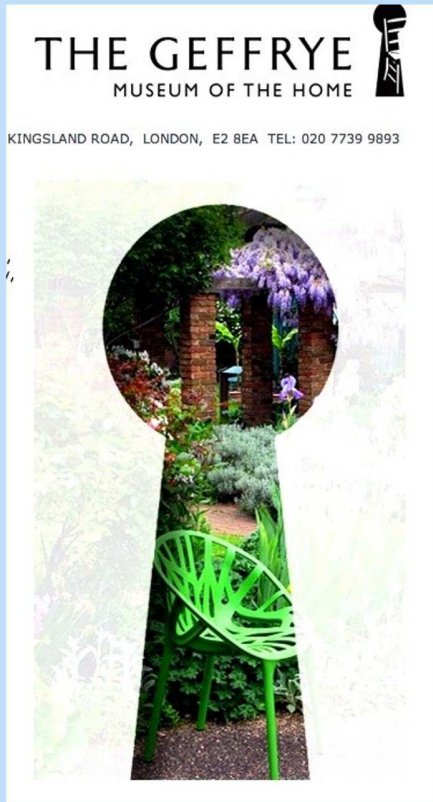


THE GEFFRYE: MUSEUM OF THE HOME

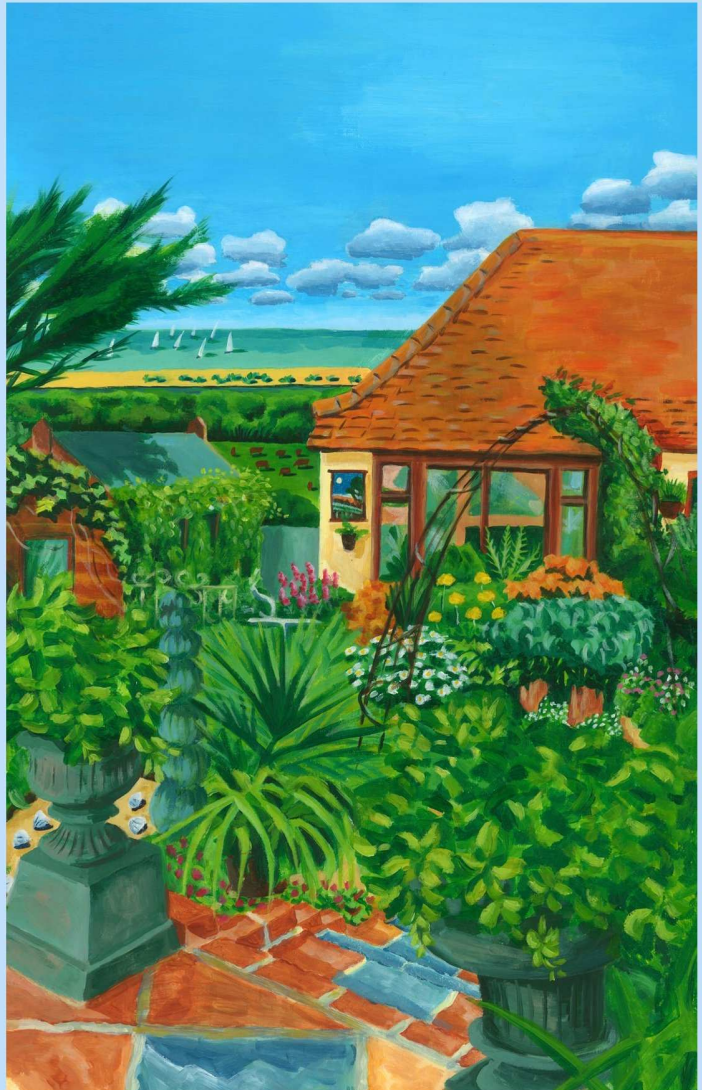
Driftwood Garden Diary 2014



The Documenting Homes Project at The Geffrye

A year in the life of Driftwood Garden

by
Geoff Stonebanks





© 2015 by the author of this book. Geoff Stonebanks retains sole copyright to his contributions to this book.



The Blurb-provided layout designs and graphic elements are copyright Blurb Inc., 2015. This book was created using the Blurb creative publishing service. The book author retains sole copyright to his contributions to this book.



As part of the Geffyre Museum's "Documenting Homes" Project I have documented a year in the life of the garden. It diarises, in words and images, all that took place at Driftwood throughout 2014.

This ranged from activities I did in the garden every week, with pictures of the before and afters, of open days and the visitors enjoying the garden!

The museum also asked it to cover what kind of work I did in the garden, planting, weeding, installing structures or furniture. Also to be included were any other activities that took place in the garden, eating, reading, and what I liked and enjoyed about the garden, and what I disliked or would like to have changed, along with any memories or resonances my garden may have evoked for me, of people, places, or events.

Their "Documenting Homes Project" is about collecting photographs as an archive of images and recorded testimony about homes in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, which are kindly donated to the museum by a variety of individuals from many different backgrounds and circumstances.

This will archive provide a wealth of information about furnishings and decorations, gardens, as well as insights into the values, interests and concerns that inform modern domestic life.

Thank you to all those visitors in the summer of 2014 that allowed their photographs to be taken and included in this record!

**Geoff Stonebanks
December 2014**

Geoff Stonebanks in his award winning garden "Driftwood".



In the autumn of 2013, the Geffrye Museum sought to acquire information on the garden at Driftwood.

The Geffrye explores the home and the way people live. Their collections show how homes have been used and furnished over the past 400 years, reflecting changes in society and behaviour as well as style, fashion and taste. Gardens are now becoming part of the work and this is a record in words and images of Driftwood throughout each of the weeks in 2014.



Part of the back garden at Driftwood



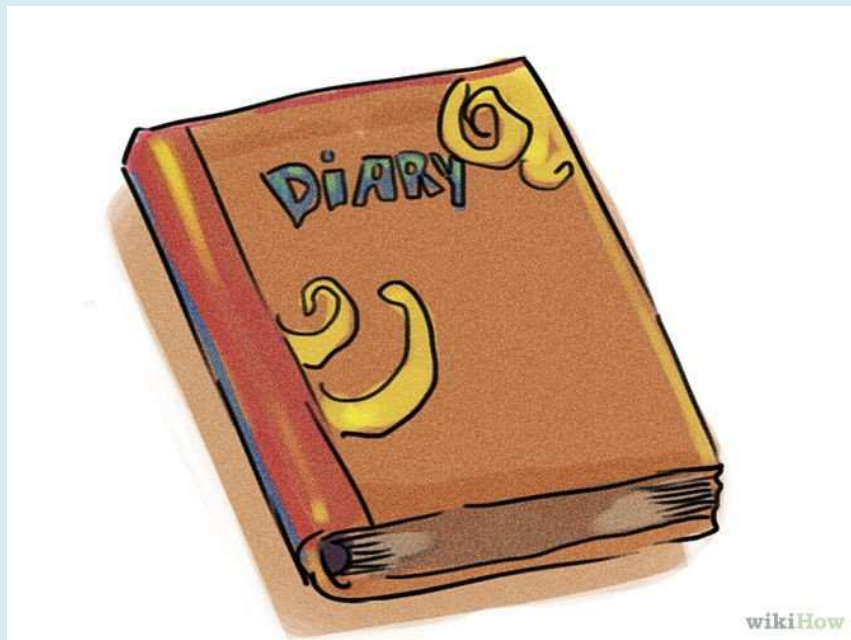
Section of the back garden at Driftwood



Image of the front garden at Driftwood

On the following pages are the images and words recorded from each of the 52 weeks during 2014.

Overleaf, double page spread of the back garden at Driftwood taken for the Daily Mail in 2012.







JANUARY 2014

WEEK COMMENCING 6TH JANUARY



The weather for most of January brought really bad wind and gales, some of the worst we have seen in the 10 years of living by the coast. Here is the front garden at the height of one of the storms. Cold week, no work in the

garden done but planned the openings for the summer and produced a poster.

The fish crate in the foreground was used by my father and grandfather on the docks in Fleetwood in the 1950's and bears my grandfathers' name, CF Stonebanks & Co. One label remained on the crates and a copy is shown here!

