

SCOTTISH GARDENERS' FORUM

Newsletter Vol 9: Issue 2

Summer 2011



www.scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

SUMMER 2011

EDITORIAL

MAY 2011

Dear Fellow Gardeners,

Summer, as always, catches us unawares. After waiting so long for warmth and light, our gardens have suddenly sprung into life and any arrears have been more than made good by April's balmy weather. Let that remind us that in gardening we are in partnership with nature. We are so little in control of our environment, but with patience, care, love and respect, we can achieve well-nigh miraculous results.

Christopher Davies (Editor)

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The Scottish Gardeners' Forum exists to provide the communication link between Scotland's many horticulturally-oriented organisations. The Council (see back cover) meets regularly to discuss matters of interest, either to horticulture as a whole, or members in particular. One of our concerns is that individual clubs should flourish in their local context, benefiting from the experience of the SGF as a whole, and in turn responding to the requests for information from other members. We invite you to send your questions to the Secretary (or to any Council Member listed): Alex Rutherford, Flat 1/1 21 Highburgh Rd, Dowanhill, Glasgow G12 9YG: 0141 334 6523,

email secretary@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

Our cover picture: the classic rose which flourishes so well in our climate, and adorns our gardens so beautifully in summer. Aesthetic perfection, rewarding the gardener and gladdening the heart of the onlooker and the passer-by.

OUR CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

What a joy it is to see some fantastic weather at last. April has been such a great month for catching up with all my gardening jobs, lets all hope this is not our Summer come early.

I can't believe its Gardening Scotland time again, where does the time go? My post is getting bigger by the day as the application forms start to come in for the Pallet and Planter Challenges.

The main show this year will have more than 400 exhibitors taking part, selling everything from compost to conservatories. The show will also be packed with environmental experts in the Living Garden and you can meet TV's top gardening team in the BBC Scotland Beechgrove Theatre where they will be giving entertaining workshops and demonstrations throughout the three days of the Show. I hope you have time to come and see us at the show and maybe purchase some wonderful new plants.

Have a very enjoyable and productive Summer.

Best wishes.

Jim



THE SGF IN ACTION.....

MEMBERSHIP & BENEFITS

The SGF membership is uniquely focused on Societies rather than individuals – the latter focus which RCHS (“The Caley”) already manages with excellence. The Forum’s objectives as expressed in its Constitution are:

- to advance education in the knowledge and best practice of all aspects of gardening and horticulture for the public benefit in Scotland.
- to foster co-operation among general and specialist Horticultural and Gardening Societies/ Clubs/ Associations/ Branches for their mutual benefit.
- to encourage the retention and development of existing and new Societies.
- to provide a voice for the non-professional sector of gardening in Scotland

Membership of the Scottish Gardeners’ Forum includes: -

- Register of Judges – updated regularly
- Register of Speakers – updated regularly
- Register of Societies
- Access to Public Liability Insurance
- A Quarterly Newsletter
- Access to a nationwide network of like minded enthusiasts

SGF WEBSITE

Our website has been redesigned and is being kept regularly up to date, so that it is an efficient source of information, not only for members, but for anyone enquiring about the SGF.

Our intention in redesigning the website was to make it easy to access and navigate and to give you the basic information you are looking for,

including details of SGF events, downloadable application forms, who's who and contact addresses, current and back numbers of newsletters and photographs of recent events, for example, the pallet gardens competition. Do make use of this website and let us know how you experience it. If you yourselves do not have a website and are thinking of establishing one, and would like to tap our brains, please get in touch with me: editor@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

Please inform your members about the availability of this site and encourage them to visit it.

www.scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

SGF NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is published four times per year, in March, May, September and December. We are taking care to make it topical, easy to read and entertaining. We would like the circulation to be as wide as possible.

You can help in three ways:

Firstly: contact us, give us feedback, reactions and comments so that we can gear the content to your expectations, avoid “dead wood” and encourage fresh growth.

Secondly: we want the Newsletter to be a forum for the exchange of information and a bridge between the community of gardening clubs (our members) in Scotland. Please let us have relevant details of your events, topical stories of human or gardening interest, club happenings, articles on aspects of gardening in Scotland: basically, things you would like to share with others. The Newsletter is a resource at your disposal! Use it!

Thirdly: help us with distribution, that is by circulating the printed copies, or better still making your members aware that they can read the Newsletters on line.

Finally, we are introducing the facility for you to receive the Newsletter by email (as a pdf file, which the majority of computers will be able to download and print out if you wish). At this point in time we do not have a full list of members' email addresses, so we have to ask you to notify us.

Please email our membership secretary, Mike Rossi, on:

membership@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

and we will put you on our mailing list.

For the time being, at least, our Newsletter will continue to be sent to member organisations as a printed version in 'hard copy'.

Items for the Newsletter (quarterly: March/May/ September/December) are welcome and should be sent to the Editor: Christopher Davies, 7 West Carnethy Avenue, Edinburgh EH13 0ED: Tel 0131 441 2152,

Email: editor@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

“WHAT’S ON” FEATURE

In this issue you will find a list of Members' events of which they have notified us. This list is not complete, nor exhaustive. We have sorted it in order by date, as we think this will be most useful to you. At this stage you may find it interesting to browse through the list. It may perhaps suggest ideas. However in the future we will probably have to be selective, to cover annual events and plant shows, for example, as it would simply be impractical to list the full programmes of all our members. Let's wait and see how it develops.

GARDENING SCOTLAND 2011 – DON'T MISS IT!

