



MALMESBURY and DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

January **NEWSLETTER** 2015

www.malmesburygardenclub.org.uk

Chairman – Ron Peel

Secretary – Ellie Church

Contributions for the Newsletter may be sent to the Editor: argoodall1952@hotmail.co.uk

Jottings from the Chair

The committee wish you all a very happy New Year. As most of you will be aware our Chairman, Ron Peel, has been unwell. He is currently at home and we all wish him a full and speedy recovery. He has asked me to convey his and Denise's thanks for all the support, good wishes, cards and flowers which they received.

The seed orders have been posted to Dobies. Orders will be sent direct from Dobies to members. The invoices will be sent out in due course. Payment is made direct to the Garden Club.

The A.G.M. was well attended. After the business was dealt with, Derek Tilney entertained us with one of his quizzes before the delicious refreshments prepared by Louise Williams. Thanks also to Ann and Graham Rees for running the raffle.

Ellie Church (Secretary)



Subscription reminder!

Subscriptions for 2015 are now due.

Please use the renewal notice provided on the last page of this Newsletter.

The subscription has again been held at **£7.00** per member and benefits include a generous discount on seed orders from Dobies of Devon and discounts from several local shops including E&S Shops, Malmesbury Garden Centre, Lumley Pet Supplies, Flowers Galore, the Walled Garden at Brinkworth and the Malmesbury Pottery in Cross Hayes.

MEETINGS – EVENTS – ACTIVITIES

<p>January Meeting Monday 12 January 2015 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>‘The Influence of my mother, Rosemary Verey, on me and others’</i> Davina Wynne-Jones</p> <p>Davina Wynne-Jones is the daughter of Rosemary Verey who designed the famous gardens at Barnsley House, near Cirencester. She runs Herbs for Healing in the Barnsley Herb Garden.</p>	<p>February Meeting Monday 9 February 2015 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>An illustrated talk by</i> Andrew Tolman</p> <p>Andrew Tolman was Senior Gardener at Highgrove and now runs his own business. He has delighted us on a number of previous occasions with his beautifully illustrated talks on gardens around the UK.</p>
<p>March Meeting Monday 9 March 2015 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>‘North American Plants in British Gardens’</i> Keith Ferguson</p> <p>Keith Ferguson was the Assistant Keeper and Head of the Pollen Unit at Kew Gardens.</p>	<p>April Meeting Monday 13 April 2015 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>‘The Path to Paradise: A journey through the Stourhead Landscape’</i> Dawn Collins</p> <p>Dawn Collins is a garden designer and also works as a guide at the National Trust’s Stourhead Gardens.</p>
<p>Saturday 23 May 2015</p> <p><i>Plant Sale</i></p> <p>The Market Cross</p>	<p>Saturday 18 July 2015</p> <p><i>Flower Show</i></p> <p>Charlton Village Hall</p>

New Year’s Resolution . . . and insulation

This year I have one more New Years’ resolution – I must write everything down – keep a copy of all the plants I have ordered and some idea when they will be delivered, write my plant labels in English and not a new language. And I must remember when I am collecting (free) that vital ingredient to add to my compost, I must find a more sheltered spot.

And now a plea for help. Has anyone managed to successfully insulate their greenhouse with ‘bubble-wrap’? After a long evening with William Grant, I decided I should insulate my greenhouse. After all, I can wrap parcels – how hard could it be? I measured it up and sent for

a roll of ‘bubble wrap’ – it was huge although it weighed nothing – and if it delayed any of your Christmas post I’m sorry. Assortments of special fixing clips came from a different supplier. They were cheap so I ordered plenty – so I thought – I’ve only just got half the roof covered and I’ve completely run out of clips. I have only started putting the bubble wrap up and I’m already wondering when I will need to take it down. So if anyone has successfully insulated their greenhouse with ‘bubble wrap’, please let me know. And most important, was it any use?

Derek



NEW SHRUBS FOR THE GARDEN by KEITH

Comments from the garden

A good time to look around the garden. With no leaves on most of your hedges and shrubs you can note down where nettles, dandelions, ground elder and couch grass are growing and spray them in early spring with glyphosate weed killer (neutralised when touching the soil). Spray young weed leaves as they appear.

New shrubs for the garden

I am always looking for new varieties of shrub and in the last few years there have been many to try.

Buddleia Most of us have only small gardens, so when I found a new variety of miniature buddleia, I thought I would give it a try. *B.* var. 'White Chip' grows to 70 cm tall and has fragrant white flowers from June to September. This is one for the butterflies.

White forsythia I have always liked the early flowering shrubs which take us out of the winter gloom. *Abeliophyllum distichum*, has white scented flowers with golden stamens; it can be free standing or grown on a wall or trellis and reaches a height of 5ft.

Weigela has always been a favourite of mine, but *W.* 'Olympiade' is a new variety to me with clusters of red flowers surrounded by yellow/green leaves. It reaches a height of 5ft and flowers from June to September. There is also a dwarf variety, *W. middendorffiana*; in early summer it has pale yellow flowers with a spotted throat. It reaches a height of 3ft.

