

Kingswood, Walton and Tadworth Horticultural Society

Spring 2021 Newsletter



Welcome to the first of your 2021 newsletters.

Chairman's Jottings

Hello Gardeners,

There is nothing more impressive than a lovely border of snowdrops, it makes one feel there is life ahead especially in this time of 'lock down'. Winter is a dull time but this year has been one we would not wish to remember with the pandemic, rain, flooding and snow that we have had. I think the snowdrops this year (mine anyway) started in December and are still a picture, and the aconites in buttercup yellow are in full swing. I treated myself to 4 new snowdrops last spring, they really are a pleasure and I will get a few more next month to flower next spring.

I heard a wonderful programme on Radio 4 a couple of weeks ago about a Galanthophile who breeds new ones and propagates them, 'Open Country' at 6.00 am Saturday mornings (If you would like a catalogue Avon Bulbs Tel. 01460 242177, a great catalogue for the gardener F.O.C. and great snowdrops.)

It was a great pity last year that all the shows, open gardens, coach outings had to be cancelled, but lockdown was the only answer, fingers crossed we are slowly coming out of the 'doom and gloom'.

As gardeners I think everyone has found new interest in their gardens. Last year in March you could not buy seeds or compost, with lockdown making everyone more enthusiastic to grow flowers and veg, some may never have had that interest previously, and it helped us to get through this dilemma even though we could not show off to our

colleagues. My Sweet peas were phenomenal, picking bunches for neighbours, the plants look pretty good for this year and will be planted out next month.

I trust everyone has their seed order and compost in stock, we must just keep safe and obey the distancing laws and shopping regulations, keep the masks on as I think we are going to have to live with these for some time!!

Happy Gardening, hope to see you this year some time, no spring show – see below.

Graeme – Chairman

Dates for your 2021 Diary

Spring Show

10th April 2021 - CANCELLED

Early Summer Show

26th June 2021

Late Summer Show

21st August 2021

Annual General Meeting

Date to be confirmed

It is with regret that the Committee have decided to cancel the Spring Show. In view of the COVID-19 situation the Church Hall management have decided to limit the number of people who are permitted in the hall at any one time and the Committee felt that this situation made it impossible

to hold a show at this time. We are optimistic about being able to hold the next two shows but we need to wait and see how the pandemic moves on from here and then adapt the shows to meet the new social distancing requirements.

2021 Gardeners Delight

We hope that with the vaccination roll out going apace Covid-19 restrictions will be lifted and we will be able to hold our ever-popular Open Gardens Event. We have decided to push back the date to SATURDAY 3rd and SUNDAY 4th JULY to give our visitors more confidence to go out and about. Cathy and David will be opening their newly designed garden at 101, Foxley Lane, Purley for the first time which will definitely be worth a visit. More details of all the gardens will be available in the next newsletter and nearer the time on our website. I hope you are all well and fit.

Best wishes, Sue suehortsoc@btinternet.com

Covid-19

Many of you may already have received your first inoculation but the following was received by Jasmine. 'A plea from NHS staff. Please please please make sure you and your family all dig out your NHS number and have a copy of it immediately to hand for when you or they are called for the COVID-19 jab. From my colleagues on the front line this is far and away the biggest bottle neck when it comes to administering the vaccine to as many people as quickly as possible.

You can find your NHS number on any NHS correspondence or through the app.

It would also be really helpful if you can share this message with everyone you know.'

Jasmine Heath

Website and Social Media

We are still looking for someone to look after our website. Louise Sear has been performing this task for the last few years but she now decided to step aside. The role is predominantly one of uploading documents or items and many of you will have looked

at our Virtual Gardeners Delight last year. We are also considering setting up Facebook for the Society. if there is anyone who would be interested please contact Cathy or David.

Coach Trips

In view of Covid-19, at this point we will not be organising any 2021 coach trips. This may change later in the year as we see how the pandemic progresses.

Subscriptions

You will see above that the April Show has been cancelled. Many of you will have paid your subscriptions at the Show and if this is the case would you kindly forward a cheque to Cathy and David at 101 Foxley Lane, Purley, CR8 3HQ for either £4.00 single or £7.50 for two in the same household. Your cheque should be payable to KWTHS. On receipt your membership card(s) will be issued.

Gardening Gloves

Marion still has a supply of gloves that she would normally sell at the Show. The 2021 cost is £5.00 as opposed to the RRP of £7.50. If you would want a pair call Marion on 01737 819964.