DRIFTWOOD
Open Garden Events 2014
OVER 8500 VISITORS & £32000 RAISED FOR CHARITY
Open by appointment for groups: 1st June to 5th September

DRIFTWOOD COMMUNITY HERDS
Sheep & Cattle

Tuesday 10th June: 1st opening for the National Gardens Scheme. 11am to 5pm. £4 for entry, tea, coffee, cakes & light lunch.

Sunday 22nd June: The 2nd Mayor's Open Garden Trail sponsored by **Pennine**. A trail of gardens open across Seaford & Bishopstone raising money for the Mayor's charity. All the gardens open from 11am to 5pm with refreshments in several gardens. £5 to see all 9 venues.

Tuesday 1st July: 2nd opening for the National Gardens Scheme, from 11am to 5pm, entry £4, tea, coffee, cakes & light lunch. Plant advice from Jean Griffin.

Tuesday 8th July: Open to raise money for St Wilfrid's Hospice through their Secret Garden Season. Entry £3. Open from 11am to 5pm. Refreshments available.

Friday 11th July: 1st ever evening opening 5pm to 9pm in aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. £5 including glass of wine or £3 just garden. £4 for entry, tea, coffee, cakes and light lunch.

Thursday 17th July: 2nd opening for the National Gardens Scheme. 11am to 5pm. £4 for entry, tea, coffee, cakes and light lunch.

Saturday 20th & Sunday 27th July: The 3rd annual Macmillan Coastal Garden Trail. One of 20 gardens open across the weekend from Brighton to Eastbourne, raising money for this great charity. £12 weekend tickets or £2 each garden! Sponsored by May's Terracotta. Plant advice from Jean Griffin on Sunday.

Sunday 2nd August: 4th opening for the National Gardens Scheme, from 11am to 5pm, entry £4, tea, coffee, cakes & light lunch. Plant advice from Jean Griffin.

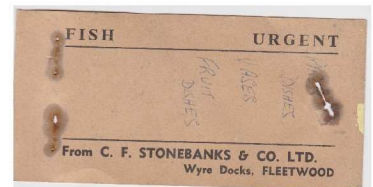
Saturday 22nd, Sunday 24th, Monday 25th August: Artware, Levea District Council art festival. 14 artists work displayed in stunning garden setting. Open 11am to 5pm. Proceeds from refreshment and raffle of artist donated work to Macmillan Cancer Support.

Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st August: Artware as above, open both days 11am to 5pm.

Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th September: Artware as above. Open both days 11am to 5pm.

Plant supports & garden sculpture for sale at all openings.
Why not book to hold a celebration in the garden too?

4 Marine Drive, Bishopstone, Seaford, BN25 2RS
@driftwoodbysea Tel: 01323 899296 Find us on Facebook
twitter www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk



WEEK COMMENCING 13TH JANUARY

Multi award winning garden!

"I've seen hundreds of gardens over the 22 years of judging the Daily Mail National Garden Competition, and believe me, you are up there with the best of them!" **Ranish Webb, Judge.**

2012 WINNER
GARDEN
BEST SMALL GARDEN

Read Geoff Stonebanks's article about his garden every four weeks in **Garden news**

Driftwood, 4 Marine Drive, Bishopstone, Seaford, BN25 2RS
01323 899296

Enjoy afternoon tea or a light lunch, surrounded by plants at the rear or on the lovely beach garden at the front, overlooking the sea.

www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk @driftwoodbysea

Weather not good again did more work inside preparing for the garden openings and produced the flyer.

DRIFTWOOD OPEN GARDEN EVENTS 2014

Tuesday 10th June, Tuesday 1st July, Thursday 17th July & Sunday 3rd August: Open 4 times for the National Gardens Scheme. All 11am - 5pm. £4 entry. Tea, coffee & light lunch.

Sunday 22nd June: One of the gardens on The Mayor's Garden Trail through Seaford & Bishopstone. 11am - 5pm, £5 to see all 9 venues. Tea, coffee & light lunch. Sponsored by **Pennine**.

Tuesday 8th July: One of St Wilfrid's Hospice Secret Gardens open 11am - 5pm. Entry £3. 11am-5pm. Tea, coffee & light lunch.

Friday 11th July: Special evening opening raising funds for the RNLI from 5pm to 9pm. Entry £5 including wine or £3 just garden.

Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th July: One of 20 gardens on the trail, Brighton to Eastbourne. Open 11am - 5pm. £12 for weekend ticket or £2 each garden. Sponsored by May's Terracotta.

Sat 23rd, Sun 24th, Mon 25th, Sat 30th & Sun 31st August: Sat 6th & Sun 7th September: Artware, 14 original artists work displayed in stunning garden setting, 11am - 5pm each day. Proceeds from raffle and refreshments to Macmillan Cancer Support.

OPEN BY APPOINTMENT FOR GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS:
1st June to 5th September. Available for private celebrations too!
Garden decorations for sale at all openings. Garden advice from Jean Griffin on 1st, 27th & 28th

WEEK COMMENCING 20TH JANUARY

Some unusually decent weather this week so spent time in the garden tidying up and trimming the plants in the pots in the garden.

The 2 standard bay trees in the image on the right belonged to my Dad's sister, Margaret Grindrod, who died in 2004. She loved gardening and these were both in her garden in Ware in



Hertfordshire until her death, when I was given them by her husband!

These were just some of the things from her garden more to be revealed as the year progresses.

WEEK COMMENCING 27TH JANUARY

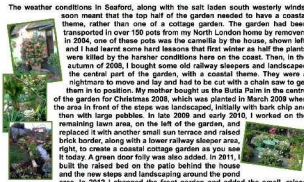
Driftwood Garden 2014

THE GARDEN HAS OPENED OVER 12 TIMES SINCE 2009, HAS REPLIED 9000 VISITORS & RAISED MORE THAN £1000 FOR WOODS CHARITIES. £1000 IN 2013 ALONE. THROUGH VISITOR GENUINITY. Double national award winner in 2012 & featured in The Mail On Sunday & Success Life in 2013

In 2014, the garden will open 4 times for the National Gardens Scheme and 12 times for other charities, notably Macmillan Cancer Support, St Wilfrid's Hospice, and new for 2014, the RNLI, with an evening opening. Since 2007, Driftwood has been transformed from a very uninspiring plot to one that has been described by others as an exuberant, yet immaculate, seaside garden, split into several garden rooms. It has been described as a layered tapestry of coloured plantings and fully embraces its location, beautifully integrating wooden and rusted metal features with the landscape. The heavy, dense plantings (over 400 plants) with no lawn and no exposed soil create an illusion of a much bigger garden.

As you arrived, you will have seen the rowing boat and the landscaped beach garden, fully completed in early 2012. On the right, the garden in 2004, the trees, top right and the pear tree on the left are the main features from the original garden. The greenhouse, at the back was installed in mid October 2004. The grass was still partially in place as recently as January 2010. The picture, right, was taken of the same, left hand area, in 2012. On arrival, the first thing we did was have the studio built at the top of the garden, to the left of the greenhouse, quickly followed by the long thin shed on the site of the old one. The main changes were begun in 2007 with the building of the summer house, there was never a grand plan. It has just evolved over time. After first engaging a designer, I decided to go it alone on seeing his plans, I thought, I could probably do it better myself. The original garden had 2 lawns and sloped from bottom right to top left. When my father sold some shares back in 2006, he gave me some money and I opted to buy a Summer House, now aptly named Dad's Place after his death, soon after it had been built in Spring 2007. As you see, left, he did get to sit in it before he died. Another photograph of the garden, taken from the gate you entered, is on the back wall of the summer house, take a look when you get up there. The lawn was a nightmare to mow and there were no level surfaces. After the summer house, also in early 2007, came the main upper patio in front of it along with the steps down, shown in the Autumn of 2007 the raised bed in the top left, with the grave was built, along with the small patio, shown right.

