

# GARDENER'S GAZETTE

Spring 2012

*Affiliated to:*

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

**SPRING SHOW**

**Sunday 25th March**

**Deverell Hall,  
London Road, Purbrook**

**Doors open 2pm**

# Chairman's Ramblings

The season of relaxing and (I hope) plenty has come and gone. I hope everyone had a nice rest and now is the time to start the serious work of planning and clearing and cleaning! Oooh, I hate this time of year!

Hopefully the weather will be kind and allow us all to get on with the planting, seeding, etc. which this time of year inevitably brings. Forecasters say that last year was extremely dry over the whole 12 months, compared with the 'average'. This is of course, assuming I read the right paper – they seem to have a tendency to vary a little. What most gardener's like, I think, is rain overnight, and not during the planting days. We should be so lucky!!

On a different note, I see our Store Manager has put in his report (see following page), that things are getting harder all round to compete with the 'big boys'. I should like to echo his sentiments that products should be looked at 'like for like'. It is so easy to 'buy on price' and then realise that the product is slightly smaller, inferior quality, or in some cases both! I myself needed a single growbag and for convenience went to a retail outlet to save time; when I put it next to the PHS Store-bought growbag, it was at least 15% smaller! The moral of this is 'you get what you pay for'. Besides, where else could you get the repartee you get at the Store and Meetings? There is also an added bonus, that if you need advice, there is normally someone who will try to help. If it's anything to do with flowers though, don't ask me – I have trouble remembering what I planted – somewhat of a mental block on my part – some would say just 'mental'. Nevertheless, I can normally direct you to someone who can help!

To end this missive, I would like to thank all those who help in any way with the running of the Society – it makes life easy for me. If you do have some spare time, and would like to help, especially in the Store on a Saturday morning, you would be made most welcome. Please bear in mind you do not have to do every Saturday – just let Brian our Trading Manager know when and he can make arrangements for cover, if possible.

Good gardening,

**Richard Knight**

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## Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2011

A very big 'thank you' to the PHS members who helped with the collecting at Lidl in Cowplain this year, and to the many members who contributed. Another record total of £2,924.68 was collected, beating the total last year by over £300. Thank you everyone. If you might be interested in helping with the collecting next year, please get in touch with me.

**Brian Andrews**

# TREASURER'S ABBREVIATED AGM REPORT

Despite the economic gloom surrounding us this has been a better year for the Society. The Trading Store had a nearly 4% increase in sales and we were able to save more than £350 by changing insurance companies (we are now with the NFU through the RHS). The Trips which are run by Ann were so well supported that they yielded a surplus of over £400. The abbreviated set of Accounts will be in the next Gazette and will show a resulting overall surplus for the year of £1,968.52; subject to the usual caveat about the accuracy of the stocktaking figures.

**Brian Andrews**

## AGM TRADING MANAGER'S REPORT

As mentioned in the Treasurer's Report, this has been a better year at the Store with an increase in turnover of about 4%. However, still quite a way to go to make up for the previous year's decrease of 15%. Fewer purchases this year has meant that our stock level is now back on a more even keel. Bulbs, seeds and potatoes have sold quite well and there has been a good trade in wood chips/mulch, which over recent years has become a valuable source of income. Grit has been a problem this year because our bulk delivery was of poor quality, being more sand than grit – we have only just cleared the pit ready for a fresh delivery of hopefully better quality. This time I will check the grit before all 10 tons is tipped! It has also been difficult until recently to obtain Cornish Grit, but we do have that back in stock. There is likely to be a small increase in costs for some of our composts this year, mainly because last year we managed to beat the increase in VAT. As usual we started taking delivery before Christmas of our estimated requirements for the coming year, in order to get the best prices.

A word about Warwicks, our main supplier, as one or two people think they have closed – they haven't. But they have closed their shop in the Square and re-opened it in their main yard at the top of Wickham Square, which has the advantage of free parking. They will be continuing to supply us and their other trade customers as usual.

Over the Christmas period we hope to do some maintenance on the Store itself, one major item is replacing the main exit door and frame because of severe rot in the bottom section.

