

# Newsletter

# March 2

Cookham and Cookham Dean Horticultural Societ

NEXT MEETING: **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm**

**COOKHAM DEAN VILLAGE HALL**

**SPRING SHOW**

**Staging 7.30pm-8.30pm**

## Chairman's letter

It seems incredible that we are already into March, seems no time since Christmas, but the weather has not been exactly kind for gardeners. The spring flowers are all now beginning to put in an appearance, and I hope we shall have plenty to exhibit at the Spring Show – last year we were holding things back because the weather had been so mild. I do hope as many members as possible will produce something for the Show, the schedule is enclosed with this newsletter. Les Waldren will again be our judge, for those new to the society he always gives us very good value during the evening as he gives full explanations and reasons as to why bloom A is better than bloom B and will tell us if we have entered the flowers in the wrong class! Even if you are not planning to enter anything, do come along, it's a most enjoyable evening and after all the exhibits have been prepared and while the judging is going on there is plenty of opportunity to chat to others and catch up on matters horticultural.

Since Brian Thompson moved to Wiltshire 2 weeks ago, I have had the awesome responsibility of looking after his sweet pea plants which he wants us to sell at our March and April meetings. We may have to ration them, depending on how many people want them, but they are still surviving so I will bring them along on the evening. I look forward to seeing you all on 25 March.

Susie Tremlett

## Gill's 'Notes for exhibitors'

*I am not a professional flower arranger or a show expert but Susie has asked me to list a few tips to members who may not have exhibited before. These are just some of the things I think about before a show but I take no responsibility for the results!!*



Snowdrops at Earlev (Marv)

- Don't forget your schedule. Work out in advance which classes you will enter. It probably helps to label your blooms before you get to the hall but I have never done this and end up rather confused about which blooms are going into which class.
- Any exhibit which is slightly past its best will not score highly so pick fresh stems, preferably the day before the show depending on the weather at the time....one bad storm and the whole lot could be flattened on the day of the show, so if you remember, try to listen to the forecast.
- When cutting your daffodils from the garden cut more than you need. When you return to the house select the best blooms, without blemishes, tears or discolouration and place the blooms in a deep container of water and keep them in a cool, dark room(garage is ideal). I then transport them to the hall in the same tall flower bucket (minus the water!) Di Benson always carries her exhibits horizontally in a lovely trug which is much more stylish! Again, take a few spare blooms in case of accidents.
- Vases are supplied. It helps if you have some newspaper to scrunch up in the vase which will support your stems when wet. Alternatively, I usually take a small plastic bag of moss from the lawn or the woods. This is very flexible for arranging and looks attractive. Collect this a week or two before if you need to.
- Take a pair of secateurs to the show for final trimming of stems.
- The judge will be looking for symmetry in your exhibit so try to select your stems accordingly and 'face' them up well i.e. when you look directly at the daffodil it should be looking back at you! If exhibiting hellebores, Les Waldren will be looking for fresh blooms that are not developing their seed heads. This was particularly difficult last year due to the warm spring but should be easier this year.
- Previous winners of the Society bulb class have often supported the foliage with thin sticks and twine if it is floppy. Again, moss around the base of the bulbs does look attractive but will not affect the result.
- I think professionals then do a lot of tweeking of the petals and cleaning of pollen but that is outside my experience. Les will show you how on the night (after the judging!)
- Finally, don't worry about your neighbours' exhibits on the bench: just trust your own judgement and remember it is fun!

For help in sorting out your large cups from your small cups look on [www.thedaffodilsociety.com](http://www.thedaffodilsociety.com) GT

### **Future Programme News**

Be sure not to miss our **29<sup>th</sup> April** meeting in the W.I. Hall, when Carolyn Foster will be talking to us about how to **Extend the Season in the Border**.

Then in **May**, Chris Chadwell will be showing us ***Paradise on Earth, the beautiful flowers of Kashmir.***

For **June and either July or August** we are planning ***visits to a local nursery and possibly to Thrive, a horticultural therapy centre.***

In **September** we shall hear about the ***Maidenhead Transition Project, permaculture and local organic gardening initiatives.***

In **October** Elizabeth Farrar will give a talk on ***Pansies and Violas.***

At our pre-Christmas meeting and **AGM in November**, there will be a talk on ***Hollies*** by Jan Sambrook.

Look out for further details in the Newsletter.

Mary Downes and Pam Campin



## **More Dates for your Diary**

### **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

South Chilterns Gardening are having a talk on moles by the Moleman on Wednesday 18 March. Talk and Demonstration. WI Hall, Cookham Dean. 7.00pm for 7.30pm Tickets £5.00 for members and £6.00 for non-members. Refreshments available.

### **Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> April**

There will be a plant market outside the Community Centre, Diamond Place, Summertown, Oxford on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April. 10am-1pm Tables / pitches are £9. Further details of booking procedure call Gill Townend 0n 483092 or just turn up to buy.

### **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations at Stubbings Nursery (Bank holiday weekend)** We have received the following information form Stubbings Nursery:

“The Good family will be opening up the beautiful garden of Stubbings House for the event - and we will have a number of family attractions, such as a falconry flying display, a children’s farm and lots of good things to eat and drink (we also encourage guests to bring a picnic, to enjoy on the lawn). By no means least, there will of course be the beautiful nursery for guests to browse around.

We are also expecting celebrity guest Charlie Dimmock, to attend. She will officially open The Glasshouse (a new facility at Stubbings) - then she will be holding a Q & A session, in a marquee on the lawn of Stubbings House.

