



NEWSLETTER XV SPRING 1997

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The rose as where some buried Caesar bled.

Ruba'iyat of Omar Khayyam

Evidently old Omar recognized the importance of bonemeal, and I have been wondering whether those February rains have leached the sustenance I had applied earlier. Doubtless additional handfuls will be forked in when I get round to it. At this time of the year it is difficult to be single-minded in the garden, there being so many different calls on one's attention, digging, weeding, seeding, sifting, shifting..the whole gamut of horticultural activity, in fact. However, spare a few moments to read, note and pass on any news that you think is relevant to your members.

SFGC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1997

The Annual General Meeting of the Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs will take place on TUESDAY EVENING 13th MAY 1997 in the Clifford Hall, CANNINGTON COLLEGE, Cannington, Bridgwater.

Like Caesars Gaul, the evening is divided into three parts :
GARDEN WALK.

Nick Rigden, Head of Horticulture at Cannington has, once again, kindly offered to conduct visitors around the gardens and houses of the College, which contains four National Plant Collections as well as a whole variety of unusual ornamental trees, shrubs and plants. Delegates and visitors are asked to assemble in front of the Old College at around 5.30 pm. Please check this time on the notice of the AGM, which will be going out to all clubs after Easter.
AGM.

During the business of the Meeting, club representatives are reminded that each club has only one vote on any item, though, of course, more than one member from any club are welcome to attend.

FEDERATION QUIZ FINAL

The third part of the evening's entertainment will be provided by the Final of the Federation Quiz which has been taking place throughout the year and a number of clubs from all over Somerset have taken part. These contests have proved to be jolly good fun. Our congratulations go to the two redoubtable finalists who are MOOR GARDENING CLUB and WEST & MIDDLE CHINNOCK GARDENING ASSOCIATION. Our best wishes to both contesting teams.

Refreshments will be provided on what looks like being a most enjoyable evening. If you cannot attend yourself, then please pass the invitation on to those who can.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SHOW ORGANIZER

The Guide, which has been collated and edited by Brian Airey, is enclosed. Brian hopes this guide will give some sort of form to what can appear to be a pretty daunting task. If anyone needs any clarification or more detail on any aspect of show organization, then they are asked to get in touch with Brian. Tel: 01934 418998

ORGANIC FERTILISER

Organico Ltd., of Hayes Lane, Compton Dundon, Somerton have special offers to all Federation Clubs on their organic fertiliser Groworganic. 40 litre bags (to cover 250 sq yds at lawn rate) are delivered to one address at the following prices
15-20 bags £3.40 incl. vat
25+ bags £3.17 incl. vat

A sample 20 litre bag is offered free for those who do not know this product. To order telephone 0145 272202 asking for Jim or Roger and mentioning the Federation.

SPEAKERS' REGISTER

Please make the following additions to your copies of the Register in the appropriate places.

NEW JUDGES

Mr C J TRIPP 59, Highdale Avenue, Clevedon BS21 7LU 01275 871177
National Veg. Soc. judge. Will judge vegetables and fruit. Expenses only.

Mrs R J TRIPP 59, Highdale Avenue, Clevedon BS21 7LU 01275 871177
National Veg. Soc. judge. Will judge vegetables, cooking and preserves. Expenses only.

NEW SPEAKERS

126 Mr C J TRIPP address as above

Subjects : Vegetables, Growing for Showing, Preparation for Showing, What a Vegetable Judge is looking for.

Expenses

127 Miss MONICA LUCAS Oakleigh Nursery, Pensford Hill, Pensford, Bristol BS18 4JF
01761 490335

Subjects : The Garden in Winter, Late Colour in the Border, Looking forward to Summer Plants for sale. Travel limit 50 miles. Band B

32 Mr H L DAWES See page 13

Wishes to add a new subject : The World of Sea Shells, illustrated with a large variety from over the globe.

