

# The Notice Board

## What's on locally

**27th June:** Cwm Weeg, Dolfor, from 2pm to 6pm. 2½-acre garden set within 22 acres of wild flower meadows and bluebell woodland with stream centred around C15 farmhouse

**27th June:** Holmcroft, Brimfield, from 2pm to 5.30pm. C17 thatched cottage, set amongst ¾-acre terraced garden with spectacular views. Sunken garden, herb partier, gravel garden and willow tunnel. Kitchen garden, woodland walk and stumpery

**27th June:** Aulden Farm, Leominster, from 2pm to 5.30pm. Informally planted country garden and nursery surrounding old farmhouse. 3 acres planted with wildlife in mind. Numerous iris including ensatas, sibiricas by natural pond. Hemerocallis with grasses and kniphofias for added zing. Emphasis on structure and form with a hint of quirkiness

**29th June:** Brilley Court, Whitney on Wye, open from 2pm to 5.30pm. 3-acre garden, walled, ornamental kitchen garden. Spring tulip collection, summer rose and herbaceous borders. 7-acre wild valley stream garden

## June 22nd visit to two Herefordshire gardens

We are off to Herefordshire this June to visit two gardens: Sir Roy Strong's renowned garden at The Laskett, and How Caple Court, an Edwardian garden with formal and natural planting. Please see Avril TONIGHT to see if there are still places available on this trip.



**"Mine is the Month of Roses, yes, and mine  
The Month of Marriages! All pleasant sights  
And scents, the fragrance of the blossoming vine,  
The foliage of the valleys and the heights.  
Mine are the longest days, the loveliest nights;  
The mower's scythe makes music to my ear;  
I am the mother of all dear delights;  
I am the fairest daughter of the year."  
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

## Meeting report: AGM, May 2010

In May, we held our Annual General Meeting and Jean Price, Chairman, thanked everyone for their loyal support and reported on a year with its share of sadness with the deaths of three stalwart members, John Hopkins, Alf Mackay, and Lilian Thomas, but also its happier moments, including the popular election of Rosemary Naylor as our new president, the very successful Serendipity Open Gardens event, and memorable trips to Chepstow, Paris - and Holland, where, Jean told us, members did "a lot of eating and drinking and admiring tulips." Everyone please note where, in that order, the plants came... Margaret Clugston, Treasurer, delivered the accounts, audited by Alan Tippett, and obtained general agreement to transfer TVGC monies to Barclays Bank in the High Street when the Knighton branch of the West Bromwich Building Society closes in the summer. All the club's officers and all the Committee members except Brenda Morgan and Marilyn Tippett were happy to be re-elected. Members were appreciative of their hard work over the year and grateful to them for their willingness to serve another term. Brenda, an extremely busy person who has been a very staunch member of the Committee, is handing over this year to newly-elected Committee member, Mary Bufton. Finally, the Rudge Cup was won this year by Kath Graham who amassed 74 points from the monthly competitions. In second place came Marilyn Tippett with a score of 69 points and third was Brenda Morgan with a score of 53 points. All were warmly congratulated, especially, of course, Kath, whose consistency ensured her overall success. Business over, members tucked into a delicious home-made soup and French bread and butter, a choice of pudding (I had two helpings) and coffee and mint chocolates. Now, where else on earth could you get a lovely supper like that for just £3.00?

Mary Comer

## Upper Teme Valley Open Gardens 2010

The sun shone on us - hurrah! And lots of people enjoyed all the interesting gardens we had for them to see up the valley. One gardener counted over 60 through, and most gardens were busy all afternoon with a good mix of both local people and visitors from away. Thanks are due to all of those who were willing to open their gardens for us and thanks also, and big thanks, are due to Ivy and Jack Stanton who not only opened their garden but also hosted the plant stall and the refreshments, to Brenda Morgan for her sterling work on the sub committee, and to Peter Smith who worked most ably on our administration and ran a successful raffle with a wonderful tree paeony which he donated as a prize. Thanks also to all those GC members who looked after the teas and helped out in gardens - we really appreciate your efforts. We made approximately £649 before expenses were taken, so well done everyone! More information, photos and a full report on funds raised in the July edition of the Notice Board, but thanks to all members who visited the gardens, and contributed cakes and /or plants for us to sell.

### May competition results

Although the unseasonable weather meant that no member had a paeony actually in flower, two members had cut strong buds and brought them along to be judged. The results were:

1st: Rose Morris

2nd: Brenda Morgan

Congratulations to both!

# My favourite flower by Ivy Stanton

We moved to the Cotswolds forty five years ago, to a small village. Walking up the hill one day I met an elderly man, who asked if I would like to see his garden. He took me to his house, opened the gate, and the most marvelous flowery perfume reached me. There in front of me was the most beautiful sight I have ever seen; I have never forgotten it.

Row upon row of the most wonderful sweet peas I had ever seen. The colours were amazing. He had won all the prizes at flower shows all round the county. Cheltenham was fourteen miles away, and they were fed up of Mr Lansbury, for that was his name, winning all the big prizes every year. Later, he gave me some of his special sweet peas for my garden, which he did every year until he moved away.



