

Spring Notes

FROM WEST GREEN HOUSE GARDEN

March 2011



Dear Friends

After months of grey and cold the joy of looking around an awakening garden is immense.

Daffodils have now carpeted the Lake field and the wild snake's head fritillaries are imminent.

The two thousand tiny specie tulips, crocus and miniature daffodils planted in late January to cover Apricot's grave make us pause in delight, turning a sad spot beautiful. Apricot came as a puppy during the first week the garden was open in 1997 after the initial years of restoration and was by my side for nearly fourteen years.

She made her presence felt dutifully visiting every car in the car park each open day at precisely 12 noon with "high food hopes" and Opera picnics were never safe. She joined the cast on stage, once invited but mostly uninvited, so we felt 2011's new planting should commemorate this chapter in the life of West Green House.

Each year two herbaceous borders are replaced, this year the Well Head bed will be planted in shades of peach, bronze and purple with three copper beech trees to be severely topiared to form precise structure. Then in the long herbaceous border facing the main path a collection of blue plants in extraordinary

shapes. In truth it will be dominated by Eryngium, the stunning sea hollies that all look like a witch's familiar. The tall E. planum "Fluela" its heads a violet blue with frilly bracts and E. x tripartitum massed in tiny blue thimble like thistles are among many.

I remember nearly ten years ago when my publisher asked me for a second book and I suggested one on Potagers, I then proceeded to explain the concept. I had no idea how popular this idea of gardening using companion planting to eliminate the need for chemicals would become with many of today's gardeners having also caught the bug, and like me enjoy the fun of planting fruit, flowers, herbs and vegetables together, accessorizing the garden with old equipment and other fun ideas.

Travelling through France this spring I found some of the most enchanting accoutrements for the Potager and so our new display of seeds, plants, supports, edging and garden objet d'art will become a feature between the Bull Pen (shop) and the machinery shed entry to the Lake Field to tempt others to garden this way.

2011 promises to be an action packed garden year and I trust you will come and enjoy the garden and its events with us all here.

Yours sincerely

Marylyn Abbott



Apricot as the baby in The Beggar's Opera, August 2010

Opera 2011

Many years ago now walking down the corridor into the Sydney Opera House's Green Room I saw the late Joan Sutherland dressed in Belle Époque costume for Opera Australia's current Merry Widow production— it was the most sumptuous costume with a humongous hat and I remember thinking how could a singer balance a hat like that and sing! But that is the nature of this operetta, lush, gorgeous, extravagant and requiring the finest voices.

After Dame Joan's retirement the role was naturally given to Yvonne Kenny who had already triumphed as Hanna in the San Francisco Opera's production. Her performance for Opera Australia was a new interpretation by Jeremy Sams, very sassy, sparkling and fun. It is this version we will present on August 6th and 7th at West Green House.

George von Bergen who is singing Count Almaviva for Holland Park Opera this summer, is a tenor known also to

Garsington Opera audiences and will sing our Count Danilo and Adrian Powter, who sang here in Ravel's "L'heure Espagnol" and Strauss's "Die Fledermaus" is Baron Zeta.

This famous operetta is an enormous challenge for us to present for we not only have had to acquire a new and larger stage, put two seamstresses to work on the 45 new costumes, then a set whose size gives me sleepless nights! And yes the orchestra is larger than ever.

But what a thrill it is to be part of this undertaking – a production designed especially for West Green House with one of the most acclaimed sopranos in the lead role.

Our second opera this year is Opera Project's production of Don Giovanni, and Mozart's sublime score returns in a fine interpretation more in the style of an eighteenth century production with Marc Callanan as the Don.

This is the second time we have presented Don Giovanni, which is often regarded as the "opera of all operas" wicked, fun and the Commendatory's appearance is true terror, what more could one ask for all acted out with some of the greatest operatic arias.

Our lighting designer Neil Daykin has given us a lighting plan for the garden that I am sure will again bring forth the oohs and ahhs! So please gather together your friends and join us on these magical nights where you will be comfortable for our auditorium is undercover as is supper even if the clouds dare return.

Tickets are still available for:

DON GIOVANNI 30 and 31 July
Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

THE MERRY WIDOW 6 and 7 August
Music by Franz Lehár



Yvonne Kenny in Act 2 of Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow*, Opera Australia production.

Opera Angels Transforming the garden into an Opera House takes enthusiasm, energy and a love of theatre. Our crew do the hard work, erect the pavilions and staging, however many hands would be welcome to assist with allocating pavilions and their table and chairs, number seating, usher guests and a variety of back stage chores before and after each event.

May we reward you with a free ticket to an opera?

If this involvement with Opera West Green entices you please telephone Pip on 01252 845582

Your invitation to . . .

