

# Kingswood, Walton and Tadworth Horticultural Society

Early Summer 2021  
Newsletter



This is the second of your 2021 newsletters.

## Chairman's Jottings

Jottings from The Chair,

Welcome to the Kingswood, Walton and Tadworth Horticultural Society newsletter. Since March 2000, apart from a brief respite in the late summer, most of us have been in our gardens improving, designing and generally trying to keep away from the dreaded Covid-19. With easing started we can once again enjoy other member's gardens to see what they have been up to. Despite the cold and wet of this Spring, compared with last year, the plants are beginning to pick up. At least for a lot of us the water butts should be full which will hold us in good stead for a warm summer.

We are all hoping that the Early Summer Show will go ahead on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June at the Church Hall, Tadworth. This will still depend on the announcements due to be made in June, however your Committee has in place contingency plans to run a Show with a few Covid-19 amendments, if required. I do hope that as many of you will attend the Show as possible. For notes on the Show see below.

A little disappointing news is that the Late Summer Show will be cancelled due to the church hall having a new floor installed. They decided that August was usually the quietest month that they would cancel all bookings. But we still have some good news, Gardeners Delight will go ahead on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July.

I am really sorry this has been such a difficult year for us all.

We are desperately looking for young blood in the society as we are all getting older and we would like the opportunity to pass on some of our knowledge. If you could find the time to talk to your neighbours and encourage them to join (if they are gardeners!) we may be able to increase the membership. We also need to find some new blood on the committee and I sincerely hope that a few people have a little time to spare and a helping hand. I would also like mention again that we really do need someone to assist with the website.

**Graeme – Chairman**

## Dates for your 2021 Diary

### Early Summer Show

26<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### Late Summer Show

21<sup>st</sup> August 2121 CANCELLED

### Annual General Meeting

Date to confirmed

## Early Summer Show

As Graeme has indicated above, the Committee aim to run the Show in the normal way. This will however depend on the announcement due to be made on 21<sup>st</sup> June. If we have to make any changes, we will let all members know.

For those of you who wish to enter please ensure that you contact Gill Ross (01737 362675, [g89ross@gmail.com](mailto:g89ross@gmail.com)) no later than Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June. On show day you will be able to set up your exhibits from 8am. If you want to wear a face covering, please do so. On entry to the hall, you will be asked to sanitise your hands.

There will be increased space between the tables so that we can ensure Social Distancing and if necessary, a one-way system will be implemented. In addition, if we need to restrict the number of visitors in the hall we will do so.

Presentations will be made at 5 pm and if some members could stay to assist with the clearing up it would be appreciated. All exhibits should be collected as soon as possible after this time.

## 2021 Gardeners Delight

We are planning to hold 'A Gardeners Delight' over the week end of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> July between 2pm and 6pm on both days. This year there are two new gardens to visit, the first in Tattenham Way and the second, outside of the usual area, yet just over 3 miles from Tadworth is the home of our membership secretaries, Cathy and David.

Over the last seven years Guy and Anna have greatly increased their gardening knowledge and enthusiasm. With the help of Guy's Mum Suzie, they have transformed the previously abandoned 140 ft garden to include manicured circular lawns, regenerated shrubs and apples trees and planted many new roses and herbaceous plants. The top third of the garden has a sunken trampoline and raised play area for the children. They look forward to your visit and will appreciate any comments and advice.

Cathy and David moved to their ½ acre garden, based in West Purley, in 1997 and have developed it over the last 10 years since taking early retirement. In 2020 it was landscaped to include a large patio area, glasshouse, raised beds, herbaceous borders and small vegetable patch. Designed for colour between February until November. Outside of the usual catchment area yet only 15 minutes from Tadworth.

Parking on Foxley Lane, please keep your wheels off the pavement or in Woodcote Drive, a few moments away.

A full list of the gardens that will be opened are shown at the end of this newsletter.

## Book Review

It has been suggested that we include a section on good gardening books to read and Jasmine has started us off with the recommendation below.

To start with try '**A Gentle Plea For Chaos**' Reflections from an English Garden by Mirabel Osler.

*'Like no other writer, Osler captures the pure enchantment of gardening'* Penelope Hobhouse.

*'A gardening book with a difference...as pleasingly idiosyncratic as the garden on which it is based'* Sunday Times.

*'There are factual gardening books and those that are a good read. And all too rarely a book that's both. 'A Gentle Plea for Chaos' falls happily and headlong into this category'* Alan Titchmarsh, Daily mail.

Please let us know if you have any recommendations.

