



MALMESBURY and DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

September/October NEWSLETTER 2018

www.malmesburygardenclub.org.uk

Chair and Secretary – Ellie Church



JOTTINGS FROM THE CHAIR

I trust you all had a wonderful summer – the warmest for years. We held a successful Show in July. When we were taking the entry forms, on the Friday, we were a bit concerned that the entries were low. However, when the entries arrived, we were delighted with the exhibition of plants and flowers to be judged.

Thanks to Keith Mathews and Margaret Bayliss for being such knowledgeable judges. As usual, the refreshments, provided by Louise, were delicious. Finally, thanks to Derek, Graham, George, Gail, Margaret and Sean for the running of the Show, and to Ann for the raffle of a beautiful basket of fruit.

I look forward to meeting you in September.

Ellie Church – Chair

ANNUAL SHOW

SHOWTIME? Who would have believed, when we chose the date for our show, we would have nine weeks of hot, dry weather leading up to the 28th of July! All our plans were made for the show – schedules printed and sent out, posters, judges invited, prize cards and certificates printed and the cups polished. When we gathered at the 'Riverside Centre' to take entries we were not at all confident that we would have a show – but slowly members arrived with their entry forms and the gloom lifted! We had entries! But the storm on the Friday night seemed to be the last straw. However, in the hall next morning we realized that our members had made a special effort to support our club's show.

Thanks to everyone – the ladies who made cakes and served teas, those who moved the tables back into storage, the stewards who assisted the judges, and of course our judges; but most especially thanks to our members who did not let us down. If you find it hard to remember how bad the weather was – just remember how strong the wind was every time the doors were opened.

Derek



Tasks for September/October

- Continue to spray roses
- Take hybrid tea & floribunda rose cuttings
- Prepare ground for new rose beds
- Continue to dead head perennial plants
- Spray Michaelmas Daisies against mildew
- Prune back flowering shrubs i.e., Weigela, Philadelphus, Senecio etc.
- Sow Sweet Peas in pots and place in frame
- Sow hardy annuals—Nigella, Godetia, Candytuft
- Place prepared Hyacinths in bowls for Christmas
- Sprinkle 2oz per sq yard of bone meal around perennials and shrubs
- Plant Wallflowers, Polyanthus, Bellis and Pansies for spring flowering
- Sow lettuces—Arctic King or Winter Density
- Spray brassica against caterpillar and whitefly
- Plant out spring cabbage plants
- Store main carrot crops
- Order fruit trees and bushes
- Cut out old fruiting raspberry canes
- Prune blackcurrant bushes
- Pick apples and pears for storing
- Spray outdoor peach and nectarine against peach leaf curl



MEETINGS – EVENTS – ACTIVITIES

<p>Monday 10 September 2018</p> <p>7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>Rosemary Verey 1918- 2001: her contribution and legacy to 20th century gardening</i></p> <p>Margie Hoffnung</p> <p>Margie gave us a talk on a Stranger in Blaise in April 2016. She has worked with Rosemary Verey at Barnsley and has done a degree in gardening at Bath University.</p>	<p>Monday 8 October 2018</p> <p>7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>Green Manures, Catchcrops and Cover Crops</i></p> <p>Lois Phipps</p> <p>Lois is an Environmental Science graduate. She has worked in agricultural research where she specialised in the best practice for maintaining healthy soils</p>
<p>Monday 12 November 2018</p> <p>7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>Marvellous Moths</i></p> <p>Bob Smith</p> <p>Bob is enthusiastic about moths which he studies in his garden near Stroud</p>	<p>Monday 14 January 2019</p> <p>7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>Stumperies, ferns and shady friends</i></p> <p>Andrew Tolman</p> <p>Andrew is a professional gardener and has given us several talks in the past</p>
<p>Monday 11 March 2019</p> <p>7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall</p> <p><i>A Curious History of Vegetables</i></p> <p>Bill Lawes</p> <p>Bill is an author from Hereford. He has written several books, one of which is <i>A Curious History of Vegetables</i></p>	



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>

Thursday 6 & Friday 7 September
The Meadows Limpers Hill, Mere, BA12 6BB

Wednesday 12 September
Hazelbury Manor Gardens Wadswick, Box, SN13 8HX



FROM THE GARDEN by KEITH

Comments from the garden

Glorious summer, in the heat of the day on many occasions 30°C, working in the shade was easier. Many herbaceous plants and shrubs were beginning to show signs of distress, shallow rooted plants more so. A summer to remember though.

