



GARDENER'S GAZETTE

Spring 2009

Founded 1940

Affiliated to:

The Royal Horticultural Society
Royal National Rose Society
National Dahlia Society
National Chrysanthemum Society
National Vegetable Society
The Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies

CHAIRMAN'S MEANDERINGS

Another year, and for once some 'decent' long-lasting frost. I say 'decent' because this is the sort of weather that does the garden/allotment the world of good. The allotments next to the Society Store looked quite pretty with a covering of frost on our first Saturday back in 2009.

It gives the plants a well-deserved rest, helps break up the soil ready for spring planting and the bugs that have been surviving in our milder winters recently should be thinned out. Well, here's hoping anyway!

The down-side was burst pipes in the Store and the 'helpers' froze due to the inadequate heating. Don't forget your subscriptions are now due for 2009 – our Membership Secretary has put a note in to remind you where and when you can renew.

Finally, on behalf of myself and the Committee: here's to a successful and productive New Year.

Good gardening – **Richard**

EDITOR'S REPORT

First I must apologise for the photographs of the Summer Show that appeared in our winter issue. Despite the pictures being black and white they didn't copy well from the original master copy. However they will be available on the Store notice board to view and hopefully on the new website soon.

Patricia

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Have you renewed your membership for 2009 and received your new red membership card? If not you may renew at the Store on Saturday mornings, at the Thursday evening meetings, or by post to the Membership Secretary. If renewing by post, please enclose a cheque for £5 payable to 'Purbrook Horticultural Society' and a self addressed envelope, if you would like a new card sent out as soon as possible. If no envelope is enclosed your card will be enclosed with the next Gazette.

Graham

GAZETTE DISTRIBUTION

In order to save funds with the rapidly increasing cost of postage the Gazettes are held at the Store for two weeks after publication and will also be brought to the Thursday meeting if the dates coincide. All members visiting the Store or attending the Meeting are asked to collect their gazette (and those of friends/neighbours that you are prepared to deliver). After two weeks all remaining Gazettes will be posted. This system was tried for the last two Gazettes and on each occasion saved about £20 in postage.

Graham

TREASURER'S REPORT

The final figure in the summary of the accounts shows a surplus for the year of just over £1,000 when compared with last year, which is very encouraging in the present economic climate. £425 of this came from the Floral Art account and £125 from the Trip account, both of which did particularly well this year. The remainder came from the combined General and Trading account, although this has to be treated with some caution due to the inevitable variations in the Stocktaking figures. Apart from the Store and the Subscriptions, Plant and Tool sales continue to provide a major source of income and help offset the cost of our Shows. Although the printing costs for the Gazette have increased this has been more than offset by economies elsewhere, e.g. Photocopier expenses. So, I hope we are in a reasonably good position for the coming year despite the downturn in the economy.

Brian Andrews

TRADING REPORT

For the third year running, income at the Store has been virtually the same. But bearing in mind that there have been some price increases this year, particularly fertilisers, some of which have doubled in price, it means that we are actually losing ground a little. The storage container, purchased with the help of a grant, has been put to good use and has released valuable space within the main store. Once again finding a source of the better quality Growbags is proving a problem, mainly due to the relatively small quantity that we use. As usual one of the trickiest jobs is trying to anticipate demand, particularly in view of the state of the economy, so the crystal ball will have to work overtime! Wood chips continue to provide a valuable source of income. At times the quality has been quite variable, something, unfortunately that I don't have any real control over. Seed potatoes sold quite well but I have adjusted this year's order slightly to reflect last year's sales. I understand that, although very expensive, Valor produced a very good crop and apparently keeps well. Varieties on order for this year are:

Earlies – Foremost, Accent, Kestrel and Charlotte

Maincrop – Desiree, Romano and Valor*

*(Limited quantity only)

I hope those of you who grew the special 'Christmas' potatoes had a better crop than I did. Mine were disappointing, particularly after a good crop the previous year. Perhaps this year I will try a few in the ground rather than in pots, as they seem to be ready for harvesting before any hard frosts.

I'm afraid some compost prices have increased this year, but the reduction in VAT has helped a little. Unfortunately the popular Gem compost is no longer available, Gem having been taken over by Sinclair, providers of the higher quality SHL composts. However we will have an alternative general-purpose compost from Vitax which will only be about 10p dearer than the Gem.

Fertilisers are becoming a real problem due to dramatic price increases. Perhaps the most staggering is that the cost of a 25Kg bag of Growmore has gone up from £7.00 to £17.00, and that is the bulk delivery, 20 bag, price. So this could be the incentive to produce, or enlarge your own compost heap – if the Health and Safety Police let us keep them! On that subject, after our current stock of 200Lt Peat has gone, the maximum size will be 150Lt due to manual handling restrictions!

