

GARDEN NEWS



Harold Hoyer/Flickr

Cheerful *Bellis perennis*

STRESS BUSTER

ANDREA BRUNSENDORF
HEAD GARDENER

There has been much talk recently about stress in the workplace, which has been touched upon in the Inn's staff newsletter on health and safety matters, and it was the subject of an interesting conversation I had with a psychiatrist friend who was asked to undertake a study concerning the working conditions within a German regional Ministry of Finance following the suicides of seven employees in a single year. As part of his report he compared the workplace environment, job satisfaction and workers' well-being across a range of industries and discovered that the profession of horticulturalist by far achieved the most positive results.

Gardening or husbandry is an activity innate to human nature: man has hunted and gathered and sown and reaped since *homo sapiens* emerged from the African plains. Growing plants, nurturing them, depending on their fruits for survival is in our genes. But the principal fact to emerge from his investigations was that gardeners achieve such high levels of job satisfaction because they are involved in the process from beginning to end. From growing plants, either from seeds or cuttings, through planting them out and nurturing them, improving the soil and maintaining their health, to bringing in the harvest or producing a

magnificent floral display, a gardener is involved at every stage.

Until this conversation I hadn't appreciated how wholesome our profession is compared to others. We haven't had to sacrifice this creative process through industrialisation or modernisation, unlike that government finance department where projects pass across three different case officers' desks before a superior makes the final decision on the matter, without involving those workers in the decision-making process, leaving them feeling like an automated cog in a robotic machine.

A potent example of such horticultural job satisfaction struck me whilst planting out our spring bedding along Paper Building - small pansies and pink daisies together with forget-me-nots and tulips. During the summer we nurtured the pansies and daisies from seed in our nursery and now, full-grown, their cheerful colours will enlighten us through the grey months that are ahead of us until the narcissus and tulips awake from their winter sleep and signal the reassuring turn of the seasons.

I fully appreciate that not everyone can work as a professional gardener and that we need other trades and professions to survive - the world's economy is necessarily not based on flower power - but I hope we can play our part

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in helping people through a difficult day at the office by providing a small corner of natural contentment in a green and peaceful garden away from computer screens and office politics, even if it is just for a fifteen-minute sandwich break.

Anyway, the gardening team of the Inner Temple wishes you all a good start in the New Year and hopes that you enjoy our work in the Garden as much as the pleasure we have in providing and maintaining such a special place amidst the hustle-bustle of the City and the frantic pace of life in offices and courts.



NANETTE HUDSON

Nanette has joined the Inner Temple to assist the Head Gardener with the care and maintenance of the Garden. She comes to the Inn after working for six years at Nymans, a prestigious National Trust property in West Sussex.



www.flowerspictures.org

VIEWS FROM THE SHRUBBERY
BY HUNTER TEMPLE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who came to visit me after my diary column appeared in the *Yearbook*. Celebrity can be a little wearing, and I sometimes had to retreat from the High Border into the Mediterranean beds to avoid the paparazzi.

I spend quite a lot of time in that bit of the Garden at the moment. The team cleared most of the vegetation from the other beds, making it impossible for me to be invisible. They then spent weeks making thousands of small holes and stuffing bulbs into them, which are called either tulips or alliums. They then covered everything with stuff which stinks of horses. It's easy to see why I prefer to hang around under the strawberry tree and Jerusalem sage.

One day recently I was hauled out of a particularly comfortable spot beneath some teasels and taken back to Bermondsey for what Andrea calls my M.O.T. I got prodded and poked and had a needle stuck into me which I was told was 'for my own good'. The woman in the white coat said it'll stop me

getting colds, which is ridiculous as all I need is for my personal heat-mat to be plugged in and then I'm perfectly cosy in the potting shed. Not being blessed with feline intelligence, humans do make a kerfuffle over the simplest things.

