



GARDENER'S GAZETTE

Autumn 2020

AGM 3rd December 2020

**Due to Coronavirus restriction please check
our Website as to whether this will go ahead.**

Affiliated to:

The Royal Horticultural Society

National Dahlia Society

National Chrysanthemum Society

The Daffodil Society

The National Vegetable Society

The Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies

www.purbrookhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

**Information regarding
Meetings/Shows/Trips, etc.
are in the Gazette.**

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 Autumn Gazette, should be with the Editor by 1st October 2020, for distribution at the start of November 2020.

The Chair Chats!

With the year halfway through - I know where has it gone? - and not hosting our Annual Summer Show in the usual way perhaps we can start to look to the future for some better news.

Speaking to many of you via email or telephone (apologies if you have not been contacted - my only excuse being that working from home, I have not had full access to membership records), you have coped well and all gardens should look good enough to open to the public. Many have been blessed with good neighbours willing to assist where they can and so reinforcing the strength of community spirit.

With regard to your Society, I have been gladdened by the resilience of you all and willingness to embrace new ideas and technology; who knew we would be on Youtube with our virtual Spring Show thus forging a path for other organisations to follow!

The web site and new Facebook group page have enabled us to communicate new regulations and their application and implication for the Society in a more frequent and immediate form than ever before, a real necessity in a forever changing period. I have also heard that members able to access these forms have been quick to respond by contacting friends not able to access them in various ways such as while meeting on their daily walk, by phone, dropping notes through doors and even while in the queue at the Supermarket! My email inbox has been a delight with some of you already sending photographs for the virtual Summer Show as well as of your lockdown garden - you have been busy!

I look forward to meeting you all - particularly with your lockdown hairdo's! - very soon.

In the meantime keep well, keep safe.

Lynda

Meetings 2020

Due to the current situation and the continuing restrictions due to the Covid-19 virus, the Committee has reluctantly decided to cancel all the pre-booked meetings for the remainder of the year. Apologies to all who looked forward to said meetings, but it could not be left to the last minute to cancel speakers as it was thought to be unfair to them.

* * * * *

Quarterly Gazette

Latest issue will be an online only version, but may be downloaded. If you are in contact with members who are not tech. aware, why not read it to them over the phone?

Please see our website for the latest news on all the Society activities.

We will try to keep it as up-to-date as possible.

* * * * *

Membership

The new membership year starts on 1st September and will remain at £6 per household per annum. For that small fee you have access to specialist Horticultural magazines; four Gazette newsletters a year giving information regarding all aspects of the Society as well as sharing knowledge; Spring and Summer Shows; Monthly meetings (on 1st Thursday of the month at 7pm for 7.30pm start at the Deverell Hall, London Road, Purbrook); Outings in the Summer months (when regulations allow) to places of interest; Trading Store for all your garden needs (open Saturday mornings 9.30am - 11.30am situated adjacent to the Purbrook East allotments on London Road); affiliated membership to other Horticultural Societies and Organisations; an informative website full of interesting items and photographs; a new facebook group page and most of all the chance to chat with friendly people, all interested in all aspects of gardening, wildlife and the environment.

Covid 19 - Financial Swings & Roundabouts

A few words of reassurance in case there may be concerns that having to shut the Store for a number of weeks due to Covid restrictions may threaten the financial security of the Society. In fact, looking at the figures and the present situation, it may turn out that the reduction in income from the Store will be more than offset by the reduction in costs in cancelling our Meetings and not having to pay for the Deverell Hall, our Speakers, and from cancelling both our Spring and Summer Shows. So I think that, assuming we can keep our membership up, there should be no problems in getting through these unusual and difficult times.

Brian

* * * * *

Trading Store

Although lockdown restrictions prevented us from opening the Store on Saturdays after 21st March, thanks to Eddie, of the allotments, we were able to supply items to a number of allotment holders over the following weeks, and we also managed some casual sales during that time. After the restrictions eased we had a trial opening of the Store on 16th May and have been able to open each Saturday since, albeit with reduced staffing, social distancing and other safety measures, and trade has been quite brisk, as have Plant Sales. Very few of the Summer Bulbs had been sold when we closed so these have been potted up and have been added to the plant table as they have developed.

In anticipation that things may be back to near normality by next year, the usual selection of Spring Bulbs have been ordered, including those for the Spring Show. Some supplies are still being obtained from Warwicks, who reopened recently, but are still due to cease trading in September. In the meantime we have set up a trading account with BHGS, of Funtington, who I believe will be able to supply most of our needs in the future.