Ellinor Schultz – A personal reflection

With sadness we have to report that Ellinor has passed away. Ellinor Schultz was born in Franzwalde, Germany on 7th December 1923, the youngest of three daughters.

Elli came to England just after the war and a few years later commenced training as an SRN nurse at St Richards Hospital in Chichester followed three years later with her Midwifery training and then her Queens district nurse training. She delivered many babies around Walton on the Hill, Boxhill and Tadworth areas throughout the 1960s. Her mode of transport on most occasions being her bike. She felt so much part of the local community living in Sandilands Road as a midwife, with her great friend, Dee Foster, also a midwife and health visitor. They both moved to Tower Road in 1968 after Elli was left a legacy that enabled her to purchase the house. Dee lived self-contained upstairs and Elli downstairs, giving both companionship and independence. Elli

received her Certificate of Naturalisation in 1982 and became a citizen of the United Kingdom.

Elli had two elder sisters who lived in Germany, Rosemary and Ursula. They were very close but sadly predeceased her. She does however have a much-adored nephew, Friedrich, his wife Birgit and a great niece Katherina. They live in Kiel, Germany and would travel to see Elli approximately twice a year staying for a few days and like Elli enjoying quintessentially everything English. Friedrich was wonderful during Elli's final year in Covid-19 lockdown phoning every day to keep her spirits up.

Elli, Ellinor, Auntie or nurse, she wore so many hats during her lifetime, met so many people and loved so much about life. She just LOVED cats with all her heart, of which there were so many, Henry, Zeus, Annie, Hestie, Fidelio, Snowy, Milly Baxter and latterly Bertie to name but a few. She enjoyed working in her beautiful garden and always entered exhibits in our flower show. She loved sharing her garden with others on garden open events for her many charities but especially the Shaftsbury Society. She loved nature, getting so much pleasure from seeing a robin or hearing a cuckoo. She was an enthusiastic rambler and there were not many paths between Tadworth and Littlehampton that Elli had not walked in the company of her many friends. When her garden was last opened about 5 years ago Elli happened to see a cardboard cutout of the Queen when we were travelling to one of her favourite haunts, Wakehurst Place. I was 'told' I had to get her one for her garden opening. The Queen, bless her, stood all afternoon amongst Elli's shrubs and plants welcoming over one hundred visitors. Elli met Princess Anne and attended a Buckingham Palace garden party with Dee in the 1960's so was well connected! She loved rugby with a passion in particular Jonny Wilkinson long before he kicked that incredible dropped goal in the world cup and thankfully through her amazing friends became the proud owner of a personal message and signed photo of the man himself.

I met Elli in 1979 when I arrived at Epsom Hospital to take up a clinical teaching position. Elli had trained as a nurse teacher in 1972 at a time when midwifery became more hospital based. She was loved by the student nurses, strict, an excellent role model but so respected by all. She still received cards and the odd

visit from her former students' nurses, some now in retirement themselves.

We became the best of friends straight away and gradually over the years she became part of our family, great friends with my parents and godmother to my youngest son. She introduced me to the Derby and of course to gypsy Rose who would read our palms every year. We spent some wonderful days together visiting (I think) all of the National Trust properties in a 50-mile radius. Wimbledon tennis, Littlehampton with my sons (she would always go in the sea with them whatever the weather). At a meet and greet event at Redhill Theatre with Pasha Kovalev from Strictly Come Dancing when he came into the room, she shouted to him 'you are my Christmas present!' Elli embraced every new experience in her own adorable way.

She retired in 1985 and along with her other passions she added a regular jazz night, many charity events and took up bridge. Bridge became quite a passion for Elli, for much of her retirement, playing 4/5 times a week gradually reducing over the past few years. However, she only retired from her Tuesday morning bridge club at St John The Evangelist Church at the age of 90. Elli was a member of the WI and in later years looked forward so the seniors club at Riddell Hall. I could fill a book and that is just about my personal friendship but I think what could be said is that Elli lived and loved life to the full. So many happy memories of such a special lady, a one in a million who was loved by so many and missed hugely.

Jan Allum

Tips, tricks and gardening folklore

- To grow the best sweet peas plant when the clocks go back and plant them out when the clocks go forward.
- When choosing bulbs, big is best.
- Do not mix daffodils/narcissus with other flowers as they give off gas that prematurely ages the other flowers. Also, daffodils do best in shallow water in the vase, do not cover more than 2 inches and change every two days.