The weather conditions in Seaford, along with the salt laden south westerly winds, soon meant that the top half of the garden needed to have a coastal theme, rather than one of a cottage garden. The garden had been transplanted in over 100 pots from my North London home by removers in 2004, one of these pots was the carnella by the house, shown left, and I had feared some hard weather that first winter as half the plants were killed by the harsher conditions here on the coast. Then, in the autumn of 2008, I bought some old railway sleepers and landscaped the central part of the garden, with a coastal theme. They were a nightmare to move and lay and had to be cut with a chainsaw to get them in to position. My mother bought us the Butia Palm in the centre of the garden for Christmas 2008, which was planted in March 2009 when the area in front of the steps was landscaped, initially with brick chips and then with large pebbles. In late 2008 and early 2010, I worked on the remaining lawn area, on the left of the garden, and replaced it with another small sun terrace and raised brick border, along with a lower railway sleeper area, right, to create a coastal cottage garden as you see it today. A green door folly was also added, in 2011, I built the raised bed on the patio behind the house and the new steps and landscaping around the pond area. In 2012 I changed the front garden and added the small, raised beds adjacent to the steps in the centre of the garden and made changes to some of the planting in the brick beds. The purpose built shelves for plant sales behind the greenhouse were also installed. Now for 2014 is the rope bannister at the front of the house and the fabulous new back porch which should make serving teas much easier. In 2013 I launched a comprehensive website for the garden www.driftwoodgarden.co.uk. Many of the objects in the garden have a sentimental attachment. The fish basket, under the olive tree at the top end, was used by my father on the docks at Flitewood in the late 1850's. The lobster pot under the central palm hanging on the wall of my parents' job. The Dolphin, in Calceolaria for 30 years. The fish crates in the front garden are stamped with my grandfather's business, C.F. Stroudwater, Wyre Dock, Flitewood and were used by him and my father. The tortoise, Hector, belonged to my Dad's sister Margaret, whose picture is beneath my father's hanging in the summer house. There are many plants and ornaments in the garden that belonged to both her and my Dad. I was extremely fortunate in 2012 to be appointed Assistant County Organiser & Publicity Officer for the National Gardens Scheme in East & Mid Sussex. In 2013, Driftwood won the Garden News 'Best Small Garden' in the UK and was one of 4 finalists. From over 1200 entries in the Daily Mail National Garden Competition, make sure you see the coveted plaques in the back porch of the house. I have been writing a monthly piece about Driftwood in the national gardening magazine, Garden News for over a year, so look out for the articles. There is a published book of the garden available online via BLURB. Copy available to view in the summer house and buy here if you wish. Thompson & Morgan Customer Trike panelist in both 2013 and 2014.



Weather bit cold, wet and windy again this week to work outside so spent time on PC on the wet days preparing the hand out for visitors to read when they visit the garden in the summer. This handout identifies both my Dad and his sister as keen gardeners and shows which items in the garden belonged to them and are now cherished by me.

FEBRUARY 2014

WEEK COMMENCING 3RD FEBRUARY



The weather this week continues the theme of the storms, wind and rain that occurred in January and this image was taken in the middle of one of the storms, All the plant fleeces on the delicate plants in the garden were really badly battered and some ripped. The central Butia palm with the red cover was a christmas present to my partner and I from my mother in 2010 and has now nearly doubled in size!

WEEK COMMENCING 10TH FEBRUARY

I found out this week that the garden would feature in a local free glossy magazine called etc magazine in their April issue and supplied some images and was interviewed over the phone by the magazine journalist. I was also asked to write a blog for the seed company Thompson & Morgan for whom I am one of their 60 or so trial gardens up and down the country. The blog was based on my experiences over the winter and some of the plants I am trialling for them.

It can be read via this link

<http://blog.thompson-morgan.com/customer-trial-panel/a-successful-year-at-driftwood/>

Also did work on one of the raised beds with fuchsias in the garden and tidied it all up and made sure the climbing plants had metal frames to grow up. Some before and after images below. Also the first crocus appeared in the garden this week too.



WEEK COMMENCING 17TH FEBRUARY



This week the weather was a bit better again with some days when I could get out in the garden. The escalonia hedge in front of the studio in the garden had got badly infected last year but had not been able to remove it until after garden openings! Managed to dig it up, which was really a hard and demanding job and then had to remove all the rubbish to the local tip. I replaced it with a new hedge of laurel that I had bought on line and had delivered. You can see the before above and the after on the left! Between



planting the 2 the studio had to be painted but I arranged to get someone to come and do that for me, prior to planting the new hedge.

These stunning helebores argutifolius flowered in both the front beach garden and also in the raised bed in the back garden! You can see from the picture and the cross channel ferry, how close we are to the sea.





The studio at the back of the garden is used by my partner, Mark Glassman. In his spare time he paints, acrylic on canvas, scenes of Sussex and the area around where we live.

WEEK COMMENCING 24TH FEBRUARY

We saw the first camellias flower in the garden this week too at the back and the gorgeous bergenia flower in the front beach garden, despite all that the recent weather had thrown at it!

This week I was also able to get out and tidy up the area around the pond. The area at the back was in need of a revamp and the area beneath the pond



needed to be cut

back as we had had a new back porch fitted last year and wanted to be able to get a full view of the back garden from the house now through the new french windows. You can see a 2 brick low divider was put in to give a clean edge to the grey slate covered border. Also in the background of the



finished image below you can see two grey vintage shutters that I had bought last year and was now using to help create room dividers in the garden!

This week was also the time to take all the protective covers off the tender plants in



the back garden too and here you can see Albert ,our Jack Russell, inspecting the covers before putting them all away until the autumn!





The gate at the top of the garden had been sticking so I took it off it's hinges and chopped some of the bottom! The first daffodil also appeared in the garden this week too!



MARCH 2014

WEEK COMMENCING 3RD MARCH

As March rolled in the weather was much improved although still cold but the garden was starting to



look the best it had looked at this time of year, as you can see from the 3 images of the back garden , all taken on the 2nd March.

This planter of a boat was bought this week and planted up with stunning Heuchera Sweet



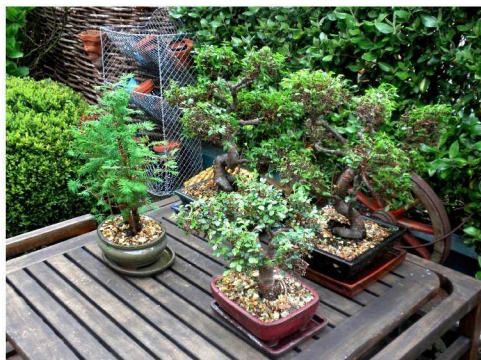
Tea. It evokes memories of my father, Ron who died in 2007, as he loved the sea and boats in particular. All the agave americanas that overwinter in a covered



area at the side of the house were brought out and tidied up, ready to be positioned around the garden! Care was taken to remove lots of babies from around the edge and these have been planted up for selling when we open the garden later in the year!

WEEK COMMENCING 10TH MARCH

This week the 4 bonsai trees that had been kept in the heated greenhouse all winter were also brought out and given a trim on one of the better days! A painter also came in for the next 2 weeks and painted the summer house and the front and side of the house too! I have always loved these small trees since childhood and had always wanted to own some. 2 of them are over 20 years old now.



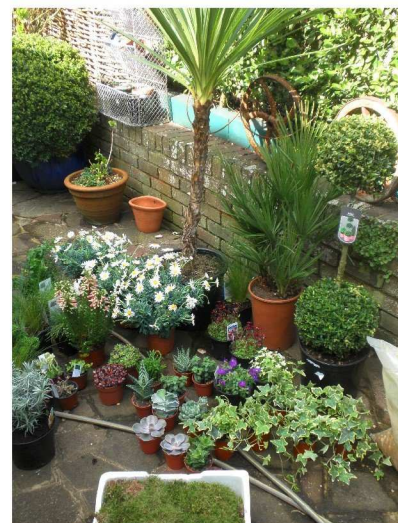
WEEK COMMENCING 17TH MARCH

Having cleaned the pond out back in February, the Marsh marigolds in it looked stunning this week and will flower profusely for the next few weeks! Not much done in the garden this week! The pond always makes me think of my Uncle Roy who had a lovely pond and was always fastidious about the way he maintained it! He died back in 2006.