## Subscriptions

Thank you to all of you who have paid your subscriptions for 2021. We currently have 227 members and 3 juniors.

## Coach Trip

After much thought and deliberation, we have decided that we will not organise a coach outing in 2021. We had been hoping to arrange a visit to RHS Hyde Hall for their show in July but felt there may have been too much reticence about hiring a coach in view of Covid-19 so we will leave it for another year.

If there are any places that would be worthy of a visit, please let us know.

### **Plant a tree.**

The Queen's Green Canopy scheme has been launched to encourage people to plant trees from the start of the tree-planting season in October 2021 through to the end of 2022, to mark her 70 years on the throne.

The scheme will also highlight 70 irreplaceable ancient woodlands across the UK and identify 70 ancient trees, and create a pilot training programme for unemployed young people to plant and manage trees.

A great idea.

### **Terry Smale**

It is with sadness that we have to report that Terry passed away in February following a short illness.

He was a committee member of the Banstead Horticultural Society between 1999 and 2014, a RHS judge and a renowned expert on growing Lithops. Some of you may remember seeing Terry on Gardeners World or remember visiting his garden to view his extensive collection of plants. Our thoughts are with his family.

### **My garden by Keith Lewis (part 2)**

We moved as a family into Shelveys Way on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 1950. The garden had been neglected and at first, we were unable to discover the way through a hedge, which was over 40 feet high. After prodding with a fork to find the original garden path we found an opening which was an obvious gap and we cut our way through. We discovered 26 mature fruit trees consisting of three types of pears, five kinds of plums, a greengage and numerous varieties of apples. Surrounding these trees, the grass and stinging nettles grew over 5 feet. Over the next three years, with the aid of a jobbing

gardener and an uncle who spent his holidays with us, we cleared most of the ground. We laid new paths, made a large vegetable area and I made flower beds between the house and the beech hedge, which had been cut down to about 8 foot high. On the lawn were two double May trees about 18 foot high and pink in colour. We re-laid a crazy paving path up the centre of the lawn with a large round centre bed about 12 feet wide. The centre bed had annuals such as antirrhinums, French marigolds, ageratums and lobelia bedded out in summer. The borders either side were full of herbaceous plants, very much like those I grow today. We invested in a motor mower, which helped except when I was mowing the road verge. The police stopped me, they patrolled in those days, and asked if I had a driving license. I had to tell them I was not yet 16. They laughed and told me not to do this in future as I was not insured. Happy days!!

At last, I managed to persuade my Father that we were wasting our time trying to grow vegetables close to the woodland belt at the bottom of the garden, we converted the area to grow azaleas and rhododendrons and other woodland plants. Most of them came from an elderly lady who propagated them in Kingswood. They cost half a crown each, about 25p in today's money and most have lasted until today. When in her 90s, Miss Gosney made me lift a little group of species tulips which I have to this day, over 50 years later. We also continued to remove most of the fruit trees due to the constant squirrel damage, but retained a fine Bramley apple tree. I remember a day when my father, who worked in Lloyds in the City, carrying a large sack bag of plums for his 'girls' in the office. Quite a sight for someone in a pinned striped suit and a bowler hat!!

By now I had started to play cricket for Tadworth which slightly restricted gardening, but we still had an attractive garden. At 19 years old I was called up for National Service and found myself in North Wales, thence to Woolwich and finally Edinburgh. My father by now had his first stroke and was becoming incapacitated which meant the jobbing gardener kept things ticking over until I returned from the army. I should say, at this point, my mother was not a gardener, but loved to pick flowers. I managed to get home from the army most weekends during the summer months, mainly to

play cricket, but also to do some gardening. On my return from the army in April 1959, I earned money gardening for people in Shelveys Way, backing a few winners on the horses and playing cricket and teaching swimming at Box Hill open air pool. That was a fantastic summer weatherwise. In October, I decided it was time to get a job. My father had two more mild strokes and I was given charge of the garden. Time for some changes which I will tell you about in a future newsletter.

### **Questions for the committee**

We have asked each member of the committee the following questions. In the last newsletter Jennie and Jasmine commented, this time it's David's turn.

#### **What or who inspired you to like gardening?**

My dad was a keen gardener and enjoyed growing dahlias and chrysanthemums (not to show standard but to enjoy!) He used to dig up the dahlias each year and store in a neighbour's garage in an old banana box. I have a picture of myself as a teenager using a hoe around his beloved dahlias. My mum's contribution was to plant a few daffodils but cold weather, soil and my mother were not a good match.