Thanks are due to all the volunteer helpers who have enabled us to keep the Store open in these unusual times.

Brian

Floral Art

As most members will know, we reluctantly took the decision to cancel all meetings for this year due to Covid.

It would have been difficult to arrange meetings due to social distancing. People would have to sit so far apart from each other and the demonstrator, that some would have found it difficult to both hear and see. Refreshments would also be another problem. It was with this in mind that we took the decision to cancel.

We will do our best to keep people informed as to when we hope to resume, and in the meantime hope that you are staying safe and taking the opportunity to enjoy your gardens.

By the time you are able to read the *Gazette* I hope to be back in the U.K. I have been away for seven months and in that time my garden has probably gone to town!

Stay safe, keep gardening, and as the Queen and Vera Lynne said - we will meet again soon.

Best wishes to you all.

Carole Rowland

* * * * *

Keeping in Touch

The Society Facebook page has ensured that members are kept up to date with new regulations and our response to them. I have noticed that members already signed up are ahead of the game as they receive and read the information almost as soon as I have finished typing! Well done to you. If any of you have mentioned it to friends and they have been declined, please contact me with their details. Declining is not a personal matter just a way of it being a closed group for members only thus keeping it relevant and most of all as safe as possible for us online users.

Oh, What a Night, Batwoman!

So, the night started in a 'normal' fashion; garden watered, family phone calls made, nothing on the telly and waiting for the delight of a home shopping delivery.

I had booked the 21.00-22.00 slot (why? - I haven't a clue probably clicked madly when saw the slot available!). I must admit that the deliveries have been superb with either no substitutions or sensible ones which were acceptable, long dates on fresh food, good quality and chatty helpful drivers, so it was a surprise that 21.45 came and no sound of a truck pulling up outside, so dashed to laptop and saw notice stating apologies there has been a delay.

Well that filled a wonderful 15 minutes deciding if the truck had a burst tyre, broken down or it had been held up by disgruntled people not managing to get a delivery slot and demanding my food - ok so it had been a long day! 22.00 came and went so dashed to laptop and apologies further delay - so now convinced the poor driver had been overcome with hunger and had stopped to eat. Eventually at 22.30 a truck pulled up with a very apologetic driver looking worn out, explaining that a road en-route had been blocked and so he had to find a new route to customers and then had to explain to them. Luckily I was his last drop off so again declared that it was ok, I had been kept informed and was sorry that his day had not gone smoothly.

So as it was hot, I left the front door ajar while taking in the shopping. Shopping checked off delivery note and stored, I set about getting ready for bed, the usual door checking etc. I went into the dining room and thought what's that? Oh something flying close to the window must be a reflection from outside. No, it was a bat! Not only was it a bat but it was not reflected outside; it was flying round and round my dining room. So what to do? I didn't want to touch it as they look so fragile and so decided to find a wastepaper bin to put over it when it settled. While getting the bin it decided to explore further and went upstairs! So now decide that a feather duster on a long handle might coax it out the window. Next problem - what if it gets caught in the curtains - curtains removed, windows all opened as wide as possible and me coaxing this beautiful creature out of the window. After 15 minutes it suddenly swooped out of the window and left me at past midnight rehangng curtains and hoping that neighbours would not think me batty!

Lynda

Australian Adventure

I arrived in Australia at the beginning of December to very high temperatures, in the high twenties to low thirties, to find a landscape that was utterly brown, fallen leaves and only the toughest of native plants showing any sign of life. My daughter's garden looked as though it was late autumn; the only summer colour was pots that she was keeping alive with washing up water. Australia was experiencing a six year drought with great expanses of farmland suffering as a result. Many farmers have suffered with depression with many committing suicide.

The middle of December saw the bushfires make their way down the east coast from southern Queensland into northern New South Wales. To put it into perspective the distance north to south was approximately equal to the distance from John o' Groats to Lands End. It began with individual fires burning and then all joining up covering thousands of square miles.

On January 19th we drove 800 kilometres to Melbourne to meet with extended family. The whole drive was like driving through a light fog, sometimes visibility was approximately 200 metres and when we had comfort stops you could taste the smoke in the air. Melbourne is in the state of Victoria; the fires were in NSW. The smoke was travelling for miles. We were to stay in Melbourne for one night and then travel back to Nowra in NSW but were unable to get back as most of the highways had been closed due to the fires. We spent Christmas in Canberra with more family doing a quick shop to buy a few things for the grandchildren to open on Christmas morning and leaving a letter from Santa telling them that because of the fires he would leave the gifts at home as he had not had time to make other arrangements. It was a very different Christmas Eve trying to reassure them that eventually they would get their presents. For the adults Christmas Day was a mixture of trying to keep things normal, but constantly receiving updates on the state of the fires and wondering when we would be able to get home.