WHEN Gardening Scotland 2011 opens to the public on Friday, 3 June, at the Royal Highland Centre, near Edinburgh Airport, it will mark the start of three days packed with inspiration, information and the chance for gardeners to buy exceptional plants direct from some of the UK's leading growers.



GARDENING SCOTLAND 2011 – GROUP OFFERS

Gardening Scotland have some great offers available for group bookings including **one free ticket** for every 10 tickets purchased and a **contribution of £25** towards the cost of hiring a coach for groups of 25 or more.

There is also **free coach parking** and a **drop-off point at a dedicated entrance**, plus a **complimentary ticket and meal voucher** for the coach driver.

If you would like to arrange a group visit to Gardening Scotland 2011 or find out more information, then please call the Gardening Scotland office on 0131 333 0965.

For more information on Gardening Scotland 2011, please visit the website at www.gardeningscotland.com

NATIONAL BONSAI COLLECTION OF SCOTLAND AND GARDENING SCOTLAND 2011



As many of you are already aware, the Bonsai Area of the Floral Hall at Gardening Scotland is home, in its 400 square metre space, to the biggest Bonsai Display and the biggest Bonsai Competition to be staged each year in Scotland. It offers at least three display areas, often including performances of the colourful and fascinating Japanese Tea Ceremony. It also provides the public with the chance to admire in excess of 130 of these tiny (some not so tiny) trees and to decide which they like best. Ongoing workshops encourage the public to try their hand at a bit of guided styling in this art. Some common misconceptions about bonsai are also explained (with examples) by the members who are manning the stands. Among them these:

“Bonsai are for indoors:” – *NOT TRUE.* This impression is based on the beautiful photographs appearing in many magazines on equally beautiful polished wood tables. These illustrations are for display purposes only and the trees are taken indoors usually for a maximum of four days. (Normally they are outdoor plants and are allowed to acclimatise under normal weather conditions)



“Bonsai are trees specially reared for miniaturisation.” – NOT TRUE. Almost any tree and many shrubs are entirely suitable for “bonsai-ing” (Exceptions tend to be those with huge leaves)

“Bonsai is an expensive hobby.” – NOT TRUE. Like any other hobby, you can spend a lot of money in achieving what you aim for but most bonsai enthusiasts, other than those with fat cheque books whom we also respect, like it best when they convert by styling a tree which has been got from one or more of the following sources

- A Plant Nursery such as Binny Plants and many others in the Floral Hall
- A specialist Bonsai outlet /trade stand such as North of England Bonsai, Wattston Bonsai or Pinewood Bonsai, usually all present in the Floral Hall
- With permission from the wild eg hedgerows and ditches

What makes bonsai different and all the more interesting and challenging is that it is a LIVE ART

YOU TOO can try your hand or even become quite an artist by starting or continuing your interest at GARDENING SCOTLAND – Taste it and see



Alistair C Simpson O.R.S. Hon. Life President

BLACK CLOUDS OVER SUNTRAP – BUT SUN COULD SHINE AGAIN WITH RESCUE PACKAGE

Big beasts of bulldozers could roll into Suntrap and churn the beautiful garden into a sea of mud if the National Trust for Scotland and Oatridge College persist with plans to sell the garden for housing development. The Save our Suntrap (SOS) Group is determined to convince the owners that this sale is a very short term fix for their straitened finances and that, in the long term, there is a much better solution. This would uphold the principles of George Boyd Anderson who donated the garden to the NTS and which would enhance the reputations of the owner organisations which are also charities.

Imagine, if you will, a very different scene—the garden filled with groups of people working on different horticultural tasks, the garden rooms fulfilling various functions, the tranquility soothing troubled minds but silence also broken by laughter and conversation in the “camaraderie” of shared experience—a community garden for everyone! This is the vision of the SOS Group. George Boyd Anderson gave his own garden to the Trust as an educational resource for those with small gardens and he hoped it would always be useful to the public.

SOS proposes to set up a Trust to continue the role of the garden in providing a place which the public can visit and learn about horticulture and take ideas for their own gardens. Classes in horticulture and related arts would be reinstated for amateurs including those with learning difficulties. Suntrap has long been a centre of excellence in the field of therapeutic gardening and this is an area which would be developed to include those suffering from post trauma stress and those in the penal system in need of rehabilitation. Areas of the garden would be offered to some of the long list of people seeking to learn gardening on allotments; this would be a way of involving people in maintaining and committing to the garden.

Suntrap Garden would form partnerships with other charities to provide services to those disadvantaged by their circumstances such as running a Social Enterprise café and promoting sales of cuttings made by the disabled from the existing plants in the garden. In addition, the Suntrap Trust will also seek commercial partnerships with businesses in the area

to provide garden visits. The SOS Group has researched opportunities and is confident of obtaining funding to maintain the garden at no cost to the owners. While some repairs are necessary and there will be an ongoing programme of maintenance, additional surveys have suggested that the original figures quoted for modernisation were excessive. The garden can be maintained by volunteers and provides a variety of opportunities for volunteering.

Visit the garden on a volunteering day and you will find a “buzz” about the place as volunteers weed and water and tend plants. Of course, there is always a need for more but many of the casual visitors have come forward to offer some time. Since opening for the season, there has been a steady flow of visitors and, without exception, their comments have been positive. Those who live locally and already know the garden are passionate about saving it. Unfortunately, some of the less able who have experienced the garden are unable to articulate their views but carers have told Save our Suntrap that they would like to return. John Smith, former Manager of Suntrap, tells a story of one lady who attended a Day Centre from which a group came to Suntrap. She was very nervous and quite unable to travel on her own. One day, the Centre bus failed to pick her up at her stop. John was very concerned when she did not arrive and went out to look for her but in vain. An hour later, she appeared at Suntrap having walked two miles along a winding country road being determined to come because she enjoyed her time there so much! Now, she has been deprived of this service but it could be offered to her again if Suntrap Garden is allowed to run the garden.

