



# MALMESBURY GARDEN CLUB

January *NEWSLETTER* 2011

[www.malmesburygardenclub.org.uk](http://www.malmesburygardenclub.org.uk)

Chairman - Ron Peel

Secretary - Ellie Church

## *Jottings From The Chair*

Twenty seven members attended the AGM. We were informed a couple of hours before the meeting that the expected delivery of gas for the heating had not arrived, so we went armed with a few heaters and conditions were quite tolerable.



Official business was dealt with speedily. Following the resignation of Sue Mellows, our secretary for the last six years, Ellie Church offered to take on this post and we are grateful for her offer, and also for the work Sue has done. Derek arranged an interesting quiz and this was followed by some excellent refreshments and mulled wine.

The number ordering from Dobies was the same as the last two years and thank you for sending them in on time. The value was easily sufficient for us to get the maximum discount, the majority of which can be passed on to members. The club orders approximately 360 seedlings to grow on for the plant sale in May. This is a big contribution to the success of the sale and we would appreciate the offer of any members to bring these on –even if only a couple of dozen. Please let us know at one of the meetings or tell any committee member.

May I wish you all an enjoyable and successful gardening New Year.

*Ron Peel*



# MEETINGS-EVENTS-ACTIVITIES

## January Meeting Monday 10th January

**7:30 pm in the Market Room of the  
King's Arms—High Street  
Malmesbury**

“Humour in the Garden”  
CHRIS EVANS

CHRIS runs the Dundry Nurseries and Garden Centre at Bamfurlong Lane, Cheltenham. Founded by Chris' Grandfather back in 1947, Dundry Nurseries started out as a small business selling plants to Woolworths.

Since then the site has extended to cover the four acre plot in Bamfurlong Lane, Cheltenham, offering a comprehensive range of plants, flowers, and vegetables to customers throughout the region.

Chris, who grew up on the site, grew into the job naturally saying: "I never remember wanting to do anything else."

He is a devotee of the common garden potato, and the business sells over 150 varieties

## February Meeting Monday 14th February 7:30 pm in the Charlton Village Hall

“Trug Making”  
CARL SADLER



CARL lives at Tetbury Hill Gardens Malmesbury. He will be making a trug at the meeting and will talk on wood related projects.

He also makes sheep hurdles and he gardens on a raised bed system.

For more details, note the following link:

<http://www.coppice-products.co.uk/Directory/Record160.htm>

## Future Dates and Speakers for the Monthly Meetings in 2011

14 March: “Box, Yew and Topiary” by ROGER TURNER  
11 April: “Some Less Usual Vegetables” by VALERIE BROOKS

## SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Subscriptions for 2011 are now due. A renewal form can be found on the last page of this newsletter. The annual amount has again been held at £7.00 per member.

- You may pay at the monthly meeting or
- by placing the renewal form and subscription in the Club box in the E & S shop (it is still there although it will have been re-located due to building work);
- or by post to me Mr. S. O’Shea, Redlands. West End, Brinkworth, Chippenham, SN15 5DA.

Please sign your membership card on receipt. Please remember to produce your card in participating shops before offering the goods to the assistant if you wish to claim a discount.

*Sean O’Shea*

## Interested in Dahlias?

Bob Hendley, a gold medal winning gardener from Dorset has a 2011 Dahlia brochure that is available for free. Just send a self addressed C5 size envelope with a first class stamp to Bob Hendley, The Fontmell Studio, The Stables Flat, Child Okeford, Dorset DT11 8EE. Photos of varieties available on line at

[www.photobox.co.uk/album/509231801](http://www.photobox.co.uk/album/509231801)

## Beekeeping for Beginners

A course consisting of 6 two hour sessions is being offered in Lacock and Lackham (for practical sessions) starting 31March. The cost of the course is £40, which includes refreshments, information handouts, practical bee handling, use of protective equipment at the apiary and a copy of the book “Beekeeping”. For information contact Melksham and District Beekeeping Association, C/O Hazel Simons, 32 High Street, Gt. Cheverell, SN10 5TH.