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## Gardeners and peat use.

Following the recent launch by Defra of their Act on CO<sub>2</sub> peat campaign targeting amateur gardeners who use the majority of the peat (around 70%) that is used in horticulture, Environment Secretary Hilary Benn MP said: "Natural England's report is a timely reminder of what's at stake if we fail to look after our peatlands. Peat soils are extremely valuable carbon stores as well as being home to wildlife and important to archaeology, and we should be doing everything we can to protect them. Environmentalists, the government, and gardening organisations all agree that the use of peat should be phased out and replaced by sustainable and if possible, locally sourced alternatives. Although sales of peat-free and reduced-peat products are on the increase, gardeners still account for most of the peat that is used in composts and growing bags, and seem reluctant to change their buying habits. Many gardeners don't realise that multi-purpose compost, unless it's labelled 'peat free', contains between about 70 per cent and 100 per cent peat. But there are clear environmental reasons we should be concerned about using even small amounts of peat. There has been a large growth in the use of peat alternatives by amateur gardeners in recent years but as the total amount of materials we use continues to rise, we're still actually using approximately the same amount of peat in our growing media as we did in the late 1990s. The quality and consistency of peat-free media has been improving significantly in recent years and it seems that gardeners are finally starting to invest in alternatives. So, what are you doing to help keep our remaining peat bogs? Using your own compost, investing in non-peat bought composts or simply continuing as you always have done? We'd be interested to hear from anyone with something to contribute to the debate; please write to Marilyn Tippett at The Mill, Lloyney, Knighton LD7 1RG if you have something to say, or email on [marilynetipett@hotmail.com](mailto:marilynetipett@hotmail.com)

## New committee

A new committee was duly elected at our recent AGM. and thanks to all those standing again, and to those who have served and stood down. Your services are much appreciated.

## The June garden: tasks and ideas

The wonderful (or rather too wonderful perhaps) weather in late May really brought things on in the garden. In fact, some things came on so fast they were over as soon as they began. I am thinking in particular of the smaller bearded iris in this case, which were a rather fleeting if beautiful show this year. Once they have finished flowering, bearded iris can be split up and shared around friends who may like some of what you have. Don't replant too deep as these iris like the sun on their rhizomes to ensure plenty of flowers next year.

This is also the time to do some pruning of the early shrubs which have now finished their flowering for the year. Deutzia, weigela and philadelphus can all be pruned now, and philadelphus in particular benefit from having at least one major branch removed each year to ensure that they do not become too twiggy at the base.

It should be safe to plant out any tender annuals now and bring out any tender perennials—such as geraniums and dahlias, that you have kept over the winter. Just keep an eye on the weather forecast in case we do have a late frost.

In the fruit garden don't forget to protect your currants and strawberries from the rapacious attentions of the birds, and possibly the raspberries too, although I am happy for them to have a small share of an abundant crop as long as they do not take all of it.

Sweetcorn can go in now as it needs a long growing season, and leeks will also benefit from as long a time as you can give them to grow strong for the winter. If you are growing Kale or any other brassicas, they too can go into the ground now. Continue successional sowing of lettuce and other saladings—little and often is the best maxim for tender leaves.

## Paeony varieties to try

**Buckeye Belle:** early, with prominent stamens and dark red flowers

**Emodi:** single white flowers in May

**White Wings:** large white flowers with crinkled edges, late season

**Paula Fay:** good double pink, scented.

**Roy Perhson's Best Yellow:** single yellow, long season

**Karen Gray:** fuschia pink flowers on long stems, dark foliage

**Konigswinter:** lilac anemone flower, needs moist soil

**Lemon Queen:** white with yellow petaloids, red seed pods are striking in winter

## Plant Profile: Herbaceous

### *paeonies*

*Paeonia officinalis*, which has thrived in our gardens since Medieval times at least was named after Paeon, the physician to the Gods, and the *officinalis* bit of the name is a reflection of the fact that this plant was used for medicinal purposes (bit don't try it at home as it is quite poisonous!). *Paeonia lactiflora*, from China, is the origin of many of the wonderful and long-lived plants from which modern hybrids have been raised and which were particularly popular in Edwardian times. Kelways of Somerset were the principal suppliers, and their Paeony garden had a special halt on the railway line so that visitors could alight and view the flowers when they were in their prime!

Breeding is still going on, and most recently the usual pink, white, lilac or red flowers with which we are all very familiar have been added to by yellow flowers. See the box above for some of the very best varieties.

Paeonies do best in good soil and can live for 50 years or more. They must be planted not too deeply or may sulk and refuse to flower. They like being given plenty of well-rotted manure or compost annually, avoiding the crown of the plant. Paeonies can, contrary to the usual advice, be moved relatively easily although they may take a year or so to come into flower once more. Remove old flowers and cut the stems down to ground level to help avoid stem rot and other fungal disease, and enjoy their lovely foliage for the rest of the year.