The Save our Suntrap Group has cross party support from politicians and a sympathetic press which has elicited support from the public. We are looking for help from fellow members of Scottish Gardeners’ Forum and members of the National Trust for Scotland to keep this garden which is special to many alive. Once this garden disappears it is lost forever and cannot be retrieved. However if our vision can be realised, the sun can shine on Suntrap again.

The garden is now open on Tuesdays and Fridays and at weekends and Open Day is on Sunday 22 May (10.30 – 16.00).

Isobel Lodge, Chair, Save Our Suntrap

EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS WITH LAPTOP AND DATA PROJECTOR

Today's audiences have become accustomed to have their interest maintained through multi-media, speech backed up by pictures ("images"), and on occasion including film-clips. A speaker has to be charismatic indeed to hold the audience through language alone! Yet forget not that it is real people, their knowledge and enthusiasm and their ability to connect with the audience that will determine whether a talk is memorable or not.



Technology and the digital props of Powerpoint may impress – possibly the presenter more than the listener. The use of the projector over and beyond the strict demands of illustrating the talk, needs to be treated sparingly. Bear in mind that turning down the lights to enhance the visibility of images on screen has two negative effects. Darkness in a warm room can have a soporific effect on certain individuals, reducing concentration, and the same darkness severely compromises the ability of the speaker and the audience to see each other, working against that *connection* which brings the talk alive.



Here are a few observations which you might like to consider. Every speaker has their own style and you may decide to adopt a different approach, which if it works for you, is fine.

Planning: consider which images are (a) essential as illustrations or (b) support – underlining – of the spoken commentary. Those images (usually text) under category (b) should be used sparingly and as headlines. Do not present text which you read aloud. The screen displays the facts, you give the explanation in your own words – showing that you are in control, not a puppet.

Equipment: you will need a laptop computer (portable), a data projector, compatible with the computer, and of course a screen. Many visiting speakers now have their presentations on disk (usually these days on a 'memory stick.')

The laptop will need the software "Powerpoint" which will enable you to create presentations as well as to show other persons' work. A little practice will render this easy. But please avoid the temptation to employ 'animations' – sophisticated transitions from one slide to the next, which distract the audience rather than inform them.

Set-up: use familiar equipment where possible. Following the recommended procedures for set-up, connection, and switch on/off should result in correct loading of the programs first time. If you are sharing the system with a visiting speaker, it is always wise to allow extra time. You should set the computer to show on its screen what it is showing on the main screen behind you. That way you can look at the audience and glance at the computer for the subject at the same time. Keep the room lighting a high as possible, but if the images require a darker room and you require notes, remember to make sure that a reading light is available. A laser-pointer can be useful to point to details on the main screen.

Presentation: Ensure that you are familiar with the operation of the equipment. You have enough to do when making your presentation without struggling with technology.

I invariably use the club's projector for a 10 minute notices slot prior to the main speaker. This consists of mainly text announcements interspersed with a few pictures of noteworthy events. Using the headline slides as an aide-memoire overcomes the need to have notes. Ensuring that the slide show is on manual change (not automatic) means that you can switch slides according to your own tempo. Such techniques are especially valuable at formal meetings such as AGM, where the agenda can be effectively navigated, key points highlighted and illustrated, and accounts projected. With the aid of a pointer, the audience can be guided through salient items avoiding confusion. This is the key to a successful meeting.

Most of the above points are self-evident. Experienced speakers know however that you can never take anything for granted. If you have not yet used computer and projector, then this article should encourage you to take the plunge, but remember the technology is your servant, you are the master. It is there to help and will never replace a real person.

Christopher Davies

INTER – SOCIETY COMPETITIONS

On the 22nd March this year, Pathhead Horticultural Society hosted the annual inter – society quiz. The societies involved were Dalkeith, Gifford, Gorebridge, Penicuik and Pathhead. These five societies have been competing against each other since 1979, originally the competition was for a class (three vegetables, flowers, pot plant, article of handicraft and baking) at the annual flower show. Each society hosted the competition on a five year cycle, and for over ten years it was very successful, and greatly contributed to the spectacle of the show.

However it became very difficult to keep the competition going, and someone suggested a quiz night and I am delighted to say that this format has been going strong for over twenty years.

Last month over seventy society members attended the quiz in the Pathhead community hall. Each team comprises three people, all questions are team questions, so no individuals are “victimised”, the quiz is usually about thirty questions long, conducted on a “pub style” format where all teams answer the same questions and answers are discussed and given at the quiz completion. This also allows the audience to participate, and indeed compete for a prize.

With the advent of computers, digital projectors and power-point it is very easy to research, set up and conduct the quiz, and even non techno geeks like me have no problems.

Dalkeith were the successful team last month, the team consisted of Sheena Lamb, Stan De Prato, and the evergreen & ever present Tom Hardwick.

The quiz usually lasts about an hour, and afterwards the backbone of all our societies (the ladies) provide a sumptuous spread of home baking, it is an excellent social occasion, an opportune time to meet old friends, arrange future speakers and judges for the coming season.

Why not give it a go?