Something different

Adding a different look to the garden creates interest. Many years ago I was given a sapling of willow; it now measures 5ft around its trunk. I have views across a 30 acre field at the back fence, facing west, so the west wind howls in. I planted the willow on the fence-line and every year pruned off all the growth growing forwards and backwards, and trained the side growths left and right. The willow now covers 30ft x 8ft in height; it gives me some wind protection but still enables me to have the view.

The *Acer griseum* or paperbark maple is a relatively small tree with interesting attractions. Its small dark green leaves turn deep scarlet in the autumn but its unusual interest is



its peeling chestnut brown bark, which it sheds in wide curling strips. It is a narrow growing tree, eventually reaching about 30ft. The shrub *Corylus* (hazel or filbert) has an interesting variety *C.*



avellana var. *contorta*. It is a talking point in the garden because its bizarre branches wander and wriggle in all directions, making it an unusual sight when leafless during the winter. You will

find these branches in many florists. The shrub *Cornus* or dogwood has many varieties with colourful foliage, but during the winter after their leaves have dropped, you will be left with long stems of a brilliant red or yellow depending on

variety. *Euonymus* or spindle tree also has an interesting variety, *E. alatus* or winged spindle, a decorative small bushy shrub. The small branches have wings attached to each side. In the autumn the leaves turn a vivid deep red and when they drop the branches show the winged effect all winter.

Keith's choice plant

Rhus typhina (stags horn sumac) var. dissecta: a medium sized shrub or small tree. It bears deeply cut large leaves which turn a fiery copper flame colour in the autumn, then, showing well into the winter, striking candles of velvety red fruits.



No disease please

Acer gall mites: small reddish or yellowish-green mounds or galls will be found on the upper leaf surface leading to distortion of the leaf in early summer. Miniscule mites which suck the sap from the leaves leaving chemical deposits. The galls have no harmful effect on the tree or shrub and will only be found on a few leaves. No chemical is available to gardeners. On small plants remove affected leaves.

Plants to enjoy in September/October

Amelanchier, Berberis, Rhus, Cortaderia (pampas grass), *Arbutus unedo* (strawberry tree), *Malus* (crab apple), *Dahlia, Chrysanthemum*.

Bulbs to enjoy in September/October

Amaryllis belladonna, Cyclamen alpine, Nerine, Acidanthera, Colchicum (autumn crocus), *Schizostylis, Sternbergia* (autumn daffodil).



FROM THE VEGETABLE PLOT by KEITH

Comments from the veg plot

Dry was not the word, tap water is not the same. Not only that, but many flowers and vegetables did not like the prolonged high temperatures, although some did.



Brussels sprouts

Some years ago I raved about a Brussels sprout called



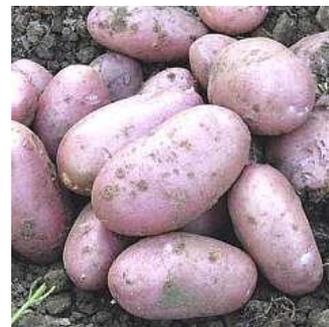
'Trafalgar'. At the time this was disease resistant and still is, but other varieties have been bred and for a number of years I have been trying a few of them. I

germinate the seeds in a small pot transferring them when an inch high singly into 4inch pots. I sow in February/March and plant out April/May. They can be fed in a pot so good plants are produced. Plant them in firm ground or they will blow out like little cabbages. All sprouts taste better when they have had a frost on them, the same goes for leeks. The variety 'Crispus', an f1 variety with an A.G.M. (award of garden merit), was the first I tried. It is disease and club root resistant, and is a vigorous variety with dark green buttons which stood well and cropped September to November – highly recommended. 'Marte' f1 hybrid, also with an A.G.M., gave even bigger buttons, if you prefer them bigger. It is a tall variety with good flavour and no growing problems, again cropping in September to November. The variety 'Maximus' f1 (A.G.M.) was also cropping at the same time but going on till Christmas. This variety had smaller buttons but cropped well and with a good flavour, also disease resistant. 'Montgomery' f1 was a variety I would also recommend, good tight buttons, excellent flavour and a heavy cropper; harvest November-February. Remember, when buying f1 seeds, there are fewer seeds in the packet.