We made the decision to try and get home on Boxing Day, I am not sure which roads we used but I do know it was not the usual route we use to get back from Canberra. We arrived home to find that one of the fires was burning 100 metres from the house and the fire trucks were keeping a very close eye on it. It is on the edge of one of the National Parks and is all bog land but because of the drought it was

ripe for burning! That particular fire burnt for twelve weeks and firemen were fighting it on the ground and others were dropping water bombs every few minutes for five days to keep it under control. I can imagine it may have been similar to the sounds of aircraft overhead during the war without the bombs. New Years day we evacuated back to Canberra as we were warned that a gale force wind was due to come through and that it may spread the fire from the bog to the road and homes in its path.

It was this drive back to Canberra on our usual route that we were able to see the utter devastation. We drove out of Nowra onto the road to Canberra and for one and a quarter hours all we could see was burnt forest and woodland; trees looked like giant sticks of charcoal and the woodland floor was devoid of any plant life. Once or twice we saw the remains of stone chimneys standing but what were once houses had completely disappeared. Thankfully no lives were lost in that particular fire. I believe it was that particular fire that made the headlines in the British press and on the TV when two fire trucks were temporarily lost just outside Nowra. We drove back to Nowra three days later as we were going to New Zealand to visit yet more family only to find the smoke had gone across the Tasman Sea and was affecting the coast of New Zealand.

For those of you who have not been to NZ it is much wetter than Australia therefore greener. The flora and fauna is similar but there are more undulating landscapes and Tree Ferns growing wild. Lupins and blue Agapanthus also grow wild. The grass is greener and the roadsides from Auckland to Ruakaka are lined with swathes of giant firs, quite different from the landscape of Australia. Parts of NZ have almost a Mediterranean kind of feel, warm and balmy, full of colourful plants.

We came back to Australia and a sandstorm! About three days later and the heavens opened! Within three or four days the grass was green, the air was clearer and my daughter was thrilled to see plants that had been reluctant to flower for a few years were suddenly in bloom. The garden thought it was spring! Calla lilies, Iris, Wattle and Camelias were all in flower. Many people use Camelias as hedging here and they all seem to have woken from a long sleep and look fabulous. A few plants that we think of as house plants grow quite happily outside. There is a very large bed of Prayer Plant, and Spider Plant is like a weed popping up all over. Black Eyed Susan also grows vigorously. There are two or three Paper Bark Gums in the garden

and a few other specimen trees; a tree surgeon came to see which trees needed some TLC but unfortunately I was not around at the time to learn the names of said trees.

I have done some planting while here. A Milly Pilly, *Elaeocarpus Prima Donna* otherwise known as Black Ash I believe. It is frost hardy so I will be planting one at home when I can. It has rather a pretty spring flower and black berries in the autumn.

Autumn has been and gone. There is not the glorious profusion of colour that we get at home. It is quite easy to miss! There was only one tree in the garden out of about fifty that turned. It was all the better for being the only one, but did not give the feel of autumn.

Some of the undergrowth is beginning to come back and also some of the trees are beginning to show some green.

Unfortunately Covid 19 has dominated the news. Therefore it is now officially winter here; the night temperatures go down to 0°C daytime, up to about 18°C. The garden looks much greener than it did when I arrived and when we went back to Canberra two weeks ago information about fire damage to flora and fauna is no longer top of the list. The Indigenous people have always burnt back in the past and forest fires were not as devastating. Unfortunately the Green Party did not agree, but things are being said that may change and burning back may resume.

Due to Covid I don't know when I shall be able to come back, but when I do, I shall look forward to driving to Canberra and hopefully there will be greenery and wildlife to see again. In the meantime I am looking forward to getting home and doing some work in my own garden, trying to catch up!

Carole

Website

(and new Facebook page)

We are updating as often as possible in order to keep everyone aware of the latest news. Please visit it regularly and again pass on information to non-technical members.