114 Mr C VARNDALL See page 20

Wishes to add : Twenty Years of Wildlife Photography.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE CONSERVATION OF PLANTS & GARDENS

The NCCPG in Somerset is seeking to increase its membership. To find out more about the work and activities of this important organization contact the Secretary, Stuart Chambers, who gives an excellent and expenses-only talk on all aspects of the NCCPG. His 'phone number is 01278 722427

Furthermore members of your club may well like to visit Hatch Court, Hatch Beauchamp, 5 miles SE of Taunton, on Saturday 26th April 10.30-3.30, when the NCCPG is holding its Unique Plant Conservation Event. Not only will you have an opportunity to visit the beautiful grounds of Hatch Court, but there will be interesting plants for sale, 22 specialist nurseries with their expert gardeners and, for the first time, a display from most of the 24 National Collections in Somerset, from passion flowers and ferns to primulas and geraniums. All this for £2 entrance. Tea, coffee and light lunches will be available.

THE SOMERSET WILDFLOWER MEADOWS APPEAL PLANT SALE

Monday 26th May Specialist Plant Sale MILTON LODGE, WELLS 10-4 50p
There will be many specialist stands including a selection of wildflowers.
Entry to Milton Lodge Gardens £2 Further information : 01823 451587

SHOWS 1997

BATH SPRING FLOWER SHOW 3-5 May 10-6 pm £4.50 (£3.50 OAP)

If you missed Malvern Show this year, then Bath Spring Show could be a revelation. Chelsea Gold Medal winners are on display before moving on to the bigger shows. There are demonstrations of floral art, lectures, crafts and so on.. It's a delightfully informal and manageable affair, with the Botanic Gardens adjacent and the City centre 15 minutes walk away. All set in the pretty Victoria Park Gardens.
Further information : 01225 396021

CANNINGTON COLLEGE OPEN DAY Saturday 17th May

Another good outing with displays and the gardens and the greenhouses open.

WEST OF ENGLAND CACTUS & HOUSEPLANT SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW 25th May 10-4.30

Displays and plants for sale at Cadbury Garden Centre, Congresbury

This is followed on Saturday 31st May by a Prizewinners Exhibition at the United Reformed Church, Weston-super-Mare. 9.30-4.00pm

BANWELL SHOW 30th August

The Annual Flower Show will be held in the Village Hall 2-5

MORE SHOWS

CASTLE CARY FLOWER SHOW

The 49th Annual Show will take place at Caryford Hall Saturday 16th August

WELLOW FLOWER SHOW & COUNTRY FAIR 6th September

This is more than a Flower Show, with live displays and demonstrations .

RAY'S GARDEN VISITS 1996

Kilmersdon Gardeners undertook a number of trips last year.

The Chairman Ray Box writes..

19th May A Sunday afternoon conducted tour of a wild place - Edford Woods, Holcombe with Christopher Cornell and Vera (Speaker no.28) In spite of storm-driven rain this was a fascinating visit. 9 hardy souls (8 members plus 1 friend) attended The tour of the woods was not without its moments of humour. Christopher divesting himself of his waterproofs so that we could share his magnifying glass in order to inspect lichens, mosses, and garlic juice spitting snails. Vera, who had forgotten her waterproofs , effectively replaced these with a bin liner, and yours truly got stuck in a bog up to the Wellington tops and had to be pulled clear. Going for a tramp in the woods. Going for a walk in the woods will never be the same again! All together an estimated 1½ hour walk lasted from 2.30 - 5.00pm.

22nd June Saturday An all day trip to Saville Gardens, Windsor Great Park. We arrived just before mid-day after an interesting trip with passing views of the huge houses at Sunningdale. After lunch in the restaurant there was time to inspect the wild meadows, wild orchids and other native plants in the area where the trees had been destroyed by the two Great Storms. The Meconopsis, azaleas, rhododendrons and herbaceous borders were all given special attention, before we met our guide Margaret, from the Friends of Saville Gardens. She and the Curator had been presented to the Queen and so enlivened her descriptions with royal anecdotes.

