



# **GARDENER'S GAZETTE**

**Autumn 2019**

## **SUMMER SHOW**

**Sunday 18th August**

**Crookhorn College,  
Stakes Hill Road, Waterlooville P07 5UD**

**Doors Open: 2pm**

**Affiliated to:**

**The Royal Horticultural Society**

**National Dahlia Society**

**National Chrysanthemum Society**

**National Vegetable Society**

**The Daffodil Society**

**The Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies**

**[www.purbrookhorticulturalsociety.org.uk](http://www.purbrookhorticulturalsociety.org.uk)**

## Officers and Committee Members 2019

President: Peter Brooks, JP

Life Vice-Presidents: Maureen Kemp, Phyllis Brooks

Chairman: Lynda Piddington 023 9226 1149  
40 Westbrook Grove, linda.piddington@sky.com  
Purbrook PO7 5HX

Treasurer: Brian Andrews 023 9226 3731  
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Trading Manager: Brian Andrews (as above)

Secretary: Chris Middleton 023 9238 0613  
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Show Manager: Graeme MacFarlane 023 9225 2124  
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Show Secretary: Charles Mobsby 023 9226 5136  
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Membership Sec: Jennie Ryton-Smith 023 9235 2718

Catering Convenor: Ann Richardson 023 9225 4986

Outing Organiser: Ann Richardson 023 9225 4986

Floral Art: Carole Rowland 023 9225 5134

Gazette Editor: Richard Knight rwknight@live.co.uk

**General Committee:** Lynda Piddington, Brian Andrews, Phil Stock, Jan Baxter, Ron Brumhill, Chris Middleton, Frances Leppard, Charles Mobsby, Betty Clark, Richard Knight, Carole Rowland, Wendy Wright, Ann Richardson

**Show Committee:** Brian Andrews, Ron Brumhill, Charles Mobsby, Mark Ward, Lynda Piddington, Ann Richardson

Auditor: Vacant

## The Chair Chats!

Well, it's supposed to be flaming June and as I write this the sky is pitch black and the rain is coming down in buckets! Perhaps global warming is taking hold and we are now a monsoon country. Still, we British do love to moan about the weather comparing year on year and season on season and, of course, reminiscing about the golden days of our youth when Summer meant shorts, suncream and sandcastles; Autumn brought red and amber coloured foliage; Winter the scent of open fires and ice on the inside of bedroom windows, and then Spring with the light green young shoots and yellow daffodils.

So now older, we are used to strawberries at Christmas; bread that comes already sliced; home shopping deliveries and best of all, warmth at the turn of a thermostat! Still we discuss the weather and the rain making lawns and weeds grow too quickly, but according to the forecast, we are going to reach temperatures of 29°C, so will then moan about having to water our plants and worry about the parched lawns - oh, well!

Half way through the year and a time to both reminisce about the first half of the year and also look forward to the last half - soon to be Christmas - expect many will know how many shopping days there are left! This first half rewarded those at monthly meetings with topics so varied and interesting as well as informative including the Air Ambulance and Cruise up the River Thames. (Frances, I believe, is already looking into the possibility of booking part 2 of this talk as it was so popular.) The show and sales tables at meetings is also showing more variety which is making the speaker's job of judging more and more difficult.

The trips again, thanks to Ann, have been very well received as I can confirm, having been on the Kew Gardens trip and looking forward to the later trips to both Wisley, and even more special, Christmas at Hever Castle.

The Summer Show is approaching at an extremely fast pace, so I hope you all are cossetting your entries to get the best results and sampling the recipes in order to make the best cake, etc. Please, though, any newcomers, do not be intimidated; we all started at the bottom as Novices, but still enjoy the taking part and discovering that we do have a talent; plus listening to the advice of the more experienced who are always willing to impart knowledge and experience which is a great boost. Also looking forward, we have the Pumpkin Evening and Quiz, so start thinking of ideas to decorate the pumpkins you are going to purchase, and swotting up on general knowledge for the quiz as bribing Frances does not work!

