

# The Notice Board

## New committee

It was good to see so many members attending the AGM this year, although maybe Avril's lovely supper had something to do with that! In any case, as part of the AGM your new committee was elected. Many of us will be familiar to you, but we are very pleased to welcome Margaret Clugston, who replaces her husband Ron as our treasurer. Here are the details of your committee members, with telephone numbers in case you want to get it touch. Next year maybe **you** will think of standing?

**Chair:** Jean Price: 01547 528260

**Secretary:** Avril Hoyle: 01547 529244

**Treasurer:** Margaret Clugston: 01547 529155

## Members

Pam Barclay: 01547 510627

Audrey Fox: 01547 529174

Kath Graham: 01547 520977

Ann Harroway: 01546 528477

Brenda Morgan: 01547 520847

Ivy Stanton: 01547 520587

Marilyn Tippet: 01547 528842

## **Open Gardens, 18th and 19th July**

*Helpers and offers of plants and cakes are still needed for this event. Remember that some of the proceeds will go towards helping to keep the club running and to keep our membership rates affordable in these days of rising costs. So if you have any plants left over after sorting out your own garden, please let a committee member know and we will find them a home until July. Annuals are welcome as long as they are potted into a reasonable sized pot which will enable them to grow on and flower. Perennials and vegetables are also welcome, but if your plant is not going to be in flower, why not stick a photo onto the front of the pot to help other gardeners decide if it is for them? This can make all the difference as to whether a plant sells or not!*



**I wonder what it would be like to live in a world where it was always June.**

L. M. Montgomery

## Meeting report by Mary Comer: AGM, May 2009

A sad precursor to May's AGM was the news of John Hopkins' sudden death. John was our President, and Jean reminded us of his enthusiasm and his commitment to TVGC as a founder member. The time not being right for it, the club postponed the election of a new president. To our great delight and satisfaction, however, the current committee will all continue in their posts. Only Ron, super-efficient and hard-working Treasurer, will be replaced by Margaret, acting Treasurer during Ron's recent illness - thank you, Alan, for carrying on as auditor! At a very well attended meeting, the committee were thanked for their tireless attention to our comfort and pleasure in taking care of seating, attendance sheet, raffle, plant sales and monthly competitions - and, in the case of Avril and Audrey, coach trips, a wonderful Christmas meal, and first-class speakers on a good range of gardening topics throughout the year. Mike Fox announced the results of the May competition, which was won by Audrey with her blue iris; Rosemary came second with her clematis and third was Kath Graham with her veronica. It has been an excellent year, in which, for example, members raised much needed money for the Serendipity Festival and Knucklas and Knighton Community Centres by opening their gardens in the summer; and rounding it all off was the presentation to Marilyn Tippet of the Rudge Cup for her spectacular 93 points from monthly competitions. Well done, Marilyn!

*Editor's note. Members may wish to know that the Club has made a donation of £25 to the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society in John's memory.*

### **Remembering John Hopkins by Rosemary Naylor**

I only knew John after he had lost his wife and had moved into Dog Kennel Lane, Bucknell. His was one of the gardens I visited in 2005.

It seems he had always been a keen gardener, a love passed on from his parents and in its turn to a daughter, a landscape architect who helped him with his recent garden.

One of his particular interests was in growing fruit and vegetables; apple trees being a particular "must have". His earliest recollection as a young child in this direction was of a walnut tree seedling he had found growing near a boundary, the other side of which its parent tree flourished.

John became our President in 2008. Though by then in his 80's, his hearing was letting him down. Nevertheless he was a regular at meetings, something which our other members from Bucknell appreciated as he was the sole car driver amongst them.



Thanks for your contribution, John, to the life of this society.

### **How do we chose who comes to speak to the Gardeners' Club each month?**

Like everything else to do with the club, it certainly doesn't happen by magic! Audrey Fox spends time in seeking out people who may be of interest to the majority of members, and tries to find someone different each year, although old favourites are often welcomed back. Audrey has been doing this job for some years now, and wonders if there is a member who might be willing to learn the ropes alongside her with a view to taking over the job eventually. Are the speakers the main reason **you** come along to Gardeners' Club? We know this is the case for many of our members, and so perhaps you would be willing to take on this role? Perhaps you have a favourite subject we haven't covered as yet, or perhaps you would like to learn more about local gardens which are open to visitors?

Whatever your passion, flowers, fruit, vegetables trees or shrubs, there are speakers out there to interest you, so why not help us make up a good programme for 2010-2011 (yes, we do work that far ahead) and volunteer! Audrey's number is on the front of this issue and she would be happy to talk through the process with any interested member.

## THE GARDEN CLUB ARCHIVE

### Request from Rosemary Naylor

I have asked on a number of occasions for members' photos to go into an archive. A few members have responded but as our club is more than 20 years old now, the gaps in the history are overwhelming. We now have a photo album with plastic pockets to take prints sized 4" by 6", which is pretty standard. Please will you look through your collections as I know several members carry a camera to club visits in particular.

We also have the opportunity to convert transparencies ( 35mm slides) into prints if you have these.

To jog your memories of some of the many activities we have participated in I have drawn up lists of events. You will see just how active we are as a group.

