

# PURBROOK HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Newsletter : Summer 2026 Issue No. 2

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## Chair's Chat

By Lynda Piddington

June already! I hope you are on the way to producing exhibits for the Summer Show [August 23rd] and encouraging the younger members of the family to enter as they get a Trophy to keep which may help.

In April I was happy to represent the Society at the Havant Community and Volunteering Fair held at the Springwood Centre in order to showcase the Society and all the fun things we get up to.

The monthly meetings already enjoyed included the History of Southampton; Dahlia Growing and Bonsai's with a great selection of topics still to come thanks to Frances organising them. the first trip this year was a superb [and dry - thank you Ann] trip to Wakehurst Place and the Millennium Seed Bank which was fascinating and we even had a stop en route to the South Coast Garden Centre at Hassocks meaning the boot of the coach was full very early with our purchases.

Thanks to you all praising the Society we have gained more new members who may not be aware of the RHS card we hold that they may borrow free of charge to gain entry to RHS gardens at much reduced prices [excluding Sundays] and have both leaf blowers and lawn spreaders available to borrow at the princely sum of £2!

We all hope you enjoy this new updated version of the Newsletter [formerly known as Gazette] which thanks to our President Wendy dragging us into the 21st Century means we can produce colour photo's so if you have any that may be of interest, please do contact one of the Committee.

## Bonsai talk on 7<sup>th</sup> May

By Frances Leppard

Robert brought along a very good variety of bonsai and they were displayed so that we could examine them closely. He started his first bonsai in 1980.

Bonsai (translation- tree tray) were first grown by the Chinese at least 2000 yrs ago. The Japanese came in at 1000 yrs ago and the English about 100 yrs ago. Penjing is the Chinese name for bonsai. In the 1780's bonsai were being sold in Japanese markets. Their first showing in Europe was at the Paris exhibition of 1855. They still have a bonsai show at Exbury Gardens. Robert is keen to say that most trees and shrubs can be bonsaied, if that's a word. He mentioned Ivy, Gingko, Gooseberry, Spruce, Privet, Hornbeam, Larch and many more. The only exception being white or black Pine. There are certain shapes to aspire to, cascade, broom (stems all on one level), flame or, with an older tree, a nicely rounded top. He also mentioned that you will lose a lot so don't be disheartened.

Keep your cutting first in an ordinary pot and when it has rooted take out the plant and cut off any tap root, the idea being to have lots of fibrous roots. Put into a shallow pot (preferably

clay). Pot in a mix of J13 and crushed shells or grit. Feed using a seaweed solution or if a chemical feed make sure it is not put on the leaves. You can then, after about 3 years, take off about two thirds of the top. A small bonsai will need repotting every year. The idea of bonsai on a tree is to make it look older than it is. When pruning bonsai check where the nodes are because that will determine where the next stems will grow from and the direction. If you get proficient and want to grow a bonsai over a stone, spread the roots and wrap over the stone, using twine that will dissolve, gradually raising it so that the roots become exposed. Good luck and we hope to see your efforts on the show table. Remember they are outside plants, not houseplants.



## What to do now

### Grow your own

June brings long days and warm soil making it a month of rapid growth which makes it ideal for direct sowing of quick growing crops like salad leaves, carrots and radishes.

July is the heart of the summer with abundant harvests. Focus on harvesting, watering and succession sowing plus pest management

August is the month of harvest and preparation for autumn. Sow autumn and winter vegetables such as spinach, chard and winter lettuces. Prepare soil for overwintering crops like onions, garlic and broad beans. Earth up early varieties of potatoes and begin harvesting once flowered. Grow extra early spuds – plant chitted seed potatoes of early cultivars into large containers. Wait for warmer weather to plant more outdoors.

#### **Ornamental**

June – deadhead flowering plants to prolong blooms and sow annuals for summer colour.

July – continue to deadhead and collect seeds for next year.

August – more deadheading and divide/replace perennials after flowering.

#### **Greener Gardening**

Use recycled pots – before buying any new plastic items recycle pots – secondhand pots are available from the Store

Make a mini pond – small ponds will attract a range of wildlife. Choose a container without holes, position in a sunny spot and fill with rainwater. Add three to five plants and a ramp so wildlife can get out safely.

