

BOLLAND GARDEN CLUB

PRESS RELEASE

Bolland Garden Club Meeting 7th February, 2023

This month's meeting was, as usual, well attended. At very short notice there was a change of the scheduled speaker. We were fortunate enough to acquire Val Corbett as a late replacement. Val is a photographer of skill who specialises in garden photography – either as a special commission from owners or just out of personal interest. Her talk was called, 'Inspirational Gardens'.

Val has a huge collection of her own work which spans a number of years of travel which ranged over gardens in all parts of the British Isles. We were shown a large number of her photographs. They depicted the beauty of gardens she had visited and her skill as a photographer. Her travels ranged from Devon through to the north of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Her photographs were taken at various times throughout the year, each season having its own appeal and charm.

The talk was structured, illustrating which features of gardens would make the most engaging photographs and techniques she used.

The factors which Val considered most important were explained and illustrated. No matter whether a garden was wild or neat and formal, good and interesting images could usually be found, though she did say sometimes it could be a long and difficult task. She looked for interesting features and was especially fond of robust and strong planting of flowers, not as she said 'spotty' but planting which makes 'a statement about itself' and has impact on the viewer. Well clipped hedges and straight borders draw the eye of the viewer. Gardens she said need focus. Such focus can be given by good topiary and she produced a photograph of Evridge Manor where trees were sculptured to give the impression of chess pieces, leading the eye to the house at the end of driveway. Examples were given of archways, trained wisteria on a circular support, pathways bordered by colourful planting of flowers and shrubs, leading the eye to water features, fountains, outbuildings, statues in the distance such as the one viewed through a hedged archway at Petworth House.

One tip that Val gave when taking photographs was to consider shooting them from a high window or flat roof top which tended to give a fuller picture of the overall garden design. She said that on occasions she even climbed long ladders to achieve the perfect shot – a practice not recommended for the faint hearted. Another hint was the use of a 'colourful item' which she illustrated by showing a photograph of a house with a red roof which stood out at the rear of the garden grabbing the viewer's attention emphasising the greenery of the garden itself. Many present would be inspired to capture the beauty of their own gardens and indeed others. All one needs to take good photographs like Val's is a tripod, the love of travel and a lot of experience and her skill!! A good night was enjoyed by all who attended.

The next Bolland Gardening Club Meeting is on Wednesday 8th March when George Pilkington will give a talk called, 'Gardening for Wildlife'.

Clare Stuart

Note for Editor – The Bolland Gardening Club meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (except January) in the Village Hall, Bolton-by-Bowland at 7.30pm