



# MALMESBURY and DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

## July/August NEWSLETTER 2023

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

Chair and Secretary – Ellie Church



### JOTTINGS FROM THE CHAIR . . . .

I am delighted, we have just picked French beans and spinach from the garden. Let's hope they taste as good as they look – tea tonight!

We had a really good time at the Plant Sale and sold quite a few plants (thank you all who donated plants to be sold). Gail did a wonderful alpine pot – thank you. Graham, it is your baby: well done and thank you. Thank all of you who helped in any way at all: it is the teamwork that makes it so special.

The 'Show' is the next thing to look forward to. The details are included within this newsletter. Please come and bring your produce to show, or just turn up to see the display and have afternoon tea with us.

Look forward to seeing you all.

*Ellie Church – Chairperson*

### £££ Subscriptions £££

There are still a number of this year's subscriptions outstanding.

If you have not yet paid yours, there is an application form and details of how to pay at the end of this Newsletter



### Tasks for July/August



- Dead-head roses
- Prune shrubs that have finished flowering: spiraea, broom, japonica etc.
- Continue to tie in tall-growing perennials as necessary
- Prune hard back bearded iris and apply general fertilizer at 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 sequestrene of iron as directed
- Complete brassica planting, protect against pigeons
- Complete late plantings of leeks, peas, beetroot and spinach
- Sow spring cabbage seed

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## **SHOW TIME . . . . !**

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**Saturday 22 July 2023**

### **Charlton Village Hall**

I hope you have all got a copy of this year's Show Schedule – it is available for you to download from our website: all the pages are numbered so, as long as you have read the rules, you can choose which pages you wish to print. If you would like a hard copy of the schedule, please give me a call on 823944 and I will see you get a copy, and if you could display a poster for our show I will see you get one as well.

All the arrangements have been made – you can leave your entry forms at E&S shop in the High Street or at the Garden Centre and we will be at the Riverside Centre, opposite the Fire Station, on Friday 21 July between 6.30 and 8.15 pm to take your entries – we always like to see members when you drop in to see us dealing with the entry forms.

We are always pleased to have help in taking entries and recording them, and also on Show day – we start setting up the show, arranging tables, allocating space etc at 8.00 am sharp and we aim to be finished in an hour to receive the first entries at 9.30am. There are a few lulls in the morning when very little seems to be happening but if any unforeseen problem crops up, no matter how small, we need cool heads and willing helpers. If you feel you would like to help please give me a call.

One can never tell what produce and flowers will be brought to our show, what with floods, earthquakes and droughts – but none of this will affect your house plants, so if you have a favourite pot plant, please enter it in one of our classes – we would like to see it.



*Ladies enjoying a break from the Show – there will be teas on the lawn again but bring a sun hat!*

Derek

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## **Memory of Chelsea Flower Show . . . .**

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Back in 1967 I had to go to Dulwich for a job interview at the London Telephone Company.

I was being interviewed by one of their directors and after a rather long interview he said to me *“Mr Tilney – I noticed that you have been looking at your wrist watch”*.

I nearly died – I really didn't realise and thought that's the end of my job!

I apologised and then I explained that, on the train that morning, I was spoken to by a stranger who asked if I was a gardener. When I said *“yes”*, he gave me a ticket to that day's Chelsea Flower Show.

The director cut me off and said *“Why didn't you say so earlier? You've got the job – away you go”!*

It was Members' Day, the Queen was there and I was glad I was wearing a suit. I had a great time and took home a present for June – the next year we went together for what became many visits to Chelsea and I still wear the wrist watch I was given when I had

completed 21 years working for the Telephone Company of Dulwich, London.



Derek

## MEETINGS – EVENTS – ACTIVITIES

<p><b>22 July 2023</b> Charlton Village Hall <i>Annual Show</i></p>	<p><b>11 September 2023</b> 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall <i>Rosemary Verey</i> Margie Hoffnung</p> <p>Margie has a horticulture degree and an MSc in the Conservation of Historic Gardens &amp; Cultural Landscapes. She has worked at Westonbirt Arboretum and Highgrove, and with Rosemary Verey and Mary Keen.</p>
<p><b>9 October 2023</b> 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall <i>How to Garden the Low Carbon Way</i> Sally Nex</p> <p>Professional gardener and garden writer, Sally is passionate about growing her own food. She writes regularly for the RHS magazine, The Garden and for BBC Gardeners' World magazine.</p>	<p><b>13 November 2023</b> 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall <i>Glorious Gardens: a Gardener's Choice</i> Andrew Tolman</p> <p>Andrew was formerly Senior Gardener at Highgrove and is now self-employed. He is a popular speaker who has entertained us on many occasions with his beautifully illustrated talks.</p>
<p><b>11 December 2023</b> 7.30pm in the Charlton Village Hall <i>Annual General Meeting</i></p>	