The Q&A session is scheduled to start at about 12.15 - and go on until about 1.00 pm (subject to final arrangements) - and we expect demand to be high for this event, so seating will be limited.

Stubbings Nursery would like to invite members of your society to attend the event- and if you are able to give us an idea of numbers, we will reserve seating for you. Of course, we'd also like your members to come along anyway, as it will be a great family day out."

Stubbings Nursery is based at Stubbings, near Pinkneys Green, in Maidenhead, just off the A404M. Directions can be found at [www.stubbingsnursery.co.uk](http://www.stubbingsnursery.co.uk)

If you are interested in this event please let a Committee member know.

**Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> June Thames Hospicecare Cookham Dean Open Gardens.** Put this date in your diary now! More details next month.

## SOME THOUGHTS ON GARDEN LIGHTING

By Julian Alder

***Lighting is an often overlooked, and arguably essential, part of any well-designed garden. The right lighting can aid the safe use of paths and steps, particularly in close proximity to water features. It can improve security by introducing a sense of occupancy to a property, and it can of course allow hard spent hours gardening and investment in planting and garden structures to be enjoyed into the evenings and year round.***

All too often the only lighting to be found in the garden is a large security floodlight, specially designed to temporarily blind any homeowner and their guests (whilst at the same time consuming as much power as two or three fridge-freezers). Also commonplace are sets of three or four plastic solar powered LED path lights; which even when on still demanded the use of night vision glasses, but unfortunately turned themselves off half an hour before you arrived home because there were insufficient daylight hours to recharge the batteries.

The most successful garden lighting designs combine a simple, selective approach that introduces light where it is needed, illuminating the subject (whether that be a path, paved area, specimen tree or shrub, gazebo, etc) without the source of the light being visible, and with the minimum of light pollution. Examples could include the use of "mushroom" shaped path lights, casting pools of light around paving and adjacent planting, or spot-lights with integral glare hoods used to up-light shrubs and trees, or produce a warm reflected light from an old brick wall.

By bringing the source of light closer to where it is needed (as opposed to the indiscriminate large floodlight), and by using the wide variety of energy saving light sources now available, garden lighting can also offer a suitably green solution to safety and security (reducing the electricity consumed to perhaps a tenth of that consumed by the floodlight, and increasing the time between lamp changes by five to ten times). It is interesting to note also that many LED light sources do not emit ultra-violet light, and as a result do not attract insects.

The use of simple switching controls, combining a timer with a dusk-dawn sensor and a manual override ensure that the lights are only on when needed, that they cannot be left on during daylight

hours, and that they are not constantly being switched on and off by the neighbour's cat or the family of foxes. Radio remote switching gives the additional flexibility to turn the lights on and off both inside the house and out in the garden, or even from your car, and often reduce the work to install the lighting system (as power can be taken from outbuildings, garages, etc.).

Unlike internal lighting, garden lighting needs to adjust and grow with the garden, and it is important to follow an approach that allows the system to be easily expanded. It is equally important to use light fittings that can be moved to accommodate changes in planting or in seasonal colours/emphasis, and that can accept different lamp wattages to allow for the increase in size of shrubs and trees as they mature.

Garden lighting can really bring the garden into the home in the cooler months by allowing selective features to be enjoyed from the comfort of an armchair. Equally the lighting can draw one out into the garden in the longer summer evenings to sit and enjoy the fruits of your labours with a glass of wine in hand.

Many thanks to Julian Alder for this article, exclusively for the Society! For further advice or information contact Julian on [www.lightingalfresco.co.uk](http://www.lightingalfresco.co.uk)

Copy for next month's newsletter to Gill Townend ([gilltownend@aol.com](mailto:gilltownend@aol.com)) by 6<sup>th</sup> April please.

.....Schedule on next page

## **COOKHAM AND COOKHAM DEAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

### **SPRING SHOW**

**To be held at Cookham Dean Village Hall on**

**Wednesday, 25th March 2009 at 7.30pm**

**(STAGING 7.30pm-8.30pm)**

#### **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

***(All plant material must be grown by the competitor : 1 entry per person per class: 30p per entry)***

**Class 1 AN ARRANGEMENT of Spring flowers and any foliage - finished result to be no more than 18" diameter in a bowl/container of your choice**

#### **DAFFODILS**

**Class 2 SOCIETY CLASS 5 Bulbs in pot (bulbs as purchased last Autumn)**

**Class 3 1 Vase 3 Blooms, Large Cup**

**Class 4 1 Vase 3 Blooms, Doubles**

- Class 5** 1 Vase 3 Blooms, Bi colours, Large or Small Cup
- Class 6** 1 Vase 5 Blooms, Large or Small Cup
- Class 7** 1 Vase 5 Blooms, Miniature, eg "Tete a Tete" or similar
- Class 8** 1 Vase 3 Stems, Multihead

**MISCELLANEOUS**

- Class 9** Any pot or bowl of growing Spring Bulbs
- Class 10** 1 Pot of Primula (single plant in a pot) eg primrose, polyanthus
- Class 11** Any decorative indoor Pot Plant
- Class 12** 1 Vase 3 stems Hellebores
- Class 13** 1 Vase Cut Flowers (not to include flowering shrubs or blossom)
- Class 14** 1 Stem Camellia
- Class 15** 1 Vase Spring flowering Shrubs - 5 stems, 1 of each type
- PRIZES** Class 1-15 1<sup>st</sup> £1 2<sup>nd</sup> 60p 3<sup>rd</sup> 40p Judge: Les Waldren