

Autumn/Winter 2014

# Marston Grange News

Issue 2

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# Marston Grange News

Autumn/Winter 2014-15

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## GARDEN FOCUS



Not much got done in the latter part of 2014. Just as harvest was ended Christmas seemed to be upon us and not much had happened in the garden. Once Poppy had left us Holly and I played ball in the meadow and just watched the garden fall over into a soft sadness.

Ironically I enjoyed watching the changes and just letting things go and I was able to take in more of the wildlife activity and see how they made use of the garden without my interference. It was a thinking time for me – and a learning time.

However, thinking inevitably for me, leads to new ideas and a time for action came with the dry weather in early 2015. We started with trees – a white flowering Japanese cherry to commemorate what would have been David's late brother's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Hornbeams to add height and interest in the hedges and a topiary hornbeam to go in the front by the pond just because we couldn't resist it. Same for the lovely Silver

Birch we thought looked lost at Summerfield Nurseries - a real beauty – and 4 different varieties of flowering hawthorns now add colour and interest in the orchard.

All that inevitably led us to thinking about the orchard and the open aspect of the view in this area which has always bothered us. There are no secrets when you come into this area of the garden – it all comes to you in one hit and takes away the joy of the surprise. So we have been working on changing this by adding large island beds to lead you around the garden. We have also reshaped and extended the cutting and veg gardens and added fencing and box hedging to give a more formal and organized feel to these areas



By Spring work had also begun on yet another pond – a real wildlife pond this time to sit and watch by – more about that next time.

# New Visitors and Wild About Gardening



Autumn/Winter was a steady harvest and drilling season. The new combine came into her own and made cutting both quieter and quicker.

In the garden and barn it was a quieter time for us with just our hardy Wild About Gardening group visiting regularly. The Christmas social was a particular success with everyone going home with their own home made decoration to grace the Christmas table.



In February Taylor's Clematis brought inspiration for our spring garden ideas – who knew there were so many gorgeous clematis out there to choose from but at least they gave us an idea of where to start and solved some of the mysteries of clematis pruning

**“... so do you know where the bodies are buried?”**

We also teamed up with the Royal Armouries to host a special Battlefield Tour for Peter Lewis and a group of business colleagues, which included a talk by Thom Richardson, Master of Arms, lunch and then a guided walk on the battlefield itself. Inevitably the main fascination of the day was where the bodies might be buried and the finds retrieved by metal detectorists over the years and how we protect these.

**We hope to work with the Armouries to offer more events in the future so please keep an eye on our Event Diary if you are interested**

# Recent Visitors & News

At the beginning of Autumn much of my energy and attention was focused on getting our new arrival – Holly – and her sister, Poppy, settled with us and the garden just became a playground for two teenage dogs who terrorized the local wildlife and trampled the garden under paw.



I thought that the garden would never be the same again – and I was probably right?! However, Holly and Poppy could not get on with each other and so we had to make the hard choice of who would go and who would stay. We chose Holly (the black one) because she was the shyer of the two, and we thought that Poppy, being a bit braver, would cope better with another change. We are eternally grateful to Gill and Malcolm Clay from Brighthouse who gave Poppy a new home and who keep us informed of her progress and her latest travels in their caravan. We couldn't have hoped for a better choice for Poppy and we were so relieved. Holly has now settled in nicely and is teaching us new tricks all the time!

Holly is a terrier/Labrador cross and she was 2 years old in November 2014. She loves being with me in the garden and follows me everywhere but is content to have the leather chair to herself when we go out and is very fond of cake if I turn my back. More of her adventures in the future I am sure.

## Farewell to an old friend

Sadly July brought distress and sadness to Marston Grange with Monty, our little Patterdale terrier, developing diabetes. We could not get him settled on the insulin injections he needed due to other complications and eventually we had to make one of the hardest decisions I have ever had to make - to let him go peacefully.

Our thanks to Tower Vets and particularly to Nick Howard, for doing all they could to help him and to get us through this. And to all our friends for their kindness and support.



*Monty..... sat watching frogs by my old pond when he was young and handsome – how we will always remember him.*