



*People, Plants,
and their Roots.*



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and their Roots.*

An Alternative Yellow Book
by Jevan Watkins Jones

*A limited edition of 200 copies
bound and numbered by the artist*

200

Published by High Stile Projects



Alan
Apple / Pear

Plant Matters

Jevan Watkins Jones

I am contemplating *Alternative Yellow Book* as if it were a long border in a garden. Seeing it actively, from within it, whilst digging around its roots carefully and as I pass along it. The long border contains its individual plant subjects that en masse become another subject in itself, breathing the same air, defined by its own edges and by my distance from them. And then there is the growing and evolving memory of how the border shapes itself, season after season, year after year. What form does that memory take?

My time frame here was shorter, one winter season in fact. The evergreen nature of the Jubilee Gardening Group and Redbond Lodge Care Home provided one habitat, the self-seeded nature of impromptu encounters with individuals provided another. Both are encompassed in the complete register of seeing, listening, talking, writing and drawing together that have become part of a slow growing relational practice.

To this end *Alternative Yellow Book* is a shared recollection of some of the plants that people have spoken of and made visible to me; remembered human/vegetal alliances at the turn of one season into another - Spring.

It is a artistic document peculiar to Great Dunmow's social history at this moment in time and, as with a garden, both invention and truth simultaneously.

The twenty-five days, two days a week, from October to February are reduced, naturally so, to just fragments of personal stories and odd fixed images. Some had bedded down in my notebooks, some had bedded down in my head, some, a combination of the two and all jostling for space. Why these in particular?

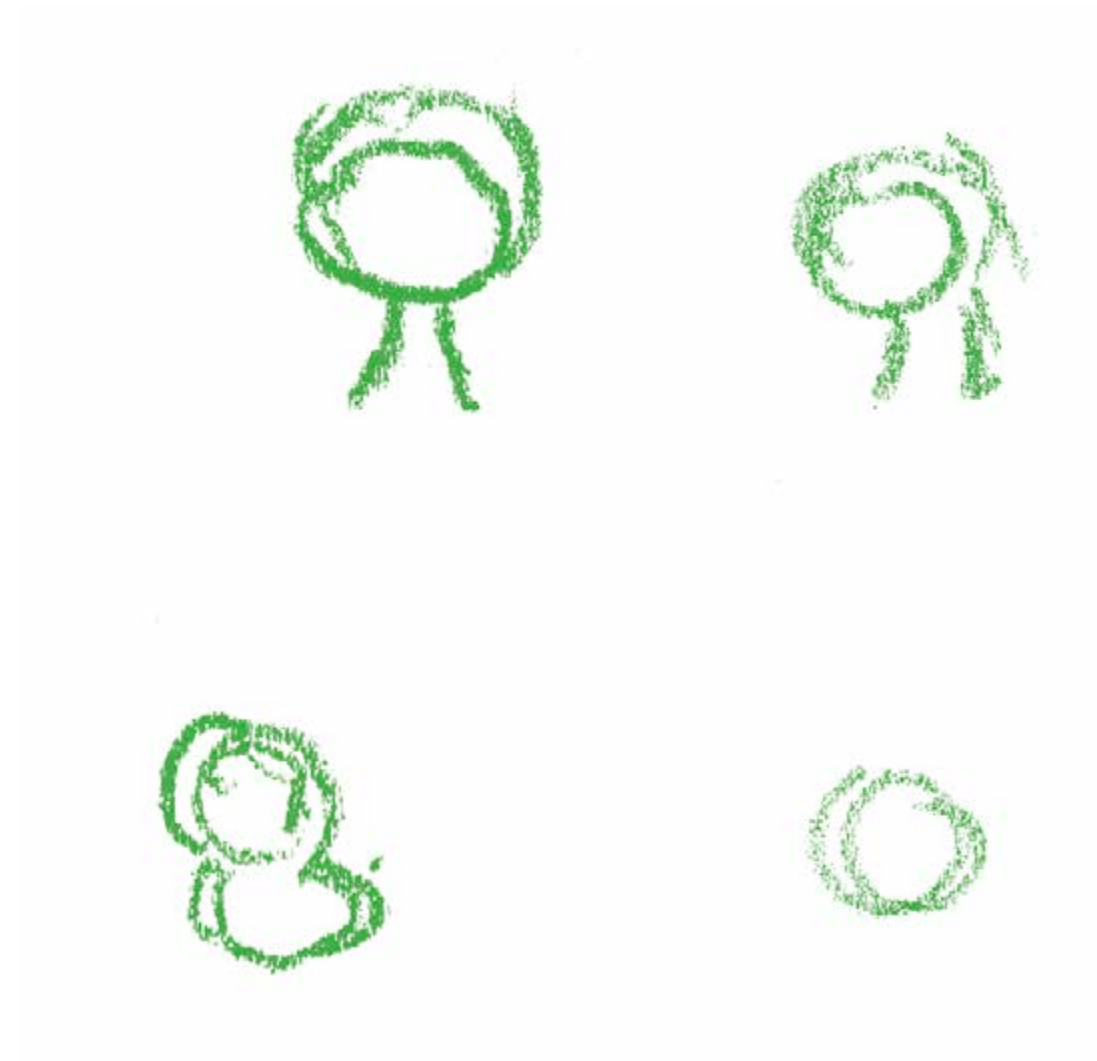
The project was exclusively aimed at older people and older people living with dementia. I was not prepared for the difficulties that some had in communicating or the physical disabilities of others for whom producing a mark on paper was, at times, a stretch too far. In contrast, I was not prepared at all for seeing, in abundance, the indomitable spirit of creativity in our own senescence.

On the face of it, a winter project for older people and about plants was not ideal. Gardens and allotments have been put to bed and no one wants to spend time in them because of the

cold and damp. However, this context did provide an interesting conceptual framework in relation to seasonal dormancy and vegetal perennation. In botany terms this is the ability of organisms, particularly plants, to survive from one germinating season to another, especially under unfavourable conditions such as drought or winter. The winter in this sense provided ideal conditions to unearth latent recollections and connections.

In Jean Dubuffet's series of paintings *Pierres* and *Tables* from 1950-53, 'we face a formless expanse of ground in which little people, animals, plants, roots and rocks sometimes appear.' The artist writes:

'They are no longer - or almost no longer - descriptive of external sites, but rather of facts which inhabit the painter's mind. They are landscapes of the brain. They aim to show the immaterial world which dwells in the mind of man: disorder of images, of beginnings of images, of fading of images, where they cross and mingle, in a turmoil, tatters borrowed from memories of the outside world, and facts purely cerebral and internal - visceral perhaps.'



Eric
Grandfather's cabbages

Finding the path - through nature and memory

Georgina Salmon

I always find memory fascinating. I think being in my job makes me more conscious of it. I have a notoriously bad memory, and yet some people seem to remember everything you've ever said to them. Some people with dementia are very conscious of changes in their memory, others have no concept that anything is different for them and will insist that it is others around them who have moved things, hidden things or kept information from them.

Our memory system naturally discards information that it decides is not needed, and files away information that may be needed again - sometimes discarding it later, sometimes keeping it long-term.

Interestingly - if something means more to us in an emotional way it is more likely to stick in the memory - emotional memory gets stored differently and is less affected by the damage caused by dementia conditions. So - something particularly frightening, sad, infuriating, joyful, astonishing, funny - will have more of a chance of being retained in the memory.

With dementia - the ability to store and retrieve information is damaged. Long term memories are more secure (I like to think of them as familiar, well-trodden tracks). New information is lost without a trace (snow covered tracks!?). It is still the case that if something has a strong emotional attachment it is more likely to get filed. There is, however, more chance of mistakes in filing and retrieval - e.g. a new grandchild being born might be remembered as an event - but whose child, babies name could be muddled.

We do all need a prompt sometimes to remember things - we could swear we did not know something, until a trigger brings that memory back. Good triggers are music, aromas, similar objects or people that make a connection with the memory. I think that is why the real plants and herbs we have used with the group have prompted good memory examples - like tulips, peas, apples (or pears?). None of those items were there, but the connections were made from the fresh plants that were present.

I think Jevan's notebook may have been an example where the prompt wasn't strong enough - even though the person had made the mark themselves - perhaps it was too abstract - the memory of making the mark had gone. Maybe the sensory reality of the objects that prompted the first reaction (herbs, flowers, dry leaves) is strong, but a picture derived from that is a leap too far? I did find it very moving when the 'penny dropped' though and both Eric and Joyce 'found' the memories they had shared with you previously.

I wonder if the notebook memories did, in fact, have strong emotional tags - Eric seemed very proud of his work on the farm and enjoyed sharing evidence of his skill and knowledge.

Derek drew a favourite flower that he has painted before and has enjoyed throughout his life. Joyce was perplexed and frustrated by the mysterious destruction of her carefully planted peas - going so far as to call it sabotage!

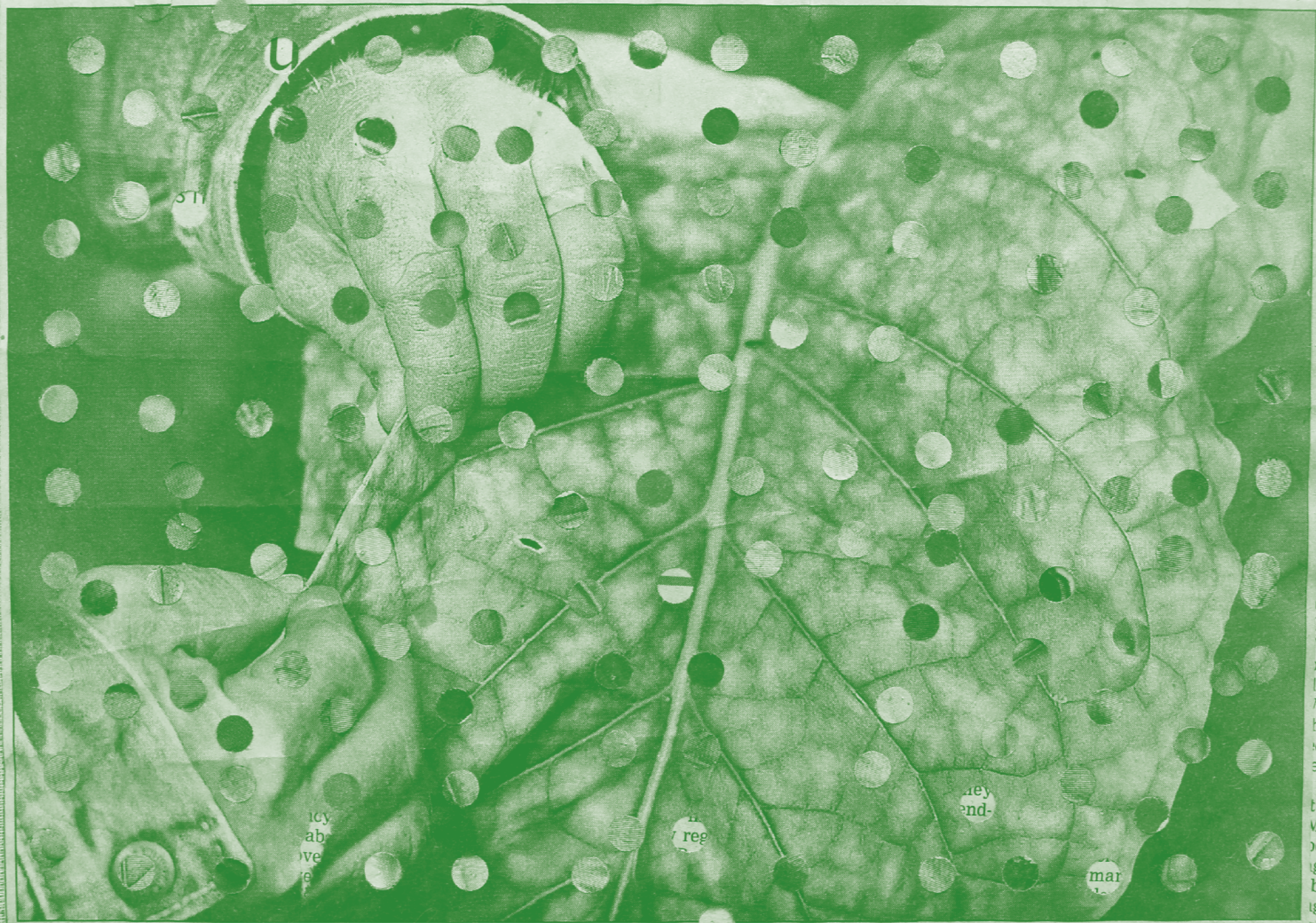
The session with the large scale drawings was quite enlightening - highlighting those memories as tracks that can be lost or hidden. Both Derek and Joyce had made marks in the notebook - picturing a memory retrieved during conversation and with visual prompts from fresh herbs and flowers. This memory could not be recalled, though, from the huge drawings that Jevan made on the walls - (himself remembering and redrawing the original notebook marks), or from being shown their own marks. Both initially denied the drawings, and only during further conversation and prompts recalled the story they had told - finding their well-trodden paths. Interestingly, ownership was then taken of the huge drawings - pointing to and referring to the huge pea picture (Joyce) and getting up and adding more detail to the haystack drawing (Eric).

