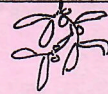




**Somerset
Federation of Gardening
Clubs**

Issue XLIV

Autumn 2012



Points of Interest

Bishops Palace Garden

***Things not to say
when recruiting new
Committee Members***

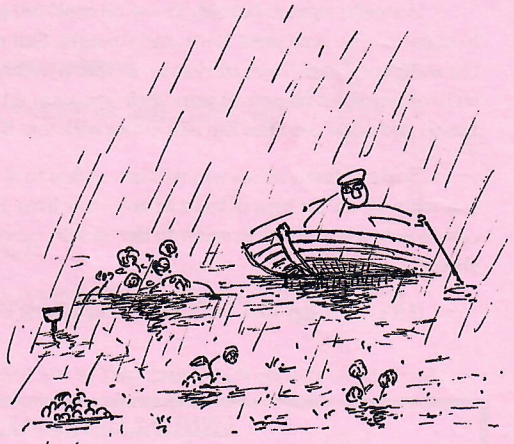
Future Events

The Rewards of Toil

Chairman's Corner

***The Pleasures of being
a Dad***

Final Cuttings



I beg your pardon

I never promised you a rose garden

Along with the sunshine

There's gotta be a little rain sometime

Jo Smith 1968



Introduction



'The rain it raineth every day'

Elizabethan song.

It is not easy to recall a day when it didn't. Our culture is riven with references to the 'soft refreshing rain', 'the gentle rain from heaven' and the understated promise of dampness in the clumsily constructed ballad overleaf. And this year, we can all cry, 'Enough!' We've run out of adjectives to describe it all. When was the last time you said, "Turned out nice again, hasn't it"? But it could have been worse.

The 26th of November 1703 saw the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Bishop Kidder and his wife killed by falling masonry while in bed at the Bishops Palace, the Eddystone Lighthouse swept away and Edmund Dirrick the Parish Clerk at Ubley at the foot of the Mendips recorded 'this terrible tempest both of watter and wind' that devastated the county of Somersetshire.

'A woeful sight to behold. The wind continuing hard on Saturday morning, it caused the sea to come in with such great force and strength, that on a sudden it filled all channels, threw down the walls and broke down the banks, so that it overspread very much dry land.' The inhabitants were of course in dangers as were their houses, and the folk of Croscombe and Chew Stoke, the Levels and other counties can empathise with that this year. Dirrick writes,

'Some of them which was within was fain to stand on the walls of their houses; others, which was without, on the tops of trees to save their lives. Some went on foot in water to their girdle: others rode a horseback in water to the saddle, carrying their children at their backs to keep them alive.'

If it's our soggy rose buds we're complaining of, we have not much to grumble about.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

DING GARDENING CLUB have generously offered to host the Somerset's Federation's next General Meeting on

THURSDAY May 23rd 2013

Ding Gardening Club is named after the little river that connects a number of villages near Illminster.

We look forward to another enjoyable evening and more details will appear in the next newsletter

The Pleasures of being a Dad. Showing is fun

While setting up our Summer Show for the Saturday we always allow exhibitors to come and stage their entries for an hour or so on the Friday evening beforehand. One family, Mum and three children, usually come across from Cheddar to Bleadon on the Friday evening and stage their own exhibits. This year, however, other things clashed with the due date so Dad had to step in and help. He had his instructions in his hand when he approached me. I couldn't help but have a chuckle with the Dad. All family members have agreed that these instructions could be published.

Chris Cudlipp (Sec. Bleadon Horticultural Society)

Instructions/Guidelines for an Exhibitor

1. Put all displays carefully in the car
2. Drive SLOWLY to Bleadon Village Hall
3. Take 1 display with you into the Hall
4. Introduce yourself and collect envelope which will contain slips of card with category numbers on
5. Place each slip CORRECTLY just under each display
6. Do this carefully removing each display from the car ONE AT A TIME
7. DO NOT RUSH DISPLAY ASSEMBLY
8. TAKE YOUR TIME
9. ASK FOR HELP FROM THE ORGANISER
10.MAKING SURE YOU HAVE DISPLAYED EACH DISPLAY IN THE CORRECT AGE GROUP
11. FAILURE IN ALL THE ABOVE WILL RESULT IN THE CHILDREN BEING UPSET AND NOT HAVING A CHANCE TO WIN
12. RETURN TO THE CAR
13. DRIVE HOME
14. GET OUT OF THE CAR AND RING US



PS

As Hon. Sec. SFGC was privileged to be asked to present the Prizes at Bleadons Summer Show, I am delighted to report that the exhibitors were highly successful and the well earned prizes duly awarded. So, the instructions worked!

Good old Dad And many thanks to Mum



SOUTH WEST ALPINE FLOWER SHOW AND PLANT SALE

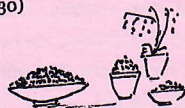
Alpine Garden Society Exeter Group - St Luke's Science and Sports College

Harts Lane, Off Hill Barton Road, Exeter EX1 3RD

(On the Pinhoe Road next to Sainsbury's—leave M5 at junction 30)

SATURDAY - APRIL 13TH 2013

PLANT SALES OPEN AT 10 A.M. (13 NURSERY STALLS)



SHOW OPENS AT 12 NOON UNTIL 4 pm - £2.50 - AGS Members free - Free Parking

Bishops Palace Garden



It has been a very busy year at The Bishops Palace. We said goodbye to the Contractors in September following the completion of the lottery project and phase one of the garden of reflection.