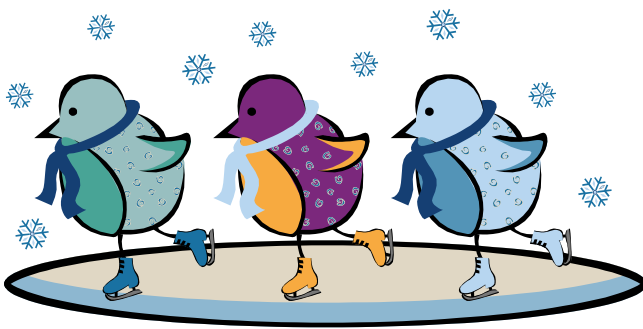


# Out with the Old and In with the New

By Keith

## Comments from the garden....

One thing with a snow cover is that everyone's garden looks the same. With this winter starting in mid November, we could be in for a long cold and frosty one. With this in mind, and as I have mentioned in tasks for last month, make sure your outside taps are turned off or well protected. Also give a thought to the birds. They need our help in the harsh weather.



## Dividing and Replanting

Some of the many borders that I maintain are shrubberies with herbaceous plants in-between and in front of the shrubs. Weather permitting, now is a good time to lift and divide the herbaceous plants. Over the years, herbaceous plants can become very big and the centre of the plant can die away. With this in mind when lifting your plants, take for instance Lady's Mantel, otherwise known as *Alchemilla mollis*, lift the plant and place two forks back to back into the plant and push away in opposite directions. The outer parts of the plant are the ones to keep, discarding the older centre of the plant.



(Clemson.edu)

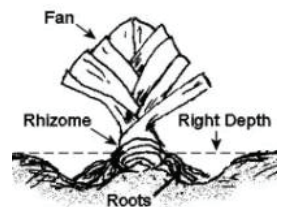
I always plant in odd numbers so three small pieces will make a good show. It is always a good idea to add some compost to the area you are planting up, also some long term fertilizer, such as bonemeal or blood fish and bone, at two ounces per square yard. Some plants such as *Iris sibirica* and day lilies, also known as *Hemerocallis*, may need a spade to divide them as over the years they become very tough. As noted above, discard the old centre of the plant.

Some plants can be difficult to divide or it can not be obvious how to proceed. The *Crambe* is one such

plant. Its roots are large, just like the roots of rhubarb. Above ground at this time of year you will see the new seasons growth as just a rounded growth a few inches across and high. If you prise the plant out of the ground it should be obvious where you can cut a section of the root with some of the new growth attached. This should only be done when the plant has been in the same place for several years.

There are hundreds of plants that can be divided at this time of year but there are also some plants that need to be divided after they have flowered.

*Aubrieta*, a rockery or low wall plant, and the bearded *Iris* are just two in this category. With the *Iris*, discard the old rhizomes, only replanting the younger growths whilst making sure the top of the rhizome is showing on the surface when they are planted. This gives the plant the best chance of flowering as it will get maximum sunlight.



(Chailey Iris Garden)

## Keith's Choice Plants

### *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Diane'

A deciduous late winter flowering shrub that bears clusters of fragrant dark red petals on bare branches. Its autumn leaves turn red and yellow before falling off. Plant in lime free soil. Height: 12ft.

## No Disease Please

**Willow Scab:** A fungus which causes black areas on the stems and they could encircle the branch. In the early stages the leaves are covered in spots causing them to turn black and die. Prune out affected stems.

## Pests Paradise

**Millipedes:** Normally the spotted snake millipede causes the most plant damage; it is cream coloured with red dots on both sides of its body and only 25mm long. They mainly feed on rotting vegetation but they will also damage young seedlings and strawberry fruits if not lifted off the ground by straw or something similar. Millipedes are numerous and difficult to control with insecticides.





### *Plants to enjoy in January/February*

*Galanthus* (snowdrop), *Jasminum nudiflorum*, *Daphne mezereum*, *Garrya elliptica*, *Helleborus* (Christmas rose), *Lonicera fragrantissima*, *Skimmia japonica*, *Iris reticulata*.