* * * *

Lockdown Gardens

As most of us have had more time to tend to our garden/allotment or even window boxes than usual and have not had the pleasure of showing the fruits of our labour to friends and family, why not send me a photograph to include on the website? You will not be judged, it is just an opportunity to show how your particular garden grows as despite having a relatively small catchment area the conditions vary dramatically and may give others new ideas for their own plot. For the many of you that are not tech aware, I would of course love 'real' photographs to use for publicity purposes (if permitted) which may be dropped off at meetings or in the store or posted to my home address marked PHS, which is in the list of Committee members on the inside front cover.

Lynda

* * * *

Membership Fees

As many of you rejoin at the now cancelled Summer Show,. you may pay your fees in person by cash or cheque (payable to PHS) at meetings or at the Store where you will receive a warm welcome. Members unable to attend these but still wishing to retain membership can post cheques to my home address marking the envelope PHS and of course including your name and address.

Virtual Summer Show

Well, thank you for sending photographs for our Virtual Spring Show. Let's do the same for the Summer Show. Please send them to me by email - linda.piddington@sky.com - for inclusion on the website. You will not be judged and will not receive any reward, apart from the joy of seeing your efforts on the website and being included on the web and Youtube channel, so that it is easy for friends and family and those further afield to view. In order to give cheer to friends and family, I shared the site to Australia, New Zealand, America and Orkney as well as in this country and the responses were all positive. The Summer Show involves more classes, and I would enjoy photographs in a similar vein, so have asked they include one or more of the following:

1. Summer Flowers in your garden
2. Floral Art Display (untitled - you choose)
3. Fruit in your garden or on your allotment
4. Vegetables in your garden or on your allotment
5. Home Baking (your choice of cake, biscuits, bread, pastry, pies, pizzas - use your imagination!)
6. Handicrafts (your choice of knitting, crochet, woodwork, stained glass, jewellery, pottery, clay items, cross stitch, embroidery or even more topical face coverings!)
7. Children's Efforts - free rein to show coloured rainbows, painting, knitting, growing flowers, growing fruit or vegetables, baking - anything at all, but please do include their age and if they are shown in the photograph, parental permission must be granted in order to use on the website.

If you are unable to email photographs, but wish to participate, then please do send them to me by mail, addressed to PHS/Summer Show and they can be used for other publicity such as the display boards and kept as an archive of 2020.

Our Special Birthday

This year your Society turned 80 and although special circumstances have made celebrating as we would have wished not possible, one of our lovely members, Clare Waskett, did celebrate it. We received a beautiful hand crafted 80th Birthday Card and she also took the time and effort to decorate a small photograph album in which were photographs taken at the Summer Show 2019.

It was such a lovely gesture that the image was put on the website for you to view and will be taken to the store and meetings before going into our archive - thank you Clare.

* * * *

Thank You!

I would like to take the opportunity to give my thanks to the Committee – still working hard to keep things going, while balancing home delivery slots, ways to hide the fact that are not the natural redhead we thought and figuring ways to ban family from using their barber 'skills'. They normally work very hard on your behalf, but this year has certainly not been normal, and has caused more work for, in particular, Ann who organises the trips, and Frances who organises the meetings having to deal with restrictions, cancellations, re-booking, etc.

Brian and his hardy band of cheerful volunteers, have managed to reopen and man the Store; while complying with social distancing and increased health and safety measures. Thank you to all those that have visited the Store and embraced the changes made to ensure the health of everyone. So, please when you next come to the meetings, go on trips, visit the Store, please take a moment to thank them!

As an aside, a thank you to a couple not officially members, but still important to us. Doug and his wife, Trace, who not only look after the running of the Deverell Hall but have also kept our website up-to-date and even made the Youtube version of our Spring Show so successful all while battling family concerns.

Officers and Committee Members 2020

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
26 Kings Road, Cowplain PO8 8UR

Trading Manager: Brian Andrews (as above)

Secretary: Chris Middleton 023 9238 0613
147 The Dale, Widley PO7 5JH

Show Manager: Graeme MacFarlane 023 9225 2124
30 Khandala Gardens, Purbrook PO7 5UA

Show Secretary: Charles Mobsby 023 9226 5136
17 Padnell Road, Cowplain PO8 8DZ

Membership Sec: Jennie Ryton-Smith 023 9235 2718

Catering Convenor: Ann Richardson 023 9225 4986

Outing Organiser: Ann Richardson 023 9225 4986

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

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
Chrysanthemum Society
National Vegetable Society
Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies - Monthly Bulletin - available online only

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
Leaf Vacuum/Blowers
Lawn Rakes and Leads
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.