

# The Notice Board

## What's On Locally

### **Glansevern Hall Gardens, Berriew, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 8AH**

Over 25 acres of glorious gardens surrounding a Greek revival house (not open). Lakeside walks, large walled garden divided into rooms. Ornamental fountains, huge rock garden, orangery, follies and sculptures. Many unusual trees, bird hide on banks of River Severn and ornamental shelters. Herbaceous borders, pergola and orangery. Colour throughout the year.

Distance: 15.34 miles

Open for NGS on Friday, 16 Sept (12-5).

**Hampton Court gardens** are open from September 1st - October 30th, on Tuesday - Sunday 10.30 am - 5 pm . Gardens admission is : Adults £6.50 (including free Garden admission on a second, mid-week visit)

**The Malvern Autumn Show** takes place on September 24–25 at the Malvern Showground, Worcestershire, WR13 6NW. The show offers the perfect seasonal day out with a host of delectable, inspirational features for food and gardening lovers alike.



The breezes taste  
Of apple peel.  
The air is full  
Of smells to feel-  
Ripe fruit, old footballs,  
Burning brush,  
New books, erasers,  
Chalk, and such.  
The bee, his hive,  
Well-honeyed hum,  
And Mother cuts  
Chrysanthemums.  
Like plates washed clean  
With suds, the days  
Are polished with  
A morning haze.  
- John Updike, *September*

# Meeting report: August 2011

Susan Russell's talk to members in August, *Plants for Difficult Places*, was inspired by the couple's trying experience of certain unforgiving aspects of an East Anglian climate and a "cold, anoxic, impenetrable blue Suffolk soil" and it spoke to all of us who have had to grow plants in adverse conditions.

Susan explained how plants have adapted to calamitously dry conditions in clever ways: some, for example, have very narrow petals, minimal leaf formation and huge tap roots; and they often flower and seed early so that they are dormant when the dry season comes along. Some have no leaves at all or hunker down to protect themselves from the wind. Others store water in their leaves. Some shrubs 'water-proof' themselves with waxy leaf cuticles or produce leaves that curl and retain moisture. For dry conditions then, Cupid's Dart, the Pasque or Easter Flower, Herons' Bills, the Sempervivum (house leek), Silver Salvia, and others like them are ideal. For flooded sites, the Globe Flower, Primulas, the Rocket and the Iris are good choices. Where trees block out light or keep a patch permanently shady and shed heavy blankets of leaves, look for plants like Wood Anemones, Cyclamens, Pulmonaria, evergreen ferns, Wild Ginger, Lily of the Valley, Lady's Mantle, and others.

Accompanied by a very good set of slides, Susan's talk was, above all, a practical response to the perennial question, "What on earth can I put *there*?"

Mary Comer

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*You will have noticed the lovely contributions from Club member Hannah Taylor, injecting a welcome note of humour into our newsletter of late. Here is a recipe to go with her musings on cake and music this month, and which will use up any plum glut you may have this year. It is especially good served warm.*

## For the topping:

- 50g/2oz plain flour
- ½tsp ground mixed spice (optional)
- 50g/2oz ground almonds
- 50g/2oz butter, cut into small cubes
- 100g/ 3½oz demerara sugar

## For the base:

- 100g/3½oz self-raising flour
- 5 mls baking powder
- 100g/3½oz ground almonds
- 150g/5oz caster sugar
- 100g/3½oz butter, cut into small cubes
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 30 mls natural yogurt
- 4-6 plums, stoned and quartered
- icing sugar, to serve

You will need: 20cm/8in loose-bottomed, deep cake tin, lightly buttered and floured, and base-lined with baking paper

## Method

Preheat oven to gas mark 4/180°C (170°C fan oven). In a food processor, add flour, spice, if using, almonds & a pinch of salt. Add butter, pulse briefly till mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Tip into a bowl, stir in sugar and set aside. For In a clean food processor, add flour, baking powder, almonds, sugar and a pinch of salt. Add butter & pulse till mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add eggs & yogurt & pulse briefly till mixture is just combined. Pour into tin, level top & scatter over plums, Sprinkle over topping. Bake for about 1 hr 10-20 mins, till a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean. Serve warm, or leave in tin for 10 mins, then turn out and leave to cool completely on a wire rack. Dust with icing sugar before serving

I realise that this newsletter is about gardening and not cooking, but hear me out and I am sure you will soon be agreeing just how important cake is when it comes to settling down to a good day out in the grounds. For starters, if Marie Antoinette hadn't said "Let them eat cake" the gardens at Versailles would probably be nothing more than a bit of cracked paving and a burnt out carriage.

When I worked as a volunteer at Croft castle, every Tuesday at 10.50 there'd be the cry of "Down tools!" The head gardener would disappear to fetch the milk and keys and the volunteers would disappear to fetch various things. Amongst the rustling of plastic bags, plants would appear and we'd exchange care advice, special dietary conditions for the plants, special bedtime stories and comforters for the plants, and cake. The cake turned out to be an important part of eleven's advice. During the half hour or so that we munched we discussed topics as diverse as rabbits hating hardy geraniums, using old pairs of tights as hanging basket liners and Alan Titchmarsh's jumpers. It also gave us the extra boost to tackle the dreaded main drive.