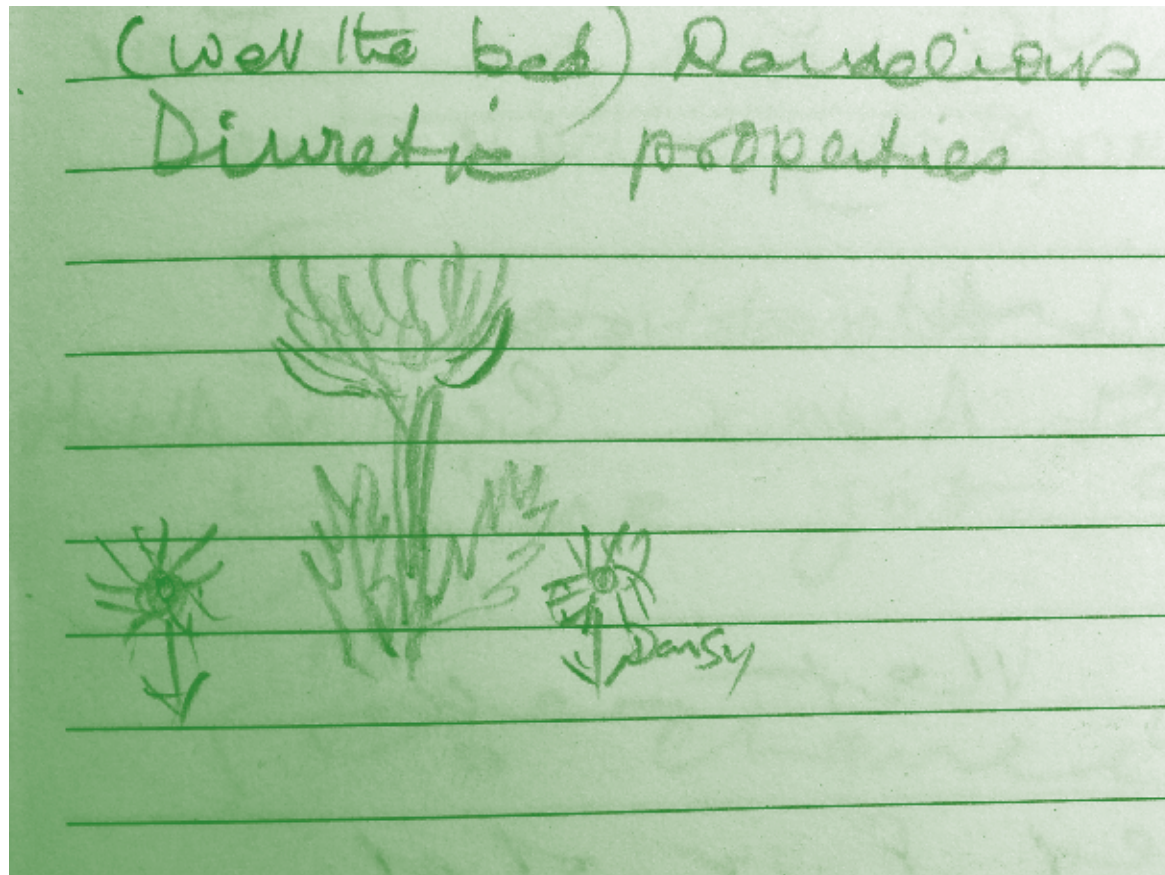
The sessions with Jevan have added depth to my understanding of the Gardening Group, why it is popular and what it means to those who attend. It's not just about meeting people, fresh air and enjoying a hobby. I think it gives people the opportunity to connect with their deepest sense of self, embedding them within the natural world and the cycle of life. The group provides multi-sensory prompts to help promote memory retrieval, connecting people with their past as well as the world around them and life as it emerges and grows.

Personally I find wonder in nature and the seasons and weather, landscape, plants, animals, soil, and all the sounds, sights, smells

and feelings that go with being part of the natural world. I think this strong emotional reaction is what makes memories 'stick' for me. I honestly remember very little about my general day to day life, but still can feel the thrill of seeing a kingfisher flash by, deer running in the snow, a field of corn glowing gold as the sun sets. I can see the whole landscape around me in all of these instances - like I'm back there. I'm not sure that everyone has this connection with nature - I know people who dislike being 'outdoors'. I'm sure everyone at the garden group feels this connection though, and I'm sure we are tapping into some of their emotional memories with our activities.

'I have very strong memories and great fondness for African violets. My grandmother used to have a constant supply of them on her windowsill in the kitchen. She would carefully cut a couple of leaves from an established plant and put them in a little glass of water- supported by tinfoil to keep the leaves away from the water. The stems would produce roots and she would pot them on. Each leaf would eventually produce tiny leaves and a whole new plant. There was always a row of pots at different stages of development and she would give them out to friends and family once grown. I love the deep mauve and little yellow centre of the flowers. I love the way you could produce little families from one plant. They remind me of my lovely grandma, who I miss very much.' GS





‘Do you have a favourite plant?’ I ask Margaret Joyce who is attending the Coffee and Chatter morning at St Mary’s Church. Without hesitation she replies, ‘dandelion’ (*Taraxacum officinale*) and proceeds to draw this most common of plants, with two common daisies (*Bellis perennis*) sat either side of it for scale. Studying for her GCSE French in 2000 had brought this plant closer to her attention and there it remains, rooted at the forefront of her plant memory. The common English name ‘dandelion’ is a corruption of the French description of its jagged, lobed leaves, ‘Dent-de-Lion’, translated as ‘Tooth-of-Lion’. Margaret reminds me of the plant’s common name in French which is ‘Pis-en-Lit’, translated as ‘Piss-in-Bed’, an indication of its diuretic properties if ingested.

I, too, carry a lone image of a dandelion, flower head closed, in the form of Albrecht Dürer’s ‘Large Turf’, 1503. As Tom Lubbock writes in reference to this landmark work, ‘*Pictorial singling out, mirrors our minds, where we see things in isolation.*’

I show Margaret’s drawing to Diana Billet at the following Coffee & Chatter - ‘*The dandelion is the perfect flower*’, she said, which struck me as a revelation standing in the church that morning. The 250 different species of dandelion belong to the Asteraceae family, the second largest, of which there are 23,600 different species distributed worldwide. Chrysanthemum, dahlia, zinnia, helenium, calendula and gerbera, common in our gardens and florists, are some species belonging to this family.

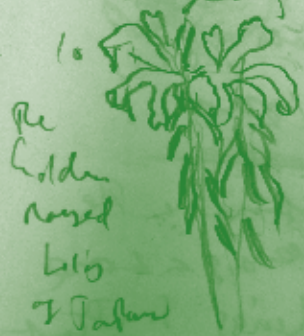
Diana shares that she was trained as a Pitman secretary. My ears prick up. Learning Pitman shorthand is on my to-do list. Developed by Sir Issac Pitman, it was first presented in 1837. The symbols used represent the spoken word, designed for writing at the speed of speech; thin strokes representing light sounds and thick strokes representing heavy sounds. I ask Diana if she could remember how ‘dandelion’ would look and she sounds out the word in strokes, dots and a flourish on paper; and now I dream of drawing all plant names in Pitman.



On further research, I find that ‘The Plant List’, a working document brought together by The Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew and Missouri Botanical Garden with other collaborators aims to be comprehensive for species of vascular plant (flowering plants, conifers, ferns and their allies) and of bryophytes (moss & liverworts). The list holds 1,293,699 scientific plant names of which 350,699 are accepted species.

I first plucked the leaves of Pis-en-Lit in the picturesque french bastide of Montcabrier in the Vallee du Lot, 2001. My then neighbour, Mme Simone Doriac, a cow farmer in her seventies, introduced me to the bitter leaf that she had grown up eating in salads. It was in her garden that day (with my wife translating) that she recounted how, as a child, she had watched the German tanks through the trees as she collected tapped resin for making soap. Plants have their vital roles.

Phyllanthus
from Eastern
body last
Lena Yang



18.11.15
Activity One - Leaves
Tageloni
from Italy to
Lena Yang
You
don't object
to meet my
Lena
No what you would
want to see
I can do a sketch

A lot of people
had different ideas
about it.
DO NO NO
Just a sketch
like a small
effect.
In plan
a flower if right
in the west.
as plant more
was with the
horses.
Let the school
have a clue
Nine, nine was
the way



The plant is healthy

Purple flower

They are purple

as they are black spots

Spotted

They are black spots

There are black spots

as they are black spots

Spotted

It does not seem
to be

they are not easy
to see

as they are black spots

Spotted

They are black spots

There are black spots

as they are black spots

Spotted

They are black spots

There are black spots

as they are black spots

Spotted

They are black spots

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as they are black spots

Spotted

They are black spots

There are black spots

as they are black spots

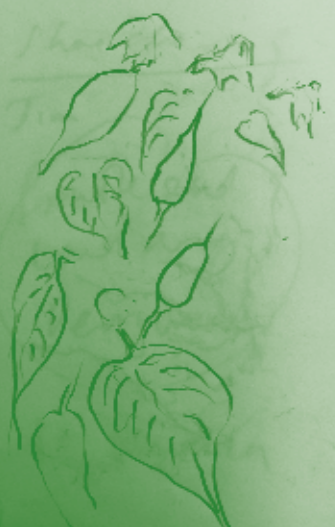
Spotted

They are black spots

There are black spots

as they are black spots

Spotted



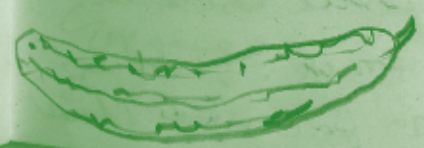
The flower of
chew full of
white flesh
Wonderful
flower keeper
and at the
end of time
and he from the
horses that sometime
said women
over tells me.