### FROM THE GARDEN by KEITH

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

Plants were so slow to get going with a cold breeze most of the time and single-figure temperatures overnight; spring was not a good one. Saying that, we did not get a hard frost so my wisteria flowered, unlike last year.

#### **Roses . . . .**

Having not mentioned roses for several years, I thought they warranted a mention. There are so many new varieties. Not everyone has room for roses, especially if you live in a flat, although climbing or rambling roses will



eventually get to you. Seriously, there are miniature roses and patio roses that you can grow in a trough or pot.

Miniature roses grow to about 30cm (1ft), so two or three roses to a trough would give you a good show. Some good varieties include Little Buckaroo with red flowers, Yellow Doll, Pixie (rose pink), Morsdag (white), and Coralin (orange), just to name a few. All are bushy and flower prolifically.

Patio roses would be better in a pot as these grow to about 60cm (2ft). Again, they are bushy and repeat-flowering. Good varieties include Yellow Sunblaze, Sweet Magic (orange/gold), Pretty Polly (rose pink) and Red Sunblaze. I have grown many of these over the years.

Ground cover roses are just that. First clear the ground and cover with weed control fabric; cut through the fabric and plant your rose; cover the area with forest bark or similar. Job done! Water will go through the fabric but weeds can't. Good ground cover varieties include Swanny with white double flowers, Fiona with semi-double red flowers, and Ferdy with salmon pink flowers.

In the past I have been asked to plant a hedge. 'What about a rose hedge?' I asked. 'Good idea' was the reply. Here are a few good roses for a hedge. *Rosa rugosa alba*, with white flowers from June to September, highly scented, with striking orange hips in the autumn. *Rosa rugosa* 'Fru Dagmar Hastrup' has large pink single flowers with bright red hips in the autumn. Other roses that make a good hedge include, Chinatown, a vigorous variety with large trusses of deep yellow flowers; also Queen Elizabeth, again vigorous with trusses of pink blooms; lastly Stromboli with large red roses carried on vigorous growth. Another rose you might like to try is the cascading rose The Fairy; this one comes in three colours: red, white and pink, flowering from June to October with numerous small trusses of slightly scented flowers.

Many of us have bedding roses, either hybrid tea or floribunda. These come in so many colours and are almost all highly scented. I have always planted rose beds of mixed colours. Here are some of the hybrid tea roses I have used. Grandpa Dickson, pale lemon yellow; Super Star, vermillion; Just Joey, orange; Christian Dior, scarlet; Mischief, salmon; Pascali, white; Prima Ballerina, pink; and Whisky Mac, gold. A



floribunda rose bed can be slightly taller. Some I have used include Evelyn Fison, double red; Sweet Dream, peach; Arthur Bell, yellow; City of Leeds, salmon pink; Elizabeth of Glamis,

pink/salmon; Glenfiddich, gold; Margaret Merrill, white; and Super Trouper, orange. I have only mentioned a few varieties of bedding rose but there are so many more to choose from.

Here are some other rose types you might not have heard of: remember, these are types and there are many varieties within each group. Damask roses, Portland roses, China roses, Alba roses, Moss roses, Centifolia or Provence roses, Bourbon roses, Noisette roses, Hybrid Perpetual roses, Gallica roses, Old Heritage roses, wild roses, Polyantha roses, Shrub roses, Modern Shrub roses, Scotch Burnet or Pimpinellifolia roses, lastly Hybrid Musk roses.

Climbing and rambling roses include many varieties; I will mention just a few that I have planted. First climbers: Golden Showers, Iceberg, Danse de Feu (orange red), Paul's Scarlet, Spanish Beauty (pink), and Woburn Abbey (tangerine). I have recently planted two rambling roses: Kiftsgate, a cluster of small roses on medium length stems, white with a yellow centre, flowering June to July; it was planted on my flowering wall. Francois Juranville has clusters of semi-double pink flowers with a fruity scent; it was planted on a pergola and flowers from June to September. There are many more climbing and rambling roses available.