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

If I have a favourite task, it is cutting the grass. When my father passed away, I promised myself I would use any inheritance to buy a new car and a replacement lawn mower! The car came first but having just dislocated and fractured my shoulder we decided to buy a key operated Hayter Harrier (a boy's dream come true!). I am now having to tutor Cathy in the art of mowing in a straight line and also cutting the edges (it may take me a while by which time I will have recovered).

#### **What advice would you give a person new to gardening?**

Buy the best tools you can afford. When we brought our first house we went to Homebase (that's all we could afford at the time) and 33 years later they are still all in use, although there have been many

additions since! Why do we need 6 separate types of shears?

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

Being outside in the open air, although being follicle challenged the summer sun does not treat my scalp kindly.

#### **Favourite garden smells?**

Salvias and freshly mown grass.

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

Lysimachia or Loosestrife, an absolute thug.

#### **The season you love best and why?**

Spring, summer and autumn. Winter is a pain which is why we go away in January or February but this year the pandemic forced us to stay in Purley, bring on 2022.

#### **David Dunning**

#### **The story of the tomato.**

In 1544 the first strange fruits arrived in Italy. They had been sent from Central America by the Spanish missionaries and we know that these tomatoes must have been yellow skinned varieties. They were given the name pomodoro (golden apple) and this word remains the Italian for tomato.

Our word is derived from the native tomato, a description given by the native Americans to the fruits they used and as an aphrodisiac. The Italians were trusting and ate them, but other Europeans were not. The first tomatoes arrived in Britain about 1580 and were regarded with grave suspicion. They looked like Deadly Nightshade and grazing animals would not touch them. The tomato quickly earned the name Love Apple, perhaps because of its use in love philtres but much more likely because of its early Latin name Poma amorist.

For 250 years we could not make up our minds whether to trust it or not. It was grown as a tender ornamental climber which bore colourful fruits. Even in the 1820s a distinguished gardening authority described the various pretty shapes and colours and noted that the large red ones could be used in the kitchen. The 1870 seed catalogue in the US placed tomatoes in the Ornamental Flowers section.

Breeders began to improve the insipid or bitter taste of the wild fruits and the doubts about safety at last disappeared. The result is the tomato is the most popular of all raw vegetables consumed in the US and Europe.

### **Gardening Jokes (some not at all funny!)**

"When's Honeydew?"

The Thyme's getting on."

"Crikey it's chilli in here. Let's turnip the heat."

"Does a Bok bring you Choy?"

Then Lettuce all smile."

### **Gardening Tongue Twisters**

**Moses** supposes his toeses are roses,  
But Moses supposes erroneously,  
For nobody's toeses are posies of roses  
As Moses supposes his toeses to be.

**Did** Doug dig Dick's garden or did Dick dig Doug's garden?

**Theophilus** Thistler, the thistle sifter, in sifting a sieve of unsifted thistles, thrust three thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb.

### **More hints and tips**

Moroccan Mint is a variety of Mint used to make the refreshing mint tea found in Morocco and other parts of North Africa which you can grow. When making tea Moroccan Mint can be used on its own

or is often mixed with Gunpowder Tea (a type of Chinese tea) or black tea.

For Moroccans, mint tea is as important as earl grey is for the British and green tea is for the Chinese. It can be served at any time of day with sweet and savoury foods, it's always tea o'clock in Morocco.

### **HOW TO MAKE MOROCCAN MINT TEA**

**Makes 400ml**

### **INGREDIENTS**

7 fresh mint sprigs cut in half so they can fit in the teapot and more for garnish

- 1 heaped teaspoon loose gunpowder tea
- 500 ml boiling water
- 3 tablespoons caster sugar

### **METHOD**

- For this recipe, you will need a Moroccan teapot or a stovetop kettle. A stovetop kettle is a kettle you can safely place on your stovetop.
- In a clean pot, pour the gunpowder tea and half a cup of boiled water. Let the tea simmer for a minute and pour out the water into a separate cup. If using a stovetop kettle, strain the water to keep the tealeaves inside the pot. Set this cup aside as it contains the essence of tea don't discard it.
- Repeat the same process, pour half a cup of the process, pour half a cup of the boiled water in the same teapot but this time, swirl the teapot a couple of times to rinse to the tea leaves. If using a stovetop kettle, strain the water to keep the tealeaves inside the pot. Pour out the water and discard it.
- Now, insert the fresh mint, sugar and first cup of water you set aside earlier. Fill the teapot with the remaining water and gently simmer with the remaining water you set aside earlier over medium-low heat until it comes to a boil. It's important to let the tea slowly come to a boil to enable the gunpowder tea and fresh mint to steep properly. If you use a Moroccan teapot, you will see steam coming from the teapot when it's boiling.