Jim Williams, Pathhead & District HS

KILMACOLM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

COMMUNITY PROJECT FOR THE RENOVATION OF THE GARDEN AT THE CROSS, KILMACOLM

Situated at the corner of the junction of Bridge of Weir Road, Port Glasgow Road and Lochwinnoch Road, the 'Garden at the Cross' was originally given a transformation from an elderly rose garden into a shrub garden in celebration of the Millennium, by Kilmacolm Horticultural Society in the Spring of 2000.



Our brand new Community Centre stands at the heart of the village. Many years of debate, plans, financing, co-operation between Council, Cargill Trust, fundraising by the community, have resulted in a superb new Kilmacolm Community Centre, plus library and rooms for commercial use.

The 'Garden at the Cross' is immediately adjacent to the new Centre, it looked tired, overgrown and neglected. So the Society felt the time was right to refurbish the shrubs and hedging and incorporate bedding plants and bulbs. Permission was given from Inverclyde Council (who maintain the public gardens), a local landscape gardener was sought who agreed to help with the makeover, all we needed was the finance!

The Scottish Gardeners' Forum kindly granted a donation of £250, we asked for donations from our visitors to the Flower Show, and Inverclyde Council gave a grant for the project.

Work was slow to start, then a hard winter stopped everything. But in March we finally got going. The ground was cleared, we put down a firm membrane to deter even the marestail from breaking through, and planted 150 shrubs, evergreens, pots of bulbs and grasses. The area was covered with a good layer of bark to cut down on the council's labour costs, and to protect the plants.



A mixture of dwarf rhododendron, azalea, pieris, potentilla, choisya, hebe, pittosporum, periwinkle, heather, heuchera, with pots of bulbs for the spring, to be exchanged for pots of geranium for the summer, have been chosen to give a spread of colour through the year, with a range of heights to reach up to the hedging at the rear of the bed.

We hope to find some interesting rocks to use for trailing plants as a future idea.

The heart of our village now has a garden (much admired) fronting the excellent long-awaited Centre.

We thank everyone who helped us to succeed with this project for Kilmacolm.

Jill Russell, Secretary

PERTH GARDENERS' & COUNTRYSIDE MARKET

Perth's first market of the year is due to be held in the city centre on St John's Street on Sat 14th May, 9am – 5pm.

The Gardeners' & Countryside market plus all other craft and art markets held throughout the year in Perth are organised and run by City Centre Management, Perth & Kinross Council.

We have a great selection of stalls again this year which include culinary plants, organic skin care products, wood crafts, locally made wines, planters, bird boxes to name but a few.

Creative Waste Workshops will be there to show children how to transform plastic bottles into fantastic flowers, windmills, rockets & birdfeeders.

Last year we opened out the market to include a countryside theme and were joined by organisations such as the Countryside Trust, John Muir Trust, Raptor Word who spread the word about Perthshire and the vast range of great activities we have on offer Perth College UHI also take the opportunity to tell the public what they do on the horticultural side.

Booking forms are always sent out mid-February for all our markets and bookings are taken on a first come first served basis. We are always amazed at the quick take up of stalls.

- When planning the layout we try wherever possible not to place stalls selling similar produce next to other.
- Weather is always a major factor on the day, therefore we monitor this closely prior to and during the market itself.
- Stalls are weighed down where appropriate should there be any chance of high winds.
- Safety of course is always paramount. My colleague and I are first aid trained and always have a fully stocked first aid box to hand on the market.
- As with any good event the more planning put into the detail the better. We have an action plan per market which we amend/update as necessary each year to ensure things go as smoothly as possible on the day.

Gail Cain

THE CALEY: WELCOME TO NEW PRESIDENT

PAM WHITTLE

The RCHS Council endorsed Pam Whittle as a candidate for President and she was duly elected at the AGM on March 1st. She is a former Director within the Scottish Government and a keen gardener. Since retiring from the Civil Service Pam has continued to be actively involved in a range of activities and issues and amongst other things is currently Chair of Greenspace Scotland, a non-executive Board member of NHS Quality Improvement Scotland, a Board member of Stevenson College Edinburgh and Director of Gardening Scotland. In 2009 she was awarded the CBE for her services to public health in Scotland. Pam will undoubtedly take the Caley in new directions with great enthusiasm.



Alison Murison

– AND THANKS TO OUTGOING PRESIDENT GEORGE ANDERSON

George Anderson has not only served his term as President with distinction, he has brought special gifts to the Caley. A professional to the core he is also in the true meaning of the word an amateur - a lover of gardening. That love has been communicated with passion and enthusiasm, with humour and generosity. He has worked hard, with meticulous attention to detail, in public and in private, on committees and at Council, on the allotment and on the podium. Nowhere was that more obvious than in the planning and execution of the celebrations for the Bicentenary. He has encouraged beginner and expert alike and we shall miss him. We wish both him and Gill good times in all that they do and to be 'blessed with content'.

Margaret Forrester

SNIPPETS & CUTTINGS.....



Duddingston Kirk Horticultural Society writes:

AWARDS FOR ALL GRANT

This may interest you and your readers.

After reading in the newsletter last year about a Society getting a grant for equipment I decided to apply on behalf of my Society. We had discussed the purchase of a digital projector for use at our monthly meetings, but as we are a small organisation with limited funds available, this seemed a long term goal for us.

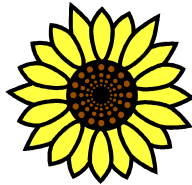
I sent off the application form and was delighted to receive confirmation of our award £1300 which allowed us to purchase both a digital projector and a laptop.