Enjoy your Summer!

**Lynda**

# PHS Meetings 2019

All meeting at Deverell Hall – start 7.30pm

**1<sup>st</sup> August**

## **Garden Plants (growing and use in design)**

Paul Templeton has over 30 years experience in horticulture. He has qualifications not only in growing but also in landscape and design. This talk will tell us how to arrange plants for colour and form, how to use space and the seasonal nature of beds and borders. Also, how to combine flowers with landscaping and that bold displays can still be created in small areas.

**5<sup>th</sup> September**

## **Herbaceous Perennials**

Now recognised as one of the UK's leading plantsman's nurseries, Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants was founded by Rosy Hardy in 1988. They supply a wide range of home-produced herbaceous perennials including many rare species all grown in peat-free compost. The nursery has won 22 gold medals at Chelsea and we are very lucky to have Rosy as our speaker as she is in great demand.

**3<sup>rd</sup> October**

## **Pumpkin Evening and Quiz**

This is a chance for you to contribute to an entertaining evening by coming along for a chat, some good food, a quiz and showing us what you are capable of growing or crafting. It doesn't have to be Gold Medal standard, nobody is going to criticise. The schedule is on page 4 and there are new categories, so please check them.

**7<sup>th</sup> November**

## **Coastal Ways - Portsmouth Harbour**

This evening will be in the format of a talk and also a film. Stuart Judd will tell us about the making of documentary films for television. He helped to produce the *Country Way* series that was broadcast on Southern ITV for 25 years showing local people and their work in more rural areas. I have chosen the above as a local interest hopefully to see a bygone era and how times have changed for the good or bad.

**5<sup>th</sup> December**

AGM

## **Floral Art Programme 2019**

**All meeting at Deverell Hall — start 7.30pm**

### **Thursday 8th August**

Demonstration by Carole Gunter relating to the PHS Summer Show Schedule rules and ideas.

### **Thursday 12th September**

Demonstration by Lin Mackenzie entitled 'Tales of Wonder'.

### **Thursday 10th October**

Demonstration by Lucinda Knapman entitled 'Autumn Glory'.

### **Thursday 14th November**

Demonstration by Jennifer Allen Thompson entitled 'Christmas Treats'

### **Thursday 12th December**

Christmas Party/Social Evening - venue to be confirmed.

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## **Trips 2019**

### **Sunday 8th September**

#### **Wisley and the Flower Show – 9am – £15**

The new visitor centre should be open by then.

### **Sunday November TBA**

#### **Christmas at Hever Castle**

As usual a deposit of £15 will secure your seat and the balance must be paid before the trip.

Payments can be made at the Trading Store on Saturdays (9.30am -11.30am) or at the monthly meetings. A cheque can be posted to Ann Richardson, 16 Fir Copse Road, Waterlooville PO7 5JA.

Cheques to be made payable to PHS Trips.

My telephone no: 023 9225 4986.

## Inter-School's Trophy Competition 2018/19

### The Results!

The following participating Schools each receive a Certificate and Trophy for their efforts.

Purbrook Park - Secondary - Purbrook

Petersgate - Primary (after school gardening and cookery club) -  
Clanfield

Padnell - Infant - Cowplain

Warren Park - Primary- Leigh Park

St. Alban's - Primary - West Leigh

Purbrook Junior - Purbrook

Barncroft - Primary - Leigh Park

In addition, Barncroft Primary, achieving the highest number of votes, will receive the sum of £30 to use for further gardening supplies. This sum was the amount generously donated by members attending the June monthly meeting using coins to vote.