- To clean a smelly vase, fill half full with water and add a tablespoon of mustard. Shake the mixture and leave for 2 hours.
- Soak tulips, fritillary and crocus bulbs in flat tonic water before planting as squirrels hate the smell of quinine.
- Keep flower arrangements away from ripening fruit. The ethylene gas given off by the fruit will age the flowers more quickly.
- If your flower arrangement is going in a warm room pop some ice cubes in the vase each morning.
- Scented flowers don't last as long as non-scented ones because they use up extra energy creating their scent.

Timothy and Sue Edwards' Hot Cross Buns for the Children's Trust

Please note change of arrangements for this year's HOT X BUNS Open Garden in aid of The Friends of The Childrens Trust at The Firs, The Hoppety KT20 5RQ Sue and Timothy will be opening their garden on the Bank Holiday MONDAY 31st MAY from 10.30 - 4pm. Raffle, Plants for Sale and Refreshments will be available. No Parking in The Hoppety except for visitors with walking difficulties - please contact Sue for more details. suehortsoc@btinternet.com 01737813025

Questions for the committee

Jasmine has put forward a new idea. She was talking to friend recently about her Garden Club. They have a newsletter and she gave me an idea for ours. Each issue a member of the committee is asked the following questions. Here is the first one from Jennie Page and 2nd from Jasmine.

What or who inspired you to like gardening?

My first foray into gardening was when we lived in New Zealand and our neighbours gave me some seeds and a patch in their garden to help make up for my disappointment at having a sister and not a pony. I grew inordinate numbers of radishes that everyone had to eat.

Returning to this country I stayed with my grandma and worked with her in a lovely cottage garden in Surrey. By then I was hooked.

What is one of your favourite tasks in the garden and your least?

If I have a favourite task it is weeding, my least liked is mowing the lawn, although the finished look is very satisfying, providing the edges are neat too.

What advice would you give a person new to gardening?

My advice to new gardeners is to get out there, and dig. Prepare the soil first, the effort is never wasted, whilst bunging in a plant in poor soil will be a disappointment. Take notice of what grows in gardens nearby, there is no point buying an expensive Azalea if you live on chalky soil, but other than the basic advice to go with your soil and not against it I would suggest any of the many easy to grow summer perennials. Once they have got going start being more adventurous, but read the labels! Mature size matters! So does the ability of the plant to stand our wet cold winters.

Don't be upset if a plant dies, make a note of which one, - unless you forgot to water it of course. A quick can full at planting is not enough, you will need to water regularly for several weeks in dry weather. Buy healthy plants, half dead bargains might just pick up but at first go for the best.

What do you enjoy most about being outside in the garden?

Being outside in the open air, working the soil and planning ahead all the time are great ways to destress, mind and body are worked in healthy surroundings.

Favourite garden smells?

Smells in the garden can take you back to your childhood, Phlox and Lilac remind me of Grandma, and bare dark earth always bring radishes to mind.

A plant in your garden you wished that you hadn't planted?

The one plant I would have planted in a more confined space is the low growing comfrey. It is steadily taking over from the bank I put it in, but in the spring, it is smothered in flowers and alive with all sorts of bees, field mice run amongst its roots and slow worms live in the thick green canopy. So, I just weed out the unwanted advancing army and watch the bees.

The season you love best and why?

Every season has its bonuses, even winter, there is always at least planning to do, lists to make and lose.

Jasmine Heath

What or who inspired you to like gardening?

Both my parents loved their garden but it was father who did most of the work in the garden. I can't remember him teaching me but his enjoyment was infectious.

What is one of your favourite tasks in the garden and your least?

Favourite task is pruning. Least favourite is trimming the edges of the lawn.

Name four of your favourite gardens

Great Dixter, Sissinghurst, Croft Castle Walled Garden in Shropshire and West Dean Gardens.

What advice would you give a person new to gardening?

Always prepare the soil well before creating borders or planting plants.

What do you enjoy most about being outside in the garden?

The fresh air, bird song and a sense of purpose.

Favourite garden smells?

Cut grass, sweat peas, mock orange and the greenhouse when full of tomato plants.

A plant in your garden you wished that you hadn't planted?

Hardy geranium Wargrave as far too invasive.

Your favourite plants and why?

The hardest question of all. In our garden, the rose Litchfield Angel. Anywhere with Wisteria and in the countryside, the Primrose.

The season you love best and why?