You can
grow plants
outside them
an com
You get more
in
A very
impressive

by Rat
light -
as the lamp
glass sphere
at colour.
I have had
computer
The way can
be look at me

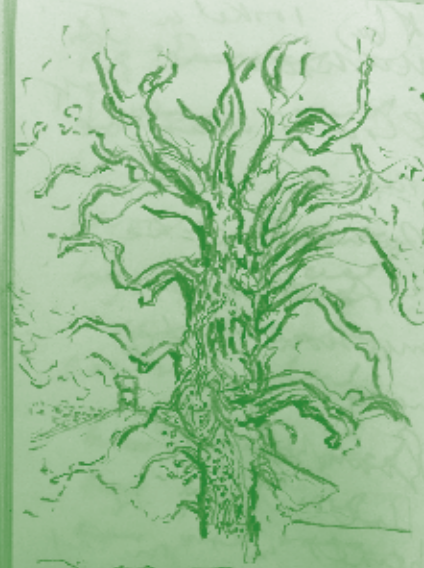
My own +
well in lamp
Rotals in Radex
Spot
If you know
you do it
Plants to place
has not yet

know what they
were?
edge curved
Olive, know
the Pophen
from the west
What a laugh!



my contact 96.
lets you sleep
had a concert
Devils claw
Bee
Reines
distill the oil
Algeria, Tunisia
France

Caccace
Mallet
up 11) he says
tea on no on
table
before now
one quarter of
a turn every day -



Keith Kemp
Farmer.
little
K's father starts
fancy at clayton
Little Campfield.
Gill Seed rape.
Wheat barley.
I or 4 you are
figs + corn

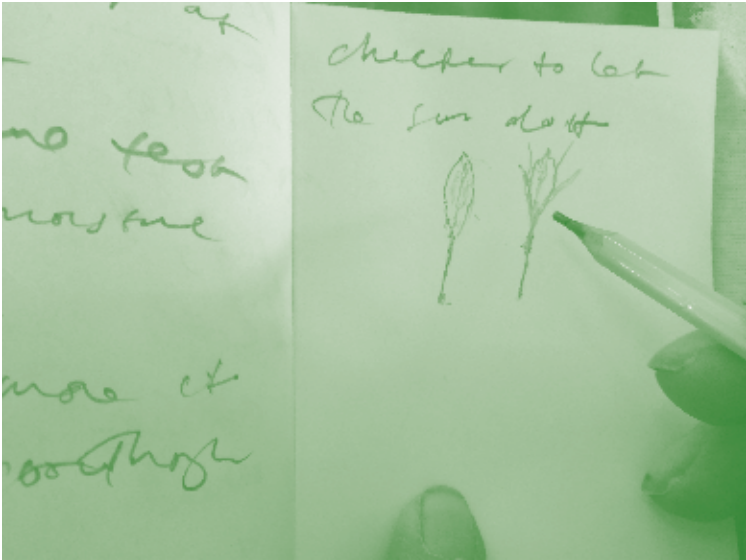
It has been an unseasonably mild winter and this has brought about the strange alliance of snowdrops (Galanthus) and daffodils (Narcissus) being sighted together as early as January in the east of England. Galanthamine, a substance that occurs in both daffodil and snowdrop bulbs, can help alleviate the progressive degeneration of the brain - beginning with failing memory - that the disease Alzheimer's and other neurological disorders cause. The substance stimulates communication between the brain cells. One of the main sites for daffodil production in the UK is East Anglia.



Doris tells me the most charming story, why forget-me-nots (*myosotis*) mean most to her. She remembers back to the day she had just given birth to her first child - ‘I saw the other mums on the ward with bunches of flowers in vases and I said to my husband, ‘I would love some flowers darling’. Knowing they had not two brass farthings to rub together, her husband went away and returned with an armful of forget-me-nots from the garden. Doris was simply delighted.

‘One of the fundamental questions of consciousness, known as the binding problem, can be explained by looking at a tree. Most people, when asked how many leaves they see, will answer “thousands.” But neurobiology tells us that the information (all the leaves) is dissected and scattered among millions of widely separated neurones. Scientists are trying to explain where in the brain all those leaves are stuck together to form the conscious impression of a whole tree. How does our brain bind information to generate consciousness?’

Professor Johnjoe McFadden, Journal of Consciousness Studies.



Drawing by Keith Kemp, a former farmer, of ripe wheat and barley ears ready for harvest - ‘You harvest when there’s 10% moisture content and always on a dry day. It’s cheaper to let the sun do it.’ He remembers also harvest time on his fathers farm in Little Canfield.



John Ray, 1759 dissertation, Flora anglia.

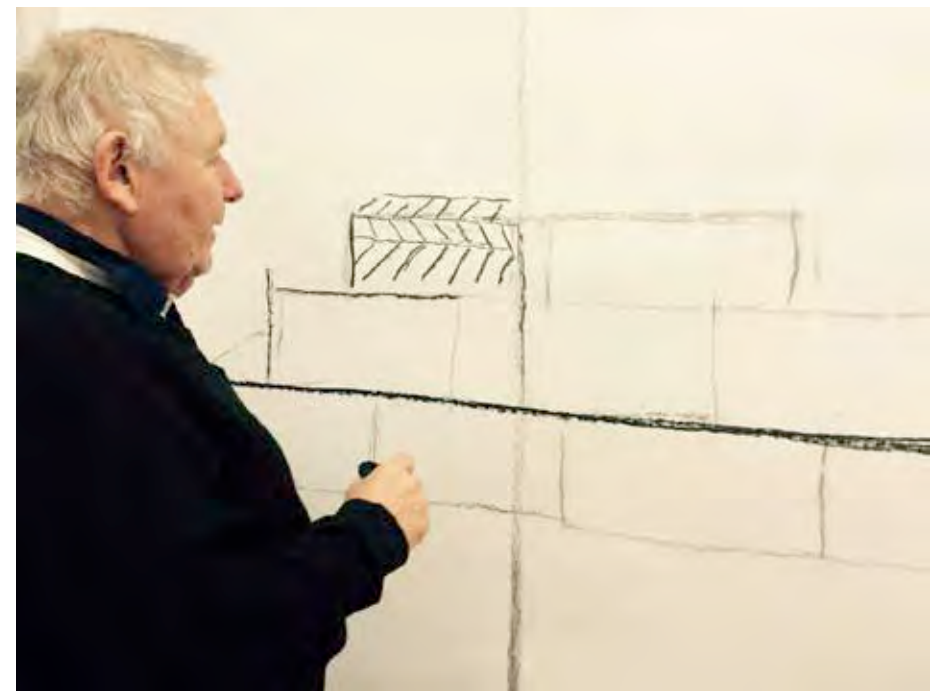
A few miles down the road, in the village of Black Notley, in a house named Dewlands, lived John Ray (1627-1705) a great naturalist of prodigious output. He wrote in his first small and ground breaking publication, Catalogus Plantarum circa Cantibrigiam nascent (*Catalogue of Cambridge Plants*, 1660) of how he came to field botany:

‘First I was fascinated and then absorbed by the rich spectacle of the meadows in spring-time; then I was filled with wonder and delight by the marvellous shape, colour and structure of the individual plants.

While my eyes feasted on these sights, my mind too was stimulated. I became inspired with a passion for Botany, and I conceived a burning desire to become proficient in that study, from which I promised myself much innocent pleasure to soothe my solitude.’

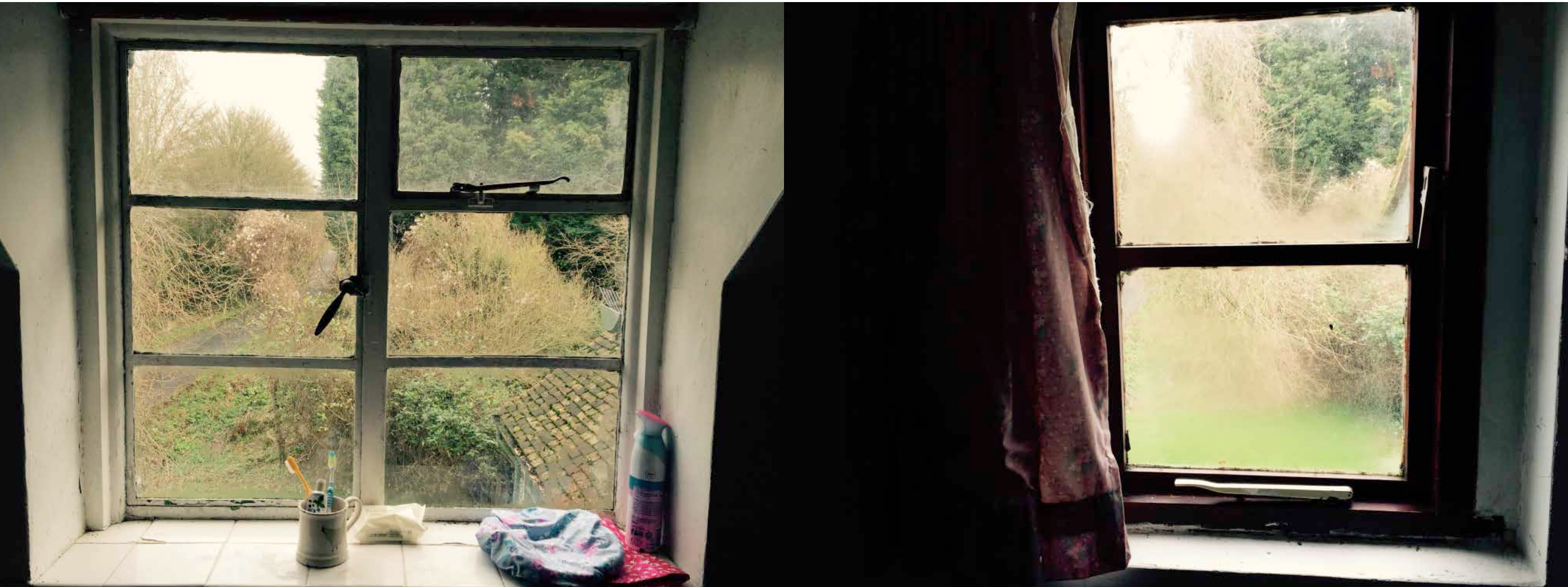


*Eric
Hay bale stacks*



*On another
occasion, Eric
redraws on the
wall his memory of
stacking hay bales.*

Gill's arboretum from windows in her former family home the Labourers Rest, Pleshey just outside Great Dunmow.



I accidentally pocket dial Gill at 6:53am one morning having just inputted her new number in to my mobile phone. Gill has just moved, from the a 16th century family home in the neighbouring village of Pleshey near High Easter, to a terraced cottage in the centre of Great Dunmow, leaving behind an impressive arboretum of species trees, grown from seed over 40 years, and a meadow in which 144 wild species have been sewn over that time.

I ask if Gill's creation is by design and she says, with no hint of cynicism, that garden design is not her thing really. For Gill, a garden should 'evolve organically', becoming a living repository of plants remembered in far flung places or native soils, and memories of people who have shared or gifted plants of interest or 'rescue plants'.

Plants matter to Gill more, perhaps, than to most. I have visited Gill's garden twice now and moving through it together I see how strongly she belongs to the landscape that has grown up around her. The garden, as Gill puts it, is a place where 'you can sort out your thoughts'. Looking up into trees one can realise the significance of our insignificance and the beauty in that.

The extraordinary thing about plants, as in the case of all living things we co-habit with, is that we recognise their growth but we do not see it happening. Trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants are planted in their own spaces and over time they meet, respond to each other's space and can touch.



Pat Rose draws her version of her favourite plant Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*) next to my attempt.

I first met Derek in the library where he comes to write and research on the internet. I tell him what I'm up to and ask if there is a plant of particular significance to him. His father, I learn, bought a house with an enormous garden (0.4 of an acre) which was formal in layout, with 200 + rose trees. As the garden was on heavy clay Derek was attracted to growing bulbs in pots so he could view his treasures close up. He was lucky that his father's 20ft. lean-to cedar greenhouse had plenty of unused staging. Two of the bulbs Derek determined to grow were *Lilium auratum* (*the Golden Rayed Lily of Japan*), and *Lilium regale* (*the Regal Lily*). The first is the most spectacular Lily of all. Stems can be 6-7ft. tall, flower buds are the size of courgettes, and when they open and curve back, the flowers can be 10-15ins. across. It is, however, very susceptible to virus infection. *Lilium regale* is shorter, with stems like steel that often curve through 90°. The beautiful, trumpet-like flowers give off a very heavy perfume in the evening which Derek says must be experienced.



Abandoned bouquet of lilies on train from Braintree to Witham following my conversation with Derek.