Lynda

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### Pumpkin Evening and Quiz

The Classes this year are:

Class 1 - A Culinary Pumpkin or Squash

Class 2 - A Collection of Decorative Gourds (maximum of 5)

Class 3 - A Decorated Pumpkin or Squash

Class 4 - A Floral Exhibit depicting Autumn or Halloween (not necessarily including a Pumpkin or Squash)

Class 5 - A Painting, Photograph, Embroidery or other Craftwork depicting Autumn

**Date for you diary - Pumpkin Evening and Quiz -  
Thursday 3rd October at Deverell Hall - 7pm for 7.30pm start.**

## **The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Air Ambulance**

A lovely thank you letter was received this week from Sherie Williams Ellen - Deputy Chief Executive of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance - for the generous sum of £169.40 donated at the June monthly meeting following the illustrated, interesting and informative talk by Michael Bonathan.

This sum will surely help with cost of equipment or to help keep this amazing service running, so when you next spot the helicopter, car or blood-carrying motorbike you can feel a sense of pride in that as a Society we have helped to contribute. A copy of the letter will be available to view on the Trading Store noticeboard.

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## **Membership**

A quick reminder that the new year for Membership begins on 1st September with 2019/2020 cards available at the Summer Show (colour yet to be determined).

Subscriptions will remain at £6 per household, despite increased prices with no reduction in benefits, so why not buy a Membership for a friend or neighbour as a thank you or even as a Christmas present. After all it lasts all year and makes a thoughtful budget gift.

One enterprising member had the great idea to laminate the card and hang on a lanyard so if at the allotment or just popping in quickly, has the card available to show at the Store without having to sort through a raft of credit and loyalty cards! How clever, glad they haven't patented the idea yet!

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## **Articles for Gazette**

As is usual for the *Gazette* editor most of the articles for inclusion in each issue are generated by two or three people.

If you have a hobby or interest (not necessarily horticultural) why not submit a short article for inclusion in the next *Gazette*. If you can also provide a link to another society or website any of our readers can then look up the relevant details.

**Editor**

## Peat Free Compost

Over recent years there has been increasing pressure for us gardeners to use peat free compost, but when we stocked some a few years ago it was rather coarse which limited its use and therefore was not popular. However, we now have in stock a few bags of Melcourt Sylvagrow which is peat free from a sustainable source and is endorsed by the RHS, and recommended by *Gardening Which* magazine. This has a much better finer texture than the earlier composts and I have found it quite nice to work with, having used it successfully for germinating lettuce seeds as well as for potting and for mixing with other composts. It is available in a 50 litre bag and price-wise is only slightly dearer than our best SHL composts. If you try it, we would welcome any feedback to help us decide whether to stock it in future.

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## Spring Show 2020 - Store Bulbs

The Society is fortunate in having people like Mark who is an expert grower of high quality daffodils from specialist suppliers, but please remember that it is quite possible to enter most of the Classes in our Show with blooms from bulbs purchased through the Store.

The bulbs for the pebbles and special pot classes for next year's Show will be 'Cheerfulness' and 'Sealing Wax' respectively, but don't forget that they can also be entered in other appropriate classes. Sealing Wax produces good quality blooms which are yellow with an orange cup and can be entered in any 'large cup' class. Similarly, Cheerfulness, which is a white and yellow double, can be entered in the double class or in pot classes that do not specify otherwise. It is also excellent grown in pots or in beds.

Other bulbs on order and their appropriate classes are:

Large Cup: **Camelot**, all yellow, later flowering than some

**Red Start**, white with orange fringed cup

**Anniversary Gift**, white with yellow cup

Small Cup; **Loth Lorien**, white with cream cup

Double: **Tahiti**, yellow and orange and a show favourite. Later flowering.

Any Other: **Mondragon**, yellow and orange butterfly

**Thalia**, striking white flower also multi-headed

Dwarf or Miniature: **Tete-a-Tete**, another long standing favourite

**Canaliculatus**, white with yellow cup.

**Golden Bells**, yellow skirt-like cup

**Minnow**, cream with yellow cup, multi-headed

In addition to the classes listed, all of the above bulbs could also be entered in the 'pot of daffodils' class.