Hydrangea For many years I have had a *H. arborescens* var. 'Annabelle' with pure white flower heads 25cm across. There is now a pink one *H. arborescens* var. 'Invincibelle Spirit'. Both will flower from early spring to the first frosts. Cut both varieties down to the ground in March. They will both need support but are well worth it.

Caryopteris The dwarf blue mist shrub also known as bluebeard, has a couple of varieties worth trying. *C.* 'Hint of Gold' has bright golden leaves with deep blue flowers, and *C.* 'Summer Sorbet' has golden variegated leaves with rich blue flowers. Both flower August/September and should be trimmed after flowering.

Keith's Choice Plants

Loropetalum, also known as Chinese witch hazel, var. 'Chinese black pearl'. A round evergreen bush with purple leaves and fragrant spider-like deep rose pink flowers from late winter to early spring. Height 4ft.

No Disease Please

Forsythia gall. Nearly round woody growths appear along the stems, some will fuse together; they are rough and brown in colour. No damage will come to your plant. Prune out if badly affected or you find it unsightly.

Pests Paradise

Hydrangea scale. Eggs hatch mid summer and overwinter on the woody stems. When the new leaves appear in the spring spray the new growth with a systemic insecticide, (not in full sunlight).

Plants to enjoy in January/February

Galanthus (snowdrop),
Jasminum nudiflorum (winter
jasmine), *Daphne mezereum*,
Garrya elliptica, hellebores
(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 in late February



FROM THE VEGETABLE PLOT by KEITH

Comments from the vegetable plot

As I maintain a number of gardens all the year round, I know how hard the ground can become and how cold. Remember the birds at this time of year: fat balls hung from a tree, visible from your window, will give great pleasure.

Green Manures

Fertilizers are getting more expensive as the years go by, but there is an alternative.

Green manures, once dug into the soil, break down, improving the structure and releasing nutrients to the next crop that you plant or sow. Most will also encourage beneficial insects such as bees and butterflies. Sowing can begin as early as February and continue to the end of November. The cost of the seed can be as little as £3 a packet and cover up to 50m² depending on seed variety. Here is a short list of green manures currently available:

Mustards Sow March to September.

Clover Red, white and crimson clover. Sow April to end of August

Phacelia var. tanacetifolia Sow April to August. This variety attracts hoverflies and helps with aphid control.

Trefoil Sow March to September.

Seasonal Activities

If you want to get an early start on your vegetable plot, place a piece of polythene on the ground. This will stop it getting too wet and also keep most of the frost off and warm up the ground a degree or so.

Rhubarb needs attention now. Clean around crowns and add long-term fertilizer (bonemeal), compost or farmyard manure (do not cover the crowns). Place one of your old unused dustbins over the crown to give you some early long pink stems. In the following years place the cover over a different clump of crowns. Continue to remove yellowing leaves on your brassica bed (**cabbage** etc). In late February sow wrinkled **peas** and **broad beans**. This is also a good time to plant a new **asparagus** bed or fill in the gaps that you might have. Place frame for early sowings of **lettuce, radish, salad leaves, spring onions** and early **potatoes**. If you have a small propagator some early seed can be started, especially if you are entering the Garden Show. **Onions** and **leeks** are two good ones to begin with.

This is also a good time to look through and order your vegetable seeds for the coming year, that is if you are not already ahead of the game.

No Vegetable Nightmares

Rhubarb crown rot I have never found this to be a problem, but if you have, and it can also appear on herbaceous plants, cut away the infected area down to healthy tissue. The cause is a soil-borne fungus or bacteria.

Leek leaf miner These pests damage parts of the leaves which dry up and become white or brown. Remove when seen. These are difficult to control due to the lack of insecticides.

Keith's Choice Vegetables

Early potatoes Charlotte and Rocket; both of these varieties have given me a perfect crop every time. No slug damage, blackleg, or eelworm. Charlotte is a salad potato, yellow, long and oval in shape. Rocket is a first early, round and white in colour.

Some vegetables to enjoy in January/February

Savoy cabbage, Brussels sprouts, Jerusalem artichokes, celeriac, parsnips, turnips, swede, curly kale, leeks, spinach.

From store; carrots, onions, potatoes, shallots, marrows.



Membership Subscriptions

The subscription for 2015 has been held yet again to **£7.00** per member. Payment is now due. You have three options for payment (by cash or cheque):-

- a) at monthly talks
- b) by posting in the Club Box at the rear of the E & S Hardware Store in High Street, Malmesbury
- c) by sending to me at Redlands, West End, Brinkworth, Chippenham SN15 5DA.

Please use the renewal form below.

Thanks, Sean O'Shea

SUBSCRIPTION 2015 (£7.00 per member)

Name.....

Address.....

Phone number..... Membership No.....

Email address.....