- When it comes to the boil, carefully open the teapot and with a large spoon, stir the tea to make sure that the sugar is well dissolved. Serve hot, if using a stovetop kettle, strain the tea to keep the tealeaves inside the pot when pouring each glass.

Place some fresh mint in each tea cup/glass to obtain a stronger fresh mint aroma and to decorate your tea cups/glasses (optional).

## HERBS

There are many combinations of herbs that work well in containers and varieties that you can grow for taste as well as for their ornamental properties. Many can be easily grown from seed or cuttings, but to if you haven't propagation facilities herb plants are readily available from garden centres or specialist growers.

Having a potted herb garden that you can harvest year-round is a chef's dream come true. However, Herb Gardening in containers is relatively easy and most varieties can be grown successfully on a windowsill, a patio or a balcony.

### Type of container

Let your imagination run wild when considering what container to grow herbs in. Just about anything will work, but keep in mind, most varieties prefer fast draining medium i.e., John Innes no3 compost. As long as the container you choose has adequate holes and drains well you should be in good shape to successfully grow herbs. Some of the most popular container choices are made of terracotta, wood or modern-day plastic, although herb gardeners prefer terracotta because of its natural wicking properties. If you are looking for style as well as practicality, try using a strawberry pot. You can grow a variety of different herbs in a small space on a balcony, decking or patio area.

Another thing to remember when choosing containers is that size does matter. The pot must fit the plant-or plants-that will be growing in it. If the container is too small your herbs may quickly become rootbound. On the other hand, if the container is too large, your plants may spend all its energy on root production and not grow the way they should.

## Soil

When growing herbs in containers its vital you provide the plants with a growing medium that is well drained but retains moisture and food in dry spells. An open and loose compost is also essential for the herbs to develop a healthy root system. A loam-based medium such as John Innes no 3 is ideal but there are several composts at garden centres.

## Fertiliser

While most herbs require little fertiliser, you do need to pay close attention to container grown herbs. Because the amount of soil around the plant is limited to the size of the container, it dries out faster and requires more nutrients than soil grown herbs. For herbs, usually all that is needed is a good all-natural organic fertiliser which can be mixed in with the potting mix prior to planting.

If your plants loose colour or look a little peaked during the growing season apply a good liquid fertiliser at half the recommended strength every 14 days during the growing season. Apply fertilisers sparingly to herbs. Heavy applications will produce large plants, but the essential oils that produce the flavours and aromas will be greatly reduced.

## Watering

When it comes to watering, containerised herbs dry out faster and require more attention than border grown herbs. How much you water depends on several factors, including:

- Type of soil or potting mix used
- Amount of exposure to sun, rainfall and wind
- Average temperature
- Size of your plants and containers

Many herbs prefer dry conditions therefore they do not have to be kept as moist as say tomato plants but this doesn't apply to all herbs.

## Sun/Light

The essential oils, that give herbs their flavour and aroma, are produced in the largest quantity when they receive plenty of light. For best results, most herb varieties require at least 6 hours of sun per day. If growing indoors, many herbs will thrive on a south facing window sill.

### **Pest and disease management**

Herbs grown in containers can be attacked by insect pests and diseases. Inspect the plants periodically for common pests like aphids, spider mites and white flies and spray with a contact and residual insecticide to prevent further infestation. During wet periods fungal diseases can attack young and mature plants and should be treated immediately with a recommended fungicide.

### **Overwintering Herbs in a container**

Some herbs die back in Winter e.g., French tarragon and mint. These and most herbs will look after themselves if placed where they cannot be frozen, saturated by rain or allowed to become too dry. Suitable places include in the rain shadow of walls, in a cold frame or even in an open fronted shed. Use pot feet or stand containers on bricks to avoid water logging. If very cold weather is forecasted protect containers from freezing by wrapping in bubble polythene.

### **HOW TO MAKE ELDERFLOWER CORDIAL**

Throughout May and into early June, you'll be able to find elderflower growing in parks, woods and alongside pavements all over the UK. These tiny white flowers grow in sprays on small trees and can be picked to make elderflower cordial. Head out to pick your own elderflower, then make your own elderflower cordial with this super straightforward recipe. Store it for up to six weeks to spruce up plain water or to use in cocktails, desserts and cakes.