Cake also plays a huge part in deciding which seeds to sow for the upcoming season, along with infusions of coffee and camellia sinensis with or without milk and sacharum. It's sitting down listening to the Archers' omnibus before tackling whatever is your equivalent of the main drive.

### Foxglove Tree

I purchased from one of the plant stalls at Hergest Croft two years ago a Foxglove Tree, Paulownia tomentosa, also known as the Empress tree. It is a very beautiful plant with lush leaves. I have never pruned it but last Autumn it started to lose its leaves and then tiny new shoots appeared on one of the branches in Spring and it stands at 2.5 feet with a spread of 3 feet. It has never flowered although they can produce huge spikes of cream and mauve. I have it in the corner of my veranda where it is perfectly happy, but if I try to move it, it sulks and goes floppy. If I show it the sun, it droops and weeps from under the leaves. If I give it fresh air it shudders and curls its leaves. Is there a member who has had one or knows anything about them? I have been told that they can grow to 40 feet, and if pruned make a good foliage shrub. What I want is the complete opposite - a plant about 3 feet tall with cream and mauve flowers. Will it happen?! Methinks it may be a contender for the Garden Shed.....surely not? Your reply in next month's Notice Board would be appreciated.



#### ***Note from the editor***

*Mary is very lucky to have kept her Paulownia last Winter, as it is not reliably hardy in this part of the world. I have seen it coppiced, when it makes huge leaves which are very decorative, but of course its real beauty is in the flowers, which you lose if you coppice annually. Does anyone have any other advice or ideas for Mary? If so, please send them to Marilyn at marilynetippett2@hotmail.co.uk, or mail them to her at The Mill, Lloyney, Knighton LD7 1RG.*

## The September garden: tasks and ideas

Rain at last-how very rarely do we say that in this lovely green part of the world?! It has made a great deal of difference to the borders and lawns, but came too late to save many trees and perennials from a bad attack of the mildew this year. If you have a perennial with mildew you can cut it down now and burn the cuttings if possible. For a tree with mildew (and some plums have suffered very badly this year), you can only burn the leaves once they have fallen. as it's far too late to spray the tree, even if you should feel inclined to do so. Everyone is agreed that it has been a very odd year for vegetables, and for many of us the runner beans are only just getting into their stride. Keep cutting them small and you should have a reliable harvest from now until the frosts. If your peas or beans have set

seed, now is the time to save it for next year and save yourself a good amount of money. This does not work for F1 seed, but for others, place the seeds, which should be from undamaged stock, in a warm dry place and leave until completely dry. Save until next year in paper (not plastic) bags, well-labeled. If you have extra, you can always donate them to the seed box at the GC meeting.

Now is the time to take cuttings of indoor geraniums (pelargoniums). Cuttings root easily, even in water if you are lucky, at this time of the year, and you will have strong new stock for next year. Keep them in a frost-free place over the Winter; a windowsill in a cold (not frosty) bedroom will do fine as a Winter resting place. Don't neglect your bulb sowing now, so that you have something to delight you next Spring. From now until November you can plant narcissi, tulips, hyacinths and many other small bulbs to cheer you in 2012.

## *Tulips to delight you*

**Single Early**  
*Apricot beauty*  
*Pincess Irene*  
*Yokohama*

**Lily flowered**  
*Ballade*  
*Claudia*  
*Marilyn*  
*West Point*

**Parrot**  
*Black Parrot*  
*Rococo*  
*Estella Rynveld*

**Species**  
*Bakeri Lilac Wonder*  
*Little Princess*  
*Peppermint stick*  
*Clusiana*

**Gregii**  
*Fur Elise*  
*Red Riding Hood*  
*Czar Peter*

## Speaker's Corner

### **Competition results**

Our speaker for the evening, Mrs Susan Russell, who judged the competition, was very impressed with the number of entries (10 in all), and the quality of blooms, colour and cent, and took a great deal of time making a final decision. Two of the winning entrants had not taken part in a competition before so that was a pleasant surprise for us all.

**First** place: Rose Morris

**Second** place: Geoff Duthie

**Third** place: Stella Farrell

### **The garden shed**

Well, what a pleasant evening, very enjoyable with many discussions about the plants, produce, etc that we had for sale. We made £16.10 towards club funds, which leaves us with a problem as we are running low on donated items. So, if you have any plants that have been languishing on your windowsill gathering dust, or looking a little neglected and in need of some TLC, bring them along and we will revive them ready for resale. Meanwhile, you can replenish your garden with new varieties from our reasonably-priced stock. The same goes for any excess produce, plants from your garden, unwanted items; we can find them all a good home, even your mother-in-law's tongue!

**The speaker** for the meeting of Monday October 10th is Mr Maurice Everett from the Bannut, a 3 acre garden and small nursery near Bromyard in Herefordshire. His talk is entitled "Autumn Fireworks - flowers, fruit and foliage". Maurice was a lecturer at the University of Birmingham until he took early retirement to join his wife Daphne in the nursery. The competition for October is "***A small basket or bowl of fruit from your garden.***"

**Mary Bufton. Speaker Programme organiser. 01547 510285**