Late Spring when everything is fresh and so much to look forward to.

A Start to Gardening – Keith Lewis

In early 1940 I was evacuated to a large house just outside Guildford. I joined a family with two other lads, consisting of mother with 2 older daughters, a nanny and two maiden aunts, it had a large garden on a gentle south facing slope. At the bottom of the garden was a large vegetable patch and a chicken run.

The two aunts were keen gardeners and started teaching us boys the 'tricks of the trade', We learnt quite quickly how to sow the bigger seeds such as Spinach, Turnips and Beans. We learnt the use of small tools like hand forks and trowels. I was taught how to use the back of a hand fork to rake the soil smoothly ready for sowing, what were weeds and what plants to look after. By the time I was a year older I found myself helping a great amount, between walks over the Downs and thoroughly enjoying it.

At the age of seven I was sent to boarding school, by which time I had been taught to read, write and know my tables up to 12 times. Life at boarding school got even better as all those who wished were given a reasonable plot of land to grow vegetable and a few flowers. All this time I learnt more and more about gardening. One made the occasional mistake but the experiences were being locked away in my mind.

At thirteen I went to Sutton Valence School in Kent and made many friends with farmer's sons. I came to learn about fruit growing from Strawberries to Apples and Pears. We had over an acre of land, on which the farmer's sons learnt to plough (we were given an old tractor) and had a large round bed in front of our tool hut to grow flowers. Every summer I grew hardy annuals sown straight into the ground. These were made up of dwarf nasturtiums, calendula, cornflower, candytuft, godetia and annual chrysanthemums, nigella (love in the midst), sweet sultan and clarkia. During the holidays I helped my father in the garden in Shelveys Way, where I have now gardened for 71 years. My mother and I would go to Epsom Market on a Saturday to buy bedding plants like Antirrhinum, French Marigolds, lobelia and various other plants.

The story of the garden's changes and developments will have to come another time.

The garden is still opening under the National Garden Scheme on 11th July and 23rd August and I am delighted to say that the cover picture on the Surrey 2021 leaflet is from my garden.

And now a few ideas for the coming season.

How to press flowers

Once you've mastered this simple technique, you'll find many uses for the flowers and leaves you press.

Why not embark on a craft project and decorate special cards for family and friends, create beautiful art, or make a collection of sheets recording the plants growing in your garden?

You will need:

books

newspaper

card

PVA glue

a pen

What to do:

1. In a spot where you have permission to pick flowers, carefully pick a section from a plant. Try not to damage other flowers or take too many.
2. Open a book and line it with newspaper. Place your flowers (as flat as you can) on the page.
3. Carefully close the book and weight it down - additional heavy books work well as weights.
4. Store this pile in a warm, dry place and check on your flower specimens daily.
5. Once your flowers are dry, carefully remove them.
6. You can then create your own flower collection or make some beautiful art. Use glue to mount the pressed flowers on card.
7. If you are creating a collection or would like to record details about your flowers, add a label. The key information to note on a sheet is when and where it was collected, by whom and - if you know - what the flower is.

Key things to consider when pressing flowers

Not all plants are easy to press. Some, such as bluebells, take a long time to lose moisture and tend to go mouldy. Bulkier plants are also more difficult to press well (see some top tips below).

You must ensure that you keep an even weight across the whole plant specimen that you're pressing. Any part of the plant left in free air rather than in contact with the newspaper will shrivel up.'

Be sensitive to nature

While it is fine to pick most plants, if you're picking wild plants there are some things to consider.

The BSBI Code of Conduct contains guidance on how to collect responsibly and stay within the law. Download a free copy from the **[Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland website](#)**.

'Picking flowers can help children learn about them and become more enthusiastic about nature and protecting it. The same is true for adults.

'It's also a good idea to follow the "one in twenty rule". This means that, if there are twenty plants, it is okay to take from one of them, as long as it's not a species protected by legislation. Picking in moderation ensures plenty is left for others to enjoy and for the plant to survive.'

Top tips for pressing plants

Drying flowers quickly can help preserve colour. You want a location that's warm enough to get rid of moisture rapidly, without cooking your specimen.

Try drying your plant specimen next to a radiator or central heating boiler - these provide a nice flow of warm air. Even warming the newspaper before using it helps drive moisture off.'

Newspaper works well as the immediate covering for your plant specimen because it is fairly absorbent and has anti-fungal properties.

