



May 2022

Newsletter

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Dear Members,

What a good turnout we had for our April meeting on rose growing. Some 84 members and visitors attended, which still kept us within the Village Hall's fire regulations of 100. On May 26th, our speaker is Michael Brown, the 'Historic Gardener', who will talk to us about 'Plants amongst the Ruins – Natives & Invaders'.

Please don't forget our Plant Sale on the forecourt of the Village Hall on Saturday 14th May, 10 am – 11.30am. Setting up starts at 9.30am so if you have plants to donate, please bring them along clearly labelled. Gill Stansfield will also be selling gardening gloves from her sundries table and Helen will have tickets for the coach trip. Please note that there is a childrens' party inside the Village Hall so parking may be tight.

Our coach trip to Hergest Croft & Brobury House Gardens, Herefordshire, is on Wednesday 25th May at £35 per head. This includes coach hire, entry to both gardens, a guided tour in the morning at Hergest Croft and tea & cakes at Brobury House in the afternoon. Most members are taking a packed lunch but if you wish to have lunch in the café at Hergest Croft, we must submit numbers with menu choice 2 weeks BEFORE our trip. Please email / telephone Helen Jones ASAP on helen@manorfarmknowle.co.uk or 07870 327524. The coach will leave the Co Op carpark in Balsall Common at 8.30am and is expected to return around 6.30 -7pm, traffic permitting. Please do NOT leave your car at the Co Op which is a 2hr maximum stay. The carpark sited behind Tesco and Costa Coffee has no restriction.

Helen Jones has taken on the running of this year's Annual Show with help from your committee. We want to make it an extra special show in memory of our late Show Secretary, David Ashcroft. David's family have suggested members plant a dahlia in his memory and the committee have added an extra class called 'David's Dahlia', with a cup to go with it. We do need your help to set up the tables the evening before and clear away after the show ends on Saturday 23rd July. Hints on exhibiting at horticultural shows can be found in the RHS 'The Horticultural Show Handbook' (ISBN 978-1-902896-83-0).

Now for some changes. I will no longer be regularly thinking of a puzzle for the last page of the Newsletter, as entries have not picked up. Putting paper copies on the tables at the Annual Dinner did not radically change the number of entrants. Apologies to my small but very faithful band of members who always enter. However, following a suggestion from one of this group, I will produce an occasional puzzle. Thus, no puzzle this month!

One other change is to refreshments. Pet Hawley has found that few members now stay for refreshments after the meeting. We are going to try offering them before the meeting starts as members are often at the Village Hall by 7.30pm. Please bring your own cup, although paper ones will be available if you forget.

Finally, it was lovely to hear that Cliff Gledhill has made a good recovery following recent surgery. I for one have missed his cheerful face at meetings!

Best wishes, Marion

SPEAKER REPORT

Rose Growing Made Easy by Simon White from Peter Beales Roses, Attleborough, Norfolk

On 28th April, we welcomed Simon who claims he began his apprenticeship with the firm not liking roses. Some 41 years later, they have obviously grown on him! He travels the country promoting roses through talks, radio and T.V. work, and sometimes still gets his hands dirty in the nursery.

Norfolk born Peter Beales began the firm in 1968 but following a series of family deaths, it is now owned by a Canadian couple. It is open 7 days a week and boasts 1100 varieties of roses and holds the National Collection of Species Roses. It offers 2 acres of display gardens (excellent fragrance in June), guided tours, workshops & events,

a garden centre, and a restaurant. They also offer advice online at support@peterbealesroses.com and by telephone 01953 454707 (option 2).

The firm's light, sandy propagation fields are rented from a local farmer, and are subject to the farmer's field rotation with potatoes and sugar beet. It takes 18mths to produce a rose and it is not easy to prophesy what type of rose will sell so far ahead. The rootstock, essentially a wild dog rose, are planted in March using an old cabbage planter at a daily rate of 35,000. In June and July, the roses are propagated using the 'T' bud method of grafting. They will start to flower the following June and some 250,000 are grown annually. A rose can last a lifetime if afforded the proper care!

Bare Root Roses v. Roses in Pots

The former should be planted between November to the end of March, whereas the season for the latter is not so critical, commonly March – end of September / early October. Peter Beales (P.B.) offers 1100 varieties as bare roots and 450 varieties in pots. Simon advised leaving the latter in their pots for at least a week after purchase, because this gives the roots of field grown roses longer to bind with the compost.