WEEK COMMENCING 24TH MARCH

This week we travelled to London to stay with a friend near Brick Lane and actually visited the Geffyre Museum as well as going to the flower market in Columbia Rd! I spent over £180 on plants and artifacts for the garden and you can see the plant haul in the photograph! All were planted up in the garden on our return! My birthday is this month and my mother had suggested I look for something she could get me as a present. Needless to say I found several things here and she subsequently gave me the money for the tall Torbay palm and a palm called a chamaerops humillis!



WEEK COMMENCING 31ST MARCH

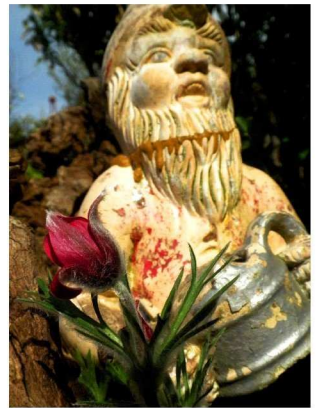
My mother came to stay with us this week and the weather was really nice and she was able to sit and read in the

garden as you can see.

The border alongside the main path in the back garden

was looking amazing with the Mysotis white, blue aubretia and Arabis spring

charm. Amazingly the first tulips came up in the garden and you can see the gnome watering the very first to appear! The garden has been looking the best it has ever looked in March despite all the bad weather and particularly the amount of rain we have experienced.



APRIL 2014

WEEK COMMENCING 7TH APRIL

I am involved with the National Gardens Scheme and attended the launch of the 2014 Yellow Book and met Joe Swift this week!



Back in the garden it had been quite nice again and my partner Mark Glassman can be seen sitting by the pond on the phone! A lot of tidying up has been done this week in the

garden and lots more flowers have appeared early including the stunning rhododendron, Cunningham's White.



WEEK COMMENCING 14TH APRIL



One of the big jobs this week has been to empty the greenhouse and give it a thorough clean before putting everything back in it for the summer! As one of 60 trial gardens across the country for Thompson & Morgan, I receive lots of new plants and plugs to grow on and give them feedback at the end of the season and many are in the greenhouse growing on! Overall the garden is looking

quite amazing for the time of year and looks really colourful!



WEEK COMMENCING 21ST APRIL



4 Friends came on Sunday afternoon and we all sat and had tea and cakes in the garden but no picture I'm afraid! The weather was warm enough. Some of the trial plants



sent by Thompson & Morgan last Autumn were the tulip bulbs of Silver Parrot and Ice cream below, which have just started to flower in the garden and are quite incredible!

WEEK COMMENCING 28TH APRIL

Busy week in the garden as the weather has been very good, sunny but cool in the breeze some days. Clipped all the topiary box in the garden and tidied up all the gravel beds in the front garden from all the leaves that had blown on them. In this shot is a topiary squirrel which my mother gave me as a Christmas present about 5 years ago as a starter





kit, with a small box plant and a squirrel shaped frame that you grow the plant through and trim into the squirrel shape! It took about 4 years before I could take off the frame and it resembled a squirrel. By the side of it my 60th birthday present from her too!

The lovely wire french seat! On the 3rd May we went to a local village fete with a friend, Rosa Botterill, and came back and sat in the garden and had lunch. My partner, Mark and Rosa in the photo. I spent most of the week getting the garden ready as I was having 30 visitors come and see it next week and paying me, with money going to charity!



WEEK COMMENCING 5TH MAY



Bank Holiday Monday was spent feeding every plant in the garden with Miracle gro! It took over 5 hours to water each plant by hand as you can see in the image, ably assisted by our J a c k Russell, Albert. This week I also

potted up all the fuchsia cuttings I have grown over the winter which I sell to my garden visitors throughout the summer. Here they all are ready on the shelves!





Tidying out the summer house this week, in readiness for the very first visitors of 2014 on the 8th May, brought back many memories of my Dad who died in 2007. That year he had sold some shares and gave my brother and I half each and I used mine to buy the summer house! I bought a plaque and named it Ron's place in his honour! He did get to sit in it weeks before he died, as you can see, (left) and was disgusted I had not named it Dad's Place, the name it now bears!

WEEK COMMENCING 12TH MAY

On the 8th May, the first day of opening, the only problem was it poured with rain all day! A friend, Diane came to help me in the

kitchen and I had baked 3 lovely cakes! Cappuccino cake, banana loaf and ginger bread! 20 visitors turned up with brollies and enjoyed their visit

but with limited cover from the rain they ate their tea and cakes either in the shed, the side alley, summer house or front porch! I was soaked after serving all those teas on trays! I also visited a local nursery this week where I am able to but

annual bedding plants at trade prices and spent over £200, some of the spoils can be seen on the left, now I have to wait for good weather to plant them all out! Amazingly dreadful winds came back to haunt the garden over 2 days and a lot of the new growth on plants was burnt off with the salt laden winds. I planted out all the annual plants over 1 week or so when the weather was good enough and the garden was filling up with no gaps or exposed soil visible.



On Sunday 11th, a local artist came to see the garden with a view to paint a picture of it this summer that I had commissioned. I also met up with Christine Walkden who is patron of my Macmillan Garden Trail



WEEK COMMENCING 19TH MAY



The week started off very windy with lots of salt burn to the new growth on the plants in the garden! On Monday, in the afternoon, it was dry and calm enough to plant up some of the



pots in the garden with the bedding plants bought last week. It took several days to get them all planted and deciding where the post would go! On Thursday 15th a follow up visit to the nursery to buy yet more plants to fill the garden with the day spent planting them all out. On the left you can see the 40 containers at the back of the house that will become a profusion of colour over the next few weeks.



In all, over £1000 spent this year on plants for the garden! Quite amazing. As a trial garden for Thompson &

Morgan, I receive plants to test out, one new one this week was the innovative Tom Tato, a new product with tomatoes growing above ground and potatoes beneath!

I look forward to harvesting the crop this summer.



Many memories evoked this week of past family members! The rusted trough was made for my mother back in the 1960's by her brother in law, my Uncle Roy who died back in 2006. It has been



planted up with lovely geraniums at the tip of the garden.



My mother will be here next month to see it too! The lilies in the pot on the right were planted by his wife, Auntie Margaret, and she died back in 2004 but this

same pot she planted them in comes out every year and stunning lilies flare up to make her presence felt in the garden each summer!

WEEK COMMENCING 26TH MAY

This week 4 friends, Chris Burchell Collins, Paul Cox, Su Cloud and Jim Pilston delivered their stock to be sold in the garden during the open days. It has all been stored in the greenhouse with samples put out in the garden. Chris's plant supports, Paul's rusted metal flowers, Su's ceramic seed pods and Jim's wooden houses! Another item in the garden that always evokes memories for me is this small



lobster pot



which hung on the wall of my parents public house, The Dolphin, near Banbury in Oxfordshire for over 30 years! It now resides in the garden during the summer and is stored in the garage in the



winter! In the middle of the week, a friend recommended 2 swedish ladies came to see the garden. They were fascinated and amazed with it and even bought my book about the development of the garden too!

A greek friend, Martha Sparkes came to stay for the weekend and gave me a late birthday present of the lead planter. On Sunday 1st June the garden was officially open by appointment until September!



This week, I was also contacted by Ideal World Shopping



Channel to talk about 2 of the plants I have trialled from Thompson & Morgan on their TV Show by

telephone on Sunday 1st June!

WEEK COMMENCING 2nd JUNE

This week I have been busy tidying the garden and getting ready for it's first opening next week! Lots to do with dead heading and cleaning the hard surfaced areas. Final additions of new plants to fill all the gaps so no exposed soil is seen! I found out this week that the garden may feature in a new gardening programme this autumn with Alan Titchmarsh! Every thing now crossed until



we find out sometime in the next 6 weeks! This week finished planting



up Clarence the cow, now looking stunning in the garden by the folly door, this was a gift last Christmas from my mother! This urn, one of a pair, has fond memories as I tidied it up this week, they were bought, one by my parents and one by friends of theirs I called Auntie Sylvia & Uncle Selby, for my 50th birthday back in 2003, both have now died so a nice memory!