Leaf-blower/vacuum – if you have borrowed the Black & Decker Leaf –blower/vacuum (the green and black one) over the last year please could you check that you have not, inadvertently, retained the interchangeable head for it that converts it to a blower? We only noticed that it was missing recently, and we have checked the most recent borrowers.

Finally it remains to wish everyone a belated happy and good gardening year ahead.

Brian Andrews

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2008

GENERAL A/C

	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>GAIN/LOSS</u>
	£	£	£
Shows	1,598.91	2,992.96	-1,394.05
Plant & Tool Sales	1,269.00	42.25	1,226.75
Sale of Preserves	91.35		91.35
Gazette		1,445.07	-1,445.07
Meetings	298.42	1,180.36	-881.94
Pumpkin Social & Fed. Quiz	25.10	158.93	-133.83
Subscriptions	2,525.00		2,525.00
Bank Interest	315.16		315.16
Insurance		628.39	-628.39
Affiliation Fees		132.50	-132.50
Copier Income/Maintenance	11.68	45.98	-34.30
Presentations & Donations	50.00		50.00
Table/Gazebo Hire	47.00		47.00
Admin		80.39	-80.39
Miscellaneous	21.75	275.62	-253.87
	6,253.37	6,982.45	<u>-729.08</u>

TRADING ACCOUNT

	£	£
Sales Income		15,453.12
Opening Stock	8,538.03	
Add: Purchases	<u>13,661.33</u>	
	22,199.36	
Less: Closing Stock	<u>9,042.07</u>	
		<u>13,157.29</u>
		2,295.83
Less: Operating Costs		
Rent to Havant B.C.		250.00
Other		<u>699.38</u>
Excess Income Over Expenditure		<u><u>1,346.45</u></u>

NET CURRENT ASSETS AT 31st OCTOBER
2008

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>GAIN/LOSS</u>
Current Assets:	£	£	
GIRO Deposit Account	9651.83	9,086.67	
GIRO Current Account	416.19	790.18	
Total Cash in Hand	410.95	273.54	
Trips Account	669.61	544.93	
Floral Art Account	786.79	525.12	
Stock	19.01	25.58	
Store Stock (Cost VAT incl.)	9042.07	8,538.03	
Copier	35.00	70.00	
Lidl Tables (depreciated)	<u>747.00</u>	<u>879.00</u>	
	21,778.45	20,733.05	
Current Liabilities:			
Stock not paid for at 31st Oct.	748.62	707.24	
Deverell Hall for October	51.50	51.50	
St. John Ambulance (Show)	<u>70.50</u>	<u>70.50</u>	
	870.62	829.24	
Net Current Assets	<u>20,907.83</u>	<u>19,903.81</u>	<u>1,004.02</u>

2008 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL

At our October meeting I asked if any members would be prepared to help with the Poppy Collection at Lidl's in Cowplain, which I had been asked to organise. Six members offered their help, and I thought you might like to know that a **magnificent total of £2,002** was collected over the two-week period.

So, very well done to the collectors and to all those members who contributed to the collection.

Brian Andrews

A NEW START FOR OUR WEBSITE

The Committee have decided that we are going to have a brand new website. By the time you are reading this copy of the Gazette some or most of it should be published on the Internet. At the time of writing this note there is a blank canvas so I will only mention a couple of the new features, hopefully enough to interest present members to visit the site. Please note there is a new address as follows:

www.purbrookhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

<http://purbrookhorticulturalsociety.org.uk>

Why have we changed the address? - As well as being for our loyal membership the other aim of the site is to try and attract new members, which we must do in order to finance the many events organised by your Society. Research shows that a search engine is more likely to pick up on complete words rather than abbreviations like PHS. Thus somebody looking for a horticultural society in this area will find us either at or close to the top of the resulting search list. For present members it should only be necessary to type the address once as it can then be stored in your favourites list if you want to visit the site again.

One new feature will be a section devoted to downloads of material available from the Society e.g. entry forms for the shows which can be printed off and used in the normal way. Useful if you suddenly find a copy is needed.

There will also be a page of useful links to websites of the Societies to which we are affiliated. I have also added some addresses for helpful sources of information to solve your gardening queries including forums.

If you have any comments, suggestions or material, photos etc for possible inclusion on the website pages please get in touch with me, or any committee member at the address shown on the Contacts page of the site or ask at one of the monthly meetings.

David Collinson

SPRING SHOW 2009

Next year's Spring Show is to be held on Saturday 28th March at its usual venue, the Deverell Hall. It would be nice to see some new faces entering the show, so if you have never entered an exhibit in the Spring Show, pick up a Schedule from the store and have a go.