Soil Preparation

Plenty of organic matter is vital. This includes farmyard manure from a garden centre, horse manure of at least 6mths old to prevent roots being scorched. Mushroom compost has too much lime and is to be avoided.

Rose replant sickness can be prevented by using the cardboard box trick, rather than replacing vast amounts of soil (2.5 feet deep and 2.5 feet square). The box needs to be of a size that could hold at least 12 wine bottles! Dig the hole large enough to accommodate the box and put the organic matter in its base. Insert the box, fill with John Innes No 3, a root boost preparation, and the rose. The box acts as a barrier and decays over time whilst the rose establishes. If you have difficulty obtaining this size of box, P.B. sells rose replant boxes via mail order.

Planting A Rose

Distances - Modern roses: 18 – 24 inches apart. Shrub roses: 2 - 3 feet apart, depending on variety.

Climbers & ramblers: 7 – 10 feet apart.

Planting Depth - Ensure that the graft union is an inch below the soil surface to reduce the wild rose rootstock producing suckers. If suckers appear, trace them to ground level and see if they originate from below the graft. Always pull, rather than cut off, to inhibit more vigorous suckers returning.

A root boost preparation can be sprinkled in the planting hole, alternatively bonemeal or fish, blood & bone but be careful that you do not scorch the roots. After planting a bare root rose should be pruned back to 3 inches high, but roses in pots will have already had this prune done. Water in and protect from rabbits, deer, where necessary. Remember roses require regular watering & feeding. Always feed after pruning in Feb/March and again in July with a high nitrogen granular feed eg Top Rose. They will also benefit from a high potash liquid feed every 2 weeks during the flowering season, eg P.B.'s Uncle Tom's Rose Tonic, Tomorite, or a seaweed fertiliser.

Pruning

Conquer your fear!! Roses are pruned to keep the centre of the plant open thereby increasing airflow & reducing disease, and to maintain their shape (eg a wine goblet for bush roses). They can be pruned from September to March /April. Always use sharp, clean secateurs for crisp cuts (bypass types are better for this), as well as loppers. Invest in a pair of gloves you feel comfortable in. Remember the 3 D's to remove dead, diseased & damaged wood and include 2 W's for weak & wayward stems too. Ensure that all cuts are made above a bud (if not easily visible, carefully run your finger down the stem to feel for a bump), and on an angle away from the bud. Shrub roses can be pruned at different heights so that their flowers appear at different heights. Rose hedges can be pruned with a hedge trimmer. On repeat flowering roses, deadhead spent blooms to encourage more, removing at a lower outward facing set of leaves.

Pests & Diseases

Prevention is better than cure! If you do spray, alternate your chemicals. Good pruning reduces the incidence of blackspot, mildew and rust. Skimmed milk in a 50:50 dilution is also a blackspot treatment and 'Sulphur Rose' is a modern organic version of the historical soot from coal fires. Provanto retail 'Fungus Fighter' as well as 'Ultimate Bug Killer' (which also deals with Lily Beetle). 'Rose Clear Ultra' is a systemic fungicide and insecticide.

Roses in Containers

Not everyone has a garden, and many roses can be grown in containers, even a large hanging basket!! Containers should be at least 15 – 18 inches across and the same in depth. The ideal medium is a soil-based compost such as John Innes No 3. Replace the top 3 inches of compost every January, and completely re-pot the rose every 3 years.

Roses in containers should be watered 7 days per week in the growing season, including when it rains as rain bounces off leaves.

Simon kept members entertained with his salesman like delivery. His car full of plants and gardening sundries was certainly much emptier for the journey back to Norfolk, following an overnight stay in Balsall Common!

NOTICEBOARD

- David Ashcroft's family have asked us to circulate details of his funeral at 11.30am, Wednesday 18th May, Oakley Wood Crematorium (South Chapel), Oakley Wood Rd, Bishops Tachbrook, CV33 9QP. To be followed by drinks at The Anchor Inn, Warwick Rd, Leek Wootton, CV35 7QX. Formal black attire is not required. Family flowers only. Donations to charity if desired, or plant a dahlia in your garden and think of David as it blooms. Please email his wife Jan on jca@krystalservices.plus.com if you intend to go to The Anchor afterwards.
- Other Dates for your Diary
 - 23.06.22** Evening visit (6.30pm) to the garden of Sarah & Andrew Heath at 1 Marton House, Birdingbury Road, Marton, CV23 9RY. Own transport.
 - 28.07.22** Social Evening at Pet Hawley's home in Alder Lane, Balsall Common
 - 25.09.22** Coach trip to RHS Garden Bridgewater, Manchester
- Should you wish to sell any item related to gardening, please send me the details and I will advertise it in the Newsletter (marion.keeley@btinternet.com)
- Vacant allotment from 24.06.22 at the site on Table Oak Lane, in Fen End. Enquiries to Debbie Carr at Barlow Associates on 01676 522552 or email debbie@barlowassociates.net

Open Gardens in Warwickshire for N.G.S.

