



WELWYN GARDEN CITY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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Spring 2022

The Start of Our Centenary Gardening Year

Join us on the Committee

We have now started the campaign to recruit 'fresh blood' - or maybe better expressed as 'green shoots' - to the committee. We have been very lucky to have excellent 'doers' on the committee for a long time - in some case ten years or more. And quite rightly some of them would like a break! We are very grateful for a long period of notice - but Rosie, Denise and Steve will all be standing down from their current roles at the next AGM in 2023. This means we have vacancies for speaker finder, outings organiser and membership secretary. (We have already had an 'expression of interest' for membership - so come forward now to avoid disappointment!).

We promise that you will not be dropped in at the deep end. Members taking on these roles will work with Denise and Rosie towards the end of the year - ready to take over in 2023. It might be that two of you could form a team for each role. This makes it more fun and gives you someone to bounce ideas off - and the committee is always here to help.

We also have a need for 'ordinary' committee members - people to come on the committee and see how everything works, take on a few tasks, and maybe think about a job to step-up to in the future. We have a great Society - it's our 100th year - so we want to keep it all going. Please think about finding out more about what might be involved - talk to any of the committee (we are back in the hall in April) or email any of us, including myself on alison.ewington@ntlworld.com.

Alison Ewington, Chair



Our Spring Programme

12 April 2022 - Fifty Greys of Shade - Colin Moat

Colin and his wife Cindy own Pineview Plants in Sevenoaks specializing in shady characters, especially epimediums, sanguisorbas and persicarias but also acteas, thalictrum, anemone nemorosa, eranthis, roscoea, ferns and many more. Colin co-ordinated the Kent Hardy Plant Society display at Chelsea in 2015 and returned by invite to mount a display around the monument in the Autumn Chelsea 2021. He is also the chair and event co-ordinator for the Plant Fairs Roadshow, an association of specialist nurseries who hold plant fairs in the South East. The nursery website is www.pineviewplants.co.uk where extensive plant lists can be found. He will bring a selection of plants to the meeting but if members wish to order specific plants before this, he can bring them with him, subject to availability. Colin will also be at the Plants Fairs

Roadshow at Hatfield House on May 1st so if any plants he brings are particularly popular, he can take orders and we will arrange a single pick up /drop off on May 1st.

10 May - Danesbury Fernery - John Roper

John is the chairman of the Friends of Danesbury Fernery and is hoping to be accompanied by Colin Adlam, their fern specialist, and Sara Donatantonio, their plant photographer. This fernery was described in 1881 in the R.H.S. Journal as "the best fernery to be found in the Home Counties". Since September 2015 volunteers have been reclaiming and restoring the site. John will be going over the history with special emphasis on the planting.



Our 2022 – 2023 Programme

13 September 2022 - Biosecurity Matters To Us All - Allison Terrell

Allison is our local plant health inspector working for the Animal and Plant Health Agency, APHA, an executive agency of Defra, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. She will be giving us an update on new legislation introduced to improve plant health and biosecurity and the implications and obligations this has for anyone wanting to move plants across borders; how these affect the workload and viability of specialist nurseries, “master” growers and owners of National Collections and, in turn, how this could alter the diversity and cost of plants and trees to us as horticultural consumers with a keen interest in the unusual. What can we do as individuals to increase biosecurity?

11 October 2022 - Title and speaker to be confirmed

8 November 2022 - Title and speaker to be confirmed

13 December 2022 - The Evolving Landscape of the Garden City: The Next 100 years - Oliver Waring

Needing no introduction to most of our members and returning now as the Landscape and Ecology Manager for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, it is 8 years since we enjoyed his excellent presentation on Caring for Trees in WGC. We are delighted that Oliver will be joining us again for our Christmas meeting to update us on the many enhancing changes that are taking place in the town and to look ahead with ambitions for the next 100 years.

Rosie Brewis

Our 2022 Outings

26 April and 12 July visits

The 26 April visit to Pie Corner, Bedmond remains full, but **one** place has become available on the visit to **Two Oxfordshire Gardens (Pettifers and Broughton Grange) on 12 July**. Cost: £59 (including coach travel, garden entries, morning and afternoon refreshments and a light lunch with cake.

7 June visit

Some places are available on our **7 June visit to Deene Park, Northants and Elton Park, Cambs**. Cost: £61 (including coach travel, garden entries and guided tours, morning refreshment and a light lunch).

If you are interested in joining us on either Outing, please let Denise Madden know (gladers2@gmail.com or 07970 415288/01707 323951).



Denise Madden

Dates For Your Diary - Wednesday 14 June - Friday 16 June 2023

We will be sending you details this summer for our next short break in 2023. It will be to gardens in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. Staying in Hereford, we'll be visiting the Laskett Garden, Hampton Court (not that one!) and the Garden at Miserden amongst others. Here as a taster is a photo of the Laskett Garden.