Sitting on the sill of Clive's south facing kitchen window is a chilli pepper plant of the genus *Capsicum*. I make a quick sketch while Clive grinds one of his thirteen varieties of coffee bean, that sit in a row of Kilner jars in the larder out of sunlight's harm. Clive is an agriculturist who has grown the plant *Coffea*, as well as *Hevea brasiliensis*, the Para rubber tree for latex tapping, Sugarcane, genus *Saccharum* and *Elaeis guineensis*, the African oil palm on the Pacific Islands. The chilli is just for home use and as the coffee is brewing he says, *'You'll note the speed of chew falls off quite fast'* if I ate one. Clive grins ear to ear.



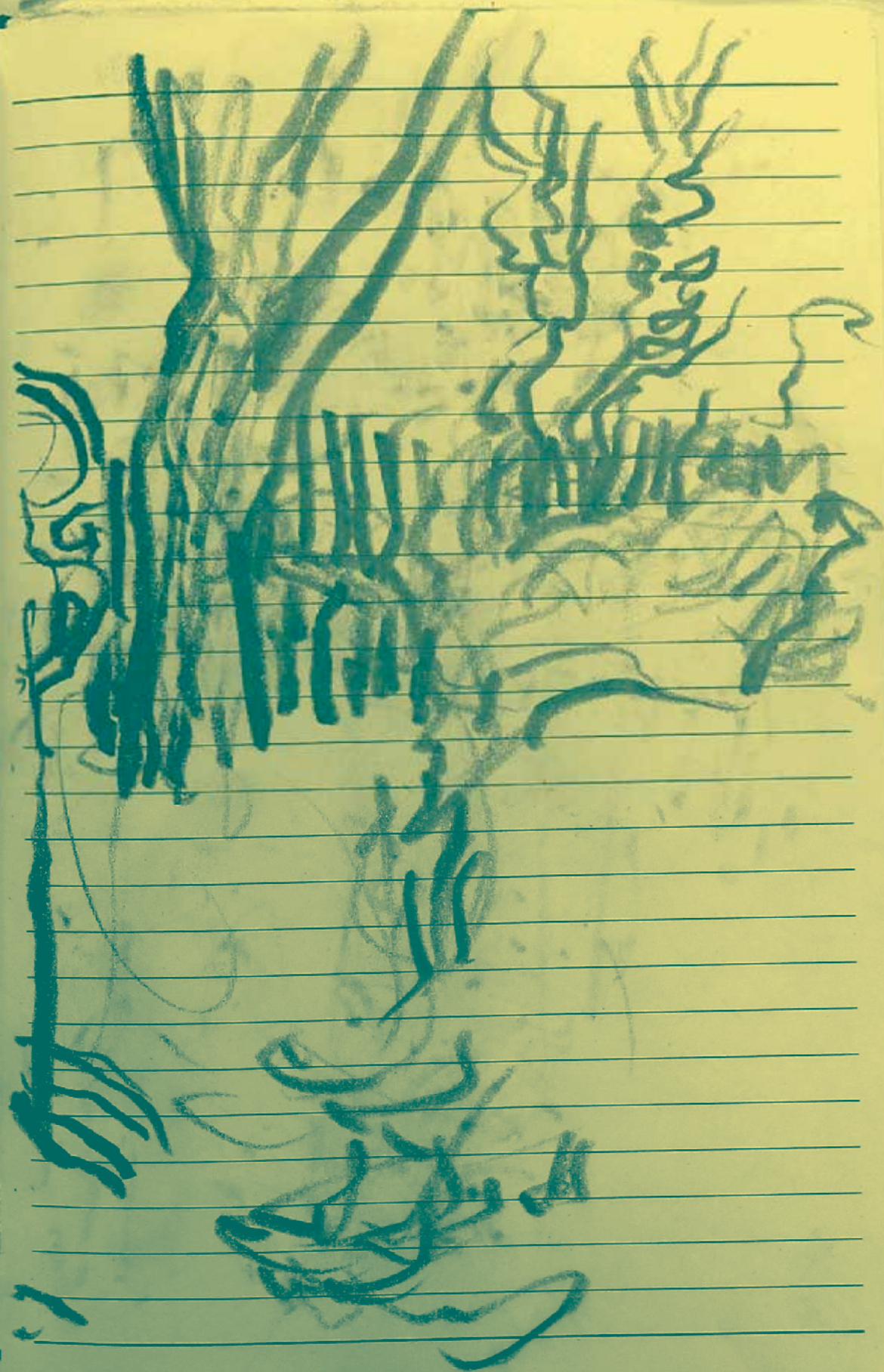
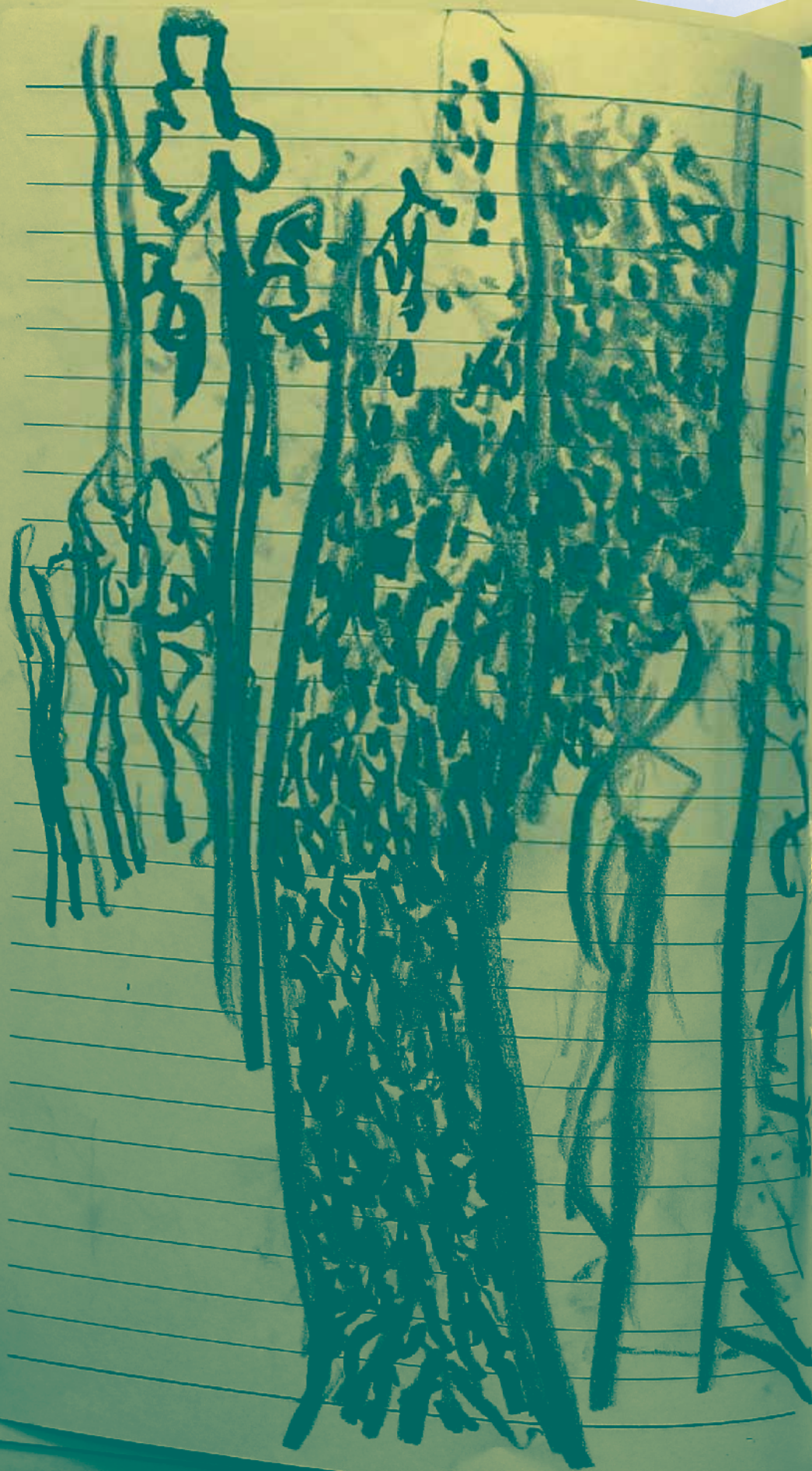
Clive had invited me over to see his Russian pine, with its peculiar horizontal habit, that resides in his garden, up rooted from Russia and flown home to his garden, where it now lives across the way from the Doctors Pond. *'Have you ever seen a pine do that?'* he points at the subject in question. I first met Clive at the Gardening Group. We got talking about his travels abroad and bringing back seeds from 'weird' plants spotted in the wild. With Seeds in his pockets, his stock answer, if questioned at customs was, *'Oh, it must have been those children playing marbles with them'*. The pine, however, was brought back as a root cutting, carefully wrapped and kept moist to prevent transpiration. I am reminded again of the global choreography of plant movement at the hands of man, and animal.

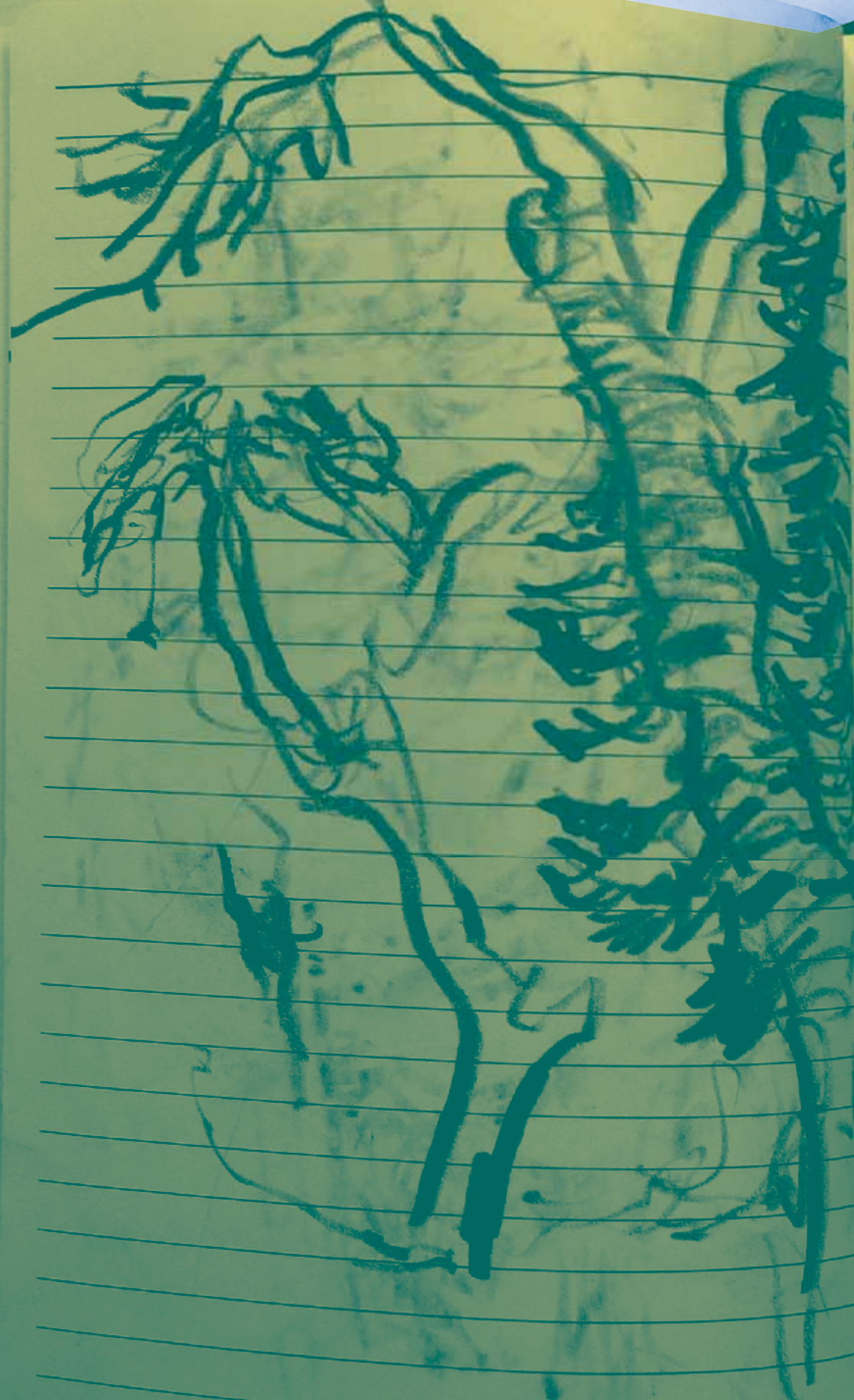
Orchids are a singular fascination of Clive's and as he explains, *'you can pick them up relatively inexpensively at Tesco'*, at Takeley 0.5 miles away, a nine minute brisk walk away, *'for five pounds or less for a misshapen one.'* It's a far cry from my imagining Clive seeing orchids, *'two hundred metres up'* in a hot and humid tree canopy. *'God knows what they live on'* he says marvelling at their audacious pluck. I am reminded that a lady told me the whereabouts of the rare bee orchid (*Ophrys apifera*) near the the Tesco roundabout (I still have the map she drew). Two thirds of the worlds plants live in tropical forest where only 0.2% of sunlight reaches the forest floor. Most orchids are epiphytes living on other plants and are not adapted to a terrestrial life style. Some epiphytes have adapted to both habitats. Many are familiar to us as houseplants, content with low light levels and heated rooms. Clive feels the cold more these days so both he and his orchids are suited to the hot house as he likes to keep it.

