



## MALMESBURY and DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

### July/August NEWSLETTER 2017

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

Chair and Secretary – Ellie Church

Contributions for the Newsletter may be sent to the Editor: [argoodall1952@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:argoodall1952@hotmail.co.uk)



#### JOTTINGS FROM THE CHAIR . . . .

We recently had a very good plant sale which made an admirable profit. Big thank you to all who helped by donating plants, cakes, lifting and arranging the tables, storing the tables or giving of their time to sell the plants. The raffle prize was a beautiful planted pot made by Gail.

We are having a spot of warm weather which is very pleasant; the strawberries taste much

sweeter when the sun has been shining on them.

I hope you all enjoy the summer break, but don't forget the Show in July (Derek will be writing about this). We shall have the Harvest Supper on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October.

Look forward to seeing you at the next meeting in September.

*Ellie Church – Chair*

#### CONGRATULATIONS!

*We are delighted to inform you that our fellow Garden Club member Derek Tilney has been awarded the British Empire Medal for his outstanding contribution to the community, his work for the British Legion and many other organisations for over 50 years. This award is very well deserved.*

*Congratulations Derek we are proud of you.*



#### THE ANNUAL PLANT SALE . . . .



The time was 6 o'clock on Saturday morning and it was raining. I thought 'Oh dear, we are in for a wet plant sale', but after a while it cleared up and we were fortunate to have good weather for the rest of the morning.

The supply of plants was slow for a while but soon increased and trade was quite good. The bedding begonias and petunias we purchased sold well and there was a big demand for runner beans and other vegetables. The takings on the day were over £500. The winner of the raffle was Mrs Mary Murchison, who was delighted with her prize of a planted pot. The raffle made over £75 and the cake stall made £18.

I would like to thank you all for your effort on the day, whether you helped, donated or came along and purchased plants.

*Graham Rees, Plant Sale Organizer*



## Tasks for July/August



- Spray roses against pests/diseases and dead head
- Prune shrubs that have finished flowering: spire, broom japonica etc.
- Continue to tie in tall-growing perennials as necessary
- Prune hard back bearded iris and apply general fertilizer a 2 oz per sq yd
- Prune winter flowering heathers, to promote new growth for the coming winter
- Feed tubs and hanging baskets at ten day intervals
- Protect ripening fruit from birds
- Raise mower height in dry weather
- Complete planting of half hardy annuals
- Prune back one or two blackcurrant canes to promote new growth (pick crop first)
- Tie in new growth of loganberry and blackberry
- For yellowing of raspberry leaf, water in sequesterine of iron as directed
- Complete brassica planting, protect against pigeons
- Spray all brassica plants against caterpillars
- Complete late plantings of leeks, peas, beetroot and spinach
- Sow spring cabbage seed

## SOME NOTES FROM DEREK . . . .

### THE SUMMER SHOW

Not long now – Saturday 29 July – all the prize cards, benching cards and certificates have been printed, schedules



distributed, even the weather has suddenly improved and everything is growing well. All the preparation work has been done and now it is up to our members and their friends to find the flowers and vegetables to bring along to our Show.

I am still looking for help with the Show, taking entries on Friday the 28th at the Athelstan Players Club room and on the Saturday. We set everything up on the morning – paper the tables, divide out the bench space – and we must be ready to receive entries by 9.30 am. Helpers are required to write up the prize cards and help the competitors.

Finally, please get your Entry Form in to us so that we can deal with it before the show. We will try to deal with any additional entries on the day, but we need to know that you are going to compete by the Friday! If anyone would like an extra copy of the Schedule and Entry Form emailing to them, please let the Editor know. Good luck to you all.

### WET, WET, WET!

Why is it that whenever I get trouble with water in the garden I always get soaked down the front of my trousers? The spraygun came off with no warning and gave me a cold wetting, then a plastic tap on a large water butt just came apart as I was bending down to fill a watering can – 40 gallons of water, some of it not too clean! Now I will have to replace the tap in the bottom of the butt. The trouble is, this butt is connected to a down pipe and linked to a second water butt.



I am not the only one to get a soaking. I gave my son my old magic 'expanding' hose. As he was using it a large 'sausage balloon' of water burst out from the fabric outer hose and when it could grow no larger, it burst giving my son a nasty slap!

### FLOWER POUCHES

I have nine hanging pouches covering a plain wooden fence, planted mainly with Lobelia and a few Petunias. It is a wall of bright blue flowers. I see that T&M have got a new flower pouch which has green foliage printed on the front of the 'bag' so that any gaps appear to be filled with plants. I will have to have them.

*Derek*

## FROM THE GARDEN by KEITH



### **Comments from the garden . . . .**

Yet again, in the main garden that I maintain, the Canada geese have returned. They have nested and now are walking about the garden with five young.