### **Try this easy recipe to make elderflower cordial at home:**

1. Pick about 20 heads of elderflower, trim the stalks and wash well to get rid of any bugs.
2. Now make a syrup. Gently heat 1.5 litres of water and 2.5kg white sugar in a large pan until the sugar dissolves, stirring occasionally. Bring to the boil and remove from the heat.

3. Zest 2 lemons and slice into rounds, then add to the syrup along with the elderflowers. If you have citric acid (you can buy it online or at chemist's), add a heaped tablespoon – this will help to preserve it for longer but it's not essential. Stir well.

4. Cover the pan and set aside to infuse for 24 hours.

5. Line a colander with a piece of muslin or a tea towel and pour in the infused syrup. Discard the elderflower and lemon rounds.

6. Funnel the strained cordial into sterilised bottles, then store it in the fridge. Alternatively, freeze the cordial in ice cube trays for a delicious addition to water or gin and tonic.

### **This editions poem**

#### **The Gardener**

I know a gardening man,  
Who grows red roses  
And catches the caterpillars,  
By their noses  
He lifts up the beetles  
That eat his carrots,  
And takes them to the zoo  
To feed the parrots.

#### **My Wife the Gardener**

~ Peter (poem in old magazine)

She dug the plot on Monday –  
the soil was rich and fine,  
She forgot to thaw out dinner –  
so we went out to dine...  
She planted roses Tuesday –  
she says they are a must,  
They really are quite lovely  
but she quite forgot to dust.  
On Wednesday it was daisies –  
they opened up with sun,  
All whites and pinks and yellows –  
but the laundry wasn't done...  
The poppies came on Thursday -  
a bright and cherry red,

I guess she really was engrossed –  
she never made the bed...  
It was violets on Friday –  
in colours she adores,  
It never bothered her at all –  
all crumbs upon the floors  
I hired a maid on Saturday –  
my week is now complete,  
My wife can garden all she wants –  
the house will still be neat!  
It's nearly lunchtime Sunday –  
and I cannot find the maid,  
Oh no! I don't believe it!  
She's out there WITH THE SPADE!

*William Wordsworth*

I've watched you now a full half-hour;  
Self-poised upon that yellow flower  
And, little Butterfly! Indeed  
I know not if you sleep or feed.  
How motionless! — not frozen seas  
More motionless! and then  
What joy awaits you, when the breeze  
Hath found you out among the trees,  
And calls you forth again!

### **Bunnies**

Two little bunnies, bless their souls,  
Go into hiding in their holes,  
And they emerge a seething mob,  
It must have been an inside job.

### **2021 Committee**

Chairman - Graeme Boast (01737 832395)

[gboast@gboast.co.uk](mailto:gboast@gboast.co.uk)

Hon Secretary – Keith Lewis (01737 210707)

Hon Treasurer – Ian Garrett (01737 362610)

[lc\\_garrett@hotmail.com](mailto:lc_garrett@hotmail.com)

Membership Secretaries – David Dunning and Cathy Varney (0208 660 9242)

[kwths@btinternet.com](mailto:kwths@btinternet.com)

Show Captain (Vacancy)

*(Does not need to attend Committee Meetings)*

Sociable Gardeners and Minute Secretary –  
Jasmine Heath (01737 814291)

[Jasmine.Heath@btinternet.com](mailto:Jasmine.Heath@btinternet.com)

Marion Mason (01737 819964)

[Marionamason165@gmail.com](mailto:Marionamason165@gmail.com)

Jennie Page

Anne Bance



KINGSWOOD WALTON & TADWORTH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PROUDLY PRESENTS A  
GARDENER'S DELIGHT 2– 6pm on both SATURDAY 3rd JULY and SUNDAY 4th JULY

The White House, Walton Street KT20 7RU Sunday

Mellows, Lothian Wood KT20 5DQ Sat & Sun Plants

Meon House, Meon Close KT20 5DN Sunday Teas

Rozel, Tadworth Street KT20 5RG Sat & Sun Teas

Holly Cottage, Chapel Road KT20 5SB Saturday

The Firs, The Hoppety KT20 5RQ Sat & Sun Ices

27 Cross Road KT20 5ST Sunday

75 Shelveys Way KT20 5QQ Sat & Sun Teas

128 Brighton Road KT20 6AQ Saturday

87 Tattenham Way \*NEW\* KT20 5NE Sat & Sun Teas

101 Foxley Lane \*NEW\* CR8 3HQ Sat & Sun

Tickets (£7.00) available from any of the gardens on either day. One ticket gives entry to all gardens. Children free. For more details contact Sue Edwards: [suehortsoc@btinternet.co](mailto:suehortsoc@btinternet.co)