Should you require a rose without any thorns, you're in luck. There are a few roses without thorns and a few roses with very few. Zephirine Drouhin is thornless and has cerise pink flowers with a white base. These climbers have virtually no thorns: Kathleen Harrop, pink roses with strong fragrance; Lady Banks, clusters of yellow roses with a slight scent, there is also a white form. Madame Alfred Carrière has creamy white blooms tinged pink, with a strong scent. Veilchenblau has clusters of purple-blue flowers. Some virtually thornless shrub roses include Reine des Violettes, which has deep magenta roses with a good fragrance and Fantin Latour with delicate pink/white blooms with medium scent. There are many other nearly thornless roses to choose from.

### **No disease please . . . .**

**Rose balling:** the flower buds fail to open and the outer petals turn brown, whilst the inner petals are unaffected. This usually happens in damp weather. Eventually the bud rots off but not all buds are affected. The



cause is damp warm weather. Prune out affected buds as they will develop grey mould and cause die back. General growth of the plant is unaffected.

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

**Perovskia variety Blue Spires:** also known as Russian sage. This one attracts countless pollinating insects. A multi-stemmed sub shrub with clusters of small violet blue flowers. Leaves are aromatic and grey/green. It is also deer and rabbit resistant. Ht 60-90cm (2-3ft).

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

*Erigeron*, *Liriodendron* (tulip tree), *Fuchsias*, *Hydrangea*, *Passiflora*, *Lavatera* (mallow), hardy geraniums in variety, *Kniphofia* (torch lily), *Briza media* (quaking grass).





## FROM THE VEGETABLE PLOT by KEITH

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

My cat wakes me up between 5 and 6 every morning, this gets me out into the garden early before the sun is up, and before the slugs have gone to bed. It means I can remove the slugs from my lettuce and dahlias and use safer sprays to remove aphids and lily beetles on my roses and many other plants. Getting up this early in the summer is OK, but during the winter it is a different story.

### **Unusual veg, salads & herbs . . . .**

I always like to try something once. In the past I tried asparagus pea, growing to only 45cm (18ins), picked when only 2-3cm long. Eat raw or in salads. A very



ornamental plant with pretty dark brownish purple-red flowers. The pea has a slight asparagus flavour. I also tried cardoon, a smaller version of the

globe artichoke. The globe tops are eaten in the same way. The young leaves are an added vegetable, stewed or added to cheese and potato bake. Cucamelon, a cross between a cucumber and a watermelon, is a pest-resistant climber bearing masses of grape sized fruits like a mini watermelon;

the flavour is more like a cucumber with a limey kick. Children will love them. Orache is one for the salad when used as a baby leaf, its



flavour is mild; it can also be used in soups, stews, pastas and quiches. It is very decorative: I have grown it in a flower border. Its leaves are two-toned dark scarlet and spade-shaped, ht 90cm (3ft). Stevia variety Sweetie, is a herb with dark green leaves which can be used as a natural sweetener; it also bears small white flowers in summer. Use in salads, also as a garnish in drinks. It is half hardy, bushy and evergreen, ht 60-90cm (2-3ft). Some other fairly new cut-and-come-again salad leaves have started to

become available, here are just a few: Catalogna, Mibuna, Quinoa, Stribolo and Mazur.

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

Moving into July, most planting and seed sowing should be complete. Saying that, keep a continuous sowing of salad and spring onion. If you grow brassicas (cabbage, calabrese or cauliflower) all the year round, sow a few seeds of each for a late crop; they should mature before Christmas. Black fly was bad on the broad beans (I played them some Des O' Connor music, it seemed to help). Pinching out the tops also stopped it getting any worse.

Late August, start to lift onions and dry off before storing, shallots can also be lifted. Watch out for aphids (black fly) on runner beans, also caterpillars on brassicas. Planting your carrots next to your onions should have helped deter carrot fly. Spray all potatoes and outdoor tomatoes and late sown peas with fungicide to prevent blight and mildew.