All these bulbs, and various others, will be available at the Store in September.



## Summer Show

A plea for help as usual! We would love some large cakes made and donated for the Summer Show to both cut and sell in the refreshments area and sell whole on the cake stall. Chutneys and jams are also welcomed, but please remember to label with your name as well as the variety - after all you should get the praise for your efforts and devotion.

We do not require books to sell as we have enough to stock a library already, but please feel free to purchase some at the Show!

Another major source of help required is that of car or van power, as many of us have cars full of our exhibits to take home and we lack the space for removing Society items from the venue and taking back to the Store as the School has to be returned to 'normal' by 6pm which is a really tight timescale.

If you can help with any of these, please contact Ann Richardson regarding cakes and preserves, and Charles Mobsby regarding transportation and muscle! Both have their contact details on the website or on the inside cover of the *Gazette*.

Many thanks.

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## June Meeting

What another great monthly meeting (thank you Frances) - they have all been so interesting and informative and the June meeting was no exception.

Firstly, we had an illustrated talk on the Air Ambulance and the impressive work they undertake.

This was then followed by another local experience - the Annual School's Trophy Competition where voting by attending members resulted in a generous £30 donation to the school with most votes. As usual the competition was very close but Barncroft Primary certainly was the front runner. I am very grateful to the membership for their contribution, as the Schools work very hard and take pride in their work and are always pleased to receive a Trophy to put on their special Purbrook Horticultural Society shelf.

Next year's competition is in the planning stage with letters of invitation expected to be mailed to the 80 institutions at the beginning of September, in order for work to commence, so judging of the final can be completed at the June 2020 meeting - a date for you diary!

Lynda

## Summer Show - Tombola

We will be having a Tombola Stall as usual at the Summer Show and would welcome donations of items for prizes to help defray the cost of putting on the Show, eg. bottles or small gifts-type items, but please no obviously second-hand items. Donated items can be given to committee members or put in the 'Tombola' box at the Store.

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## Medicinal Plants

**Angelica:** all parts of the plant are strongly aromatic. Has culinary uses as well as medicinal, believed to be a major antidote to the plague.

**Borage:** the herb of courage, the leaves and flowers put into wine or cider and Pimms will make men and women glad and merry and drive away all sadness. Also used in plasters, bath oils and medicines for hot complaints. Today bought as capsules of Starflower oil.

**Chamomile:** its tiny flowers are useful for freshening clothes, aiding digestion, soothing sores and bites and 'the herb boyled in posset ale helpeth children of the ague'. It is called 'the plant's physician' because it revives sickly plants growing near it

**Columbine:** one of the eight herbs used against the plague, continued to be used against measles and the pox until the eighteenth century.

**Comfrey:** other names include knitbone and boneset, the most important herb for treating fractures, the root was pounded into a mass and spread like a plaster around the limb where it set dry and held the bone in place. It is also used to stem bleeding and aid healing.

**Cowslip/Primrose:** both made into wine and used to make sweet waters and dessert decorations. Leaves rubbed into the skin to keep it free from blemishes and into wounds to relieve soreness. The leaves and petals were eaten to relieve aches and pains.

## What Do We Do?

This is not a Brexit-inspired article but to inform you that unlike those negotiations, we, the Committee do know what we are doing!

For the uninitiated, or those that have forgotten, the Committee sits once a month and is tasked with maintaining the general running of the Society. We ensure all affiliations to the RHS, Dahlia, Vegetable, Daffodil Societies and Federation are all current with subscriptions paid and medals purchased. Venues for meetings and Shows booked and paid for along with all other expenses incurred such as Speakers' fees, coach fees; Trading Store stock and repairs; Catering; Printing and general maintenance (not of Committee members!).

All correspondence is dealt with and responded to at meetings, as well as reports given on Trading Store; Membership; Catering; Monthly Meetings; Shows; Publicity; Website; Gazette and Treasurer's Report.