Peter and Connie Jenkins' Bench in The Centenary Woodland Garden - The Gathering with the Family on 14 March



Thanks to our members' generosity, our Society purchased a commemorative bench to celebrate the lives of Peter and Connie Jenkins. It has been placed on Campus West in the new Shade Garden surrounding the 'Ad Astra' statue. On 14



March, at the bench, five members of the Jenkins Family joined a group of Horticultural Society Members who had contributed to the funding for the Bench. In the lovely sunshine, Alison Ewington and Judith Hunter (Peter and Connie's daughter), each said a few words before the party retired to Humphrey's Café in



Campus West for a cup of tea. There, Simon Jenkins, gave a short address on Peter and Connie's lifelong interest in gardening.

The Jenkins Family were very touched by the Society's generosity and thanked all those who contributed to this lasting memorial to Peter and Connie.

Denise Madden

AGM Report

The AGM was held on Tuesday 15 March with 25 people viewing online. Much of it is a formality but it needs to be done to make sure we are carrying out everything fairly and within the terms of our constitution. It is vital that our finances are in order and independently verified. So, thank you for tuning in and showing your support for the Society. Also my personal thanks to all the very hard-working committee and all that they do. We said goodbye and thanks to Jen Williams – and said a formal welcome onto the committee to Beth Mateer who has revamped our website.

Alison Ewington, Chair

Have a Look at Our New Website

Please visit and bookmark our new website www.wgchortsoc.co.uk. Here you can find details of our upcoming meetings, outings and news. There is also information on how to contact the committee or join as a member, so please do share with anyone who may be interested in the society.



Beth Mateer

February Winter Lunch – Cambridge Botanic Garden

Our first, one day outing for two years was a rare treat as we enjoyed the luxury of enough Cambridge Botanic Garden Guides to provide one for every six of our members - a benefit of their pandemic protocol! They showed us the delights of the famous Winter Garden; this year celebrating its fortieth birthday. Its maturity was beautifully demonstrated by the numerous, large, floriferous, scented Daphne Bholuas and great, established groups of multi-coloured Cornus varieties. Elsewhere, there were snowdrops a-plenty; bright, spring flowers in the glasshouses and not too much damage from the recent Storm Eunice. One sad exception was, however, the demise of an apple tree that had been grown as a cutting from the famous Isaac Newton tree.



We were the first large Group to have lunch at Scotsdales Shelford Garden Centre since the pandemic began and the food was very good! After a talk from Scotsdales' Samantha Cochrane, members enjoyed themselves browsing and purchasing plants from the well-stocked, impressive Garden Centre.

Denise Madden

A Date for the Diary

National Garden Scheme opening: 35 Digswell Road: Sunday, 31 July, 14.00 – 17.30pm. Adrian de Baat will be opening his fantastic and highly acclaimed garden only once this year, so put the date in your diary.

All Aboarders – Spring at the Station

We only restarted our gardening parties in March after a long winter/Covid break. The troughs are looking colourful with bulbs, primulas, heathers and evergreen perennials. The first new planting of 2022 will be 25 bare root roses courtesy of Harkness Roses, who were generously giving them to community gardens. Initially we are planting them in an emptied raised bed on Platform 2, and then will decide on final locations as we move plants around and refresh the compost in all the beds.



We continue to enjoy great support from GTR. We reported last time that they raised the edges of the old beds on platforms 3 & 4. This means that we can provide a decent planting medium for those beds, which mostly had hardly any soil! GTR is also funding that effort and we have started to take delivery of large quantities of compost and soil conditioner. This will be the main job for this season, alongside seasonal planting, and more volunteer help would be welcome.

Our AGM for 2022 will take place at lunchtime on 5 April at St Francis Church Hall. If you would like to attend, or support All Aboarders in any way - by volunteering, donating



or sponsoring us during 2022 - please contact the All Aboarders Chair, Lynda Cowan, on 01707 324723. Please find out more on our website at www.AllAboarders.org.

Horticultural Ladies

The full story of women's contributions to the world of horticulture, botany and associated disciplines has yet to be told. For many years elite women were considered too delicate to take part in botany or gardening. However, many women overcame these prejudices and forged a life which included plants. Hertfordshire Gardens Trust has produced a book exploring the stories of some of the Horticultural Ladies over nine centuries. Written by members of the Garden History Group the essays were developed from presentations given by Zoom in 2021 to the whole group; they cover designers, plant hunters, writers, plantswomen and others. The book is available from Hertfordshire Gardens Trust at a cost of £10. Please email hertstalks@gmail.com or phone 07485 711 561 for details of how to obtain a copy.



If you have any news, seen plants in our public spaces or have plants in your garden that you would recommend please let the Editor know: Anne Freimanis, a.freimanis@icloud.com or 01707 323277.