If you want to press a succulent plant or something with a large stem, use kitchen roll to absorb the extra moisture that comes out on the first day, and throw it away. Ditto if you are trying to press multiple specimens at once. Place the kitchen roll so that it is an extra layer outside of the newspaper. You could also consider cutting the plant stem in half.

If you're trying to press a bulkier plant, add extra paper and card to ensure that every part of the plant and flower is being directly pressed, to avoid bits shrivelling up.

Don't use sticky tape to attach your flower to card. It discolours things and easily falls off the card, but not the specimen. Glue is much better, particularly PVA.

Traditionally people used to sew pressed plant specimens onto thick paper. You could attempt that, if you enjoy sewing and have suitable paper, but glue works perfectly well'

How long does it take to press flowers?

Depending on what plant you are pressing and the drying conditions, it can take from just a couple of days to a few weeks for your specimen to dry completely.

The specimen is ready once it no longer feels damp. The dried plant may be quite brittle, so be careful when moving it.

What to do with pressed flowers and leaves

Here are some ideas for what to do once you have prepared some pressed flowers and leaves:

Turn them into a framed picture.

Decorate bookmarks and photo frames.

Create unique cards to send to friends and family.

Use them to learn about plants in your local area and how to identify them.

Make a collection recording the plants growing in your garden.

Growing Clematis on a Patio

Clematis grown in containers are a beautiful way to add height to a patio or courtyard garden. Choose a container 18" (45cm) approx. diameter for a single clematis plant. For larger containers consider planting two or more plants per container.

1. Obelisk support/or canes tied wigwam fashion.
2. Root crown buried 2.5" (5cm) below soil surface.
3. Soil surface covered with low growing plants to provide shade for root system.
4. Loosen out main base roots prior to planting.
5. Use loam-based compost such as John Innes No. 3.
6. Base drainage aided by layer of small stones or pea gravel.
7. Place pebbles or broken pottery over drainage holes.
8. Terracotta or wood make best Planters. Ensure good drainage.

More hints and tips

Here are a few clever and unusual gardening tips - not promising that they will work but let us know.

Put coffee filters in your potted plants

Sounds pretty weird, doesn't it! By putting the filters in the bottom of a plant, it helps make the transportation process easier. Once the plant outgrows its pot, it will need to be moved to something new, dirt and all. The filter keeps the entire plant in one piece, avoiding a huge mess to clean up later.

Grow a rose bush in a potato

Not as hard as you think! You can take the trimmings from other roses that you have cut, and stick them into potatoes. Yes, you read that right! Securing the trimming in the potato makes it easier to plant it. Simply dig a small hole in the dirt, stick the potato in the hole, and cover it back up. This avoids the need to buy a rose plant and follow all the rules that come with it.

Instead of buying mineral rich soil that is definitely overpriced, you can just as easily make your own. You can take the eggshells from eggs that you have used and put them in the blender. From there you blend them into a powder, which you can then take and sprinkle into your soil. From that you just created soil filled with calcium!

Another item to put on your potted plants: baby's nappies!

Putting nappies in your plant helps to soak up the excess moisture that your plant creates. It leads to a healthier plant that can grow at a faster pace. You will be less likely to over-water your plant if you follow this gardening hack. And an added bonus: it keeps the plant smelling fresh!

Create your own watering can

A lot of watering cans do not have the water pressure that gardeners desire. They either release too little water, or too much. It can get frustrating when you keep paying for a watering can that does not even do the trick. To avoid this, you can create your own! All

you need to do is take an empty gallon bottle and poke holes in the cap. Because it is your creation, you can choose how many holes you need. After this, you fill the bottle with water, screw on the cap, and you have your very own watering can.

Too many weeds? Vinegar to the rescue

Gardening cannot be done without finding weeds along the way. It can be a challenge to pull them out, because that can run the risk of messing up your plants. However, you want to keep your garden looking as beautiful as possible. An easy fix to the weed problem is to pour vinegar on them. Vinegar is a great solution to the problem because it kills the weeds without destroying the environment. An eco-friendly weed killer?

Water your plants over time with a wine bottle

Sounds strange, but once again, this is a hack that actually works. All you do is fill the empty bottle with water, poke holes in the cap and place it upside down into the potted plant. This allows the water to slowly make its way into the soil to keep the plant hydrated. If you are going away for the weekend and have no one to water the plants, this wine bottle solution is the way to go.

Want to keep animals away from your garden?

