



# MALMESBURY GARDEN CLUB

May *NEWSLETTER* 2011

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

Chairman - Ron Peel

Secretary - Ellie Church

## *Jottings From The Chair*

It is with deep regret I have to inform you that two stalwart members of the club Stan Weitzel and John Clark have passed away; Stan over the weekend of April 10th and John on April 14th .



For several years Stan undertook many of the club duties, such as secretary, speakers secretary, newsletter editor and arranger for the Dobies seed order. At their house at Baskerville he and Lily organised the club hut, which offered members various items such as fertilizers, canes and sowing compost that was made on site at a discount price.

John had spent all his life in horticulture and will be remembered by many as the manager of Kingsway Nursery. He has served on the committee for several years, where his knowledge was of great assistance at our shows.

A few days ago I received a message from Pam Hall with her resignation from the committee. Pam has been a member for some forty years, and for a long time was club secretary prior to Stan. I have given her a letter, together with a bouquet of flowers, on the club's behalf to thank her and show our appreciation for the hard work and commitment she has made to the club.

*Ron Peel*

### **MALMESBURY GARDEN CLUB'S ANNUAL PLANT SALE and CAKE STALL IN THE MARKET CROSS ON SATURDAY 28<sup>th</sup> MAY**



This May newsletter is the time to remind you of the Plant Sale on the last Saturday of the month. The committee do their best to keep the running costs within our income, but with rising costs it is becoming more difficult. The Plant Sale is the main fund raising activity of the year and we are hoping for members to make that extra effort to help generate funds for the club.

As usual over the last few years we have had a great demand for vegetables such as Cucumbers, Courgettes, Runner Beans, Melons, Cabbages, Red and Green Peppers, as well as Indoor and Outdoor Tomatoes. We would also like as many bedding plants as possible.

It will be a great help to Louise and her team if you can label your plants and give as much information as possible such as their height and colour if known.

Once again to all the Ladies and Gents who like baking, if you would be so kind to make a cake for the cake stall, the monies will all go to help swell the club funds.

I shall be unavailable from the 4<sup>th</sup> May until 19<sup>th</sup> May. But if you do have a problem with transport please let me know and I am sure we will be able to help out.



*Graham Rees—Plant Sale Organiser—Tel. 01666 823093.*

# MEETINGS-EVENTS-ACTIVITIES

## August Bank Holiday Show News

I hope you all have your copy of our August Bank Holiday Show Schedule - and I do hope you will take time to look through all the classes and that you will find something which interests you.



We have made quite a few changes to the show this year, I suppose the biggest is to the Flower Arranging classes. We have seen a dramatic drop in entries in this section and we have made some changes which we hope will attract more competitors.

There are also several changes in the Home Produce section and, although this section has always been very well supported with lots of entries, we have made some changes to make it more interesting.

Because this section is so very well supported, we have decided to award the Handy Cup for the 'Baking' and a second award, the 'Poole' Cup for the 'Preserves'.

There are also a few additions to the 'Vegetable' classes which replace some classes which were not well supported.

The titles of the Photographic groups have been changed which we hope will allow a wider range of entries, I'm especially looking forward to seeing what our members put into the 'Image of Malmesbury' and the 'Nature close up' classes.

Just a few changes in the Junior Sections - the imagination of the youngsters is always amazing - I'm especially looking forward to seeing their efforts in creating a 'Poster for a missing pet'.

The competition for a knitted 'Teddy for Charity' has been put back in our schedule - those of you who kindly donated Teddies before will be pleased to know they went to children in Afghan hospitals. This year Hullavington Junior School would like to include any donated Teddies in their charity boxes.

If you know anyone who would like a Show Schedule please let me know - if you think you can help by giving a little time to help the Show there are lots of little jobs to be done. Good Luck to all...

*Derek.*

## Subscriptions

There are still a number of members who have yet to pay their subscriptions. If members have not renewed their membership by 31<sup>st</sup> May I will presume that they no longer wish to remain members of the Club.



