

# NEWSLETTER

2009

September

NEXT MEETING: **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm**

**COOKHAM DEAN VILLAGE HALL**

## ***“Growing our own Future”***

An opportunity to hear from **Cindy Barnes** about local initiatives involving organic and sustainable gardening and agriculture, including an introduction to “Transition Town Maidenhead”

**Vinnie McCann** who runs Waltham Place and is an organic farmer will also be

## Chairman's letter

It seems no time since we last met, and in the meantime what happened to this “barbecue summer” that we were promised? Autumn is now staring us in the face and I think I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times we have been able to sit out in the garden and enjoy the hot sunshine for more than a couple of hours. It's been a good summer for fruit and veg, because we have had quite a lot of rain, but the weeds in my garden are of exhibition quality! Let's hope we have an Indian summer, although I don't think the omens are particularly good at the moment. However, I suppose it's all part of life's rich pattern and we should be grateful for a good harvest – Brian Thompson's sweet pea plants have done really well and I am still picking bunches every two or three days.

We had 2 very good outings in June and July, the first to the Plant Nursery at Great Missenden and the second to Thrive – more about both of these later in the newsletter. Thanks must go to Mary Downes and Pam Campin for arranging these, and to Becky Pinnegar who was such an interesting guide to the gardens at Thrive, near Reading. A good number of members were able to go to both of these. More suggestions, please, for future outings.

Now is the time for you to prepare your “Society Geraniums” for bringing to our September meeting, I gather from a number of people that they have turned out to be fairly small plants and of different colours, so it will be really interesting to see what turns up on the night. We are hoping for a really good display. Also, perhaps now is a good time to remind you that the Committee are always open to new ideas and suggestions for talks and/or activities, and we shall be looking for a new committee member at our AGM in November.

I look forward to seeing you all again at our September meeting.

Susie Tremlett

# DON'T FORGET THE VILLAGE FETE AND HORTICULTURAL SHOW ON 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER!

Entry forms from Sue Wilkes on 01628 482098

## Our Summer Outings 2009

### **The Plant Specialist, Independent Nursery, Whitefield Lane, Great Missenden**

Over forty members made the journey into deepest Buckinghamshire on a fine June evening. We were welcomed by Sue Higginson who gave us some information about their staff and left us in the capable hands of one of the Partners who started the Nursery in 2002, Keith Pounder.

We were shown into the stock-growing and holding area, where Keith explained the sustainable environmental principles to which the Nursery is committed. He showed us the layered beds based on an Australian system which uses the minimum amount of water possible while raising healthy



plants. They pride themselves on the versatility and variety of unusual herbaceous perennials and grasses, many of which carry RHS Award of Garden Merit status, which we then saw in the colourful display garden. Here it was easy to see examples of which plants would suit either traditional cottage garden planting or "prairie style" and we were able to note certain successful planting combinations.

Following this we went to the sales area, which is neatly laid out and labelled, where quite a few members made one or two purchases.....I always head to the "plants for shady areas" finding this the most difficult area of my garden to fill. Advice

was at hand.

The evening concluded with a cup of tea and most members felt it had been well worth the journey.

Find out more on the website, [www.theplantspecialist.co.uk](http://www.theplantspecialist.co.uk)

### **Thrive, Beech Hill, Reading**

Thrive is a small national charity which uses gardening to change the lives of disabled people. Buffeted by heavy showers along the M4 one evening in July, fifteen members wielded their umbrellas around this lovely garden, which nevertheless proved to be outstanding.

Becky Pinniger, who works at Thrive as a Horticultural Therapist, was on hand to give us an introductory talk about their work. Originally set up in 1978 as a bridge between the world of horticulture and the world of health, its scope gradually widened and in 1989 volunteers restored and adapted the walled garden of Trunkwell Park. The garden has now become an important centre for the rehabilitation and welfare of people with a wide range of physical and mental disabilities as well as a training centre for related professional groups.

