



MORE FROM THE SHED - 6

Dear DGT Gardeners

How is it going?

OK – so this week we are going to find out how tattooing and plant hunting were linked, who Vita Sackville West refused to have at her dinner table, if a rose is really romantic and we puzzle over the correct way to visit a garden. But first...

In a previous week's blog I promised to tell you more about Hooker's Lips



which belong to the plant *Psychotria Elata*, a tropical tree found in the rain forests of Central and South American countries. The leaves of the Hooker's Lips (also known as the Hot Lips Plant) have evolved into this form to attract pollinators such as hummingbirds and butterflies. Looking at this photo sparked off a train of thought about Joseph Hooker, the eminent plant hunter, but I have found no reliable source that links this plant with the great Botanist, so I guess they refer to another sort of hooker.

However it does provide me with my theme for this Garden Shed blog – **LOVE**.

I start with a quote from Gertrude Jekyll:

“ The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies”

Incidentally, you all know that Jekyll rhymes with treacle BUT did you know that Gertrude's younger brother the Revd. Walter Jekyll, was friends with the famous novelist Robert Louis Stevenson and the author 'borrowed' the name when he wrote Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde?

A couple of blogs ago I mentioned the gardens at Villandry and several of you wrote to say how much they enjoyed visiting there. I am fascinated about the symbolism in the **The Salon of Love**



The Salon of Love which was designed by Spanish artist and landscape architect Javier de Winthuysen consists of four areas of box hedging filled with different coloured flowers.

Tender love – top left - depicts hearts with flames with pink coloured flowers

Passionate love – top right – has the same hearts but broken with passion with red flowers

Fickle love –bottom right - 4 fans symbolise the volatile nature of feelings , the horns of the jilted lover – in the centre the lover letter with yellow flowers to symbolise jilted love

Tragic love – bottom left - blades of daggers and swords used in duels - red plants for spilt blood

In Victorian times love messages were often conveyed using the language of flowers



In the chart Wild Roses were said to symbolise Pleasure AND Pain, but **Dorothy Parker** had a very definite view about roses:.

*A single flow'r he sent me, since we met.
All tenderly his messenger he chose;
Deep-hearted, pure, with scented dew still wet -
One perfect rose.*

*I knew the language of the floweret;
'My fragile leaves,' it said, 'his heart enclose.'
Love long has taken for his amulet
One perfect rose.*

*Why is it no one ever sent me yet
One perfect limousine, do you suppose?
Ah no, it's always just my luck to get
One perfect rose.*



A photograph from 1918 of a Girl Guide cutting a rose to help with the war effort on the home front.

Gardening is a balance of poetry, practicalities and politics

The answers to the last quiz about main ingredients in the following dishes:

1. Tarte Normande 2. Pesto 3. Dhal 4. Tzatziki 5. Guacamole 6. Spanish Tortilla 7. Tebouleh 8. Allo gobi

1. Apples 2. Basil 3. Lentils 4. Cucumber 5. Avocados 6. Potatoes 7. Parsley, tomatoes, mint

8. potatoes and Cauliflower

But back to Hooker's Lips and Hooker the Plant Hunter.



A 'Plant Hunter' from Chelsea Show 2016

Plant Hunters as a breed were/are strange individuals – they were described thus by Carl Linnaeus in *Glory of the Scientist* (1737)

Good God. When I consider the melancholy fate of so many of botany's votaries, I am tempted to ask whether men are in their right mind who so desperately risk life and everything else through the love of collecting plants.

And why were they, the equivalent of Indiana Joneses, so keen to travel all over the globe. Simply the LOVE of plants.

They risked starvation, disease, injury and violence from animals and unfriendly natives. They faced a life of solitary journeys. The threat that their bodies would never be found.

And the skills that were needed?

A knowledge of Botany. Specimen collection and preservation. Route finding. Canoeing, horse riding, climbing, hunting.

Take **Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker** (1817 – 1911)



It is said that his travels and discoveries had the greatest effect on European gardens. He returned to Kew with about 6,500 species. He was THE rhododendron man and people became more and more keen to have these plants. I find it fascinating that in the midst of the heartache of WW1 The Rhododendron Society was established:

‘Well, we are The Rhododendron Society...’ The words uttered in March 1915 by P D Williams at Lanarth, his house in Cornwall, where he had invited rhododendron enthusiast friends Charles Eley and John Guille Millais to stay. They then invited like-minded friends to join the Society and set out the rules and regulations at the first Annual General Meeting which was held at the Chelsea Flower Show on 23rd May 1916. The choice of members was by invitation and inevitably comprised landed gentry with large estates.