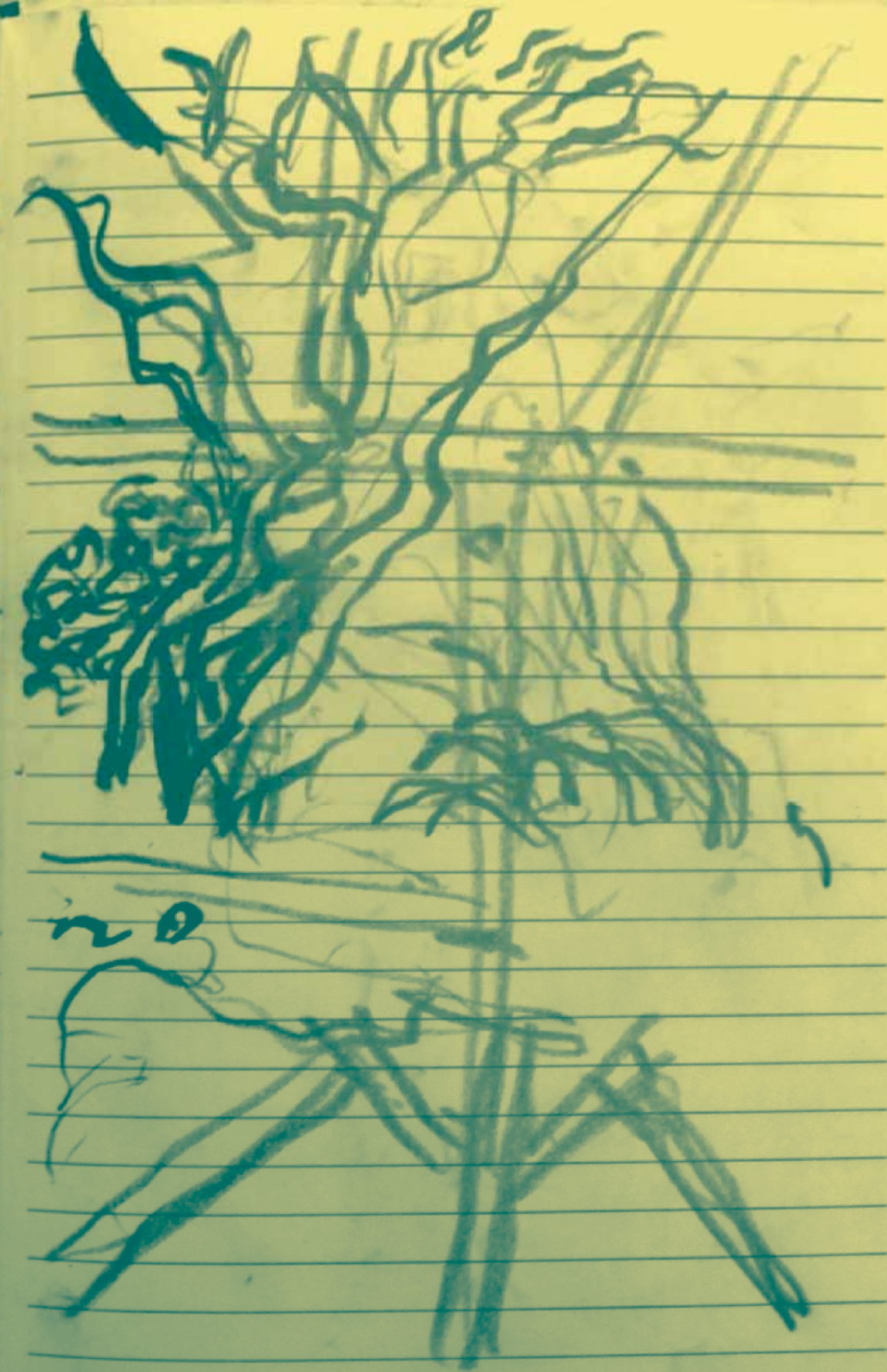


*Gill walking in
her arboretum.*

*A GARDEN
OUGHT TO BE
SOMEWHERE
YOU CAN
GET LOST
IN.*







*I SEE THE
HOUSE AS
GROWING
IN THE
GARDEN.*

Gill



*Gill's greenhouse
mostly emptied.*

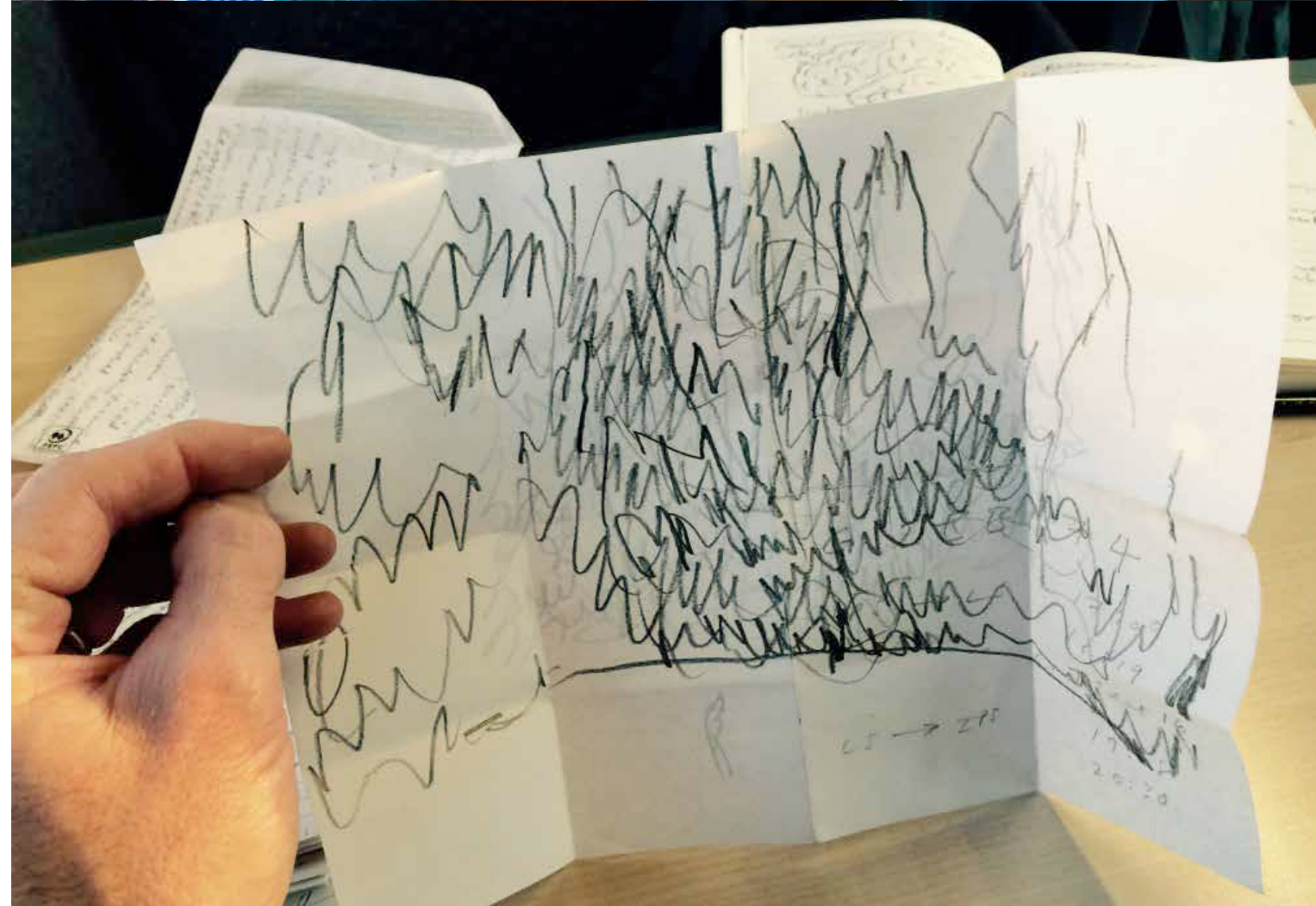
The Reverend Rosemary Drew invites me to view her garden. The garden sits on the brow of a plump hill rising gently from the Doctors Pond, and is open for occasional days of stillness and reflection as part of the national ‘Quiet Garden Movement’. ‘People are frightened of silence’, Rosemary tells me. Being silent in a garden can seem alien at first. Whereas the activity of gardening itself can be, from my experience as a gardener, quite noisy. In Rosemary’s garden the winter berries of the Pyracantha ‘Orange Glow’ (*Firethorn*) beckon me in to a tiny chapel. Inside, an image of nature bows down before Jesus in a stunning contemporary icon painting. Rosemary’s favourite flower is the Sunflower (*Helianthus*), having seen them en masse in fields of France. ‘I like the idea of us all turning towards the light.’ she says symbolically of the flower. Van Gogh painted the lifespan of his sunflowers in a yellow house in Arles, 1888. Date and motif in accord.