Looking ahead, I think this year will not be easy because I anticipate that Garden Centres and other stores will be offering even more competitive prices as they try to get through the downturn. They, of course, work on much larger profit margins than we do. There is no scope for us offering special prices when our normal profit margin is only 10p in the pound, but we will still do our utmost to get the best possible prices. So if you are lucky enough to see similar quality products a bit cheaper elsewhere, I would ask you to think about all the additional benefits you get from OUR Society, and remember that the Store provides a vital source of income to fund our activities.

Finally, as usual, I would like to thank everyone who has helped in any way at the Store over the year and of course all the members who have supported us, and wish everyone a good gardening New Year.

**Brian Andrews**

# MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Following the adoption of a proposal at the AGM in December the following changes have been made to the Membership Fees and dates:

1. The current (2012) membership will expire on 31st August 2012.
2. Annual membership will then run from 1st September 2012 to 31st August 2013 and annually thereafter.
3. The membership fee until 31st August 2012 will be £4.
4. The annual membership fee from 1st September 2012 will be £6.
5. Members who have renewed before January 2012 and have paid £5 may either have a refund (from the membership desk) or may put the £1 towards their 2012/2013 membership.

Please remember to renew by mid-April in order to ensure continued Gazette delivery. Renew at the Store, at Thursday meetings, or by post to the Membership Secretary.

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## TALKS 2012

### **Thursday 2nd February**

**‘The Lavender Story’** – Tim Butler from Lavender Fields at Alton will give a talk on his experiences of growing and selling lavender. Plants will be available for sale.

### **Thursday 1st March**

**‘Stress-free Allotments’** – Victoria Ennion speaking on allotments and how to avoid gluts and pests.

### **Thursday 5th April**

**‘History and Plants of Staunton Park’** – Chris Bailey (Head Gardener) will show slides and talk about the Park, and answer questions.

**Francis Leppard**

# WHAT ALLOTMENT OF FUN

A big thank you to Peter Brooks (Life Vice-President) and all allotment holders who gave of their time, experience and produce to groups of young children from Barncroft Infant's School, Leigh Park. As part of the interaction with schools Purbrook Horticultural Society were approached by Barncroft in order to secure a visit to an allotment as part of 'Eat Your Greens' project. The concept was to follow greens from soil to mouth. Although the children were only aged 5 and 6, they proved to be very interested and informed.

Peter Brooks not only gave a talk and answered their probing questions, but also provided each child with an envelope containing beans from his plot along with the growing instructions. Every single child had a question or something to say, showing how well Peter caught and kept their attention as well as imparting knowledge at a level they could understand.

Other allotment holders also permitted the children to wander around their plots and answered questions and even provided the group with apples to take back to school which prompted quite a debate on the merits of stewed versus baked apples!

Thanks must also go to Jerry and Betty Clark who helped marshal the children (and plot holders!) ensuring their safety and they again provided items for the school as well as answering yet more questions.

It was a real pleasure to help the school and engage the 'Growing Community' with the young children who, according to the teachers, will help them become responsible and respectful members of Society. The visit was so successful that a follow-up visit is projected for the Summer in order to view crops at this more bountiful time of the growing year.

Anyone wishing to help with the Society Ambassadors, please contact Lynda Piddington (details on website or leave a message at the Trading Store) to be put on the list.

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## Grit, Grit & More Grit!

To all of you who mentioned (complained!!) about the grit not being gritty enough – your troubles are at an end.

Brian has personally supervised the delivery (and checked!) that this is far grittier than the previous 10-ton load. So come and try for yourself.

# WHO'S WHO AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

As a Society member who also sits on the Committee, I was aware that even I did not know how Life Members became thus (tsk! tsk!). Had they paid a lifetime's amount of subscriptions? Had they done something heroic such as saving a child from a man-eating worm? Were the recipients family founding members? Anyway, following a prolonged cup of tea around Betty's (preserve and baking queen, also titled Lady Convener), we concocted this idiots guide to all you need to know or where to find out about the workings of our Society, or in political terms, transparency!

## **Hierarchy**

President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Trading Store Manager, Show Secretary, Show Manager, Secretary, Honorary Life Members, Committee Members and last but not least, Members.

## **Committee and Sub-Committees**

There is a General Committee and then Sub-Committees that as a smaller group, discuss and debate specific topics before bringing these up for approval at the General Committee.