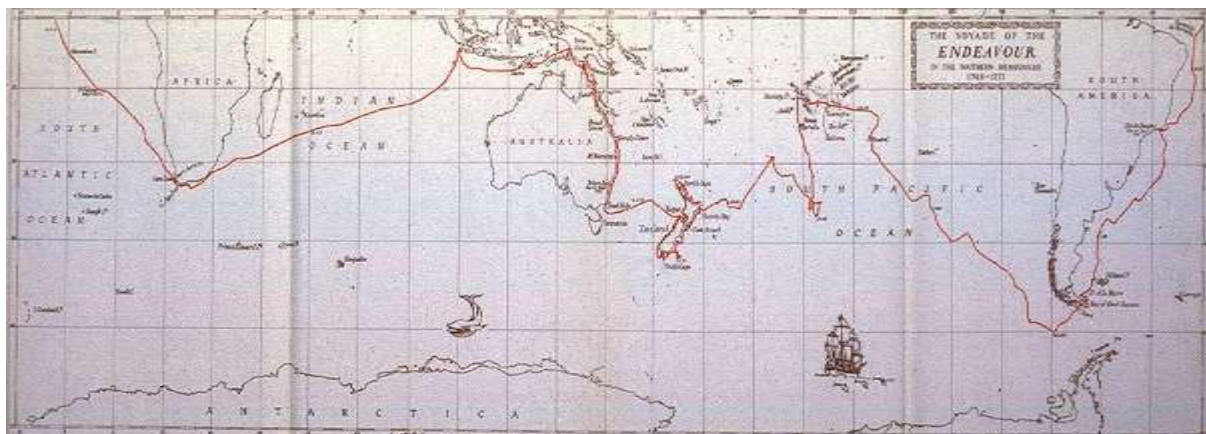
However, some did not like these flowers and Vita Sackville West refused to have rhododendrons at Sissinghurst, since they were like she said, “ fat stockbrokers, whom we do not want to have to dinner.”

However, I have a penchant for the **eccentric gardener** and I want to bring to your attention Sir Joseph Banks (1743 – 1820)



Banks made his name on the 1766 natural-history expedition to Newfoundland and Labrador. He took part in Captain James Cook's first great voyage (1768–1771), Banks was a man of independent means and had paid £10,000 for himself and a team of 9 to go on the voyage.

They visited Brazil, Tahiti, and after 6 months in New Zealand, Australia, returning to immediate fame. He held the position of president of the Royal Society for over 41 years. He advised King George III on the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and by sending botanists around the world to collect plants, he made Kew the world's leading botanical gardens. He is credited for bringing 30,000 plant specimens home with him; amongst them, he discovered 1,400. Approximately 80 species of plants bear his name. He was the leading founder of the African Association and a member of the Society of Dilettanti which helped to establish the Royal Academy. If that wasn't enough for a 3-volume biography, he was the first English traveller to describe the art of tattooing, with a superb account of the tattooing he saw on the buttocks of a Tahitian maiden.



Now this is the bit I **love**. Banks wanted to go on another voyage, and he would have financed himself and his assistants to go, but the Government refused Banks' desire to take a pack of greyhounds and his own orchestra on board the ship.

I said that these plant hunters were really the stuff of Boys' Own adventure stories and it is possible to download on your Kindle for nothing (understandable when you read it) a copy of the Scots-Irish American novelist, Thomas Mayne Reid (1846-1848) *The Plant Hunters Adventures Among the*

Himalaya Mountains. It describes a dreadfully dangerous plant hunting expedition and, spoiler alert, it finishes:

Oh! groaned he, *'it is an awful fate – here must we live and die – far away from home-from the world- alone, alone, oh!.....'*

Puzzle which way to go??



In May last year, I had planned to walk round the lake at Stourhead and I knew that often these landscaped parks had a right and a wrong way to walk round. What should I do?? Eek. But, Oh joy! Two guides were stationed at the entrance where the path divided into a clockwise and an anticlockwise path. Now I had been warned that the guides on duty that day were rather strange. One guide always told the truth and the other, always lied. I was allowed only ONE question to put to the two guides and I was determined to choose the correct route to see the landscape properly. What was my one question – remembering that I had no idea which guide was the one who told the truth.

Alas, there is no space this week for a bit about tea, but to whet your appetite for the next blog which **will** have a bit about tea:

"While there is tea there is hope", wrote the playwright Arthur Wing Pinero in Sweet Lavender.



GOOD GARDENING FROM THE SHED!

(and enjoy the word search!)

WORD SEARCH IN THE GARDEN

W	E	N	O	M	R	O	H	G	N	I	T	O	O	R
J	E	N	G	E	Q	A	O	F	R	Y	P	M	O	R
U	K	E	L	M	X	C	L	X	R	S	I	C	S	E
G	A	O	D	O	L	I	A	M	P	I	K	E	B	I
U	R	V	K	Z	A	S	W	A	K	A	E	B	J	L
E	K	A	R	I	U	S	N	O	W	D	R	O	P	A
S	L	H	E	H	N	A	M	C	D	I	A	L	O	P
R	R	O	B	R	N	R	L	C	D	A	W	T	U	S
U	E	M	B	G	A	B	I	I	H	A	B	I	T	E
E	M	E	I	G	F	T	R	A	V	I	T	L	U	C
T	M	G	D	B	S	T	E	L	I	O	S	T	N	A
A	I	R	B	E	E	S	S	W	K	N	S	H	U	R
C	R	O	P	N	Q	I	O	J	K	N	S	H	Y	R
E	T	W	O	E	S	M	H	C	L	U	M	J	K	O
S	S	N	D	A	A	M	J	O	P	G	R	A	F	T

HOSE

KELP

DIBBER

HABIT

STRIMMER

PEA

DAISY

BOLT

CARROT

WEED

RAKE

ANNUAL

PESTICIDE

GUANO

AERATE

BEES

LOAM

CROP

DIRT

MOSS

BRASSICA

ROCK

MULCH

ESPALIER

TILTH

ROOTING HORMONE

RAKE

CULTIVAR

SECATEURS