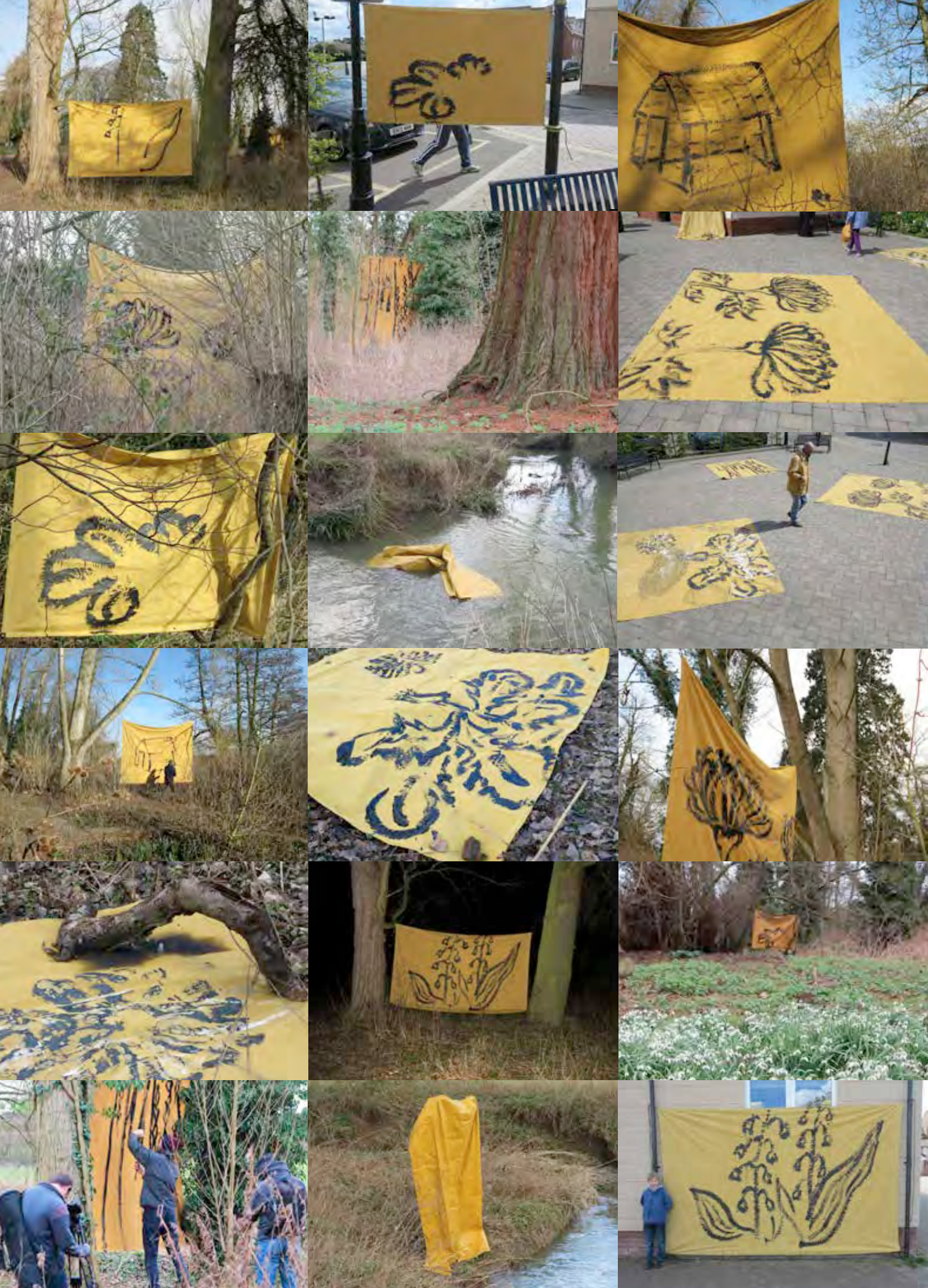
Jacqueline, a French lady who married an Englishman with an Italian surname, Caccace, recalls a cherry tree (*Prunus*) in the garden of her Grandmother’s house in Reims, France. ‘Remember’, her Grandmother said, ‘I have put everything in this suitcase and buried it under the cherry tree so that when the Germans are gone you can find it.’ Jacqueline did return to recover this with her husband after the war but the house was gone and she was not able to locate the cherry tree. Jacqueline remembers her grandmother’s concoction of Tilleul (the dried flower of the Linden of Lime tree, genus *Tilia*) - a soothing bedtime drink. Now a resident at Redbond Lodge, Jacqueline lives surrounded by her relics of wartime journeys and distinguished meetings. Pablo Picasso once told her ‘Draw what you think you see, not what can see, a photographer can do that’. Framed on her walls and loose on her writing desk, her own fine pen & ink drawings of exotic Palms from exotic places once lived.

During a ‘drawing together in conversation’ session in Dunmow library more plant memories are gathered up. Vera talks of field trips in Ogwen, North Wales, with a head teacher keen on botany, remembering the sight of a dog rose (*Rhosyn gwyllt*), primrose (*Briallu*) and honeysuckle (*Gwyddfid*). Diana Tapp draws her childhood Wendy House under a cherry tree (*Malus*). Gill draws from her fond memories of climbing in her Grandmother’s Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea*) and a line of swaying Poplars (*Populas*) in strong winds. Sarah draws from a strong memory of laughing her head off as her naughty infant brother pulled up Marguerite daisies (*Argyranthemums*). Rosemary draws in six colours a vivid memory - ‘I would buy seed with my pocket money - I can still see the lakes and the mountains, and the flowers in my minds eye - tall and round’

On a separate occasion, Pat shares an ‘odd’ group of garden photographs over afternoon tea, dug out from a miscellaneous box under the stairs. Broadcast freely on the dining table the stories in the photographs slowly emerge as we pass them around. After some debate, Pat’s daughter, Catherine, establishes that the photo of the felled oak (*Quercus robur*) is not, after all, the oak that John took down at Prospect Lane but a much larger oak on the estate of Windsor Great Park where they used to walk as a family. The cropped nature of the photograph had shrunk the context, and the image of one oak had assimilated with the remembering of another. The forest of a local village to Dunmow. Hatfield Broad Oak still has the fenced off remains of a very large oak known as the ‘Doodle Oak.’ Drawing and nature entwined.

Double-sided concertina drawing made on the train from Pat Mummary’s childhood memory of a bank of dense firs.





Trees are redolent of times gone by and things seen. Pat describes to me another recollection, a bank of dense firs set out in a semi-circle on a steep grassy slope. She was about eight years old and could not see behind them or around the sides of them as she stood on the long stretch of grass leading up the slope in Chesnut Avenue in Grays, Essex. As with many of the stories of plants, the firs have fixed in my own imagination, this time as an imposing screen of viridian boughs that mingle with my own brush with conifers.

Drawings made in situ with bitumen on yellow canvas from recall of others plant memories in a public event at the Riverbank Walk and later installed on the town square, Great Dunmow.

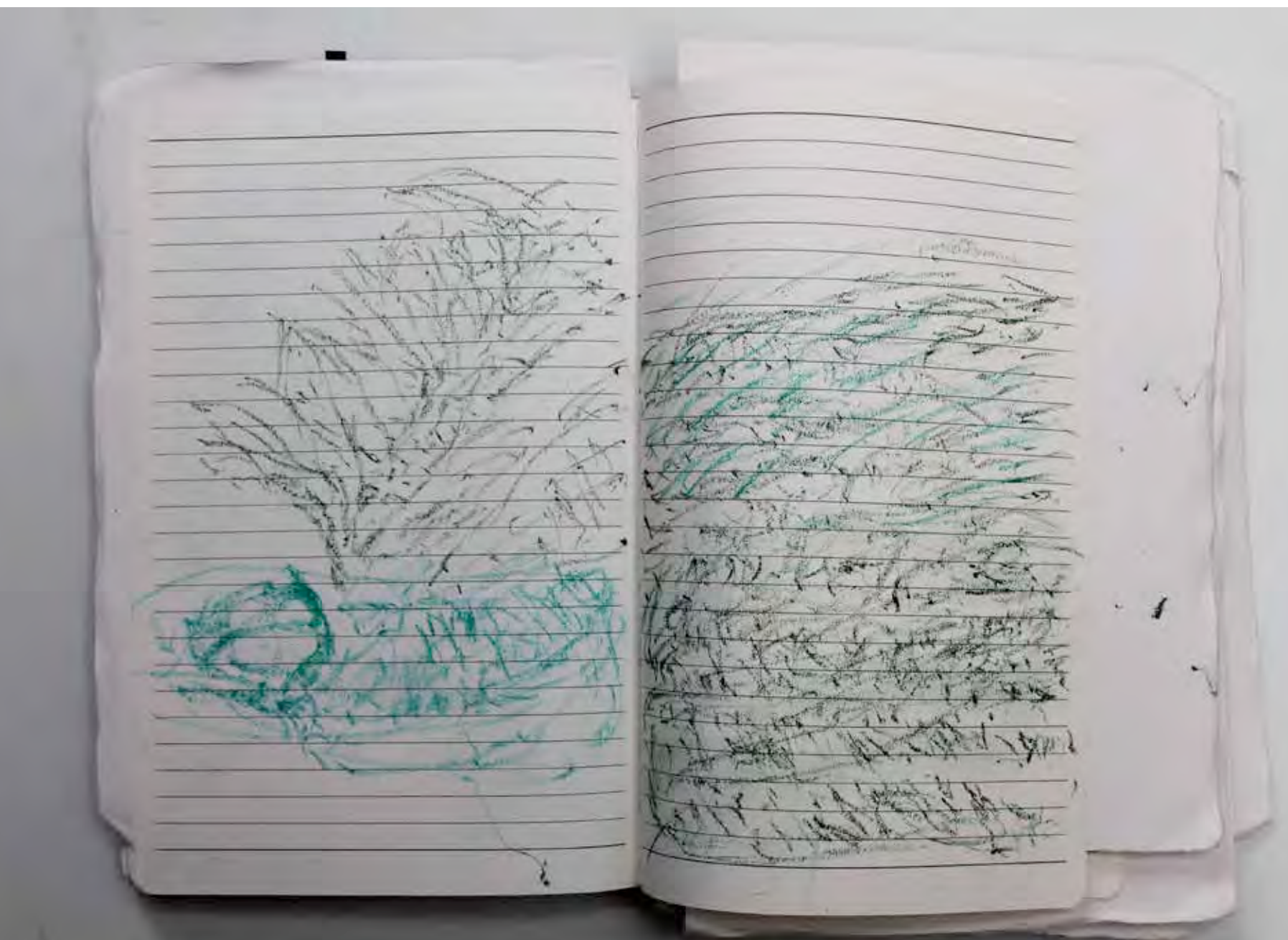


Paper flower arrangement consisting of individual flowers and berries that 'the girls' had made for Sarah Kiggins in 1970 to mark her time as studio Manager at Constance Spry Art Studio. The components were arranged by Sarah herself.

One morning I bumped into Sarah and her daughter Rebecca outside the library. We got chatting about plants, as you do, and I learnt that Sarah had worked with Constance Spry, the influential London based florist, educator and author of the mid-20th century. Credited with bringing floral artistry into the domestic home, Spry popularised unusual plant materials and a naturalistic style. The terms Pre-Spry and Post-Spry now exist because of her contribution to flower arranging for an aspiring middle class and high society.

Sarah had worked her way up from an assistant in 1956, aged twenty-two to Art Studio Manager in 1968. In her early days she remembers fondly Constance Spry standing by the steps of a coach with a basket full of roses of all types and colours, waiting for her staff to board after a training day at Winkfield Place. *'She would look at you individually and select a rose that suited you. She was good like that.'* Sarah said. Spry cultivated many Antique roses in her time and designed the floral arrangements for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

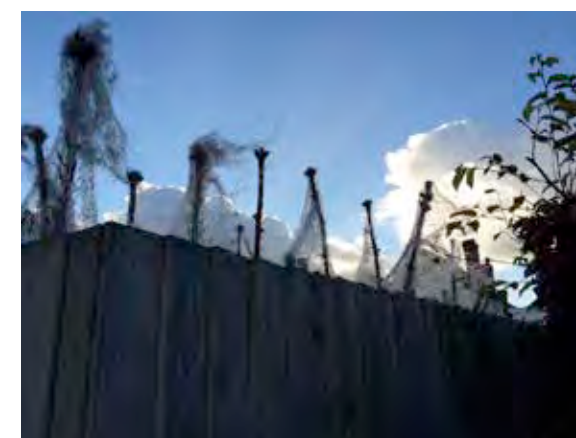
From the studio Sarah and her girls would create artificial flowers, fruits and veg formed of finely painted white crepe paper, colour matching from photos and notes kept in Sarah's 'Bible' book of plant information. The handkerchief Tree or Dove Tree (*Davidia involucrata*) is one she distinctly remembers studying with an annotated drawing at Kew. Sarah became an expert in green, her speciality being foliage, adding a touch of white, yellow or blue to a body of natural green to achieve the right hue. The leaf of *Monstera deliciosa* (*the Swiss Cheese plant*) was one of her favourites.



Bob's drawing of a
Pheasant Breast Aloe
(*Aloe variegata*) in
a pot.