Seasonal activities

Crops will be producing well by now, but some will be finishing which means clean-up time. I have found, due to the exceptionally dry weather, I have not had blight on my potato haulms (leaves) – not yet anyway (end of August). I am expecting a smaller crop of potatoes when I dig them out late September. Storing some of your vegetables can begin now, especially carrots. I dig them out early September; I find very little carrot fly in them so they store well. All onions and shallots should be in store by now and checked monthly for rotting. Spray for the usual problems at this time of year: insecticide for caterpillars and aphids, and one of the many available fungicides for mildew on late sown peas and courgettes. Continue to sow at three week intervals cut-and-come-again salad, radishes and spring onions. Give slight protection when it gets colder. If not done already, cut away at the bottom old fruiting canes of raspberries and tie in the new canes. Also cut away at the base all the fruiting lengths of loganberries and tayberries and tie in the long new canes.

Keith's choice vegetable



Potato Sarpo Una second early: I tried this for the first time this year. A round, red, medium-sized potato with a wonderful flavour and good blight resistance.

No vegetable nightmares

Brassica downy mildew: yellow blotches with greyish white fungal growth on underside of leaf, seedlings are more prone to this problem. A fungus is the cause, encouraged by humid damp conditions. Early application of a fungicide will help. Sow seeds thinly and remove any leaves showing the above signs.

Some vegetables to enjoy in Sept/Oct

Carrot, onions, runner beans, cabbage, potatoes, salad, courgettes, cucumber, leeks, curly kale, cauliflower, beetroot, dwarf French beans, early Brussels sprouts, sweet corn, spinach, Swiss chard, celeriac, radish, spring onion.

Recipe

Pear and Blackberry Pie

Ingredients

Plain flour, for dusting
300g sweet shortcrust pastry
Freshly grated nutmeg
1 egg, beaten
1 tbsp demerara sugar

For the poached pears

75g white caster sugar
1 lemon, pared
5 cardamom pods
½ nutmeg
1 cinnamon stick
3 small pears, peeled cored and halved

For the filling

3-4 small pears,
peeled cored and
chopped
75g white caster
sugar
2 tsp cornflour
2 tbsp ground
almonds
150g berries (eg raspberries, blackberries)



Custard, cream or ice cream, to serve

Method

1. To make the poached pears, put the sugar in a big saucepan with the lemon peel, cardamom pods, nutmeg, cinnamon and 1 litre water. Bring to a gentle simmer. Lower the pear halves into the liquid and place a circle of baking parchment on top, so they cook through properly. Leave over a medium heat, so that a few bubbles break the surface every now and then, and cook for 15 mins. Allow to cool in the liquid. Can be chilled overnight if making ahead.
2. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Dust the work surface with a little plain flour. Roll out the pastry so it's big enough to line a 20-23cm frying pan, pie dish or shallow baking tin. Grate a little nutmeg over the surface, then gently roll again to help it stick. Lift over your dish, press into the corners, then trim the edges. You can give it a pretty crimped edge, if you like, then wrap the off-cuts in cling film and keep in the fridge until needed. Scrunch up a sheet of baking parchment, unfold, and lay it over the pastry. Fill with baking beans and bake for 15 mins. Remove the beans and parchment, brush with some of the beaten egg and return to the oven for another 5 mins.
3. Meanwhile, make the filling. Cook the remaining pears and sugar in a small pan until the pears are soft enough to squash with the back of a spoon. Drain off 3 tbsp of the poaching liquid and mix this with the cornflour, then pour back into the pears and continue cooking and squashing for another minute or so, until the filling has thickened.
4. Sprinkle the ground almonds over the pastry case, then add the squashed pear mixture and scatter over the berries. Remove the poached pears from their liquid and blot them on some kitchen paper. Arrange them face-up among the pear mixture and berries. Using a mini pastry cutter, cut little shapes from the leftover pastry, then arrange them on top. Brush the pastry pieces with beaten egg and sprinkle with the demerara sugar. Bake for 45-50 mins until the pastry is golden and berry juice is bubbling. Cool for 10-15 mins before serving with custard, cream or ice cream, if you like.

Recipe from Good Food magazine, October 2017

Ellie