

LONG EATON AND DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

MEMBERS MEETING APRIL

After a lovely sunny spring day the chairlady opened the meeting with the usual notices and the presentation of trophies from the spring show by the president Tony Lee. Members gathered to hear a talk by Geoff Hodges on Gardening with Climate Change. Geoff has 31 years experience of writing about gardening, and radio in a free lance capacity. For such a large subject Geoff took us through firstly some terminology such, as climate, being the patterns of weather you expect and weather being what you get. Geoff then went on to explain in an easy to understand way what change means to us as gardeners : average temperatures raised annually, hotter drier summers, warmer winters with more rain. less frost and earlier springs (when bugs appear in lawns). With more drought, less water, a drip irrigation system is best and the best soil is clay being water retentive but with any flooding more root rot disease. Warmer winters of lawns will disappear so use different species of grass. Lots of fruit trees need cold winters. Exotic pests and diseases eg lily beetle and rosemary beetle become more prevalent.

What to do? Put lots of organic matter in soil, composted bark mulching, about 3" thick. Put in sun loving plants & climbers, drought loving trees, even bananas, shrubs such as plumbago, buddleia anything with silver leaves, brooms. Scented leaf plants are good. Ground cover plants eg osteospermum, allium, canna lily cyclamen. After answering a few questions Geoff was shown members appreciation in the usual way, for an entertaining, enlightening talk on a serious matter. The raffle followed, and members went home with plenty of food for thought. The next members' meetings are 21May and 18June.