We now have the equipment and have used it for a talk given by a member. Hopefully this will be the first of many such "inhouse" talks to come.

I would encourage other societies to apply to Awards for All

Ella Bruce

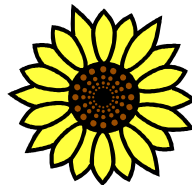




NEWS FROM DALKEITH HS

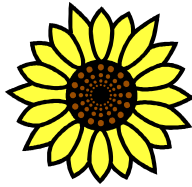
Gladys Hardwick (Secretary) writes: Dalkeith Horticultural Society Annual Show will be on 17 & 18th September 2011 at the Schools Campus, Cousland Road, Thornybank, Dalkeith, Saturday 1 – 4.30 pm, Sunday 12 – 4.30 pm. If you would like a schedule please contact me on 0131 660 1816.

Another item - we have a quantity of green artificial grass table covering and some rolls of corrugated paper which we want to dispose of. If anyone would like this they can contact me and arrange to pick it up free of charge



Alan Bennell

Colinton Garden Club writes: if you are thinking of visiting the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh, why not combine your visit with a rather fine breakfast in the attractive surroundings of the restaurant of the new John Hope Gateway. Colinton GC did just that when the snowdrops were out, were welcomed by Professor Stephen Blackmore, the Regius Keeper and were brought up to date with the latest developments by Alan Bennell, Head of external relations. The RGBE is a centre of excellence and always worth a visit.

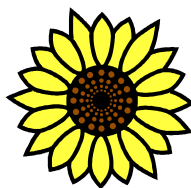


Lesley Norman, Secretary, Viaduct Gardening Club, Carlisle writes:

As we are not technically in Scotland, (but none-the-less members), I am bold enough to contribute!

Our next Gardening Club event (on Sunday 17th April) is what we term: The Big Weed, where members of our Club turn up at our local Hospice (Eden Valley) in Carlisle and have a concerted effort in the gardens to get them ready for the summer. We have been asked to clear the areas at the entrance to the Hospice and seed it, so that it is easier to care for. Also, we will be cutting back, weeding and mulching as well as 'pricking out' in the greenhouse. It's a great day and it's amazing what can be done in a few hours!

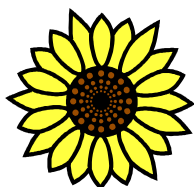
Following that, on Sunday 22nd May, all the local gardening clubs get together on the forecourt of an Agricultural Company (Rickerby Limited) in Carlisle for our annual plant sale. This is the major fund raiser for most of our clubs and last year our Club raised over £700 in just a few hours. 10% of the takings from each club is donated to a different charity each year and this year it is for Friends of Hammonds Pond (a local childrens' play park). Last year it was for the Hospice. We work hard as members, lifting and splitting plants, sowing seed etc., and can than pass on our knowledge of the plants to the customers. It is always very well attended! (we just pray for a sunny day).



Sad news from the Perthshire Highland District Horticultural Society who write:

“I am sorry to inform you that, at a recent Extraordinary General Meeting, it was decided that the Society should be wound up on account of declining membership. We have enjoyed the SGF Newsletter and wish it well.”

We wish the members good luck in their efforts to keep the spirit alive so that the horticultural activity of the region will not suffer too much. As for the Newsletter, you can continue to enjoy it on line and we will be pleased to keep in touch in that way.



Gifford Horticultural Society

Mary Wallace writes:

On Saturday 14th May we are holding our annual Plant Sale in Gifford Village Hall, EH41 4PL, from 10 am. There will be a plentiful supply of good quality bedding plants and pot plants and also many donated plants from our members. Visitors are welcome.

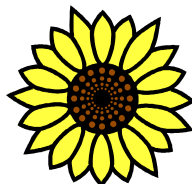


Killearn Horticultural Society Annual Show – Glenda Asquith writes:

We would like to welcome you to our Annual Show in Killearn, on 20 August 2011, 2.00 - 4.30 in the village hall. With more than 200 classes and almost 800 entries last year we are sure to have plenty to interest you. We will have exhibits in horticulture, floral art, baking, arts and crafts, photography and children’s entries. We will also be serving teas with loads of home made cakes.

Last year a local film maker produced a lovely record of the day for us and you can see it on youtube. Just type this link into your computer to be taken straight there <http://youtu.be/VpFMYf4hvc8>

For further details please contact Glenda Asquith on 01360 550142



The Dundee Flower & Food Festival is being held at Camperdown Country Park, Dundee from 2 – 4 September 2011. Further information can be obtained from 01382 434940 or www.dundeeflowerandfoodfestival.com

SGF NEWSLETTER

NEXT ISSUE – AUGUST DEADLINE

Just to remind you – and to invite you to send in an article – that the next issue “Autumn” will be published at the beginning of September, so please send me your news, ideas, observations by the middle of August.

I will send round the usual reminder by email, which functions very well, except that one third of our members has not given an email contact address. Please review the email contact you have given us and if you need to update it, let our Membership Secretary, Mike Rossi, know. Any queries please to

membership@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

Please send us your articles so that we can share them for the enjoyment of our members. Thank you

Christopher Davies

ANN'S DIARY

JOBS FOR JUNE– CONTROLLING PESTS AND DISEASE

At last the weather has warmed up a bit and our garden plants have started to grow in earnest. With all that lush foliage about this is the time of year to start making regular inspections for those garden gremlins that can damage our plants namely animal pests, diseases and weeds.