WEEK COMMENCING 9th JUNE

Busy week this week as we open for the National Gardens Scheme on Tuesday, the first of the 16 openings this summer! I spent the Monday getting everything ready while my partner Mark, and our dog Albert took



things easy in the garden! A friend, David Holland, came around with a lovely planter he had made for us after we had admired one in his garden last week. I then went out and bought some small pots and suitable plants to put in it!

The finished product looks great! On Tuesday 10th, the gates were flung open and we saw 176 visitors come to the garden from across Sussex and even as far away as Norwich and Essex! (They were holidaying here in Sussex.) It was such a lovely day that many were able to have tea and cakes on the



beach garden at the front of the house. The three on the left came from Surrey, having seen the garden advertised and promoted each month in a national garden magazine, Garden News, Wendy Pulling and her 2 friends, Jane and Sandra. A few of the 600 friends I have on facebook also came along to see the garden in the flesh so to speak, here you can see Audrey Peters with me in the garden! Last summer I had commissioned a local artist to come and paint the garden but she only had time to do it this year so on 13th June I went to see the picture on display in a local art gallery in

Seaford before it come to be hung for me to enjoy in the house! I am extremely pleased with the finished project.



WEEK COMMENCING 16th JUNE



On the 16th June 2 ladies had booked to see the garden privately and enjoyed their visit all to themselves. The week was spent getting ready for the next public opening which is on Sunday 22nd for the Mayor of Seaford. On 18th June 2 family friends, Jean & Clive Farley, visited the garden and can be

seen with my mother Barbara in the garden. Jean (71) felt strongly that the rusted metal and wooden wheels we had decorating parts of the garden evoked special memories of her childhood back in Wales in the 1940's along with the centaurea montana which reminded her of the



corn flowers in the fields. My partner Mark, came back later and refused to be photographed as you can



see. On Saturday I spent the day making the garden look good ready for the Mayors Open Garden Trail on Sunday! Local MP Norman Baker and Cllr Mark Brown came along to open the event! As you can see it did look fabulous!



Two friends came to help serve the tea and cakes in the kitchen for the day, Rosa Botterill on the left and Celia Hughes on the



right! We raised £2307 from the trail of 9 gardens in the town that I had planned and organised!

WEEK COMMENCING 23rd JUNE



On the 23rd June we had a coach party visit the garden that had booked over a year ago! Here are images of the visitors enjoying the garden. They had come to

Sussex for a few days just to visit a number of small gardens like mine!



Also this week a facebook friend from Devon was in Sussex and came to see the garden with her husband! Sacha and Ray Hubbard own a nursery in Devon and had seen the garden on facebook and really waited to come and see it. After her visit she wrote on her facebook page "Whatever you do, if you get to East Sussex, visit Driftwood Garden on one of

their many Open Days for the NGS. It's the most staggering and inspirational garden to show what can be achieved without possessing rolling acres but having an eye, imagination, a love of plants and great energy and enthusiasm. This is a real 'must see' garden. Thank you, Geoffrey for allowing us to visit when you were 'off duty' and we really enjoyed this afternoon very much indeed and talked about it all the way home!"

Paul Cox, a local artist had made up the metal frames for the 3 leaded glass panels I have bought earlier in the year in Dorset and they now look wonderful bursting out from the olearia hedge!



WEEK COMMENCING 29th JUNE

We opened for the National Gardens Scheme again on the 1st July and saw over a hundred visitors to the garden some of whom can be seen enjoying tea and cakes in the garden. It was a busy week trying to get everything ready again as it had been very dry and the garden needed a



lot of watering by hand. The remainder of the week was taken up making preparations for the busy week next week with 2 openings, a private visit and my going to spend a day at Hampton Court Flower Show.

WEEK COMMENCING 6th JULY

We had a quiet opening for St Wilfrid's Hospice on Tuesday 8th July, after my spending all day on the Monday watering the garden as it had been so warm.

On Wednesday spent the day at Hampton Court Flower Show and then on Thursday got ready for the evening opening for the RNLI. On the day of opening it poured with rain all day and the event was a complete wash out. Despite that the Mayor of Newhaven, Judith Ost, kindly came along and performed an opening ceremony

I was amazed to learn that the garden would be part of national TV Show, Good Morning Britain, on Monday 14th so spent all weekend working hard and getting ready for the film crew.



WEEK COMMENCING 13th JULY

On Sunday 13th, got the garden ready for the Good Morning Britain TV shoot, live for the programme on Monday morning. In the evening Oliver Breckon, the shows producer, delivered the gnomes that had



been made of the shows presenters for that week and we had to pull out the 17 we had in the garden for them to be included on the show too! At 0400

on Monday morning the OB unit arrived and the team set up and Laura Tobin, the weather girl, delivered all her 9 broadcasts live from the garden. What's more, twice during the show she interviewed me live on TV about my passion for gardening and my charity fundraising. It was a great morning full of fun and the team presented me with the Laura gnome as a thanks for the hospitality shown to them.

After all that, at 2pm the same day a group of visitors came to see the garden too.



A l s o

this week 15 visitors came to see the garden on the Wednesday evening and we opened for the National Gardens Scheme on the Thursday 17th. I was well and truly worn out by the end of the week.

WEEK COMMENCING 20th JULY

There was another garden visit this week on Wednesday and great fun was had by all! All week I was getting ready for the Macmillan Garden Trail which I had organised to raise money for the local cancer centre in Brighton and we had an opening ceremony in the garden with the Mayor of Seaford , Cllr Mark Brown and the Chair of Lewes District Council, Tony Nicholson. Then the newest TV station in Brighton, latest TV came along to film the garden to make a short programme for the new channel and



then went on to visit

some of the other gardens along the way! It should be a good short programme. To add to the whole thing on the sunday, Jonathan Kent, from BBC World Service, came to interview me in the garden about the relationship between social media and charity fundraising. There were many lovely visitors to the garden with just 2 shown here. Throughout the day we also had a gardening expert available to talk to any one with a gardening query, Jean Griffin from BBC Sussex's Dig It programme on a sunday morning.

By the end of the weekend I was absolutely worn out and had to get ready for a further TV crew visit.



WEEK COMMENCING 28th JULY



On Monday, the crew from Outline Productions came to the garden to talk to me and make a short film of me and the garden to put forward to Sky TV, in the hope I am selected for a new gardening programme to be filmed in September for screening in the New Year. They were here over 2 hours and filmed about 6 segments

and were amazed that I did them all in a single take with no mistakes. It was a lovely 2 hours and everything was crossed once they had left. The rest of the week was quiet from a gardening perspective as my 87 year old mother was staying and we went out for days out with her. She and her friend Edna Bradbury had been busy selling tickets for the garden entry when we were open

WEEK COMMENCING 3rd AUGUST



The garden opened for it's final garden opening on the Sunday (with just the 7 openings for Artwave left). We were extremely busy with over 250 visitors and raised £1104 for the National Gardens Scheme. Artists started delivering their stock ready for Artwave and Frances Doherty was the first with these gorgeous ceramic



pieces and we ended up buying the piece on the wooden plinth! Richard Hannay's lovely lead planters are being retained for Artwave too. We have sold 3 of them but hopefully we can sell more.



Towards the end of the week we were warned of hurricane Bertha from America which might hit the UK so I spent time trying to prepare the garden for what might come. There were many gaps, as some of the annuals were dying off, so I bought some more plants from the garden centre to try and freshen up parts of the garden.

WEEK COMMENCING 10th AUGUST



The storm hit us on Sunday 10th and the garden took a real battering from the relentless wind. It was non stop and many plants were d a m a g e d ,



especially the beautiful shasta daisies (left)



around the green table and chairs. The wind can be seen blowing the gunnera's leaves. I spent a couple of days this week trying to make it look good. It was confirmed also that the garden may be included in a new book about small gardens and a dutch photographer is coming to take some shots in the garden next week. There were

some visitors to the garden this week too! My partners sister and brother in law, Jacqueline and Stuart Harvey came over from Spain to spend a few days with us. A friend, Lin Bryan, of theirs also visited from Essex and brought someone with her, Louise.