### **Zantedeschia . . . .**

Otherwise known as calla lilies, some varieties are hardy but others not so. I have grown these for many years and, as with other plants, the varieties are now numerous. I find that growing them in pots is the best way: you can put them on your patio, windowsill or even bury them up to the rim of the pot in the border. If it is a tender variety, this makes it much easier to bring it back in at the end of the season. They are no trouble and you don't need a greenhouse. Keep them in a shed or outhouse for the winter, and after you have cut them down just cover with newspaper,



cloth or cardboard and do not water until the spring. In March/April empty the pot and replant in the same pot with new compost, placing the corms so that the very top of the corm is just showing above the compost. They do not produce huge root systems so a six inch pot should be adequate for three corms. You can plant hardy varieties straight into the garden. But even though they are hardy, winters can be severe, so I cover them with a small amount of bark chippings. Tender varieties, which have a better selection, are better treated as above. Slugs seem to be the only problem as the new shoots are emerging, as with lilies. I have not had a problem with lily beetle. Plant in full sun or semi shade. It is much easier to water

and feed them when they are in pots. All varieties grow to about two feet and the trumpet-like flowers appear July to October.



Here are some that I have grown: *Z. rehmannii* (bright pink); *Z. akela* (purple); *Z. elliottiana* (bright yellow; spotted foliage); *Z. passion fruit* (orange); *Z. galaxy* (carmine; spotted foliage).

A new variety I am trying this year is *Z. Auckland*, a cream coloured variety. A few other varieties that need a mention are: *Z. Picasso*, a striking plant with purple-edged cream trumpet flowers and spotted leaves, and *Z. cantor*, the nearest you can get to black, but not everybody's choice.

### **Keith's choice plant . . . .**

**Zantedeschia var. aethiopica 'green goddess':** large trumpet flowers with a large lip. Flowers start out green and mature to white from the centre, ht. 3ft.

### **Pests Paradise . . . .**

**Shieldbugs:** looking exactly like shields from above, they feed on other insects or on the sap of plants, which fortunately does not cause a problem. They are 12mm long and come in a combination of colours from greeny brown to yellowish green and reddish brown. Their eggs are laid from mid spring to early summer. One of the nicer insects. No control is required.

### **Plants to enjoy in July/August**

*Astrantia*, *Astilbe*, *Monarda* (bergamot), *Kniphofia* (red hot poker), lavender, hydrangea, clematis in variety, roses in variety .



## FROM THE VEGETABLE PLOT by KEITH

### **Comments from the veg plot . . . .**

I can't stress enough the importance of growing your vegetables in a different place each year. If you don't, club root can become a problem on your brassicas (cabbage etc.) and there are now no chemicals to prevent it. Growing the same vegetables in the same place each year can build up a problem which can be difficult to eradicate and might only show itself as the vegetable nears maturity.

### **Cut and come again . . . .**



For some reason (I could eat them like an apple) I have got interested in growing cucumbers, possibly because there are a number of interesting varieties now available. C. var. Crystal apple, for instance, is a heritage variety. It grows like a small melon with a great taste of cucumber, one you can eat like an apple. This one you can leave to grow along the ground or train on a trellis or something similar. C. var. La Diva is an all female-flowering variety with smooth skin. It can be grown indoors or out and produces sweet bitter-free cucumbers with a crispy texture. Cucamelon is not strictly a cucumber but tastes a little like one. It is a vigorous trailer or climber, producing an abundance of small fruits resembling tiny watermelons with a citrus tang. This variety, if cut back, can be overwintered and will crop earlier the following season. A good bitter-free greenhouse variety is Femspot, which has virtually no male flowers which cause the bitterness. This variety produces 12" long cucumbers with a sweet taste.



Grow cucumbers in ordinary compost. If grown outside, make a small hole, fill it with compost or similar, place a pot at an angle and bring back the surrounding soil to form a mound. When watering into the pot, the water will go straight to the roots of the plant and not run away on the surface.

Some other varieties worth trying are: C. burpless tasty green, outdoor, 8-10 ins long; C. swing f1 hybrid, indoor/outdoor, 8-10ins long; C. aviance rz, greenhouse, 11-12ins long; C. patio snacker, indoor/outdoor, 6-8ins long.

### **Seasonal activities . . . .**

Most planting should now be complete. This is the time we look out for flea beetle on seedlings if it's dry and slugs everywhere if it's wet. Aphids can become a problem on French beans and runner beans, and also on sweet peas and lettuce. Always pinch out the tops of broad beans when they are a good height as this stops blackfly becoming a problem. Watch out for asparagus beetle on the ferns, if you grow them, also caterpillars on your brassicas. This time of year is also the time we could get blight on potato haulms (tops), and on outdoor tomatoes. This generally shows after a shower of rain, where before the rain there was no sign of blight. This has happened to me on a number of occasions. Spraying your potatoes and tomatoes every 10 days with a fungicide can help. If you do get blight on your potatoes, dig them up as if left it will also infect the potato as well. All parts of tomatoes will be affected if they get blight, both leaf and tomato. Continue sowing salad leaves and radish at two to three week intervals.