Becky showed us round the garden which is divided into different working areas where clients are helped to grow a wide range of vegetables, fruit and flowers, shown how to propagate their own plants, often in raised beds, use tools effectively, plan and manage their own small plot and harvest the crops. Everywhere we saw the amazing results of all the hard work of clients, volunteers and therapists that culminate in a really attractive, well-designed garden. It is clearly a purpose-built space, but one which is open to change and continuing development, with improvements planned all the time, including a bee-border and changes in the pond area.



A favourite part was the individual plots where many clients have personalised their bit of the garden and expressed their own personality in the design.

Our evening finished with a very welcome warming cup of tea and home-made cakes.

To help people access the benefits of gardening at home, Thrive runs an information service, produces information materials and has two

websites [www.thrive.org.uk](http://www.thrive.org.uk) and [www.carryongardening.co.uk](http://www.carryongardening.co.uk) which offer advice and ideas including practical tips, tools and techniques on how to garden when you have a specific disability or health need. MD



## How did you learn to garden?

The RHS Campaign for School Gardening is trying to find out when people were first introduced to gardening and by whom. They want to ascertain whether parents learnt to garden while they were at school, or if grandparents hold more gardening knowledge than their children. I certainly found an interest in gardening from my grandmother, rather than my parents and I don't remember learning anything at school other than how to grow a bean and the anatomy of a worm!! If you are interested in taking part in the RHS survey go to [www.rhs.org.uk/News/c4sgsurvey.asp](http://www.rhs.org.uk/News/c4sgsurvey.asp)

## Robinia deaths

Several members have mentioned to me that their *Robinia pseudoacacia* trees have been looking sick in the last two years. Sadly, the specimen in the WI Hall garden has been affected. There is no clear reason for this and the June RHS 'Garden' magazine tells us that even the leaf spot fungus diseases and root rot do not account for all the deaths. It is possible that two recent wet years may have contributed to the problem as Robinias like well drained soils, but research is still continuing.....

## **GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS!**

I wanted to let Hort Soc members know that I have tried the "recipe" for repelling deer, sent in by Hilary Hollingsworth several months ago, and the good news is it works! Remembering to do a follow-up spray every few weeks and after a heavy downpour, it should deter deer from munching all the plants. I also spray the soil around the plant too so they don't get too close. They had eaten everything including aucuba, geranium, heuchera, choisya, echinacea....the list goes on. I'm happy to report that all have recovered bar one heuchera.

For those that missed the recipe.....

1/3 cup of Tabasco sauce

1/3 cup of washing-up liquid  
3 eggs  
mix with water to blend  
Pour into a 5L sprayer bottle and fill up with water.

The mix does not harm the leaves and should keep unwanted garden visitors away.

Good luck.

Oh, the bad news is that for the first time, after living here for 13 years, I have seen a rabbit in my garden!!!

Adele Weiner

## NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY AND PLANT BULBS

The bulb planting season is upon us already so order your catalogues now, go online or visit your local garden centre.

Last autumn the team from Gardening Which? planted 47 new varieties of bulbs at Capel Manor in North London. I am sure you all have your own favourites but if you are looking for something new then try some of the best listed below;

### BEST BUY DAFFODILS

**Narcissus 'Golden Echo'** a jonquil daffodil with up to three flowers per stem 45cm tall from Walkers Bulbs

**Weeks in flower** 6      **Flowering period** Mid Mar to Mid April      **Colour** white/golden yellow

**Narcissus 'Wisley'** cyclamineous type daffodil one flower per stem 45cm, also from Walkers

**Weeks in flower** 5      **Flowering period** Mid Mar to Mid April      **Colour** white/yellow

**Narcissus' Blushing Lady'** jonquilla type 30cm tall from Thompson and Morgan and Walkers

**Weeks in flower** 5      **Flowering period** Early April to early May      **Colour** apricot/yellow

**Narcissus 'Mirar'** large cupped daffodil 38cm high from Walkers Bulbs

**Weeks in flower** 4      **Flowering period** Early to late April      **Colour** ruffled orange cups, golden petals

Try also **Narcissus 'Pensioner'** with pink cups (Jacques Amand) and **Narcissus' Wave'** with double flowers in cream and yellow. (Walkers)