Silver birch (*Betula
pendula*) in Gill's
arboretum.



Christmas Trees on sales in
car park of the Boar's Head,
Great Dunmow.



Pampas grass
(*Cortaderia selloana*)
at Banks Court,
Great Dunmow.



Joyce
Garden pea



DEREK

Unedited length - 38:23



00:41
06:57

07:32
08:00
08:27
08:43
09:05
10:42
14:19
16:52
19:28
22:26
24:13
26:40
29:30

Derek talks about the concrete model church in the garden
Linda out there [gardening] from early morning -
‘Are we having lunch dear?’
‘She was happiest when she was gardening.’
Golden Rayed Lily of Japan (Lilium auratum)
It was first plant you spoke of, ‘buds like cucumbers.’
Stargazer Lily you see in florists
Mistake of over-feeding Lily bulbs - ‘You leave them alone.’
‘That bamboo looks lovely there, doesn’t it?’
Drawings of bamboo in nursery book
Containing bamboo in muck bucket
Derek’s father in the vegetable garden and mother doing the flower beds
‘These things float up in your memory.’
The stolen comes out of the rhizome
Irish yew (Taxus bocarta ‘Fastigiata Aurea’)
Seeing sunspots through the neighbours telescope in his garden

About Linda

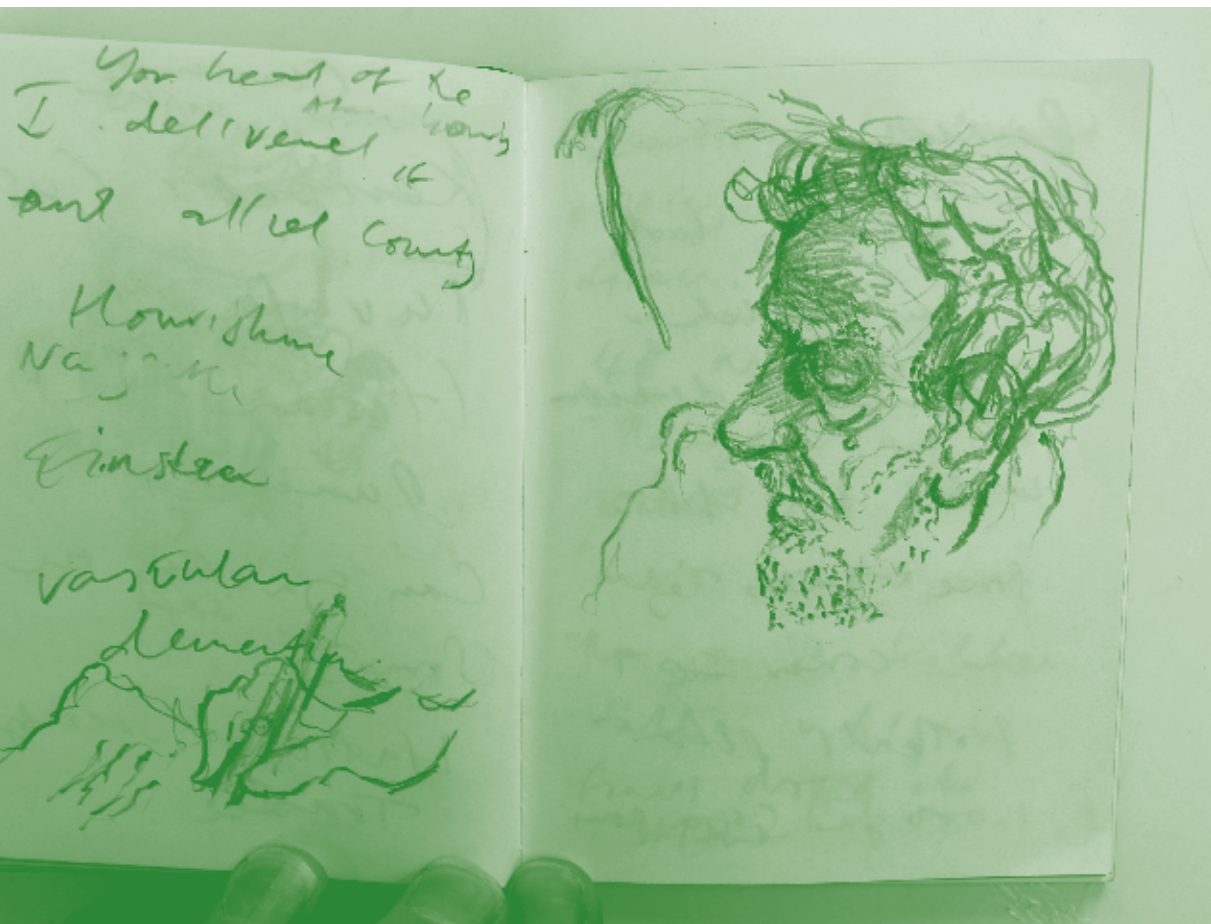
Linda thought that she was very fortunate to grow up in the 1950s, a time when children were free to ‘roam’. After early walks with her mother (who did the same in her childhood), she was able wander the countryside and pick wild flowers, fish for ‘tiddlers’, catch butterflies and insects, and take specimens home to identify. For pocket money, she feed calves, geese and chickens on the farm where her mother was housekeeper. Through these activities she acquired a lifelong very deep love of nature, both plants and animals. Her father gave her a patch of garden to cultivate. A painter and decorator, he built a greenhouse from scrap wood and glass in which he raised vegetable seedlings, grew tomatoes and Alstroemeria, the Peruvian lily or Lily of the Incas as its more commonly known. Linda started to acquire potted plants and began to edge her father out. Her green-fingered interest expanded and after he died, she acquired a large, handsome cedar greenhouse to house her ever-growing eclectic collection, which ranged from delicate slipper orchids to cacti and succulents. At one time, she had a collection of over 50 fuschias. In summer, hanging baskets festooned

the back of her home in Barnston. Her husband Derek was often tasked with watering her pots and once counted 250. Her garden was eventually filled with plants and she acquired a 1,000 sq. ft. allotment to grow her vegetables. Towards the end of her life Linda began to scale down and concentrated on Sempervivums (known as Houseleeks) which were housed in a larger, cold greenhouse which replaced her father’s. And as a natural extension of her interest in grasses, she began to collect bamboos that were kept in pots against a planned move of home.

Linda died on the 13th May 2015, the day after the 48th anniversary of when she and Derek had first gone out together. They had discussed what plant she would like growing on her grave. She told him the foxglove because she thought them beautiful and they are loved by bees. At a very tender time, Derek and I have formed a friendship through our conversations about Linda and plants. I was touched when he shared with me that his funeral bouquet for Linda was made up of 48 red roses, for the happy years they had spent together, and two white roses to represent them.

CLIVE

Unedited length - 25:19



00:05 Pine from Russia
00:40 Clives interest in plants
01:02 Flat and horizontal - 'you've never seen a pine doing that before.'

02:05 'If it looks really weird it's worth going into'
02:12 Transporting seeds and cuttings - '...seeds are easiest.'

02:34 'Rather like humans, no water, plants die.'
03:16 'Wanted to go into Forestry...worst paid job in the world.'

03:19 'I've spent my life falling down sewers and coming up smelling of Violets.'
03:32 'From the age of 6 or 7 I was always interested in plants.'

04:14 Royal Agricultural college - scholarship
04:30 'I hardly remember, it was a long time ago'
05:20 South Pacific - started work
06:16 Pictures in sitting room - Asia and India
06:44 Oil Palm
07:32 Ended up in charge of 18,000 people and 2000 acres.'

08:02 Chunkel - plantation tool
08:35 Process of palm to oil - crush the seeds
09:43 Aircraft tyres - natural rubber
11:00 Plant cycle
11:54 Sugar cane - 'Wouldn't like to try it in this climate.'

12:24 Wheat - '...not altered by humans.'
13:03 Can't remember what else has been imported
13:15 'Two and half acres here nearly all run to grass.'

13:29 Poplars - only one left
14:03 'Water, Sun and common sense.'
14:25 Coffee - 'If it grows and you can eat it someone will buy it.'

15:14 Seeing orchids 200ft up in the air
16:49 Horizontal pines - '...they've turned nature inside out.'

17:08 'It's a very good survival mechanism'
17:23 Kew Gardens - waiting for specialists
17:44 Gardens of Easton Lodge
18:05 "If there's a casual seed lying about...ends up in my pocket.'

GILL

Unedited length - 39:44



03:59 Home and garden connected
04:17 See the window as a frame
04:34 House is growing in the garden
04:46 Sorting out your thoughts
05:26 Gardening is therapeutic
06:36 Botany as a hobby for Gill's mother
07:24 Living in Harrogate - remember every tree
08:00 First rose cuttings in Bristol (Albertine)
08:42 Window box in London - 'My only garden'
11:07 The tree's growth and walking paths
11:24 Trimming branches without permission -
'Trees have precedence'
12:24 Mistakes in the garden
12:38 Paper bark birch
13:04 Tree on its own
13:29 Beauty of the sycamore
14:43 Adding trees beyond the boundary
15:25 Rescue plants
15:30 Memories of holidays - two needle pine in
Loch Awe
15:56 Liked the idea of them
16:12 Growing from seed - 'most important thing,
thrilling'
16:46 collection in pots
18:17 Light and shade when planting
18:23 Too shady for Magnolia
19:23 Established Willows (Salix)
20:09 Garden designers
23:04 Taken over by nature
24:37 Plants that love chalk
25:02 Acid soil
25:54 Greedy gardeners
26:54 Wildflowers - Betony (Stachys officinalis),
Yellow Rattle (Rhinanthus minor),
Ragged-Robin (Lychnis flos-cuculi)
27:06 Carrying names in head - list of 144
28:44 Snowdrop (Galanthus) - 'nice clump'
31:21 Silver birch (Betula Pendula) by the gate -
dug from the spinney
31:50 Moving to the cottage garden
35:06 Not used to having neighbours
35:57 Den making
36:02 Childhood home in Bristol
38:50 Potting bench in the conservatory
37:44 '...and exit.'

JACQUELINE

Unedited length - 35:54

As well Algiers, the war took the French Teenager to Germany (walking silently through the Black Forest taking care not to tread on twigs) and Monte Casino where she transmitted messages hiding in vineyards.

Dunmow Broadcast



00:30

03:38

07:16

07:35

07:50

08:30

09:57

10:56

12:55

13:08

14:39

15:19

16:28

18:27

18:57

20:36

21:15

21:43

22:04

24:20

24:30

24:47

25:39

26:03

28:22

28:47

29:05

29:35

31:26

32:28

33:00

33:15

33:46

34:17

Meeting Picasso in Marseille- ‘Do what you think you see, as you see it yourself’

Place near Café Royale (paintings there turned upside down)

Leaving France

Jacqueline’s part in the French Free Forces

Meeting Charles de Gaulle in Italy

‘You felt you were doing something useful’

Prohibition

House overlooking the lake

Drawing from herbs

Things Jacqueline’s tried to introduce in England

Garlic - ‘...a very good plant.’

Grandmother - family house

‘Remember, everything is in the suitcase buried under the Cherry tree.’

Egypt compared to Europe

Meeting Pope Pius XII

Beautiful paintings in Vatican Museum

Champagne caves

‘Why don’t they make champagne in England?’

Vines - harvesting grapes

Garden in Uganda

Growing pineapples from cut tops

Washing line pole growing leaves

Doing the garden with German Doctor

Banana

J returns to drawing

‘It’s a tropical plant - yes?’

Husband Phillip and Art in Africa with plants

Picasso

‘What I would do to have good eyesight.’