Avoidance is always the best line of attack;

- Mulches regularly applied to the soil will keep down annual weeds. A thick mulch of organic matter laid down around the roses in late winter also helps reduce the reoccurrence of mildew, rust and black spot by sealing in the previous year's fungal spores.
- When purchasing plants buy newer varieties that are resistant to particular problems; potatoes less susceptible to blight include 'White Lady' and 'Arran Victory', gooseberries less susceptible to mildew include 'Hinnomaki Red'.
- Aphids can be kept down by introducing pollen heavy plants into the garden that will attract predatory insects such as hoverflies – try planting *Phacelia tanacetifolia*, a beautiful purple annual or *Calendula* to do the trick.

The second line of defence should always be **vigilance** – this means a daily wander through the garden with coffee mug in hand and your eyes wide open.

- First green fly on the roses can be removed by hand if you catch them early enough – miss them for a couple of weeks and you'll have an infestation.
- Nocturnal adult vine weevils can be found on plants at dusk, dispose of these and you will have fewer weevil grubs pestering your *Fuchsia's*.
- At the first signs of black spot or mildew remove the leaves and put them in the bin thereby stopping the spread of the fungus.

- Pull every weed you can before it has the chance to set seed and spread around the garden.

If all else has failed and the pests have got a hold in the garden there are many ways to **wage war** without necessarily using lots of chemicals, most garden centres now stock a number of natural and organic products which are less likely to cause damage to the environment, friendly insects or you. Biological controls are now readily available over the internet to keep down the white fly in the glasshouse or slugs in the cabbage patch.

Your garden should be for enjoyment and relaxation so if a particular plant causes you heartache and work every year because it continually attracts a particular problem consider **acceptance** – let the saw fly have the ‘Solomon’s Seal’. Alternatively dig the offending plant out, chuck it and buy something new after all you now have space in the garden!

JOBS FOR JULY – POTTERING AROUND

At this time of the year most of us are probably sitting quite smugly on the patio enjoying the fruits of our labours; herbaceous perennials at their peak, blowsy scented roses buzzing with bees, petunias in full cascade from hanging baskets and the veggie plot is hopefully starting to pay for itself. Gentle gardening is the order of this month and the following ‘pottering’ will repay you many times over during the rest of the summer;

- Hanging baskets and containers; continually dead head plants such as surfinias, marguerites, verbena and pansies. Make sure you pinch out the flower stem as well as the petals, this will stop the plant producing seed and encourage it to produce more and more flowers.
- Water and liquid feed often, if the water runs out of a basket as soon as you pour it in try making your own drip watering device from an old 500ml water bottle; simply remove and discard the lid, cut off the bottom, ram the top of the bottle into the centre of your hanging basket’s compost where it can’t be seen – it should

be well stuck into the compost, then fill with water – it will gently seep into your basket rather than pour out over the edges.

- Roses and herbaceous plants should also be dead headed when the flowers go over, this time use secateurs and cut well back to a healthy leaf junction at least 6” down the stem, the plant will now use its energy for growth rather than seed production.
- Continue to tuck sweet pea and clematis new growth in behind wires, strings and trellis, do it when the growth is young and you’ll save a lot of work later.
- In the veggie plot keep vigilant for marauders, a nightly inspection may catch one or two slugs on the lettuce or black fly on the beans; these can be removed by hand when they are only few in number, if you don’t keep your eyes open then you may suddenly find yourself with larger infestations of pests by next week.
- Keep the weeds down, the old fashioned way by hand or by hoe. If you catch them when they are small and before they produce seed you will again save yourself future gardening grief.
- So July is about small but important gardening tasks which all may, by the way, be performed with one hand while the other is grasping a nice chilled Chardonnay! It is after all holiday time. Enjoy your gardening.

JULY IN THE GARDEN – MAKE A GRAVEL GARDEN

Due to warm days and wet nights, which should really be a gardener’s delight, I seem to have spent most of the last month impersonating a jungle explorer with machete in hand, hacking my way through over-exuberant growth towards civilisation – or a least trying to get down to the hut at the bottom of the garden! My attitude of ‘see a plant, want it, buy it, shove it in with a shoe horn’ has finally caught me out and my back garden is now definitely over planted and overflowing. Perhaps I’ll just move house?

My front garden, on the other hand, is much better behaved due mainly to the fact that it is pebble mulched with landscape fabric below and underlying this is a ‘soil’ basically composed of builder’s rubble and more old gravel. Over the years I have planted drought loving plants and many alpines into this south west facing space and they have slowly

but surely thrived. No excess growth to cut back, plenty standing areas between the plants, easy weeding and best of all space around each plant so that it can be admired on its own merits.

Gravel gardening can be really rewarding if you follow a few basic pointers;

- Choose a sunny area.
- Soil should be free draining, add gravel or grit as necessary.
- Ensure total cover, right to the edges, with black landscaping fabric or black polythene.
- Make sure the pebble mulch over the fabric is thick enough to totally obscure it.
- Choose plants that are architectural in shape and relatively slow growing. Alpine types such as *Celmisia*, *Erigeron*, *Lewisia*, *Morina*, *Saxifraga* work well with Lavender, *Artemesia* and Rosemary, for evergreen interest add slower growing ornamental grasses and conifers such as *Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata Aurea', *Juniperus chinensis* 'Pyramidalis' or *Pinus mugo* 'Gnom'.
- Leave plenty of space between plants or infill with boulders or lumps of drift wood if you like.
- Cut a cross in the fabric and plant your chosen specimens a few centimetres 'proud' of the soil so that they don't end up too deep.
- Add bulbs that like to be 'baked' in the summer for example; *Iris danfordiae*, *Tulipa tarda* or *turkestanica*.