Membership is a modest £7.00 per person. With the discount on our annual seed purchases together with discount from some local businesses it is possible to recoup this outlay.

Payment can be made by placing your subscription, together with your details, in the Club post box in the E & S shop in the High Street, Malmesbury, or by post to me at

Redlands, West End, Brinkworth, Chippenham, SN15 5DA.

*Thanks Sean O'Shea*

# The Rockery

By Keith

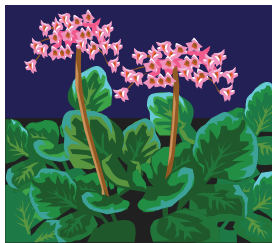


## Comments from the garden....

The garden does really take off in every direction this time of year and this includes the wild life. Moles will be found in the lawns and rabbits will enjoy digging to make a nest, even in 3ft high fibreglass flower tubs full of wallflowers, tulips, narcissi and polyanthus! In fact, they got right to the bottom, but of course it was not good enough. My fault actually. In past years I had planted all the bulbs then put some wire mesh on 6" from the top so giving enough root space for the wallflowers and polyanthus. Bless them?

## Rock Garden Plants

Rock Garden plants may be planted in many places; in the cracks of paving, over the edge of a wall, on the edge of pathways and even in the front of borders. One favourite, *Aubrieta*, has a vast range of varieties and colours: whites, pale blue, pinks, purples and reds. They reach a height of 4 to 6 inches.



Some of my favourite rock plants include, *Saxifraga*. There are a number of sections with this variety including cushion, mossy, encrusted and miscellaneous. All have some varieties well worth growing and the colour range is very good. They include yellow, crimson, pink and purple and they all come in many shades.

The dwarf creeping *Phlox* species are very colourful and they also offer a vast range of colours. *Geranium* or cranesbills are a must, providing a low growing and spreading habit with a good colour range. *Dianthus* or rock pinks, although needing a little grit when planted, give a dazzling display of generally white, pinks and reds with a height of 4-6 inches. *Campanula* or bellflower has a very large range of varieties that flower slightly later than some of the rock plants. Again, the colour range is good.

A few varieties I have grown in the past but not seen very often include:

♣ *Chiastophyllum oppositifolium* or lambs tail, also known as cotyledon, is one for semi-shade. It produces sprays of dangling yellow flowers at a

height of 6 inches.

♣ *Penstemon* although normally quite tall, have low growing forms as well. They are worth a place and offer a good colour range.

♣ *Limonium cosyrense* or sea lavender is the only low growing form and it has tiny pinkish flowers.

Below I have listed individual varieties mentioned above and a few others well worth a place in the garden.

*Aubrieta* 'Bressingham Pink', - single  
'Doctor Mules' - violet purple

*Saxifraga* 'Riverslea' - carmine, cushion var.  
'Four winds' - red, mossy var.  
'Esther' - yellow, encrusted var.

*Phlox* 'Millstream' - pink red eye.

*Dianthus* 'Dazzler' - carmine pink.

*Gentiana decumbens* - purple blue.

*Armeria* 'Beven's Variety' - pink.

*Campanula* 'Elizabeth Oliver' - double blue.

*Penstemon* 'Six Hills' - lavender blue.

*Helianthemum* 'Wisley White'

## Keith's Choice Plants

### *Physocarpus* 'Diabolo' (also known as ninebark)

A tall arching shrub with amazing deep purple black foliage on purple stems. From May to July it produces slightly domed white flower heads, a dramatic contrast with the foliage. Height 6 feet.

## No Disease Please

***Dianthus fusarium* wilt:** The flowers fade and the leaves turn a straw colour; they also sometimes have a purple red discolouration. This can happen to various parts of the plant over a long period and it is always generally fatal for the plant. A fungus is the culprit. Prune out affected parts when seen and never plant dianthus in the same place again.