Sat 14th & Sun 15th May, 2 – 4.30pm, 6 Canon Price Road, Nursery Meadow, Barford, Near Warwick, CV35 8EQ. Admission £3, children free. Refreshments & plant sales (cash only)

Sat 28th & Sun 29th May, 2 – 4.30pm, 6 Canon Price Rd as above

12.30 – 5.30pm, Hunningham Village Gardens, CV33 9DS. Combined admission £6, children free. Refreshments in Church Parish Room

12.30 – 6pm, Ilmington Village Gardens, CV36 4LA. Combined admission £10, children free. Refreshments at Ilmington Community Shop (Sat) & Village Hall (Sun).

Sat 4th & Sun 5th June, 2 -6pm, Tysoe Village Gardens, Near Warwick, CV35 0SE. Combined admission £7, children free. Refreshments by the W.I.

Sun 12th June, 2 - 5pm, Packington Hall, Meriden, Near Coventry, CV7 7HF (for Sat Nav use CV7 7HE). Admission £6, children free. W.I. refreshments.

11am – 5pm, Styvechale Gardens, The Chesils, Coventry, CV3 6FP. Combined admission £5, children free. Refreshments & plant sales at some gardens.

Please note Berkswell Open Gardens will be on Sunday 26th June, 3 of which are our members!

TOPICAL TIPS

- Deadhead daffodil and tulip flowers but leave the foliage.
- Apply a balanced fertiliser to trees and shrubs and a general-purpose fertiliser to beds and borders.
- Feed and mulch roses.
- Finish dividing and replanting herbaceous perennials.
- Remove weeds before they flower to avoid seeding.
- Sow hardy annuals outdoors. Harden off half-hardy annuals sown previously.
- Sweet peas can be sown or planted outdoors.
- Plant summer flowering bulbs, corms and tuberous plants such as *Dahlia* and *Gladiolus*.
- Evergreen shrubs may be planted at end of the month or in May.
- Tie in climbing and rambling roses and other climbers such as clematis and honeysuckle.
- Prune back *Salix* and *Cornus* grown for winter colour, and evergreen shrubs such as *Choisya*, *Ceanothus* and laurel.
- Prune early flowering shrubs, such as *Chaenomeles* and *For-sythia*, after flowering.
- Re-pot houseplants if pot-bound. Houseplants will benefit from standing outside during warm rain.
- Plant out early potatoes in the first half of the month and main crop potatoes in the second half.
- Sow vegetables such as beet-root, carrots, lettuce, radish, turnip, peas, spinach and parsnip.
- Spring clean the pond.
- Reseed bare patches of grass in the lawn.
- Start mowing lawn regularly, choose a dry day.

COMPETITIONS

MONTHLY FLOWER STEM & POT PLANT COMPETITION

- Flower Stem**
1. Alison Watson (Azalea)
 2. Felicity Hill (Camellia)
 3. Mary Cotterrell (Exochorda)

- Pot Plant**
1. Edward Cotterrell (Pelargonium)
 2. Barbara Haynes (Streptocarpus)
 3. Caroline Travis (Orchid)

ANSWERS TO APRIL'S FRUIT & VEG QUIZ

1.Alicante 2.Malling 3.Loch Ness 4.Lincoln 5.Ben 6.Florence 7.Greensleeves 8.Concorde 9.Nantes 10.Czar 11.Iceberg 12.Boris

Thank you to entrants Anne Beaumont, Wendy Boulton, Barry Clarke, Val & David Cotterrell, Mary & Edward Cotterrell, Sylvia Farley, David Felthouse, Amanda Ghent, Pet Hawley, & Gill Whitehead. The winning entry pulled from the hat was Anne Beaumont who will receive a copy of the RHS magazine 'The Garden' at the May meeting.