### BEST BUY TULIPS

**Tulip 'Cloud Nine'** White flowers with pink edges, spreading to fuchsia pink. 63cm tall

**Weeks in flower** 5      **Flowering period** Mid April to Mid May      (Peter Nyssen)

**Tulip 'Tennessee'** Very popular with visitors to the trial garden. Crimson with ivory edges. 50cm

**Weeks in flower 6 Flowering period** Late Mar to early May (Hyde Bulbs, Walkers and Taylors.)

**Tulip 'Gabriella'** The best pink tulip on trial. Very uniform and strong stemmed 38cm tall

**Weeks in flower 5 Flowering period** Early April to early May (Gee Tee and Peter Nyssen)

**Tulip 'Juliette'** a Darwin hybrid in red and yellow. 45cm tall but rain resistant.

**Weeks in Flower 5 Flowering period** Early April to early May (Taylors bulbs in Garden centres).

**Also recommended** Tulip 'Sensual touch', Tulip 'Ice Cream', Tulip 'Candy Prince' and Tulip Princess Charmante' Tulip 'Green River' Tulip 'Bastogne Parrot' Tulips are best planted in Late October/November. I even planted some last year in late December for a spring wedding and they were a picture in late April.

## FOR YOUR DIARY.....

### Garden Talk

#### ***Going Dutch - Gardens of Gelderland***

Beyond the windmills and the tulips there is another Holland, full of beautiful but undiscovered gardens. Visit three of the best with this Illustrated talk by Richard Poad to raise funds for the Church Flower Festival in October. **Tuesday 15th September** - 10.30 a.m. for 11 a.m at Cookham Dean WI Hall, Church Road - Tickets £7.50p including coffee and biscuits. Tickets from 01628 476512 or 482637

#### **NCCPG NEWS**

**Sunday 20th September 2.30 pm.** We are hoping to arrange a conducted tour of the gardens at Upton House and introduction to its National Collection of Asters which consists of nearly 100 species and cultivars of Aster amellus, ericoides and cordifolius plus a representative selection of other species. More Detail from **Terry Cann** on [cannhousehold@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:cannhousehold@tiscali.co.uk)

**Saturday 24th October 10.30 am,** introduction and guided tour of The Oxford Botanic Garden's Harcourt Arboretum. There will be a fee for the event of £6.50 per person which includes refreshments. More detail **Terry Cann** on [cannhousehold@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:cannhousehold@tiscali.co.uk) or 01494 783254

**Other event** 23-25th October - Oxford University dept of continuing education - Plant power: Herb, Physic and Botanic Gardens code X7124 at [www.conted.ox.ac.uk](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk). Includes talk by Timothy Walker and visit to OBG.

**Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> October 6.30pm** A talk by Mark Lane, the Garden Manager of Buckingham Palace.

#### ***'The Garden at Buckingham Palace – Getting to Know You'***

With the advent of the garden opening for the first time ever this year for guided tours, Mark Lane will be providing an insight into the history, conservation practices and general workings of this famous garden. VENUE: Lecture Theatre, Royal Horticultural Hall, Vincent Sq. SW1P 2PE This lecture follows the Autumn Show.

TICKET PRICE: £12.50 for Plant Heritage members. £15.00 for non-members (NB Cookham Hortic Society members are signed up members of NCCPG))

Doors open at 6pm

**To apply for tickets send your cheque (payable to London Group NCCPG) with an SAE and your contact details to: M Watson, 20 Elmsdale Road, London E17 6PW**

*The Savill Garden have now achieved full recognition for the National Collection of Betula Utilis*

## **TO ALL MEMBERS**

We have had a request from the Thames Valley and Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust asking if any members would be prepared to open their gardens for the charity in 2010. The Air Ambulance does not receive any monies from the Government nor from the Lottery, but relies solely on the generosity of the people, companies and associations of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. If you think you could help please contact Sue Thomas on 01189 732927 or Karen Steward on 01189 732626.

**TRY TO SUPPORT THE MARLOW FARMERS' MARKET. EVERY SUNDAY 10AM- 2PM IN DEAN STREET CAR PARK. Meat, fish, cheeses, free range eggs, cakes, bread and good value plants**