Floral Art Club are represented by their Chair or Deputy to ensure both groups are kept up to date with all matters.

In 'any other business and matters arising' the Committee members take the opportunity to inform and react to concerns within horticulture and our community as a whole, such as major building works locally and their effect, or even products being placed on the banned list.

Currently, we are assisting with funding to replace the Village Noticeboard in Purbrook which was recently vandalised and are awaiting confirmation of the rumoured banning of slug pellets. Alternatives are already on sale at the Trading Store, along with a supply of the original.

Members of the Committee are willing to listen to any of your concerns and are able to bring them to the attention of the Committee on your behalf. Who are these lucky people? Their names and in some cases addresses, email address and/or telephone numbers are all displayed on the inside cover of each *Gazette*.

**Lynda**

## The Show Table

I have been told that when originally conceived, the 'Show Table' was based on the feeling that there were members with material worthy of being entered in the Shows, who did not enter because they were unsure how best to prepare their exhibits at home and to display them to the best effect. This applied both to members completely new to exhibiting and existing exhibitors who could enter additional classes new to them.

The show table represented a less challenging and 'fun' competition with the main benefit being, that, for most classes of exhibits, there was likely to be an experienced exhibitor or even a show judge who could be consulted about simple things that would improve that specific exhibit. For example, an alternative arrangement in the vase or the judicious removal of some of the older blooms from a flowering pot plant.

The 'fun' part arises from two aspects - firstly, exhibits can be from any class included in the Show Schedules, so that, as on one occasion, a pot plant can be in competition with a vase of cut flowers, an item of needlecraft, a painting or photograph. This means that it is almost impossible to give an objective verdict. In addition, the judge by tradition, is the night's speaker who may have no detailed knowledge of the finer points of any of these classes and in recognition of this fact is advised that the awarding of points can be based on how much he 'likes' each exhibit if he has no specialist knowledge.

This appears to result in the marks awarded erring on the generous side - although there cannot be joint winners since the judge is also advised that the marking should result in only one exhibit winning the £5 prize voucher. Both the above aspects mean that there is no stigma attached to not winning - your pot plant, despite being superb did not win because the judge was more impressed with the time and effort that went into an embroidery.

The £5 voucher was intended as an additional incentive to enter, but it also attracts experienced exhibitors. This is not necessarily a bad thing. It provides a benchmark for the inexperienced and a standard against which advice can be given and the presence (or lack) of imperfections in these exhibits can help highlight what the judge will be looking for or penalising.

Speaking for myself, I try to bring a vase of garden flowers as often as possible - primarily because I feel that if I am going to exhort more of you to enter, then I should show willing, but also to boost the number of entries. The observant among you would have noticed that my entries are at best sporadic. This is due partly to the ravages of slugs and other pests in the garden; poor timing and my inability to provide house plants with the regular care they require, but also because I try to maintain a standard above ridicule!

The purpose of this note is to encourage more members to support the Show Table, so that I am under less pressure on the Thursday afternoon to find something to take along for the show table. There are very few rules as to what can be exhibited on the Show Table. These are listed below. In the vegetable, fruit, flower and pot plant sections there are virtually no restrictions since these sections include an 'any other' class which lifts any restrictions. There are some restrictions in the cookery and handicraft classes, but these serve to concentrate the mind on classes currently in the schedule.

The current rules for the Show Table are:

1. The exhibit must be from a class covered in either the current or previous years' schedule for the Spring or Summer Show.
2. Exhibits should comply with the basic description of the class, for example, a vase of perennials, a classic Victoria sponge, a fancy pattern hand-knitted garment, a photo entitled 'bloomers'.
3. The following deviations from the Schedule are permitted:  
The number of blooms in the vase or the number of apples, etc. - say 1 or 2 fewer than specified for the class.  
The pot size - say up to a few centimetres larger than the maximum specified.  
The size or number of cakes, etc. - say a couple of centimetres larger or smaller, or one fewer than stated.