Tea with Mr Gilbert and Mr Sullivan's

“Mikado”

A special afternoon of music and tea in the West Green House “Green Palace”

Presenting the highlights from The Mikado in marvellous costume

One of our perfect afternoon teas will be served after the performance.

See our 6,000 tulips in bloom!

Easter Monday 25th April 2011

Gardens open at 2pm

Concert commences at 3pm ~ Special Afternoon Tea 4.15pm

From £39 - Limited bookings



Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado is just pure joy. A hilarious story set in feudal Japan with songs that have become part of our lives. Most of us can sing a few bars of "Tit Willow" "Three Little Maids from school" "Let the punishment fit the crime"

The Bournemouth Gilbert and Sullivan Society are among England's best, whose soloists have won Best Performance awards at the annual International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival, Buxton. So we are thrilled they will perform a costumed concert production of the Mikado for us before we serve our "Special Afternoon Tea" on Easter Monday 25th April in West Green House's "Green Palace"

Bookings – Telephone: 01252 845582 or

Email: enquiries@westgreenhouse.co.uk

West Green House, Thackham's Lane, Hartley Wintney, RG27 8JB

West Green House Events Diary 2011

April 3 Mothering Sunday

The garden opens informally from 1pm – 4pm, as the Lake Field's huge display of bulbs will be at their best. Our Special Afternoon Tea "Ritz style" will be served in the garden if the weather is kind or in our spring flower filled "Green Palace" – tea bookings essential 01252 845582

April 23 Saturday 11 – 4.30

The gardens reopen. 6000 tulips flowering from April to early May in the Walled Garden. The gardens will be open every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 4.30pm until Sunday 18 September

April 24 Easter Sunday 11- 4.30

A special display of Objet d'Art and plants for a potager garden.

April 25 Easter Monday 2 – 5pm

Tea with Mr Gilbert and Mr Sullivan's "The Mikado". A costumed concert performance by the Boumemouth Gilbert and Sullivan society in West Green House's "Green Palace" with "Ritz style" Special Afternoon Tea. Blossoms and tulip display in the gardens
Pre booking essential 01252 845582

Sunday 26 June

Midsummer Music 11 – 4.30
An informal day beside West Green House lake to picnic and listen to the 50 voices of the Chorus of St John's, Smith Square, London.

July 30 & 31

West Green House Opera season

Mozart's "Don Giovanni"
In the Green Theatre's undercover auditorium, dinner by the lake
Booking now open 01252 845582

August 6 & 7

West Green House Opera season

Lehar's "The Merry Widow"
with Yvonne Kenny as Hanna Glawari
In the Green Theatre's undercover auditorium, dinner by the lake
Booking now open 01252 845582

Sunday 18 September

The garden closes for the season

Sunday 1 October

Tea with Music 2 – 5pm
In West Green House's "Green Palace"
Programme details to be announced in our Autumn notes.

Wednesday 16 November –

Sunday 11 December

Our annual Christmas Fair 11am – 4pm daily

Held in the Log Barn, the Bull Pen and the Green Houses. Already our extraordinary collection of gardeners' gifts have been ordered in France,

Germany and the UK

Contact us at West Green House, Thackhams Lane, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Hampshire RG27 8JB
Telephone 01252 845582

Email enquiries@westgreenhouse.co.uk
Visit us at www.westgreenhouse.co.uk

Opening Times 2011

From Easter Saturday 23rd April until Sunday 18th September

On Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 11.00am – 4.30pm

Cost £8.00 p.p.

Children (School Age) £4.00 p.p.

Luncheons, morning coffee and afternoon teas available.

Groups

Groups are welcome any day except Wednesdays and Saturdays from Easter until 18 September by appointment.

Directions

from M3, exit 5 to Hook, to Mattingley, then turn right at the West Green Garden signs and follow these to the entrance. From M4, exit towards Basingstoke; take B3349 to Hook, Mattingley then left at West Green Garden signs and follow these to the entrance. Trains leave Waterloo Station for Winchfield station. Taxis are available for the seven minute drive. See www.westgreenhouse.co.uk for full directions and map.

**West Green House,
Thackham's Lane,
Nr Hartley Wintney,
Hampshire RG27 8JB
www.westgreenhouse.co.uk
Telephone: 01252 845582**

Join West Green House Garden's 'Green Fitness'

Any form of physical activity can be beneficial to health. Digging, raking, lifting and dividing plants are all activities that will have you using your muscles and give you a good workout, whilst weeding and dead-heading are quite relaxing and will help you switch off from all the stresses and strains of the day. Greenhouse work requires more concentration so whatever you do both your health and gardening skills will improve.

Our plan for you – Teri, who worked as a registered general nurse before taking up horticulture, will be on hand to supervise you. Don't worry if your gardening experience is minimal as there is always someone around to show you what to do and to ask for advice.

For enrolment and further information phone Teri or Pip on 01252 845582