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

**Tomato var. Honeycomb F1 hybrid:** a cherry tomato that I can recommend, a good size cherry with exceptional flavour and a high level of sweetness with a honey-like aftertaste. Large trusses are produced on sturdy plants. Plant with basil to ward off aphids.



### **No fruit nightmares . . . .**

**Plum leaf gall mite:** swellings or galls develop on leaves of damsons, gages and plums. Tiny mites which suck sap from the underside of leaves are in the galls. No prevention is available, but fortunately, little damage is caused to the trees

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

Runner beans, cucumber, spinach, carrots, onions, beetroot, shallots, potatoes, salad, radish, marrow, peas, dwarf French beans, courgettes, globe artichokes, cauliflower, celery, cabbage, tomatoes, calabrese broccoli (large green heads).

Black, white and red currants, raspberries, gooseberries, strawberries, loganberries, tayberries, plums, blueberries.



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## **HELP! Your questions answered by resident expert, Keith**

Please send your queries and problems to: [info@malmesburygardenclub.org.uk](mailto:info@malmesburygardenclub.org.uk)

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**Q** *Do I need to lift Dutch and English irises each winter?*

**A** I have, in the past, purchased a bag of forest bark or similar, and when the irises have finished I cut them down and apply a 3inch layer over where they were planted. The new shoots in the spring will push through the covering. If you want to remove the protection you can. It's always possible the winter will be very bad with very hard frosts; if it is, you can always add a little more covering. If you want to err on the safe side, lift and store in a frost-proof place.

**Q** *Can I divide my heathers?*

**A** This is not a good idea. Heathers are very woody and if they are old plants they would not like being moved. The best thing to do, and the quickest, is to layer some outer growth, pegging it down in the soil in early spring. By the autumn the growths should have rooted. Cut the layered growths from the main plant. You can then dig out the old woody heather. If the new rooted heather is in the wrong place, because it is a young plant, you can easily lift and replant where you want it, but make sure you water it well.

**Q** *My cucumbers are bitter. What am I doing wrong?*

**A** If your cucumber is not pollinated, it will be bitter. Today you can get all-female cucumbers: no problem with bitterness. Here are some all-female varieties: Carmen F1, Passandra F1, Emilie F1, Femspot F1.

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## **RECIPE . . . .**

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### **Strawberry gin**

#### **Ingredients**

700ml bottle of gin  
400g punnet of strawberries, sliced  
100g caster sugar

#### **Method**

1. Mix the gin with the strawberries and caster sugar in a large bowl and pour into a 1.5-litre sterilised Kilner jar.
2. Store in the fridge and stir every two days for three weeks.
3. Strain through coffee filters or muslin cloth to serve.
4. Enjoy!

Recipe from *BBC Good Food*



*Ellie*

*A very successful Plant Sale . . . .*



## SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2023

Subscriptions for 2023 are now due. They remain the same as previous years, that is: £7.00 for single membership and £10.00 for couples.

I would be grateful to receive your subscriptions as soon as possible. They may be paid:

- at the monthly meetings
- by post to me, Sean O'Shea, at Redlands, West End, Brinkworth, Chippenham, SN15 5DA
- by using the Club Post Box at E & S Hardware Store, High Street, Malmesbury
- by Bank transfer to Lloyds Bank PLC; sort code 30 91 99; account 02440789; put your name as the reference so I can track your payment.

### PLEASE SECURE CASH/CHEQUE IN AN ENVELOPE WITH THIS FORM

Enclosed £7.00 single membership       £10.00 double membership

1. (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms): ..... Membership No. ....

2. (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms): ..... Membership No. ....

Tel. No. ....

Address: .....

.....

Email address.....

#### GDPR Declaration:

- I authorise Malmesbury & District Garden Club to hold records of my personal details as necessary for the efficient running of the club. These details include:
  - name and address
  - landline and mobile telephone numbers
  - email address (if disclosed)
  - application/renewal form
  - record of subscription payments
- I am happy for Malmesbury & District Garden Club to communicate with me by email, by post and by telephone.
- I am aware that I can request a copy of the details of my record and that I can ask for any inaccuracies to be amended or for records to be deleted. I am also aware that I can refer complaints to the Information Commissioner if I am not satisfied with the way my complaint has been dealt with.

For further details contact Mr. Sean O'Shea at the address above.

**Signed: (1)** ..... **(2)** .....

Thank you

*Sean O'Shea (Treasurer)*