So, if you have grown or made something you are proud of, consider it worthy of exhibition in a show; bring it along for the Show Table and get advice on how it could be better prepared or displayed, and who knows, you could even win the £5 voucher, if it catches the speakers' eye.

**Charles**

## **Orchid Growing - a 'potted' guide**

The beauty, complexity and incredible diversity of orchid flowers are unrivalled in the plant world. These exotic beauties comprise the largest family of flowering plants on earth. There are over 30,000 different species, and at least 200,000 hybrids.

Orchids can be found in equatorial tropics, the arctic tundra, and everywhere in between. The reason for this amazing diversity lies in the orchid's amazing ability to adapt to a given environment. With so many different orchid varieties that thrive in many different growing conditions, it is relatively easy to find an orchid that is well suited to the conditions that you can provide - whether it is a kitchen window or a full-size greenhouse.

Most cultivated orchids are native to the tropics. In their natural habitat, they attach themselves to the bark of trees, or the surface of other plants. Their thick white roots are specially adapted to absorb moisture and dissolved nutrients. Tropical orchids usually grow high on trees, rather than on the forest floor. They like good air circulation and plenty of light. Orchids prefer a 12-hour day, all year-round and require a high intensity of light - about the same as midsummer conditions in temperate regions.

Many orchids are difficult to grow - in fact, some are almost impossible to keep alive, much less bring into bloom, even for professional growers. This still leaves dozens of varieties and hundreds of hybrids that are perfectly happy growing on a sunny windowsill or under lights.

For best results and success, choose one of the less fussy varieties that are adapted to the type of growing conditions you can provide. Purchase the most mature plants you can afford, as young plants are much more difficult to please, and, if possible, buy it in bloom, so you will know what you are striving for!

## **Magazines, Cards and Equipment Loans**

There is a selection of Society Magazines, Privilege Cards and garden equipment available for loan to Members against a signature at the Membership Desk in the Store.

### **Magazines:**

The Garden - Journal of the RHS  
National Dahlia Society Bulletin  
National Chrysanthemum Society  
National Vegetable Society  
Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies - Monthly Bulletin

### **Cards:**

RHS Reduced Garden Entry (+ 1 guest) - not Sundays at Wisley  
National Vegetable Society  
National Chrysanthemum Society  
National Dahlia Society

### **Equipment:**

£2 non-refundable charge per item towards replacement costs  
Lawn Spreaders (4)  
Leaf Vacuum/Blowers (4)  
Lawn Rakes and Leads (4)  
Folding Tables (for indoor use only)

Anyone borrowing an item is required to return it within two weeks so that other Members may have the opportunity to use it.

*Please use RCDs when using electrical equipment outdoors for your own safety.*

## **For our New Members**

For those of you reading this magazine for the first time, you may be interested to know what takes place at our Monthly Meetings.

We meet at the Deverell Hall on the first Thursday of every month excluding January. Doors are open at 7pm and the meeting commences at 7.30pm. Illustrated talks are presented by local personalities; these programmes are mainly of a horticultural nature, although at times other topics of interest are presented.

An interval is usually taken at about 8.30pm when coffee/tea and biscuits are served (at no charge). This is then followed by the drawing of the Raffle and the winner of the Show Table. The speaker then concludes the evening talk and the meeting closes at about 9.30pm.

Do come and join us, you will be made most welcome. In addition to enjoying the talk you can also

- participate in the Show Table
- buy plants from the Plant Stall
- book a seat on one of our outings
- pay your Membership Fees
- catch up with other Members and Officers of the Society

## **Trading Store Opening Hours**

Every Saturday 9.30am - 11.30am

The Trading Store is situated on the London Road, Widley, adjacent to Purbrook East Allotments.

Items for inclusion in the Winter Gazette, should be with the Editor by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019, for distribution at the start of November 2019.