### *.....Tasks for January/February.....*

- Continue to plant roses—weather permitting
- Examine roses for ‘wind rock’ and firm in
- Continue pruning climbing roses, honeysuckle, summer jasmine etc.
- Cut out canker on fruit trees and paint over with pruning compound
- Prune apple and pear trees, but not if frost persists
- Spray peach and nectarine against leaf curl with copper fungicide
- Continue spraying fruit bushes and trees with a winter wash
- Continue clearing herbaceous plant tops
- Cut down summer flowering clematis in February - check variety first!
- Prune back winter jasmine after flowering
- Examine all stored corms, bulbs and tubers
- Set up early potatoes in trays to sprout
- Sow early broad beans and wrinkled pea varieties
- Sow early carrots and parsley under frames
- Plant shallots late February

## *From the Vegetable Plot*

*By Keith*



For those of you with only a small area for growing vegetables and very little time for weeding and keeping the vegetable area tidy, this might be a good idea for you. If you visited Luckington Manor Gardens many years ago, you will have seen the creation of a small vegetable area with a difference. A small lawn 20ft by 12ft was covered with plastic and then with bark chippings. On this area were placed at equal distance 12 half barrels which were then filled with a mixture of John Innes No. 3, a soil based compost, and a peat based multi purpose compost. Between these were placed half a dozen smaller barrels or pots and filled with the same soil mixture.

The half barrels in the corners had 8ft canes pushed in around the edge of the barrel, about 8 should be enough, and they were then tied at the top. Early lettuce plants were placed in the centre of the barrels. The canes would be ideal for supporting runner beans and climbing french beans. Other crops that can be grown between the canes would be radishes and early carrots. A central barrel is chosen and again 8ft canes with twigs placed between them, thus giving a good support for sweet peas. Each barrel can be planted up with any vegetable you wish to grow. Sweetcorn could be planted in the centre of a barrel surrounded by 18" high peas such as Meteor supported by short twigs. Broad bean could be another central vegetable surrounded by dwarf french beans. Leeks with onions could be another planting, also outdoor tomatoes with beetroot. Other barrels could contain a single vegetable such as early and late potatoes, courgettes, spinach, swiss chard, and parsnips. This would give you a good selection of vegetables, if not large amounts. Remember when one vegetable is used up you can plant up again with another.

The smaller barrels or pots between the large ones will be planted up with a good selection of herbs, thus attracting pollinating insects. Marjoram, fennel, parsley, thyme, sage, bay, basil, coriander, dill, and rosemary are just a few you can use and you can always add more small containers for the herbs as required. A few advantages with a plot like this is less weeding and it is much easier on the back as there is very little digging and you are working at a higher level, so less bending.

For the rest of your vegetable garden, if you have started, continue digging over your empty vegetable plots applying farmyard manure or compost. Many soft fruit bushes can be pruned now, including redcurrants, gooseberry, blackberry, tayberry, blueberry and raspberry. Tie in the new raspberry canes and cut down the old. Autumn raspberries are all cut down in March. Continue pruning apples and pears, clean up decaying leaves in the brassica bed. Manure asparagus beds, remembering to break down the manure with straw if it is clumpy. This prevents the asparagus distorting as it comes through the ground. It is also a good time to browse through the seed catalogues and order for the coming season. Good luck.



## Bulletin Board



### Would you like to receive your Newsletter via Email?



Just email me at [info@malmesburygardenclub.org.uk](mailto:info@malmesburygardenclub.org.uk) and I will add your name to the mailing list.

*Editor*

( If you do receive your newsletter via email, and you are planning on changing your email address, please let me know and I can make sure there is no disruption to your newsletter deliveries. )

## Membership Form

### MALMESBURY GARDEN CLUB

Subscriptions for 2011 are now due and can be paid at meetings or direct to  
Mr. Sean O'Shea, Redlands, West End, Brinkworth, Chippenham, SN15 5DA or  
The Club Post Box, E & S Hardware, High Street, Malmesbury.

PLEASE SECURE CASH/CHEQUE IN AN ENVELOPE WITH THIS FORM

Enclosed £7.00 single membership       £14.00 double membership

(Mr) (Mrs) (Miss) (Ms):.....Tel No.....

(Mr) (Mrs) (Miss) (Ms).....

Address:.....

.....  
email address.....