WEEK COMMENCING 17th AUGUST

This week I worked hard to get the garden ready for a photo shoot for possible inclusion in a new book being written by a well known garden writer, Noel Kingsbury! A dutch photographer came to shoot the garden early on the 21st August!





Surprisingly she was only interested in the front garden but was very hopeful it would be included in the book for publication in 2016. I also had a large group visit the garden from Uckfield who had a



great morning. On the 23rd the Artwave Festival began and we had record sales of the art in the garden. A local



vintage gramophone enthusiast, Graham Barber was on hand to play music from the

20's to the 40's on his wind up gramophones! Over 400 visited the garden over the weekend and many enjoyed the tea on cakes on offer.



WEEK COMMENCING 24th AUGUST

The art festival continued over the weekend and Bank Holiday Monday when it poured with rain all day. On the Sunday though many bought art and enjoyed sitting in the garden again! The weekend as a whole was really successful with over £3000 worth of art being sold. I worked



hard all week trying to maintain the garden looking good ready for the second week of the festival.

The Saturday was a good day but not as busy as we had hoped. We still managed to sell over £1000 worth of art though!



WEEK COMMENCING 31st AUGUST

Sunday was a bit quieter as there were roadworks on the main road which prevented visitors from getting to us! We had a nice surprise when 2 ladies pictured right, Maria and Sue arrived and said they



had planned their short stay in Sussex around their

desire to see my garden after reading about it in a national gardening magazine. They had come all the way from Leeds! Albert, our Jack Russell was on hand to help in the summer house!



On Monday 1st September I learnt that I was not to be included in the new gardening TV programme as my garden was known to the other prospective participants which was a real blow! At least now the last public in the garden will be this coming weekend and I will not have to keep the garden going until later in the month! Friends Janice & Mario came for tea in the garden on the 3rd September, the same day I found out that the neighbours



planned to cut down the tree behind the shed which will have a real impact on the look of the garden next year! The final weekend of the Artwave Festival went down well and we had many visitors continuing to buy the art on sale!

WEEK COMMENCING 7th SEPTEMBER

2 of the artist displaying their work in the garden can be seen here, Penny Edwards on the right, a friend Martha Sparkes in the middle and ceramicist cat Brown on the left.

Another artist, Phil Duncan with wife and friends in this image below too! 965 people visited the



garden during the 7 day festival and we sold over £10000 worth of art. On Sunday



the 7th, the last day of the garden openings for 2014, we were able to present the Head of Regional



Fundraising for Macmillan with a cheque for £10000. Rob Moon came and completed the draw of or raffle as well! Many people were in the garden to see the event take place.



My partner Mark Glassman completed this collage of images from the festival.

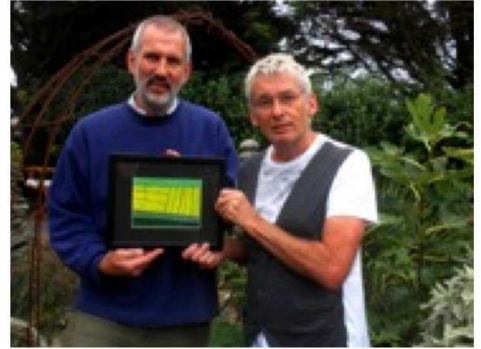




Winners of the raffle prizes came to collect their prizes later in the week too! I decided to have a bit of a rest and did not spend too much time in the garden this week.

The shot shows me and the artist of the first prize, Chiara Vagnarelli, 2nd

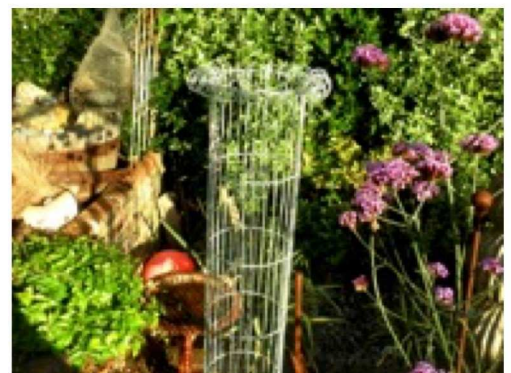
from right with the 1st prize winner (centre) Kathleen Avenell, 2nd prize Janet Dingley (far right collecting for her sister Susan Weedon, and 8th prize winner Beatrice King (2nd from left). The other is 3rd prize winner Tom Greaves!



The garden started to look a bit bare with all the art gone!

WEEK COMMENCING 14TH SEPTEMBER

We were away all this week at both my mothers and in Devon! While away bought some nice items for the garden seen here! A couple of vintage garden forks, some wire mesh baskets and 2 contemporary but interesting plant supports!





During the week the tree next door was actually cut down and you can see the difference it has made to the look of the garden!



WEEK COMMENCING 21st SEPTEMBER



This week saw a great blog I had written on vintage garden tools posted on an american web site with this image on the right! Frances Doherty, who had been exhibiting her work in the garden for Artwave came and collected her unsold pieces and kindly gave me the 2



damaged hydrangea pieces that had been blown over by the wind which still look amazing event though they are slightly broken.

Having been away from the garden for a week there was a lot of tidying up to do and

it was amazing how good it was still looking for this late in the year! This is the view of the area by the pond!



WEEK COMMENCING 28th SEPTEMBER

The Indian Summer still continues and the garden is still looking quite good! Even the yuccas at the top of the garden have started to



flower again which has not happened before!

On Sunday I spent time trimming off the top of the ivy along

the side of the house to neaten it up and take out the dead areas where my neighbour had removed it on his side of the fence! It is amazing how

much colour is still evident throughout the garden! In the middle of the week I tidied up my favourite area and cut back the shasta daisies which made it look much neater and tidier as the image on the right shows! If the weather continues the shasta



daisies might even flower again! I also

decided to replant the dining room chair with some autumn plants to refresh it and as you see it looks

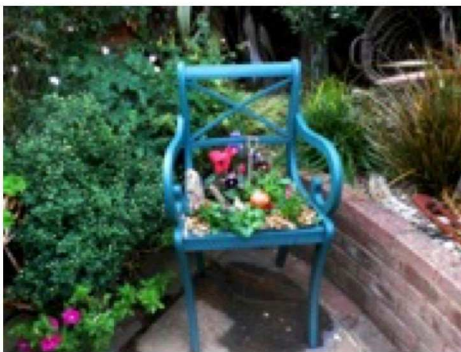
great with some cyclamen and winter pansies!

Even Albert has been out in the garden too this week, watching over everything being

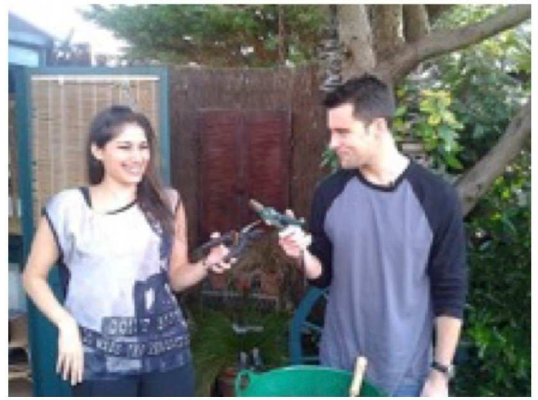


done! A busy week ended with the new

local TV channel, Latest Tv coming to film some sequences in the garden to be used in the weekly TV Show, Latest Homes Live, over the next few weeks! I have been asked to do a weekly slot on gardening with clips



filmed in the garden and in the studio! The 2 presenters Andrew Bullock and Simone Thorogood enjoyed the filming throughout the day on Friday 3rd, as you can see.



They were also involved in some practical sessions and created these chair planters after instruction from me! They really enjoyed the day as you can see with the duelling secateurs

WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 5th OCTOBER



Another busy week in the garden, the weather was lovely and the garden was still looking really fabulous, front and back as the pictures show.

Many flowers in the garden were still looking really great like these osteospermum and

begonias!



I had been contacted last week by a TV production company called Studio Lambert who were commissioning a new gardening programme for BBC2 and wanted to use me and the garden to help make a video to support

their request! They came to visit on the 7th and spent several hours filming me on a tour of the





garden, then interviewing me about my passion for gardening and my garden design aspirations. Fingers crossed the programme gets commissioned. If so, I may be in it in 2015!