Personally I would recommend the "pot of daffodils" classes since, from my experience, these, with relatively limited protection and expertise, will at least produce a welcome splash of colour on the patio or for the house if not a timely entry for the Show. I would especially recommend the two classes: "12 daffodils grown in pebbles and water" (this year the variety is White Cheerfulness) and the "6 Barrett Browning grown in an 8" pot" because:

- The society daffodil experts have selected varieties that should be ready for the Show without having to resort to complex advancing or retarding regimes.
- They are relatively easy to transport to the show and set up (which is especially important to me, since, as Show Secretary, I haven't much spare time at the show)
- There is a trophy up for grabs for each of these classes and inexperience appears to be no bar since I won one of them at my first attempt.
- The massed entries put up an excellent show on the stage.

If you are feeling more ambitious, then the other "daffodil in pots" classes also meet my "quick to stage" category but from my only experience last year, require either greater knowledge of luck since you have to select the variety that is compatible with the date of the show. Unfortunately the varieties I selected beat the show by three weeks. It was

however a welcome early display outside the front door, so I'll have another go this year and hope the weather and my selected varieties interact more favourably. Show schedules and entry forms are available at the Store or at monthly meetings. Good luck to those who have decided to have a go and I hope to see a few new faces at the Show.

Charles Mobsby - Show Secretary.

PUMPKIN EVENING -2009

Regulars at the monthly meetings will be aware that in recent years the October monthly meeting has incorporated a successful heaviest pumpkin open competition plus an opportunity for members to exhibit the squash or pumpkin they have grown.

To some extent the event has suffered from lack of early enough publicity, so advance publicity of the 2009 event is to remind you of the show early enough for you to give your plants a flying start and to alert you of a new class aimed at encouraging more of you to enter.

The first class is an open class for the heaviest pumpkin. To attract entries from local growers of giant pumpkins, the prize for the heaviest was about £25. Though we did not attract entries from outside the society, the entries have been outstanding and well worth the prize money on offer and this class with the same prize money will continue.

Several pumpkins entered in the heaviest pumpkin class were well grown, quality entries but the entrants had grown a variety that could never yield a really heavyweight entry. To provide an opportunity for these members to compete on a level footing it has been decided that a second, more restricted heaviest, pumpkin class would be included. This class will specify the variety of the pumpkin to be entered with the winner based solely on the weight of the exhibit. At the time of going to press, the variety has not been finalized but it is intended that the Store will sell seeds and/or young plants of the selected variety at the appropriate time. The first prize for this class will be £5.

Since many of the society members do not have the space required to grow pumpkins, the pumpkin evening included a subsidiary class for 'Squashes'. While this class was supported, there was some uneasiness about the large prize and the ad hoc judging criteria. It has thus been decided that the class will consist of a single specimen of any type of squash (preferably a named variety). A qualified judge would determine the winners based on the 'quality' of the exhibit for the squash type and variety. The first prize for this class will also be £5.

Last year the pumpkin evening also included an enjoyable quiz. I hope this advance warning will encourage more of you to grow one or more entries, but if you cannot, then come along and support the entrants and participate in the quiz.

Charles Mobsby - Show Secretary

GARDENING FROM A DISTANCE

This can be a problem, as we discovered after acquiring a holiday home in the Poitou Charentes area of France. Each year sees us spending longer periods away from the UK with the result that our English garden turns into a jungle by the time we return, particularly noticeable this last year with so much rain.

In France we have settled on bulbs, dahlias and perennials for border interest. We have also created a herb garden with lavender and rosemary hedges (grown from cuttings). For privacy we have planted evergreen shrubs. The longing for them to grow quickly will be overtaken by the chore of pruning. Some soft fruit and salad completes the picture and this seems to work for us. Friends ensure the grass is cut in our absence for which we are very grateful. Three of us spent a happy week there in August, visiting markets and local sights.

Our French neighbours love their gardens, growing the majority of their own produce. A vegetable plot is always a priority, although they do also grow some flowers from seeds and our garden has benefited from their generous donations of plants. They have made us very welcome and expressed an interest in PHS. There do not appear to be similar clubs locally. Now there's a challenge!

Jan

Anne did enclose some photographs which will appear on the website and the store noticeboard.

PURBROOK FLORAL ART CLUB

All our meetings are on a Thursday evening 7pm for 7.30pm at the Deverell Hall, Purbrook. There are refreshments, raffle and sales table. Visitors are very welcome at a small charge of £3 per person.