## *Pests Paradise*

**Phlox Eelworm:** The stems become swollen and split. The plant rots and dies in extreme circumstances. Eelworms infest the stem system and foliage but rarely the roots. Spray with bug clear early in the season. Tall phlox are normally the ones affected.

## *Plants to enjoy in May/June*



*Anemone, Digitalis - (foxglove), Crambe, Bergenia, Brunnera, Tellima, Dianthus, Viburnum, Hemerocallis (day lily), Geum.*

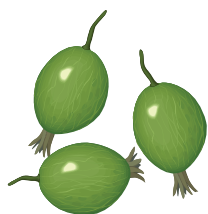
## *.....Tasks for May/June.....*

- Continue spraying roses
- Apply rose fertilizer 2 oz per sq yd
- Complete planting of half hardy annuals
- Tie in tall growing perennials
- Prune early flowering shrubs, Forsythia, Ribes etc
- Sow hardy biennials, wallflower, Sweet William etc
- Spray fruit trees against scab sawfly and woolly aphid
- Spray gooseberries against mildew
- Spray blackcurrants against big mite
- Spray strawberries against grey mould
- Plant out dahlias and chrysanthemums
- Sow annual seed in flowering situations
- Earth up early potatoes, cover if frost forecast
- Plant out courgettes, celery and sweet corn in late May
- Sow perennial seed, delphiniums, lupins, hollyhocks etc

## *From the Vegetable Plot*

*By Keith*

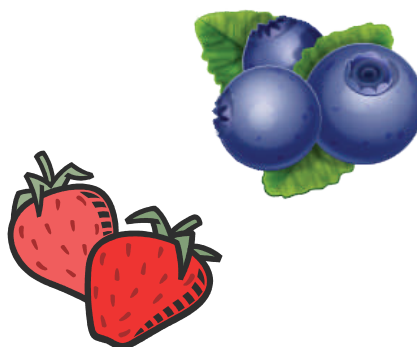
### **The Fruit Area**



If you have room in your vegetable plot, it is well worth growing some soft fruit bushes. They do take up a fair bit of space, but there are various ways of growing your soft fruit with limited space. Gooseberries can be grown on a cordon system, a single stem planted 18" apart in a row and planted at a 45 degree angle. Redcurrants fruit on the old wood, planted against a wall and trained in a fan shape that would be much easier to net against the birds. Loganberries and Tayberries are also a good wall trained fruits. I find the birds leave these alone so no netting is required. There are many ways of growing strawberries to save having a large bed to weed. Hanging baskets, pots and tubs are a few good ways. You can even buy a strawberry tub which has holes around the sides, these containers usually hold about 20 plants. Blueberries need lime free soil, so large pots are a better way to grow them. Just throw a net over them when in fruit as the birds find them delicious. The thorn-less blackberry gives us soft fruit late in the season and can be trained on a wall or fence.

I have listed some good varieties for the soft fruits suggested.

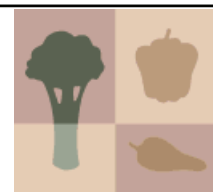
- Gooseberry 'Invicta'
- 'Xenia' (red skinned)
- Redcurrants 'Rovada' (cordon)
- ' Red Lake'
- Tayberry 'Madana'
- Strawberry 'Flamenco'
- 'Florence' (late season)
- Blueberries 'Patriot'
- 'Earliblue'
- Blackberry 'Merton' (thorn-less)



The vegetable plot really begins to take off now with the planting of many varieties of seeds including carrots, radish, swede, turnip, parsnip, lettuce, peas, dwarf french beans, runner beans, and potatoes, if not already planted. Remember to sow short rows of lettuce, radish, carrots and peas every two weeks to keep a



# From the Vegetable Plot (continued)



continuous supply available. Within the next few weeks the brassica bed will be planted, brussels sprouts, purple sprouting, savoys, curly kale, and cauliflower, cabbage and green sprouting for summer use.