## **General Committee (meets once a month)**

The task is to maintain the general running of the Society, thus ensuring that all affiliations to the RHS, Rose, Dahlia, Vegetable, Daffodil and Federations are up-to-date and subscriptions paid.

Venues for meetings booked, speakers booked and paid for along with other expenses incurred at the Trading Store, Annual Shows, Outings, Catering, etc. Any correspondence or enquiries are dealt with and reports received on Trading, Membership numbers, monthly meeting attendance and quality of speakers; Outings; Publicity; Show Secretary; Secretary; Treasurer; Catering; Floral Art; Gazette and Website.

Also at Committee level in 'matters arising' or 'any other business', names are put forward to become Honorary Life Members because of their major contribution to the Society; such as working for many years in the Trading Store or in other 'back-room' activities. The proposed names are then discussed, voted on and then a decision made that is then conveyed to Members at the Annual General Meeting. General Committee also appoint the Vice-Chairman to stand in when the Chairman is not present, but all other posts are elected at the Annual General Meeting.

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### **Sub-Committees**

Trading Store (meets as required).

Chaired by the Trading Store Manager for general issues relating to the Store, such as arranging stock checks and audits as well as dealing with maintenance, cleaning, stock purchase and deliveries.

### **Floral Art (meets once a month)**

Mainly self-regulating with their own Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, etc. but as all Floral Art members also subscribe to PHS Membership, their Chair sits on the General Committee and also plays a major role on the Show Committee, amongst others.

### **Show Committee (meets as required)**

Once dates for the Spring and Summer Shows are decided at General Committee, funds are handed to the Show Manager and Secretary and team who then meet to discuss the finer details for approval by the General Committee. All show management details are discussed, such as, Schedule, Booking of Venue and Judges; offering a chosen Charity the opportunity to run and man a stall (free of charge); contacting other prospective stall holders/demonstrators and allocating space at the venue in an appropriate position to ensure all Health and Safety Regulations are complied with. The entrance fee is decided and publicity arranged. Cups and Trophies are inspected and cleaned and tickets and certificates printed. Volunteers are then sought for pre- and post-show set-up as well as for stewarding and catering.

Following the Show the Show Committee then hold a ‘wash-up’ meeting to assess the outcome and discuss what could be improved upon and how, before reporting results and findings to the General Committee.

Phew! As you can see, it is quite a commitment sitting on the committee or maybe we should just be committed! Please, though do not be put off; any help or suggestion no matter how small or insignificant you think, can make a huge difference to us! If someone wishes to help with any aspect of the Society, whether it be helping set-up a Show, baking cakes for sale, doing a ‘stint’ at the Trading Store or even by just encouraging friends and neighbours to join, you can contact any Committee Member who will pass on your enquiry/suggestion and then furnish you with a response.

It is YOUR input that ensures we are still an active, vibrant, friendly Society, while many others, both local and national, are disbanding.

**Lynda Piddington and Betty Clark**

# TRIPS FOR 2012

## **Capel Manor Gardens and Spring Garden Show – Enfield**

**Sunday 15th April £18**

Capel Manor is a college of horticulture and runs a training scheme for professional gardeners. The extensive richly planted gardens are delightful throughout the year and include many themes, historical, modern, walled, rock, water, sensory and disabled and an Italianate maze, Japanese garden, demonstration and trial gardens.

Most of the gardens are accessible to wheelchair users.

There is a restaurant on site.

## **Knebworth House and Gardens**

**Sunday 10th June £21**

Knebworth House has been the home of the Lytton family since 1490 and still is a lived in family house. It is a unique high gothic fantasy house, complete with turrets, griffin and gargoyles. There are 25 acres of beautiful gardens and 250 acres of parkland. The house has been used for filming Jane Eyre and The Canterville Ghost and many more.

Disabled access to the ground floor with audio tour.

Guided tours of the house have been booked for 2pm and 2.30pm; this allows enough time to have lunch.

## **Hidcote Manor Gardens**

**Sunday 2nd September £22 NT £14**

One of the most delightful gardens in England; a series of small gardens within the whole, separated by walls and hedges of different species, famous for rare shrubs, trees, herbaceous borders, old roses and interesting plant species. We will probably stop at Milletts Farm for morning refreshments; this is situated just before Oxford.