Picasso

J stops drawing

Using cacti to stop animals coming to the house - ‘spiky plants’

J notices the different colours in the leaves

Passing news from Calais to England in books

BOB

Unedited length - 51:41



06:21 Begins with B drawing cactus using pencil
06:44 Introduces colour to the sketch
07:46 Introduces pastels to the sketch
11:23 B starts humming
11:45 B changes colour
13:40 B changes colour
14:10 B changes colour
14:36 B returns to using pencil
16:12 B uses pastel
16:25 B touches plant with pastel
16:46 B starts smudging with fingers
18:10 B stops drawing - They call this a Cascade'
B turns page and starts a new drawing using dark green
24:50 B touches plant with pastel
25:34 B starts smudging with fingers
25:49 B returns to using pastel
26:27 Little smudge with fingers
26:41 Little smudge with fingers
27:15 I ask a question. Bob is focused on drawing
28:59 'My approach to the drawing is from back to front to middle to back.'
29:50 B responds to question about his work with plants
31:01 Bedding plants
31:20 B responds using pastel to sketch in the air
31:45 'a sort of "conglesh" of colour'
32:42 cut grass and chalky bits [sketches in air again]
33:41 'It caught my eye.'
34:01 Story about the chap who copied B's artwork
36:16 'Longer stems down the bottom for the plants growing...'
36:35 Starts drawing again - describing a past drawing
38:33 B talks about his paintings
39:29 'Pooke, are you trying to copy me? I said, "As if I would"' (bob chuckles)
39:46 'like a windscreen on a car...thread over that way, that way, that way, then...'
40:30 'You get all spiky leaves.' - B describes how to draw them with gestures
41:00 'It's your fan' - Bob recounts what his daughter had said regarding his painting effect
45:15 Record covers aged 16
46:28 Talks about son's drawings - 'Do you remember your drawings?'
49:50 Talks about plants
50:17 'use lights and darks...came down to a scrubby pot... left it at that.'

Mary recalls her Grandfathers prize winning carnations, 'He liked to keep them in the garden and some in the house' in Yardley, Birmingham. Mary remembers being of school age, 'He used to follow you down the garden to make sure you weren't going to tread on them - his pride and Joy. He was a keen gardener full stop.'

Jubilee Gardening Group

Unedited length - 44:16

- 0:07 Orchid with tiny flowers
- 1:38 Stinking Hellebore (*Helleborus odorus*)
- 2:55 "I've got these flowers climbing up on the wall" - Joyce, maybe
- 5:46 Images and sound link up
- 6:04 Drawing of the windows in an envelope - Joyce
- 7:06 "It looks like one of those things [bee orchid (*Ophrys apifera*)] in the air"- Joyce
- 9:22 "That's a lovely picture" - George looking at the aster
- 10:22 "You get more definition with a brush" - Mary
- 11:58 "I'm trying to get the background colour in" - Ron
- 12:53 Jevan and Mary try to remember the name for Primrose
- 14:02 Mary talks about painting
- 16:25 Mary's interest in art
- 18:59 Mary's interest in gardening
- 19:33 Mary's grand father's prize winning Carnations
- 24:31 Beryl's enjoyment of flowers
- 25:14 "You can see something and think 'that's beautiful', and then you see it in the real and it comes alive" - Beryl
- 25:30 Eric's grandad growing mushrooms
- 27:20 "I learnt so much from my dad" - Beryl
- 28:15 Beryl's favourite flower - Primrose
- 29:14 Beryl talks about her father
- 35:44 Joyce talks about drawing instruments
- 39:00 Jim's drawing of the poppy
- 41:24 Jim talks about his garden and his uncles garden hit by a bomb



Eric

Eric remembers his Grandfather and Uncle digging and pruning in the garden in Nazeing Common, Harlow. 'Comin' buh?' his grandfather would say and they would go off to check the lines were straight. In another session Eric draws two rows of four cabbages, eight in all and all distinctly individual in their emerging form. Low to the ground, a sense of weight is evident in his rendering. Foremost in our drawing conversation has been Eric's recollection of building stacks of hay - 'climbing up, as one is thrown and laid down.' The next time I meet Eric he re-draws the pattern of the hay bales in stack formation, talking through the process with the group.

Ann

The first picture in Ann's mind is of the fruit that appear after the blossom has fallen. 'I want But-But', is how Ann asked her Grandfather for a cherry as a small child. Her Grandfather was a seasoned grower of fruit including apples, quince, mulberries, figs, grapes and medlar that she remembers picking up and placing in the dark to ripen. One hundred pumps on the pump in the pump shed, Ann recalls, is what it took to get water up from the well to the house in Leavenheath, Stoke-by-Nayland.

Derek

Derek's drawing throughout our sessions together are enquiring and deftly executed. I ask him if he has drawn or painted flowers before and he replies 'Yes, tulip and daffodils - they are very powerful in my mind'. Derek sports a navy blue Tottenham Hotspurs cap hat with an enamel badge of service on it and a small handmade cloth daffodil pin on the left. I ask if he can recall the shape of a tulip and draw it in my notebook. It is a more tentative mark from memory but still the lines that shape the petals add up to being real. He knows it by sight and from touch I'm sure. I enquire what colour it is and he says clearly, 'yellow'. His daughter tells me that his painting of a yellow tulip is pride of place in the sitting room.



*Derek
Yellow Tulip*



Beryl
Rose

Joyce

Joyce tells me about a tree in her garden of fifty years, ‘... being there of an evening when the sun is setting - it would light up the tree in gold - I would sit out and it would feel peaceful - absolutely beautiful - it was idyllic - a massive oak reaching up to the heavens.’ Another time Joyce tells me the story about her two rows of peas; that one morning on attending them she found that they had gone! ‘It was as if someone had drawn a line along them and cut them down with a pair of shears. I couldn’t believe my eyes.’ Could it have been birds or rabbits we wonder?

Alan

I am looking, with Alan, at a book picturing fruit trees. ‘You like the blossom?’ I enquire. ‘It changes.’ Alan replies. I mention to Alan that I’d just been talking to Derek about the apple cultivar Newton Wonder. Pointing to a pear tree Alan mimes, with a glint in his eye and few words that on one occasion a pear had fallen on his head. ‘Bang’ he said with a smile. I ask Alan to draw the assailing fruit in my notebook to remind me of the story. Georgina, the Jubilee Gardening Group Co-ordinator, is pretty sure it was an apple so now it’s the ‘apple come pear story’.

Beryl

On our first meeting I ask Beryl if there is a flower special to her and she answers, ‘It has to be the Rose.’ I offer her my notebook and she draws a rose in a way that convinces me that she has this bloom singled out in her mind. Most roses have five petals divided into two distinct lobes with five sepals beneath them. Beryl’s rose, perhaps *Rosa ribiginosa*, contained by eloquent curved rhythms that appear to hold its perfumed scent. “You can see something and think ‘that’s beautiful’, and then you see it in the real and it comes alive”. Beryl was a dancer in her younger years and had a green grocers with her husband.

Biography

Dealing with people, animals and plants, Jevan's work is underpinned by personal narrative and a sensitive attention to different states of being. He is an alumnus of The Royal Drawing School, where he received first prize for his work on The Drawing Year, 2009-10. In 2014 Jevan collaborated with injured and wounded soldiers from Chavasse VC House to form the exhibition *Facing-Recovering* that toured from Firstsite, Colchester, to the Royal Armouries, Portsmouth and on to the House of Commons, London. He lives and works in Suffolk as an artist and gardener at Darsham Nurseries and Hill House, Great Bealings.

Plant related work by the artist:

La Tailleur (The Vine Cutter) - an installation in response to a two year period working with the vines at Chateau Gautoul, Vallée du Lot, France.

Buildings & Buddleia - a residency project in response to the colonisation of this pioneer plant in Colchester Town Centre.

Airplants & Arrows - a gallery resource commissioned by Firstsite, Colchester for children and families.

Turf Twinning - a collaborative project with Lawrence Bradby and residents of Greenstead Estate for Firstsite, Colchester, with publication essay, 'Six Cuts' by Jonathan P Watts.

Occupied with Plants - a solo exhibition at Art Exchange in collaboration with plant physiologists, School of Biological Sciences, University of Essex, with exhibition catalogues essay, 'The World's Long Thoughts' by Lawrence Bradby

Green Interlude - a residency project exploring liminal plant life by the sea, Aldeburgh Beach Lookout, Suffolk.

Alternative Yellow Book

In the naming of this work the artist acknowledges "*The Yellow Book*" synonymous with the National Gardens Scheme's (NGS) open gardens annual publication in print since 1931 and the fashionable quarterly literary periodical *The Yellow Book*, 1894 - 1897, first edited by Aubrey Beardley.

The Film

A film was produced along with the book under the same name. The finished duration of the film is 11:10 mins and features five individuals who share their interest in plants. For details on how to order a copy and to see a clip of the film by Jevan Watkins Jones and produced by Aura Films in conjunction with High Stile Projects please go to:

www.highstileprojects.co.uk



*Jacqueline
Tiger aloe*

Afterword

Catherine Mummery

Paul Klee famously said *‘Drawing is like taking a line for a walk’*.

I first met Jevan in 2011 on a course run by the Campaign For Drawing. I remember him talking about how pruning vines is like creating a future line drawing – the vine’s growth depends on where it is cut the previous season. It is an image that has stuck with me. I realised that there were connections between horticulture and visual art that I had not thought of before and I spoke again to Jevan about his ideas on this subject in the Spring of 2014 in the café at the University of Essex prior to opening of his exhibition *‘Occupied With Plants’*. It was here that ideas for the *‘Alternative Yellow Book’* were first germinated.

My interest in making connections between visual arts and the natural world goes back to the time I worked at the Gardens of Easton Lodge at Little Easton in Essex. Here I developed programmes that enabled artists to interpret the garden’s hidden histories. Ideas sown in one project were cultivated and grown further in the next. After leaving the Gardens of Easton Lodge I wanted to carry on working with artists in this way and, in 2009, I formed High Stile Projects with my husband Martin Sale. Our aim was to use our creative interests and skills to produce contemporary arts programmes locally to where we live. Many of our programmes

use the arts to animate community spaces in the ancient market town of Great Dunmow, north-west Essex. We established the *‘Drawing In Dunmow’* initiative to bring together local groups, schools, individuals and professional artists through the imaginative use of the art of drawing to enhance a shared sense of community.

Jevan’s proposal offered exciting new possibilities for drawing to be used to engage with local residents. We set up a series of workshop visits and meetings for Jevan with residents at Redbond Lodge Care Home; the Dunmow Gardening Club for people living with dementia and visitors to the Dunmow Library. Whilst these sessions mostly took place in community spaces it was the stories of individuals that were sought when Jevan asked them to draw their memories of plants and gardens that were special to them. Gardens hold such personal memories for so many of us. They are private spaces usually shared only with family or invited guests and all have stories about the plants that they contain. As time passes, collected memories become refined and, when retrieved, all the more valuable. Jevan’s gentle and conversational approach in his drawing sessions allowed participants to bring back memories and create images of cherished places and plants. Now simple lines walked on a page outline rich stories. As a collection these images capture hundreds of years of gardening experiences and a community’s shared love of plants. My thanks go to Jevan and all the participants involved.

This project has only been possible thanks to the support of many local groups and organisations including the Dunmow Branch of Alzheimer’s Society; Redbond Lodge Care Home; St. Mary’s Church and Riverbank; and staff at Dunmow Library. It was funded by the Arts Council England through their Grants for the Arts lottery fund and small grants from Essex County Council and St. Mary’s Riverbank. Thanks also go to Firebrand Creative and Aura Films for their involvement in the programmes.

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Catherine Mummery, Project management

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Book Design: Stefan Musgrove, Firebrand Creative
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Contributors to the film:
Derek Metson-Ward
Gill Davies
Jacqueline Caccace
Robert ‘Bob’ Pooke
Clive Smith
Jubilee Gardening Group

Members and volunteers of the Jubilee Gardening Group, Alzheimer’s Society

Georgina Salmon, Dementia Support Worker, Alzheimer’s Society and PREFER Home Care

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Firebrand Creative

*“Each plant is something
about somebody.”*

Gill Davies, The Labourers Rest, 2016