Instead of buying all the gardening tools to scare away animals, create your own tool. All you need to do is plant plastic forks into your soil with the tips pointed out of the ground. This keeps the animals away from your plants. They will see the forks, get scared, and turn away. Avoid the expensive and potentially unhelpful methods with this simple gardening trick without harming the animals.

Keep fungus away from your garden with cinnamon. Often, gardeners like to move plants from one place to another. If you are replanting something, you do not want fungus to start growing in place of the actual plant. It will ruin your garden, and will be a frustrating process. To avoid it altogether, use cinnamon! Before you plant what you want to, dip the root into cinnamon. It will help keep fungus from invading your garden, and keep the plants healthier.

<https://Wild about Walton & the Surrey Hills — WILD LONDON>

Planting azaleas? Use cola to help them grow

Gardeners want their plants to come out as strong as they can be. There are many weird hacks that do this. One of them is the use of cola. All you need to do is pour four ounces of it into your soil, and your azaleas will start growing even more efficiently! You do not even need the more expensive versions of this soda – any form of it works. A strange tip, but it does the trick.

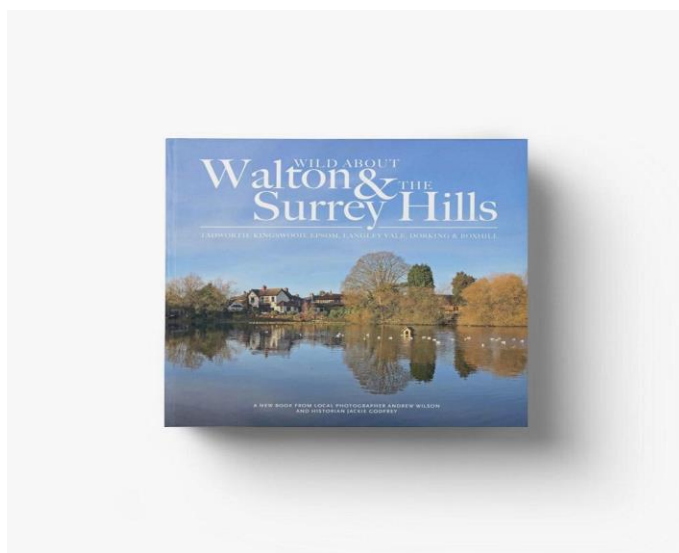
Quiz

The winner of the quiz included in the last newsletter was Jasmine Heath – well done.

Wild about Walton

As mentioned in the last newsletter, here is the information about the book.

Wild about Walton & The Surrey Hills £23.99



Come on a journey with Andrew Wilson and discover the wonders of the beautiful Surrey Hills. Walton on the Hill lies on the edge of the North Downs and due to its wonderful landscape has been designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Through the lens of Andrew’s camera visit some of the most magnificent sights in southern England including Box Hill, Epsom Downs, Leith Hill and the lesser known but equally as beautiful Langley Vale as well as the local towns and villages of Epsom, Tadworth, Kingswood, Headley and Dorking. All these places - and more - are featured in this fabulous new book which is part of Andrew’s ever-expanding series of “*Wild about*”.

As a departure from what he normally does and in recognition of the current difficult circumstances brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, a donation of £1 from the sale of this book will be made to each of the following charities: The Children’s Trust, Tadworth Court (charity number 288018) and The Friends of Walton on the Hill Primary School (1122518).

Old Wives’ Lore for Gardeners

Sow seeds generously

One for the rook, one for the crow,
One to die and one to grow.

You need not have couch grass

In an area badly infested with couch we sowed turnip seed thickly, as we were advised. We now have no couch. You may not want turnips (and sown so lavishly you will not get very large ones anyway), but you certainly don’t want couch. It is possible that lupins and tomatoes are recommended for the same purpose.

Ground Ivy, Horsetail and Ground Elder

It is said that marigolds, particularly the Mexican variety *tagety minuta*, will control these weeds. It may be disconcerting to the visitor to see a dense crop of marigolds blazing in some unsuitable part of the garden but if this remedy works as effectively as turnips against couch who cares?

This Edition's Poem

A Perfect Lady

I knew a girl who was so pure
She couldn't say the word manure
Indeed, her modesty was such
She wouldn't pass a rabbit-hutch
And butterflies upon the wing
Would make her blush at anything.

The lady is a gardener now
And all her views have changed somehow
She squashes greenfly with her thumb
And knows how little snowdrops come
In fact, the garden she has got
Has broadened out her mind a lot.

2021 Committee

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