Then the weather began to change and we had a lot of wind which badly burnt some of the flowers, as you can see. Rain set in then for the rest of the week and as we had my

brother and his wife staying from Bahrein I did not get in to the garden!

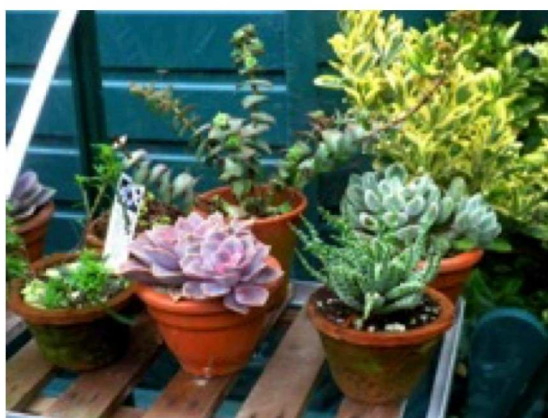
WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 12th OCTOBER

Very wet and miserable but mild over the weekend so no gardening. The weather started to improve a bit on Tuesday so managed to get out in the garden and start to clear up for the winter! Tidied out the summer house and started to put garden furniture away for the winter. I

then moved on the greenhouse and emptied it and

washed the entire space out and cleaned the glass ready for the winter too! I've also begin putting the more delicate plants in for





the winter too! After all that I moved on to get the shed ready for storing garden ornaments as well. Considering the time of the year, I have been amazed to see a seaside plant in the back garden produce new flower shoots! On the left you can see the Sea Lavender doing well!

Even the fig tree has had new figs setting on the



branches too, most unusual. This Miscanthus on the right looks amazing in the garden too at this time of the year! Overall, the garden is still looking quite



stunning for the middle of October, as the picture of the pond area below shows!





This week I also decided to make a start on cutting back the New Zealand Flax, or phormiums in the back garden . There are 3 very large ones that have had dramatic large seed heads thrown up that move wonderfully in the wind! Here you can see me cutting them back to a more manageable size! The second plant can also be seen here before and after it's trim!



WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 19th OCTOBER



Garden still looking great this week but tail end of a hurricane about to hit on Tuesday with very high winds! Fortunately it does not do too much damage. There is still some great colour around the garden to like these osteospermums! Also this week the new tree I had ordered to try and

take away the view of the road, created by the removal of the tree in the



next door garden arrived and was planted straight away! It is a Sorbus which should look good once the leaves are



produced next spring! I spent time preparing for the next TV shoot with Latest Tv, getting



all the equipment and plants ready for the different sequences we will be filming on the 30th. I also



prepared an area at the top of the garden ready for the new fence to be installed next month! Still lots of great colour in the garden considering the clocks go back this week!



WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 26th OCTOBER



This week I got working on trimming back some of the trees and shrubs in the front and back gardens. You can see me



trimming the Sea Buckthorn in the back garden and the trimmed Tamarisk in the front garden.



A friend also brought around a rusted anchor, fished up by a boat in Shoreham, which looks great in the front garden. The rest of the week has been spent on preparing for the next



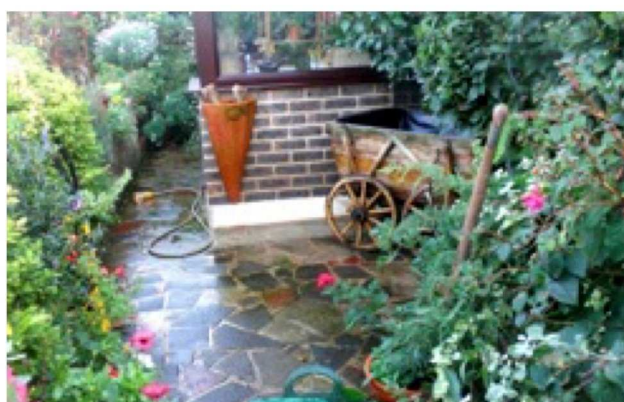
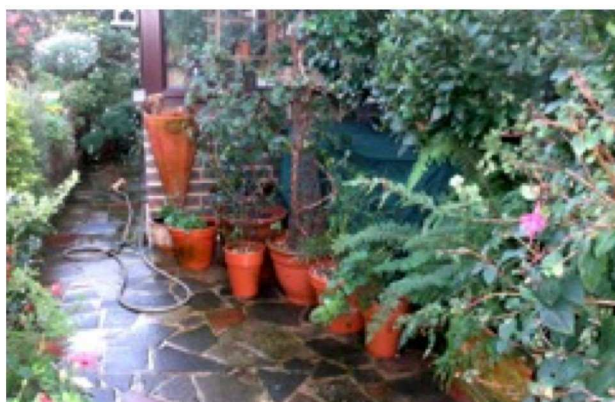
Latest Tv filming on Thursday 30th. The crew came and we managed to shoot seven 10 minute segments to be included in the weekly show over the next few weeks! Here you can see the 2 presenters, Andrew and Simone being shown how to complete a number of gardening tasks.



As this was the last time this year the



garden would be filmed I have spent the rest of the week tidying the back patio and getting it ready for the winter.



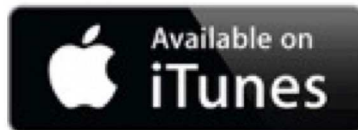
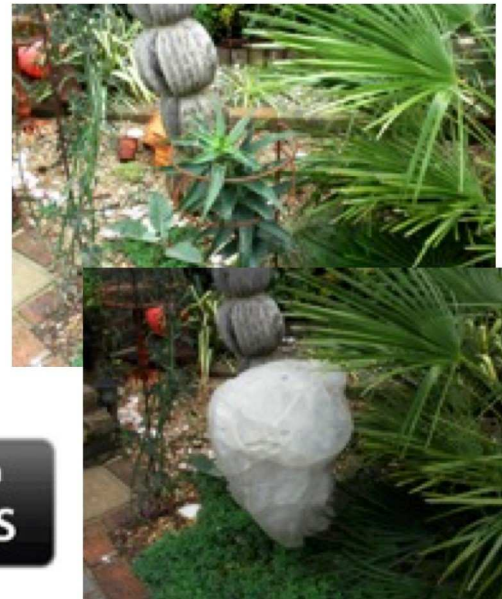
WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 2ND NOVEMBER.



This week the weather was varied but much colder. I spent time taking the geraniums out of the beds and the pots and protecting them in the greenhouse. The 2 images above are the before and after shots of the central steps area in the middle of the garden.

As the winds

were also getting up I decided to fleece all the palms in the garden ready for the winter too! On the left, the main Butia palm covered over. On the right, a before and after on one of the the smaller plants. On the 7th November, a 30 minute interview with me was published by a Canadian web site, Back To My garden, as a podcast on iTunes which was quite exciting! It had over 200 downloads in the first 24 hours which did surprise me.



BackToMyGarden

WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 9th NOVEMBER.

Weather not been good at all with gales and heavy rain all weekend



so not much done in the garden at all. The front looked good though as did the Fuchsia Duke of Wellington.

WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 16th NOVEMBER.

Wet start to the week but dried out towards the end when we



were away for 3 days. There was one visitor in the garden though!

This lovely mouse. Returned from being away with this lovely old children's horse that I am going to display in the garden next year.



WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 23rd NOVEMBER.



This week the builder came in and started to rip out the old fence at the top of the garden and start to build the brick wall. You can see some before and afters.

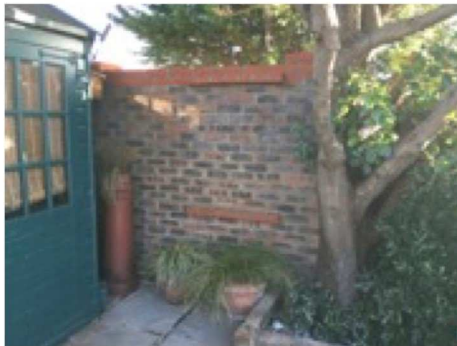




The plant selling area was also transformed as well.

