

Cookham and Cookham Dean Horticultural Society  
**Newsletter**

May 2002

Next meeting: Wednesday, 29th May  
Cookham Dean Village Hall - Meeting Outside at 7.45p.m.  
to see our "Golden Jubilee Seat"  
continuing in the hall with our topic for the evening...  
***PLANTS FOR A WINTER GARDEN***  
by Patricia Leichti

**EDITORIAL**

For those of you who have heard the debates over the last 3 weeks or so about people needing a licence for their compost heaps I have good news. The arguments started with the commercial ventures who do have to be licenced to produce and sell compost (under The Waste Regulation Act, in order that there is control over the spread of soil borne pests and diseases.) The media, and others, have been caught up in the hype and I am reliably informed that there are no proposals to make householders licence their compost bins and heaps - unless you are producing so much you are selling it.

If anyone would like me to email their copy of the newsletter please let me know your email address – you will get advanced copies delivered straight to your inbox.

Zoe Albright Oakwood, Church Road  
[zoe@oakwoodtraining.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:zoe@oakwoodtraining.freeserve.co.uk)

**SPEAKER'S CORNER**

Chris Chadwell, our speaker in April, certainly made an impression. Dressed in the national costume of Bhutan, he described his outfit as a cross between a kimono and a kilt. The burning question was " Is he wearing anything underneath????"

The talk about his trips to the Himalaya (definitely no 's' on the end) certainly conveyed his passion for the culture, customs, landscape and flora of *The Land of the Thunder Dragon*, otherwise known as Bhutan. Chris told us of his involvement with projects with the Bhutanese to utilise the medicinal aspects of their plants for a wider use. The healing properties of certain plants to combat "Delhi Belly" or the "Kathmandu Quickstep" seemed highly prized!



We saw the most beautiful slides of snow-capped mountains, glaciers and flowers - orchids, gentians, primulas, clematis, and giant rhododendrons. Chris really is an excellent speaker and I have to thank Sue Wilkes for recommending his return.

On 29th May, Patricia Liechti will be visiting us to give advice on winter interest for our garden. She will also bring plants to sell.

Looking ahead to our June meeting, we will have the "VASE OF SWEET PEAS COMPETITION" as well as our speaker.  
*Adele Weiner*

## AUTUMN SHOW - IMPORTANT NOTICE

Our meeting date in September has been changed. The new date for the *Autumn Show* is Wednesday, 11th September. There will be no meeting on the 25th. Please make a note of this new date in your diary.

## THINK AHEAD FOR THE AUTUMN SHOW

There is still time to plant potatoes for the Autumn Show. Grow in a large container such as a bucket or a tub, use grobag compost or similar to avoid potato scab, and keep well watered through the season. At least once a week before the show, cut off the green tops so the potato skins set, and the day before the show, lift carefully and wash in clear water. Good varieties to try are Kestrel, Maxine, Nadine, Romano, Cara, and three plants should be enough to produce a good exhibit. Carrots, parsnips and beetroot can be grown in a similar way, but the containers will need to be deeper. There is still time to plant onion sets and shallots. It should be safe to plant out tomatoes in a cold greenhouse now. I prefer to use grobags.



Chrysanthemums can be bought now and planted out early in May – garden centres should have a selection of spray varieties available. Dahlia plants can be bought early in May, hardened off, and planted outside at the end of the month. Butterfields Nurseries at Bourne End have a good selection, and you can get good advice there on which ones to grow. My choice would be Jormanda (terracotta, ball shaped), Lemon Elgans (lemon, cactus type), Moorplace (purple, pompom). *Graham Talbot*

NB Hilary Hollingsworth has told me that grobags are £5 for 5 at Wyevale Garden Centres at the moment – a good time to buy!

## MEMBERS OPEN GARDEN DAYS

Would anyone be interested in opening their garden for a viewing day for members of the Society once in a while? It would be an opportunity to talk gardening, exchange ideas/plants and enjoy each others "pride and joy" or "problem patch".

Gardens of all sorts, large and small, would be welcome. It could be either all the gardens being open on one day of the year/season, or members could just let the Newsletter editor know which day their garden would be available to view.

Perhaps you could let a member of the committee know your thoughts on the idea.

*Bridget King 01628 622794 [peterking36@btinternet.com](mailto:peterking36@btinternet.com)*

## TEA ROTA



To celebrate the Society's gift to the village of the "Golden Jubilee Seat", we will be offering wine and soft drinks for refreshment (instead of tea) at the May meeting.

Thanks to Stella Fairlie & Elizabeth Skeat for offering making the tea at our June meeting. However, we do need a third person to help. Please add your name to the list. Thank you.



## MEMBERSHIP

We welcomed two new members at our April meeting - John Fairlie and Lesley Aston.

## BEING A PROGRAMME SECRETARY



At the April meeting I explained that after three years of service, I shall be standing down from the Committee at the A.G.M. in November. This means we will need a new Programme Secretary. As booking speakers needs to be done well in advance, most of the programme for 2003 has been prepared, so my successor will not have to do very much to begin with. I would like to have a handover between now and November.