### **Keith's choice vegetable . . . .**

**Pea var. rondo (RHS A.G.M. award):** A heavy cropper, each pod contains at least 10 peas, ht 3ft. Resistant to fusarium disease.

### **No vegetable nightmares . . . .**

**Raspberry cane spot:** Purple spots with white areas develop on the canes of the plant. As the spots enlarge the bark will split. A fungus is to blame for this disease which sometimes spreads to the leaves and fruit. Cut out infected canes and burn. Spray canes with a fungicide when bare and in leaf, but not when in fruit.

### **Some vegetables to enjoy in July/August**

Spring onion, beetroot, peas, radish, carrots, potatoes, spinach, dwarf French beans, tomatoes, runner beans, cabbage, salad leaves, cauliflower, self-blanching celery, courgettes, cucumber, spinach beet (swiss chard), calabrese (green sprouting broccoli), onions.

## **MEETINGS – EVENTS – ACTIVITIES**

**Saturday 29 July 2017**  
Charlton Village Hall  
**Annual OPEN SHOW**

**Saturday 28 October**  
Charlton Village Hall  
**HARVEST SUPPER**

**ngs** gardens open  
for charity

Further details of these open gardens can be found in the 'Yellow Book' or on the NGS website:

<http://www.ngs.org.uk/gardens/find-a-garden.aspx>

### **Sunday 2 July**

DUCK POND BARN, Church Lane, Wingfield, Trowbridge, BA14 9LW.

### **Thursday 6 July**

THE MANOR HOUSE, Castle Combe, Castle Combe, Chippenham, SN14 7HR.

### **Sunday 9 July**

84 STUDLEY LANE, Studley, Calne, SN11 9NH.

### **Thursday 13 – Friday 14 July**

WINDMILL COTTAGE, Kings Road, Market Lavington, SN10 4QB.

### **Sunday 16 July**

BROADLEAS HOUSE GARDENS, Devizes, SN10 5JQ.

LYDIARD PARK WALLED GARDEN, Lydiard Tregoze, Swindon, SN5 3PA.

### **Sunday 23 July**

HORATIO'S GARDEN, Duke of Cornwall Spinal Treatment Centre, Salisbury Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Odstock Road, Salisbury, SP2 8BJ. Award winning hospital garden which opened in Sept 2012 and designed by Cleve West for patients with spinal cord injury at the Duke of Cornwall Spinal Treatment Centre.

SWEET BRIAR COTTAGE, 19 Gladstone Road, Chippenham, SN15 3BW.

TWIGS COMMUNITY GARDEN, Manor Garden Centre, Cheney Manor, Swindon, SN2 2QJ.

### **Sunday 30 July**

130 LADYFIELD ROAD AND ALLOTMENTS, Ladyfield Road, Chippenham, N14 0AP.

### **Wednesday 9 August**

THE OLD MILL, Ramsbury, SN8 2PN.

### **Sunday 27 August**

WUDSTON HOUSE, High Street, Wedhampton, Devizes, SN10 3QE.



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## Recipe

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### **Strawberry Marshmallow Mousse . . . .**

#### **Ingredients**

250g fresh strawberries, halved if large  
25g caster sugar  
140g mini marshmallows  
200ml double cream



#### **Method**

1. Put all but 2 strawberries into a pan along with 100ml water and the sugar. Over a medium heat, cook strawberries until soft enough to mash, about 3 mins. Take off the heat and squash the berries, using a fork, until pulpy. Add the marshmallows and stir into the hot strawberries until they dissolve. Leave to cool.
2. Whip the cream until it holds its shape. Fold the cream into the cooled strawberry mixture, then spoon into one bowl or separate pots and chill for about 2 hrs, or until set. Cut the reserved strawberries in half and use to decorate.

*Recipe from Good Food Magazine, August 2009*

*Ellie*

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## **Editor's Postscript . . . .**

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### **Cut 'n come again**

The dry weather this spring meant that most of the vegetable seeds in my tiny vegetable bed failed to germinate and I had to start off a new batch in the greenhouse. This has had fringe benefits. The 'spare' lettuce and Cavolo nero (black kale) seedlings are still providing me with a supply of cut-and-come-again micro-greens to add to salads. Kale is particularly nutritious, with alleged anti-cancer properties. If dry springs and hot, dry summers are what we have to expect as the climate changes, this may be how I grow my salads in the future – small quantities in seed trays in the more controlled environment of the greenhouse.

*Alison*