Asparagus is now in season it can only be picked for 6-8 weeks then allowed to grow into ferns, as I call them. Weeding is best done by hand. If grown on the french system (i.e. raised beds) cut asparagus crowns off just below ground level. If grown on a flat bed system cut growths off at ground level. The winter was so severe that I lost a bed of globe artichokes. I have just potted up a new batch which with luck will give me a small globe late in the season. These plants lend themselves to the back of a flower border, they are tall with deeply cut grey foliage, very much an architectural plant, with a height of 4 feet. GOOD LUCK.

## No Vegetable Nightmares Please

**Courgette and Marrow mosaic virus:** Very visible yellow blistered patterns are seen on leaves making them distort. This disease can also affect cucumbers, making all fruits distort. They also show pitting and yellow blotches. Dig out and destroy affected plants, grow on new ground every year.

**Bean Seed Beetles:** Holes appear in the bean having had adult beetles inside. Beans show a pale circle patch where beetle has been. Eggs are laid in bean pods as the seeds are forming. No effective treatment is available, affected seeds will still germinate with no detrimental effect.

*Keith*



## 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. )

### Harvest Supper Update

The Harvest Supper will be held at the Red Bull, Sherston road, Malmesbury, on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> October.



The cost will be £11.50 per person for a 3 course meal.

I will be taking bookings from August onwards.

*Sean O'Shea*

### Luckington Open Garden Day Sunday 5th June 2PM—5PM

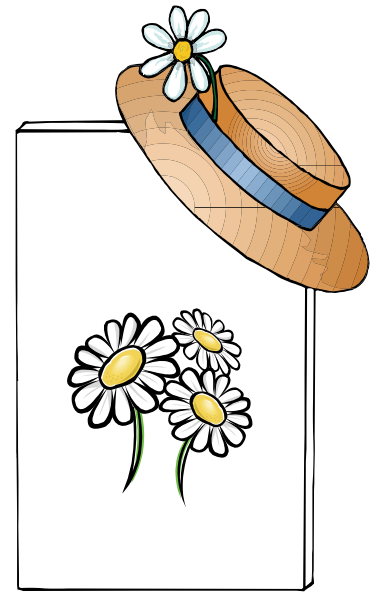


Nine gardens will be opening on this day in Luckington, offering an exciting afternoon of garden exploration. The cost is £5 and all proceeds will go in aid of Luckington Church. Tickets will be available at the church on the day. Teas will also be served at Luckington Court (which appeared in Pride and Prejudice).

## Rodbourne Garden Festival – Sunday, June 26th, from 2pm

The Festival at Rodbourne returns, with Talks, Teas, Bar and BBQ and this year with gardens to visit in the village. We hope as many of our readers as possible will come and join us for this full line-up of events:

- Village gardens in Rodbourne to visit (see below)
- Talks in Rodbourne Church at 6PM
  - ◊ Barbara and Ian Pollard 'The Naked Gardeners' from Malmesbury Abbey Gardens
  - ◊ Ben Barton's Peasant's Eye View
  - ◊ Tickets £7.50 includes glass of wine. Limited seating, early booking recommended. Contact Angela Payne on 01666 822916.
- Teas and Cakes
- Many interesting stalls: plant and produce; quality raffle; ice cream and soda
- Prime beef and sausages BBQ, and vegetarian
- Bar
- Musical Entertainment
- Quiz and competitions (to be judged by Barbara and Ian Pollard), for adults and children to be announced. Quiz sheets will be available in local shops from June.



All comers will be made very welcome. Entry and Talks tickets raise funds for Wiltshire Air Ambulance and Church Fabric fund.

Several different gardens will be open for view, ranging from the delightful 'Cotswold' style family farmhouse with pool, pond, orchard and formal borders; cottage garden (previously Vera Punter's garden as featured in her book 'WhitSunday's Child'); recently redesigned and elaborate planting in beautiful church setting; the classically beautiful Victorian style greenhouse plot with vegetables and pretty borders.