Skills required? Being able to use a telephone and write the odd letter. We now have 127 members and I must assume we have several people that possess these skills. Please don't wait for "someone else" to volunteer. Be brave and give me a call to see what it's all about - then you can say whether you are able or not!!

Looking forward to hearing from you.

*Adele Weiner 01628 483309*



## VISITS – WATERPERRY GARDENS

I am taking bookings for a trip to Waterperry Gardens on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. We will meet on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August at 10 am and return at 4 pm. The provisional cost is £12 if we can book a 35 seater coach and this includes the entrance costs.



You could start your visit at the nearby old Saxon church with its 13th Century original glass windows. Move on to the 8 acres of gardens, made famous by Beatrix Havergal's gardening school from the 1930s

The gardens boasts one of the finest herbaceous borders in the country. The border is carefully planned so that each month later flowering plants grow up to hide the earlier plants. The Mary Rose Garden is full of both formal and informal beds of roses and leads to The River Walk.

There is also a Formal Garden which has a traditional knot pattern surrounded by old fashion herbs and flowers. The Alpine Garden has raised beds holding a collection of delicate mountain flowers.

Also you will be able to see the Art in Action Gallery, the museum which holds a collection of old, mainly agricultural tools, the Garden shop and of course the Tea Shop with its range of cakes and pastries.

Book early as there is no meeting in July. Catherine Doe ☎ 01628 526415

## VIRTUAL GARDENS

This months recommended sites are–

<a href="http://www.waterperrygardens.co.uk">www.waterperrygardens.co.uk</a>	All the information you may need for the visit in August
<a href="http://www.alpinegardensociety.org">www.alpinegardensociety.org</a>	All about the Alpine Garden Society

Zoe Albright

THANK YOU.....

.... for your quick response to the request for the loan of the projectors. Stella & John Fairlie have kindly offered to help us out on both occasions.



Thank you again for your kind offers of help regarding the *Gardens Open Day* for the Thames Valley Hospice, on Sunday, 9th June. You will be contacted regarding when & where to bring plants and cakes. Those who have offered to help on the day will also receive a call. If you would like to help but have not had a chance to give me your name, please give me a call a.s.a.p.  
**01628 483309**



**Adele Weiner**

## WHAT'S ON

### Red Cross Plant Sale

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May Plant Sale at Grays Farm, Wokingham 10 – 4**  
**(B3430, turn into Heathlands Rd approx 1 miles on left after Wyvale Garden Centre off A329 take Easthampstead Rd over railway, Heathlands Rd is 1<sup>st</sup> on left.**

**Red Cross Open Gardens. 2 – 5 pm, £3.00 admission. Tel 0118 9290523 for further details**

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May - Sunningdale School, Dry Arch Road**  
**(A330 from Ascot, L into Charter Road, L into Dry Arch Rd)**  
**6 acres of grounds in the school with rhododendrons and azaleas and landscaped lawns**

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June - Blencathra, Finchampstead**  
**(Entrances from private drive at the end of the Ridges on B3348)**  
**11 acres of mature trees and shrubs, lawns, landscaped lakes and woodland walks.**



**DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER**  
**12TH June**



## **SWEET PEAS**

As has been mentioned in previous newsletters and at meetings, the Society is proposing to have a mini sweet pea show on 26th June, there will also be the pre-arranged speaker, and I have been asked to pass on a few, hopefully helpful, hints.

If you want to grow sweet peas for flower arranging or showing, then in order to achieve the long straight stems and large blooms required, it is necessary to remove all the tendrils (remember to tie them up though) and keep as few growing tips/points as possible - this puts all the energy into one single stalk, the side shoots growing from the leaf axis should therefore be removed.

On the other hand, if you are growing them for quantity, say a nice colourful hedge or wigwam then the opposite is true, and you should pinch out the growing tip on the main stalk in order to promote more side shoots. The additional growth will make it more difficult to remove the tendrils which cause the flower stems to go curly and the flowers will have shorter stems, but you should have many more to compensate! Whichever way you choose to grow them all the plants will benefit now from a liquid feed such as Miracle Gro or liquid Growmore.

On the morning of the 26th, pick your flowers early and stand them in water in a cool place. Try to pick them with the top florette still showing signs of not being 100% open. Bring plenty of flowers to choose from and a few sweet pea leaves.

There will only be two classes:

- 1) Five stems in a vase to be provided by the Society -any colour and mixed colours if you prefer.
- 2) A table arrangement to be predominantly sweet peas in a container of your choice.

If any one is mystified by any of this, or needs help before or on the night of the show, please do ask me.

*Brian Thompson*

## **HELP NEEDED FOR HORTICULTURAL PROBLEMS!**

I have a much loved Acer atropurpureum dissectum which has been in the shelter of a wall for about ten years. It is beginning to outgrow its space and is now invading the water feature which originally seemed far removed from it. It was pruned slightly last year and now seems to have taken offence and has some dead branches. These could alternatively be wind damaged. I don't know- but would hate to lose it. Any suggestions for the cause of this die-back, and what to do about it?

*Becky Pinniger*

Let me have your suggestions so that I can print them in the newsletter to share.

*Zoe Albright*