Visitors should not make the same mistake that I and Cherry made in only allowing ten minutes to inspect the New Zealand Garden where the plants of the Antipodes, presented to the Queen, are planted, before rushing off to catch the coach. This small enclave deserves far more attention than that !

10th July Wednesday. An evening trip to Milton Lodge, Wells. (Garden no.3) A fine old house fronted by high well kept yew hedges, featuring herbaceous borders, a small hidden water garden, an arboretum and above all a magnificent view of Wells Cathedral over open fields. Well worth taking the time to talk about all you have seen whilst partaking of cup of tea and a slice of home-made cake !

14th August Wednesday. An evening trip to Lady Farm Garden, Chelwood owned by Judy Pearce and featured in the Somerset Yellow Booklet.

An expensively created and expanding garden with flower borders fronting an attractive old farmhouse and rare flowers in borders each side of a stream which flows downhill to a small lake. Two fine brass figures at the side of this lake appear to be indulging in a somewhat unexpected activity! Tea and homemade cake in a summerhouse overlooking the whole garden, is a very attractive proposition. Don't leave before you have inspected the hidden vegetable garden with its huge cabbages and other fine healthy vegetables. If you are lucky you could end with an armful of sweet peas, cut and presented by the charming owner.

Ray Box
Prog. Sec.

HESTERCOMBE GARDENS

The Hestercombe Gardens Trust has been formed to oversee and co-ordinate the development of both the Jekyll Lutyens Garden and the Georgian Landscape Garden. The Friends of Hestercombe Garden Trust will continue to support both projects. Membership Secretary Mrs Jill Pullinger 01823 413923.

Volunteers to assist visitors in the gardens are still required. Contact Patricia Hennah, Steward Co-ordinator 01823 400639

The Landscape Garden is to be officially opened on 22nd April.

CHANNEL 4 GARDEN PARTY

This may be your chance to appear on television. The Series Producer of Channel 4's Garden Party is looking for beautiful gardens and interesting gardeners for this years 20 programmes. What she is seeking is a garden attached to a fairly ordinary house lived in by a typical family. The gardens must be of a high standard, photogenic with the potential to inspire. The programmes will concentrate on problem areas within the host's garden.

Another element in the programmes will feature a series of video diaries recorded by lively, ordinary gardeners tackling garden projects.

If you are interested or know of someone who fits the bill, then you are asked to send in a half page description of the garden, complete with photos which will be returned. Address to be written on the back of each photo.

The address to write to is :

Amanda Lowe, 21 Bruges Place, Randolph Street, London NW 1 0TF Tel: 0171 482 5855

FINALLY A POEM !

I am indebted to a member of Somerton Gardeners Club for passing on this little gem whose provenance is obscure.

THE FAILURE

by J.J. Webster

Oh why ain't I blessed wiv green fingers?
Why ain't me plants strong and tall ?
How come all me neighbours reap fruit from their labours
While I never reaps bugger-all ?

Me beetroots is pale and anaemic
Me leeks grow no thicker than threads
Me cucs and tomarters is chronic non starters
Cos me seeds never rise from their beds.

Me parsnips is parst all redemption
Me peaches and pears never crop.
Me broad beans and marrers ain't fit fer the sparrers
And I'm buyin me spuds up the shop.

I give 'em orl kinds of pertection
I've tret 'em like family pets,
Yet me bushes and trees is beset wiv diseases
Wot nobody else ever gets.

I works and I waits and I worries
I never 'as time to relax
Me fingers is bleedin' from forkin' and weedin'
While uvvers lies flat on their backs.

Me knuckles is covered in plasters
Me neck 'as a pernamint crick.
Me muscles is achin' from hoein' and rakin'
And me back ain't arf givin' me stick.

I've read every book in the lib'ry
Consulted the experts by post,
I've tried orl the capers described in the papers
And killed orf more plantlife than most.

But I've never been known as a quitter
And one day I'm gonna perfect
By intensive research down " The Angler and Perch "
Agarden wot thrives on neglect.

HAPPY EASTER AND HAPPY GARDENING !

Pip Harwood