Due to few weeds, little pruning and the need to sit back and admire you may now relax in a deck chair with a small glass of your favourite summer tipple.

Ann Burns

Ann Burns is Team Leader, Horticulture and Landscape Construction, at Oatridge College

“WHAT’S ON:” This feature is provided for the interest and convenience of members. The information is given in good faith, depending on the accuracy of those who supplied it. In the event of your acting on it, we suggest you double-check. The events are arranged in datal order.

SOCIETY	EVENT	VENUE	DATE
Torosay Isle of Mull Gardening Club	Flower Show & Craft Exhibition	Craignure Village Hall	2nd May 10.30am-2pm
Dalgety Bay Horticultural Society	Annual Gardeners Question Time	Dobbies, Dalgety Bay	6th May
Helensburgh & Gareloch Horticultural Society	Plant Sale	Victoria Halls, Helensburgh	7th May 9.30am
Pathhead & District Horticultural Society	Plant Sale	Pathhead Pavillion	Sat 7th May
Barrhead & District Horticultural Society	Display & Seed Planting for Children	Neilston Agricultural Showground	7th May 9am-4.30pm
Royal Horticultural Society of Perth	Plant Sale	North Church Lane, High St , Perth	14th May 10am -2pm
Ormiston Horticultural Society	Plant Sale	Marketgate, Ormiston	14th May 10am -12pm
Blackhall Horticultural Society.	Annual Plant Sales- We can offer a wide range of plants for containers & bedding out in the garden	St. Columbas Church Hall, Muirdale Terrace, Edinburgh 4	14th May 10am- 12 am
Perth Council	Gardeners' & Countryside Market	King Edward Street, Perth.	Sat 14th May
Gifford Horticultural Society,	Plant Sale	Gifford Village Hall,	Saturday 14th May
Polmont Horticultural Society	Bedding plant sale	Brightons Parish Church Hall, Brightons	20th May
Dollar	Plant Sale	Burnside Hall Dollar	21st/22nd may
Dollar	Dollar Open Gardens	Burnside Hall Dollar	21st/22nd May
West Linton	Plant Sale	West Linton	21-May
North Berwick Horticultural Society	Annual Plant Sale & Coffee morning	St Andrew Blackadder Church	21st May
St Andrews' Gardeners' Club	Plant Sale & Coffee Morning	Town Hall, St Andrews	21st May 9.20am - 12 noon
Dalgety Bay Horticultural Society	Annual Plant Sale	Community Centre, Dalgety Bay	21st May
East Kilbride Horticultural Society	Annual Plant Sale		21st May
Killearn Cottagers Horticultural Society	Gardener's Market & Coffee Morning	Killearn Village hall	21st May
Friends of Suntrap	Open Day	Suntrap	22nd May
Viaduct Gardening Club	Annual Plant Sale (10% of Profits for Charity)	Forecourt of Rickerby Limited in Carlisle	22nd may

Banchory Horticultural Society	Plant Sale	Banchory Scout HQ	28th May
Biggar Horticultural Society	Plant Sale & coffee morning	Gillespie Centre, Biggar	28 May 10am - 12
National Bonsai Collection of Scotland	Bonsai Exhibition and Display	Ingliston	3rd-5th June
Roberton Gardening Club	Coffee Morning	Roberton Village Hall	4th June
Menstrie Community Council	Fete Week	Menstrie, Various Locations	6th-10th June
Menstrie Community Council	Gala Day	Menstrie Park	11th June
Kippen Horticultural Society	Kippen Street Fayre	Kippen Main Street	11th June
Penicuik Horticultural Society	Open Garden Scheme	Various Gardens, Kirkhill :tel 01968 674046	3rd July 2-5pm
Grangemouth Horticultural Society	Rose, Sweet Pea & Carnation Show	Grangemouth Town Hall	16-Jul
Scottish Begonia Society	75th Anniversary	Ayr Flower Show	5th, 6th, 7th Aug
Banchory Horticultural Society	Gardens Open Day	Banchory	6th & 7th Aug
Leuchars & District Horticultural Society	Summer Show	Burnside Hall, Balmullo	06-Aug
Nairn	Annual Show	Community Centre Nairn	Sat 12th Aug 1pm-4pm
Girvan District Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	North Parish Church, Girvan	13th Aug
Nairn & District Gardening Club	Annual Show	Nairn Community and Arts Centre	13th Aug 1-4pm
North Berwick Horticultural Society	Summer Show	North Berwick Community Centre	13th Aug
Culter & District Horticultural Society	Flower Show	Culter Village Hall	13th Aug
Perth & District Fuchsia Group	Fuchsia Show With Open Classes	North Church Hall, Perth	13th Aug
Royal Horticultural Society of Perth	Summer Show	The institute, Bridge of Earn	19th & 20th Aug
Largs & District Horticultural Society	Flower show	St. Johns Church Hall, Largs	19th & 20th Aug
Gifford Horticultural Society	Flower Show	Gifford	20th & 21st Aug
Fife Fuchsia Society	Annual Show	Roths Halls, Glenrothes	20th Aug
	Kippen Flower Show	Village Hall, Kippen	20th Aug
Killearn Cottagers Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	Killearn Village hall	20th Aug
Killearn Horticultural Society	Annual Show	The Village Hall	20 August 2.00 - 4.30
Kilwinning Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	Abbey Church Hall	25th Aug
Duddingston Kirk Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Duddingston Kirk Hall Edinburgh EH15	27 & 28 August 2pm
Currie Parish Horticultural & Industrial Society	Currie Show	Balerno High School	27th Aug 1.30pm