A big transformation with the new fence and brick base for shelving and pots! No other work done in the garden by me this week as I was unwell! The new brick wall is coming on well and will be completed next week.

WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 30th NOVEMBER.



This week the builder came and finished the brick wall between the summerhouse and the tree, once it has been tidied up around the area it will look really good with a louvred shuttered mirror window sitting on the red ledge you can see!



**On the 4th December
t h e
Latest
Tv film**



crew were in the garden again and we set up a small Christmas tree and I showed the presenters how to make decorations suitable for the birds, to decorate the tree. We had closed oranges, orange and lemon baskets to hold bird

food, pine cones smothered in fat ball bird food to name but a few. In addition to the tree we also made holly wreaths from bits and pieces collected from the garden which looked fabulous too as you can see.



You can see the
2 presenters of
the show
Andrew Bullock
and Simone
Thorogood



holding up their wreaths and stood beside the
tree we had decorated in the garden. The tree
looked amazing once decorated.



WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 7th DECEMBER



The weather now began
to turn really cold and
little was done in the
garden in the run up to
Christmas, with lots to do
in the house! However,
the garden still looked
good this week as you
can see.

WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 14th DECEMBER

The weather has really begun to turn colder this week with some frosts and temperatures about freezing point! The flowers always look quite



magical with the frost on them though as you can see. When the weather is this cold I tend to admire the garden from the house rather than work out in it! It still looked quite amazing though considering the time of the year!



WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 21st DECEMBER



Well, Christmas week is not normally a week I would work in the garden. Despite the cold and the very strong winds we have experienced. Lots of plants are already getting ready for spring as the new buds on this camellia in a pot at the back of the house clearly show! Meanwhile, despite the time of year, other flowers are still looking good in the garden like this achillea moonshine which has

flowered again! The osteospermum bronze has also had a new lease of life in the run up to Christmas too! There has still been some ice this week as the bird bath in the garden shows! The tree



we decorated for the Latest TV shoot at the start of the month is still going strong though and has been topped up with food for the birds over Christmas! So, hopefully they too had a great time!



WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 28th DECEMBER

Well, the final few days of 2014 and the garden then starts to revive itself for the new season in 2015. There was no work done this week in the run up to New Years Eve.

An enjoyable year in 2014, probably one of the best we have had with the garden.

We saw 2227 visitors in June, July, August and September. Over 300 came by appointment too. More importantly £16000 was raised for charity this season too!

Let's hope 2015 is as successful! The highlight of 2014 was undoubtedly the live television filming with Good Morning Britain back in July! Thanks to weather girl, Laura Tobin, and all the crew for making it such a memorable day!



flowered again! The osteospermum bronze has also had a new lease of life in the run up to Christmas too! There has still been some ice this week as the bird bath in the garden shows! The tree



we decorated for the Latest TV shoot at the start of the month is still going strong though and has been topped up with food for the birds over Christmas! So, hopefully they too had a great time!



WEEK COMMENCING COMMENCING 28th DECEMBER

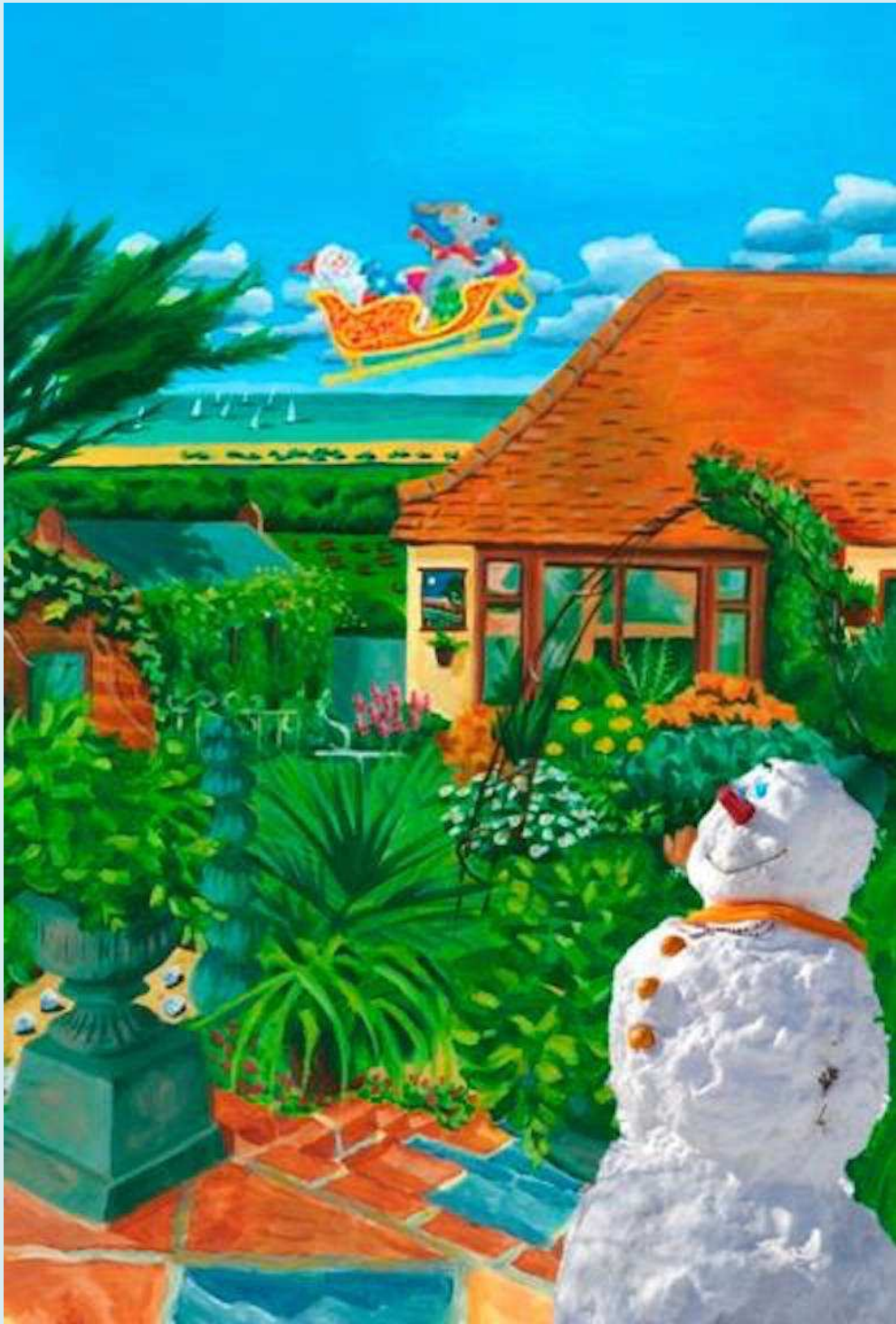
Well, the final few days of 2014 and the garden then starts to revive itself for the new season in 2015. There was no work done this week in the run up to New Years Eve.

An enjoyable year in 2014, probably one of the best we have had with the garden.

We saw 2227 visitors in June, July, August and September. Over 300 came by appointment too. More importantly £16000 was raised for charity this season too!

Let's hope 2015 is as successful! The highlight of 2014 was undoubtedly the live television filming with Good Morning Britain back in July! Thanks to weather girl, Laura Tobin, and all the crew for making it such a memorable day!





**Opposite, a
Christmas twist
on the great
painting by Sarah
Gregson that was
commissioned in
the summer of
2014!**



THE GEFFRYE

MUSEUM OF THE HOME



Driftwood Garden in Bishopstone, East Sussex, has opened to the public since July 2009 and for the National Gardens Scheme since 2011. Over the 6 years from 2009 to 2014 it saw nearly 11000 visitors come through the garden gate and raised £47000 (to December 2014) for various charities. It has won 2 national gardening awards and featured extensively in both national, european and local magazines. It featured on ITV in July 2014 and had a weekly slot on Latest TV in Brighton in late 2014. Since November 2012 it has had a monthly column in Garden News, the UK's weekly, national gardening magazine. Driftwood is also a trial garden for Thompson & Morgan products. In 2013 Geoff Stonebanks was a finalist in the BBC Community Heroes Awards for his fundraising.