PROGRAMME FOR 2009

8 th January	AGM	Deverell Hall 7.30pm
12 th February	Demonstration Jenny Withers	Something Old, Something New
12 th March	Demonstration Nel De Jong-Smith	Dutch Treat
9 th April	Demonstration Angie Hide	It Started With a.....
14 th May	Workshop	In the Frame

	Karla Bell	<i>Binding Techniques</i>
11 th June	Social Evening	Deverell Hall
9 th July	Demonstration Sue Hooper	A Palette of Colour
13 th August	Demonstration Gretchen White	The Murmuring of the Bees
10 th September	Demonstration David Denyer	Falling Leaves
8 th October	Workshop Pamela Welch	Christmas Theme <i>TBA</i>
12 th November	Demonstration Carole Norman	Christmas
10 th December	Christmas Party	Deverell Hall

All enquiries please call one of the Committee Members:

Jenny Withers – Chairperson – 023 9225 1721
Lorraine Plant – Secretary – 023 9264 3809

FORTHCOMING TRIPS 2009

SUNDAY 24TH MAY

Penshurst Place and Gardens £18 adult, £15 child.

SUNDAY 12TH JULY

Parham House and Gardens includes Annual Garden Show £17.

Sunday 6th September

Batemans – Rudyard Kipling’s House and Garden (National Trust) £19 adult, £12.50 child.

Sunday 18th October

Kingston Maurward Gardens and Abbotsbury Sub Tropical Floodlit Garden £tba

<http://purbrookhorticulturalsociety.org.uk>

Please note: When booking a trip we will require a £10 non-returnable deposit. This is because the cost of hiring a coach has increased so much.

SUNDAY 24TH MAY
PENSHURST PLACE & GARDENS

Ancestral home of the Sidney family since 1552, with a history going back six centuries. Penhurst Place has been described as the grandest and most perfectly preserved example of a fortified manor house in all England. See the awe-inspiring Barons Hall with its 60ft height steep angled roof and the State Rooms filled with fine tapestries, furniture, portraits and armour. The 11 acres of gardens are as old as the original house. The walls and terraces were added in the Elizabethan era and are divided into a series of self contained garden rooms, each offering an abundance of variety in form, foliage and bloom from spring to autumn. There is also a park with woodland trail, a garden history exhibition, a toy museum, venture playground, shop and garden tea room. Disabled Access – Garden Yes. House DVD of states rooms in Barons Hall, Wheelchairs on loan.

SUNDAY 12TH JULY
PARHAM HOUSE, GARDENS
& ANNUAL GARDEN SHOW

Parham is one of the finest Elizabethan examples, set in the heart of a 17th century deer park below the South Downs. The house contains a particularly important collection of needlework, paintings and furniture. The spectacular long gallery is the third longest in England. The award winning gardens include a 4 acre walled garden with stunning herbaceous borders, greenhouse, orchard, potager and herbiary. Parham has always been a much loved family home now lived in by Lady Emma Barnard, her husband James and their family. “The 16th Annual Garden Weekend” - quality plants and garden products for sale, woodland craft demos and much more.

Lunches and teas in the 16th century Big Kitchen and picnic area.

Disabled Access – Good access to gardens and partial in house.

SUNDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER

Details to follow.

SUNDAY 18TH OCTOBER

Details to follow.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF MONTHLY MEETINGS FOR 2009

Thursday 5th February

Stewart Pocock of 'Pocock's Roses' in Romsey will give a talk, video presentation and a rose pruning demonstration.

Thursday 5th March

Mrs Rosemary Webb – a talk on local wild flowers and orchids. This is the talk promised for 2008 which unfortunately had to be cancelled.

Thursday 2nd April

Tim Woodland – a very topical talk on summer bulbs, how and where to plant and any possible problems.

Thursday 7th May

Kelvin Mason from Sparsholt College, increasing your plants with simple propagation, talk and demonstration.

June 2009

Evening Trip – further information to follow.

Thursday 2nd July

Mrs Rosina Brandham – Everyone enjoyed to talk on Joseph Paxton last July so we have booked the next instalment which is entitled 'The Great Exhibition of 1851'

Thursday 6th August

Bryan Madders with a talk and slides on unusual perennials. We are always looking out of something different and this hopefully will not disappoint.

Thursday 3rd September

Bill Chase, a local expert on Cacti, a prickly subject!

Thursday 1st October

Our usual Pumpkin Competition, quiz, refreshments and general get-together. Try to source your pumpkin seed now for the largest types ready for sowing early 2009. Many shops and garden centres sell off seed before the autumn. There will also be plants available in the store.

Thursday 5th November

John Comes, photographer, showing lots of slides of flowers and wildlife. Maybe we can pick his brains about how to take better pictures.