## Up and Coming Trips & Talks

By Ann Richardson and Frances Leppard

### **Trips**

5<sup>th</sup> July – Sherborne Castle (price £40)

13 September – Buscott House and Gardens also includes Millets Farm (price £36 or £24 if National Trust member) **ALL FULL WITH A WAITING LIST**

### **Talks**

4<sup>th</sup> June

Elizabeth Sawday from Apuldrum Roses is keen to let us know that 'Roses grow on you'. I'm sure that most of us already love them even if we have the wrong soil. Maybe there is a way around this?

2<sup>nd</sup> July

Barry Newman is a well-known grower, exhibitor, lecturer, judge and a keen allotmenteer. He is a senior NVS (veg) judge and a Britain in Bloom judge. In 2022 he was awarded the Kew Guild Medal for services to the horticultural industry. His talk is entitled 'The Modern Kitchen Garden'.

6<sup>th</sup> August

Ray Broughton, who many of you will know, will talk about the cultivation of herbs and their uses in society. He is a very good speaker and will keep you interested and at times amused. Ray trained at Wisley in the 70's and taught horticulture for over 40 years. He was head of horticulture at Sparsholt College for 12 years and has a lot of credits and awards to his name. He is now retired.

3<sup>rd</sup> September

Lady Chatterley's Gardener, now I've got your attention, this is the name of an illustrated walk-through gardens of historical importance. With a humorous informal style, Guy Deakins delivers useful tips, insights and new perspectives against a backdrop of personal anecdotes. He has been a plantsman, horticulturist and garden designer for 30 years.

1<sup>st</sup> October

Pauline Weeks will give a talk entitled 'The wild bunch in your Patch' She will be identifying critters and showing the relationship between your patch and the life within. She will also help us in understanding the social media critter scientists. There will be specimens to hold!! Pauline has spoken to us before on a different subject and she is a good clear speaker.

5<sup>th</sup> November

Our Annual Quiz and winter/ pumpkin evening. You will be pleased to know that Frances has not compiled the fiendish quiz this year, it has been very kindly set by Wendy. Details of the entries for the pumpkin, squash or winter arrangement will be published soon.

All talks are at Deverell Hall 84 London Road Purbrook PO7 5JU. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start.

## Wakehurst Place – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2026

By Lynda Piddington



Ann did it again! How did she manage, after all the rain; hail; thunder and lightning in the days leading up to the trip, to achieve lovely walking weather? En route to Wakehurst we had a welcome [but not for my bank balance] stop at the fantastic garden centre at Hassocks which was a treat for those who had not visited before and for those who had - the extra carrier bags brought along in anticipation came in very useful.

Then a half hour's drive later we arrived at Wakehurst where the Millennium Seed Bank was both interesting and educational, I mean I knew animals could be on the endangered list but Bananas? Yes! Apparently being a mono culture i.e. without differing varieties, Bananas were

almost completely wiped out by a virus in the 1950's and it could happen again should they succumb to another virus. Please, however, do not take this to heart and dash to the Supermarkets to clear the shelves of Banana's as the clever scientists are monitoring the situation and sourcing a solution to nay future problems.

The gardens were extremely well laid out in regions with accessible footpaths and plenty of places to sit and contemplate or have lunch. The walled garden proved a popular spot and the "white" garden which was adorned with white flowering shrubs and plants bordered by majestic Silver Birch trees. I can imagine the gardens to have all year-round interest with the considered planting, which was still evolving as good gardens do, and of course the water gardens which attracted wildlife as well as providing a pleasing soundtrack to walks. So, with a coach boot groaning under our purchases, Matt the driver took us home via the scenic route and on disembarking, Ann did it again by ensuring we all managed to get home in the dry before the heavens opened yet again as we closed our front doors so many thanks Ann!



## Cuttings

### Spring Show 2027

An early heads up that the bulbs required for the named classes in the Spring Show are "Red Devon" to be grown in Pots and "White Cheerfulness" to be grown in Pebbles and Water they should be available for purchase in Store August/September as we hope to have some for the Summer Show.

### Peter Chivers

We all wish Peter Chivers a happy retirement from years of volunteering in the Store. One of our "Backroom Boys" weighing up and bagging products and a font of knowledge that he was always willing to share [this of course means we have a vacant position waiting for someone to fill]

### Paul Tansom

One of our members, Paul Tansom has now been made Mayor of Havant - many Congratulations Paul from us all

## Officers and Committee Members 2026

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Show Committee : Brian Andrews, Charles Mobsby, Lynda Piddington, Mark Ward, Alice McKerrow, Sharon Twine.

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