### Coffee mornings and afternoon teas

1998 June 13 at Mr & Mrs Granville Bates', Llanfair Waterdine  
1999 May 15 at Heyope Rectory with Dr and Mrs K Ackerman  
2000 July 1 at the home of Brigadier and Mrs Eva Maclauchlin, Lloyney  
2001 July 21 at the then home of Ruby and Lilian, Presteigne Road, Knighton  
2003 Aug 2 at Heyope Rectory  
2005 Aug 20 at Bea Freeman's , Knucklas  
2007 Aug 18 at Hawkshead, Heyope with Kath Graham and Keith

### Open Gardens

2002 July 8 - the gardens of Eva Maclauchlan, Keith and Eileen Ackerman, Jean Huckfield followed by supper at Avril's  
2003 July 21 - several gardens in Bucknell  
2004 July 12 - several gardens in Knighton  
2008 July 17 and 18 - several members' gardens in Knighton's Serendipity Festival

### Evening Quizzes with neighbouring societies

2001 July 9 - with Presteigne and Radnor Valley Garden Clubs, we hosted  
2002 April 24 - with SW Shrops GC at Lydbury North  
Sept 16 - with Presteigne GC at Presteigne  
2003 Oct 7 - with Radnor Valley GC at New Radnor  
2007 March 28 - with S W Shropshire GC and Church Stretton GC at Lydbury North

### Evening, afternoon and full day visits

2004 June 9 - afternoon visit to Lingen Nursery  
Oct 7 - coach trip to Bodenham Arboretum  
2005 June 13 - evening at the Walled Garden at Knill  
June 29 - coach trip to Chirk Castle  
Oct 12 - coach trip to Arley Arboretum and Gardens near Bewdley  
2006 June 12 - evening visit to Ivy Cottage, Kinsham  
June 28 - coach trip to Dower House, Morville Hall  
July 12 - coach trip to Acton Round Hall near Bridgenorth  
Oct 25 - return coach trip to Bodenham Arboretum  
2007 June 11 - evening visit to Cwm Weeg, Dolfor  
July 12 - coach trip to Llanerchaeron in Aeron Valley, West Wales

Plus more in 2008 .... so please check through what you might have and see me at the forthcoming meetings .

Rosemary Naylor

## The June garden: tasks and ideas

It's always good to get feedback on what is in the club newsletter and I know from comments that some of you have found the little thoughts and ideas in this column useful, which is encouraging. We can all learn from one another, so if you have any tips and ideas you would be happy to pass on, please let me know. June is such a busy month, perhaps the busiest month in the gardening year, as we try to keep on top of Spring early-flowering shrubs, tie in wayward growth, weed and mow lawns as well as plant out the seedlings we have been nurturing all Spring. Don't forget the importance of hardening off before planting out your seedlings; if you skip this your seedlings will struggle in the garden and not get established as quickly. They will manage in the end, if we have no hard frost to finish them off, but will be a little slower to get going.

Last year I used enviromesh for the first time and I was very pleased with the results. It is a fine green mesh and is very useful for shading and frost protection when plants are first put out into the open garden. Also useful for keeping the bugs off, and it lets the rain through more easily than fleece. You can buy it by the metre from larger garden centres.

This year why not try growing your vegetables in a different way? Some of the prettiest chard and lettuce look lovely at the front of a border, and give as much colour as many perennials with the advantage of being able to eat them! Pumpkins and squashes are good grown in different ways; for example, on top of the compost heap where they can scramble at will, or up an arch, where they may need a little support once the fruits are formed. This year I am also trying some purple climbing French beans, and red-flowered Broad beans, and in the more ornamental part of the garden I am trying lablab beans which I saw

a year or two ago at Hampton Court. They are a very dark purple scrambler over an archway in the vegetable garden. The flowers are pink and sweetly scented, and the pods are edible, especially when young. Harden off well before planting out as they are a little more tender than some beans. Their seeds are very prettily marked too, in black and white.

If you, like me, are a fan of auriculas, those pretty florist flowers, now is the time to re-pot them and take cuttings from offsets. There are as many ideas on pots (plastic or terracotta?) and compost (free draining or rich?) as there are growers, but I was told that the secret of the members of the Auricula Society is to put finely cut old beech leaves in the bottom of each pot! Try it and see if it improves your success rate.

## *Plant Profile: Tree Paeonies*

In China and Japan, tree paeonies have been grown and selected for centuries, and celebrated in their paintings and drawings. Larger, and certainly taller, and more of a shrub than their herbaceous counterparts, the tree paeony is a magnificent sight when in full flower in May or June. Their height and spread mean that they may need support, and it is important to choose your variety carefully as the huge heads on some more recent introductions can become too heavy for their stems and droop, spoiling the look of the plant and making it difficult to appreciate the lovely blooms. They will thrive in most situations, but do need staking if your garden is windswept, and don't like early morning sun as it can spoil the delicate petals. If you give them plenty of space they will thrive, but if placed in a crowded border they will be less happy as they need good air

circulation to avoid the dreaded paeony wilt. They are also one of the plants that rabbits leave alone, and so good for some country gardens in this part of the world!

Companies who specialise in tree paeonies include Kelways and Claire Austen, and some good cultivars include Kokamon (deep pinky red), Hakuojisi (pure white), and High Noon (yellow). Species tree paeonies are easy from seed (although expect a wait of 2 years before you see growth as they send down their tap roots in year one and no foliage appears until year two) and are very graceful. Good examples are lutea ludlowii (yellow) and delavayii (deep crimson red). Both these varieties will have smaller flowers than the hybrids but will be easier garden plants and less prone to wind damage.