Helensburgh & Gareloch Horticultural Society	Flower & Veg Show	Victoria Halls, Helensburgh	27th Aug 2pm
Inverness Horticultural Society	Inverness Flower Festival	Inverness High School	27th & 28th Aug
Musselburgh	Annual Flower Show	Our lady of Loretto Church Hall, Newbiggin	27th Aug 1-5pm
West Linton	Annual Show	West Linton	27th Aug
Stonehaven & District Horticultural Society	Summer Flower Show	Stonehaven Town Hall	27-Aug
Blackhall Horticultural Society.	57th Annual Flower Show like many local flower shows we are suffering from a lack of entries in all sections, and would welcome more folk to exhibit	St. Columbas Church Hall, Muirdale Terrace, Edinburgh 4	27th Aug
Broughton Horticultural Society	158th Annual Exhibition of Fruit, Veg & Industrial Work	Village Hall, Broughton	27th Aug
Chryston Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Muirhead Public Hall	27th Aug
Duddingston Kirk Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Duddingston Kirk Hall Edinburgh EH15	27 & 28 August 2pm
Monklands Dahlia Society	Early Show	Ridgeview Nursery, Longridge, Bathgate	28th Aug
Scottish National Chrysanthemum Dahlia Society	S.N.C.D.S. Flower Show	Albert Hall, Stirling	30th & 31st Aug
Banchory Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Banchory Town Hall	3rd & 4th Sept
Biggar Horticultural Society	Annual Show of Flowers, Veg & Industrial	Municipal Hall, Biggar	3rd Sept 1.39 - 4pm
Dollar	Flower Show & Craft Exhibition	Burnside Hall Dollar	3rd Sept
Kilmalcolm Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	New Community Centre	3rd Sept
Paisley Florist Society and Garden Club	Annual Show	St Mirin's Cathedral Halls	3rd Sept
Polmont Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Polmont Sports Centre	03-Sep
Barrhead & District Horticultural Society	autumn Show & Coffee Morning	South & Lavern Church Hall. Barrhead	3rd Sept (to be confirmed)
Livingston and District Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	Howden Park Centre, Livingston	3rd Sept
Penicuik Horticultural Society	Autumn Show	Ladywood Leisure Centre, Penicuik	3rd Sept 1-4.30pm
East Lothian Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Corn Exchange, Haddington	3rd Sept
Dalgety Bay Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Community Centre Dalgety Bay	3rd Sept
Kirkintilloch Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	St Mary's Parish Church Hall	3rd Sept

Pathhead & District Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Pathhead Community Hall	Sat 3rd Sept
Polmont Horticultural Society	Annual Show	Sports Centre, Polmont, Schedules from W. Anderson, Forest View, Polmont, FK2 0UL	3rd Sept
Buckie & District Flower Show	Flower Show	Fishermens Hall, Buckie	3rd Sept
Central Scotland Fuchsia Society	B.F.S. Show	Linlithgow P.S.	4th Sept
Scottish Bonsai Association	National Exhibition	Kibble Palace, Glasgow	4th September
Cowdenbeath & District Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	Trinity Church, Sinclair Ave	10th & 11th Sept
East Kilbride Horticultural Society	Annual Flower show		10th Sept
Fenwick Church Garde Club	Annual Produce & Flower Show	Fenwick Church Hall	18th Aug, 7.30pm
Central Scotland Fuchsia Society	C.S.F.S. Show	Greenpark Centre Polmont	11th Sept
Helensburgh & Gareloch Horticultural Society	Bulb Sale	United Reform Church Hall	17th Sept 10am
Caledonian Bonsai Society	Fife Flower Show	Dobbies Garden Centre, Dunfermline	17th & 18th Sept
Dalkeith Horticultural Society	Annual Flower Show	Dalkeith Campus	17th 1pm-4.30pm & 18th Sept 12noon -4.30pm
South East Scotland Fuchsia Society	Annual Show	Dalkeith High School	17th & 18th Sept
Grangemouth Horticultural Society	Annual Open Show	Grangemouth Town Hall	24-Sep
St Andrews' Gardeners' Club	Annual Show & Coffee Morning	Town Hall, St Andrews	24th Sept 10am - 4pm
Monklands Dahlia Society	Late Show	Drumpellier Country Park, Coatbridge	1st Oct
South West Scotland Rock Garden Group	SRGC Travelling Speaker, New Zealand		8th Oct
Clackmannanshire Horticultural Society	Clackmannanshire County Show	Devondale Hall, Tillicoultry	10th Oct
Leuchars & District Horticultural Society	An Evening with Willie Duncan	Burnside Hall Ballmullo	13th Oct
South West Scotland Rock Garden Group	Davie Sharp, Rock Garden Construction		14th Oct
Grangemouth Horticultural Society	Late Chrysanthemum Show	Grangemouth Community Unit	23-Oct
Leuchars & District Horticultural Society	Autumn Show	Burnside Hall Ballmullo	29th Oct
Leuchars & District Horticultural Society	Let's Cook (Sarah Mellersh)	Burnside Hall Ballmullo	10th Nov
South West Scotland Rock Garden Group	Liz Mills & Anne Chambers, Arizaemas		11th Nov
Leuchars & District Horticultural Society	Floral Art (Alyson Christie)	Burnside Hall Ballmullo	8th Dec
South West Scotland Rock Garden Group	Malcolm McGregor, Saxifrages		9th Dec

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