There is a restaurant and cafe, plant sales centre and shop at Hidcote.

Wheelchair users can access one third of the garden.

**NB:** This year can you please make a full payment when booking a trip. Cheques should be made payable to PHS Trips. You can book at the Store on a Saturday; at our monthly meetings or send details with a cheque to Ann Richardson, 16 Fir Copse Road, Waterlooville PO7 5JA.

**This is my last year organising Trips for the Society – if there is anyone who would be interested in doing this rewarding task please let me know. I would be willing to help in any way possible.**

## PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS

Did you know that if your little/large ones attend any school in the Purbrook/Waterlooville/Cowplain/Horndean/Havant area they are invited to participate in our School's Initiatives?

Every year we encourage participation in our Inter Schools Trophy Competition and we also have Ambassadors who are willing to visit schools on a one-off or regular basis in order to share knowledge, assist in planning vegetable plots, wildlife areas, etc. or even by helping with the weeding and planting (sometimes just supervisory, not necessarily active). Schools also contact us to assist with various projects such as the recent visit to allotments. Schools are also able to join the Society as a school rather than as individuals in order to benefit from the Trading Store discounts, meetings and Gazettes along with the benefits of the expertise of the Societies to which we are affiliated.

So, to all you parents and grandparents please ask if your young ones are involved or wish to become more involved. Should you be interested in representing the Society by becoming an Ambassador, then please contact Lynda Piddington (contact details on the website or just leave a message at the Trading Store).

### AN APOLOGY

**Due to my computer crashing I have been unable to post the previous Gazette online. Anyone who is desperate for a copy can get a hard copy from the Store on any Saturday morning.**

**Richard**

# Magazines, Cards and Equipment Loans

There is a selection of Society Magazines, Privilege Cards and garden equipment available for loan to Members against a signature at the Membership Desk in the Store.

## Magazines

The Garden – Journal of the RHS

National Dahlia Society Bulletin

The Rose

Chrysanthemum Society

National Vegetable Society

Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies – Monthly Bulletin

## Cards

RHS Reduced Garden Entry (+1 guest) – not Wisley on Sundays

National Vegetable Society

Royal National Rose Society

National Chrysanthemum Society

National Dahlia Society

## Equipment

Lawn Spreaders (2) £1 charge towards replacement costs

Leaf Vacuum/Blower (2) £2 non-returnable

Lawn Rakes and leads (4) £2 deposit, refundable on return

**Anyone borrowing an item is required to return it within two weeks so that other Members may have the opportunity to use it.**

Folding Tables may also be borrowed (£1 per table)

# OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2012

President:	David Parker	
Life Vice-Presidents:	Peter Brooks JP; Maureen Kemp	
Chairman:	Richard Knight 28 London Road, Horndean PO8 0BY	023 9278 6137
Treasurer:	Brian Andrews 26 Kings Road, Cowplain PO8 8UR	023 9226 3731
Trading Manager:	Brian Andrews (as above)	
Secretary:	Helen Twitchen 86 Purbrook Gardens, Waterlooville PO7 5LE	023 9223 3573
Show Manager:	Graeme MacFarlane 30 Khandala Gardens, Purbook PO7 5UA	023 9225 2124
Show Secretary:	Charles Mobsby 17 Padnell Road, Cowplain PO8 8DZ	023 9226 5136
Membership Sec:	Graham Spooner 14 Deverell Place, Widley PO7 5ED	023 9237 2713
Catering Convenor:	Betty Clark 2 Marrells Wood, Purbrook	023 9225 3889
Outing Organiser:	Ann Richardson	023 9225 4986
Gazette Editor:	Richard Knight (as above)	
Gazette Distribution:	Graham Spooner (as above)	
General Committee:	Richard Knight, Wendy Hill, Brian Andrews, Betty Clark, Cliff Jones, Maureen Kemp, Jan Baxter, Charles Mobsby, Frances Leppard, Lynda Piddington, Helen Twitchen, Jenny Withers, Brian Rees.	
Show Committee:	Richard Knight, Lynda Piddington, Brian Andrews, Betty Clark, Charles Mobsby, Maureen Kemp, Helen Stock.	
Catering Committee:	Betty Clark, Santhia Sang	
Auditor:	Helen Stock	