The exciting new Garden of Reflection is behind the Wells border and comprises a colour garden, birch woodland, prairie planting with sculpture, tall yew hedges and a garden building to follow soon. The colour garden uses Purbeck stone cut into a stained glass window effect design with blocks of bright planting. It will open next Spring along with the Community Garden.



In the main garden it has been a hard year for gardening with all the rain, the rounds of weeding were relentless and we are still catching up with strimming and hedge cutting !

Box blight did well in the warm damp weather and we have made the decision not to use it any more and recommend to all other gardeners to switch to alternatives (RHS website is good) Most box that is sold has it, but commercial growers can use stronger chemicals than us to keep it at bay but as soon as the spraying stops it comes back. You can quarantine plants but why take the risk? If you have older healthy box plants be vigilant with the plants and soil you might import.

We have lots of developments planned for the garden this winter including the new knot garden which will have a portcullis design and will be planted with the National Bishops Dahlia collection. The dahlias were very popular with visitors this year so we have decided to make them a regular feature. We will also develop the area around St Andrews Well with a natural and woodland style under planting. This area of the garden is newly opened and has an oak boardwalk with intimate views of the Well and the Cathedral. We will be open until the 21st of December and will re open at

February half term for the snowdrops in the arboretum.

For garden group visits please call Moira on 01749 988111.



THE REWARDS OF TOIL

The most peculiar thing about gardening is that all of a sudden everything is too old to eat.



Radishes change overnight from delicate young shoots not large enough to put on the table into huge plants seven foot high with a root like an Irish shillelagh.



If you take your eyes off a lettuce bed for a week the lettuces, not ready to eat when you last looked at them, have changed into a tall jungle of hollyhocks.

Green peas are only really green for about two hours. Before that they are young peas; after that they are old peas.



Cucumbers are the worst case of all. They change overnight, from delicate little bulbs obviously too slight and dainty to pick, to old cases of yellow leather filled with seeds.

If I were to garden again, I should wait until a certain day and hour, when all the plants are right, and then go out with a gun and shoot them all dead, so that they could grow no more.

Stephen Leacock.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2013

Accompanying this newsletter is a form for you to complete and return to :-

Barbara Rahn 1 Dells Court ,


Wells BA5 2UZ

To be returned by the 16th of February, please.

If you receive this via e-mail—please return it

BY POST

PESTS OLD AND NEW

Slugs and snails are not a modern pest . The great 18th century plantsman and gardener Peter Collinson was infuriated by any devastation wrought by a variety of creatures. Two of his remedies are worth a try. 

Clipping the wings of local seagulls and letting them loose in the garden was a popular method; one for you seaside gardeners.

Collinson also squirted 'tobacco water' on his pests—the old nicotine spray. Those of you who like to chew a bit of Old Shag might try your hand at a little target shooting—after all, the slugs are big enough to spear by hand. You can practise your Javelin throwing for the next Olympics by becoming a sort of Tarzan of the Gastropods.

VILLAGE SHOW JUDGES - Two questions for whoever is reading this to ask your Show Secretary if you have one. **First Question:** Who are your show judges? **Second Question :** Would any of your judges be willing to put their name forward to do a little more judging around the area?

If the answer is YES/MIGHT would you please forward the name and contact details to Judy Combes who would issue an invitation to join the Federation Register. We do need judges in all categories If you have members who would like to try their hand at judging and would like to gain some official qualifications then the Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies offers courses through their Guild of Judges. They provide friendly and interesting courses open to anyone who is interested.

For more information please contact the Chairman of GFGS - Martin Davis 01452 539749

Chairman's Corner



Well, what happened to summer 2012.....? What a wash out! I am sure that most of you have had problems with your garden this year; the main one Mo and I have had, is that we've not been able to sit in it... well hardly! Although there is always something to do out there, it is nice now and again to sit with a glass of wine in one hand, a magazine or a book in another and soak up a little sunshine....but unfortunately there has been too much of the other sort of soaking. But on the positive side, what wasn't a 'wash-out' was the wonderful way (there is the 'w' letter again) our country came together, with the Queens Diamond Jubilee and the superb organisation of the Olympic & Paralympics Games. We should certainly be very proud of Team GB and their efforts, especially to those that won medals.

And on the subject of people coming together, we have sadly this year lost five clubs from our membership. I believe that in some instances this is mainly due to those smaller clubs who cannot maintain the expense of hiring venues and speakers. It occurred to me that if it were possible, neighbouring clubs or societies could unite with those smaller clubs thereby boosting membership and support. Obviously it depends on logistics, but worth considering, and we have noticed that since renewing their memberships, many clubs have included in their titles '& District'. This is certainly another way in which we can pull people together, providing much needed community activities, especially those who live out in very rural areas. Just a thought!

Finally, I would like to thank Yarty Gardening Club for organising such a splendid AGM back in May and for their warm hospitality, not least of all the huge buffet! I found it a pleasure to meet so many people from other clubs, and very much appreciated the positive comments from those who felt the Federation's committee were doing a 'grand job' ! Thank you all for your support.

God Bless
Erl

SPEAKERS AND JUDGES REGISTER

The Federation's thanks go out to all those hard-pressed club secretaries who have taken the trouble to respond to the plea for more names and addresses of Speakers and Judges not currently on our Register

Only by pooling our information and resources can we sustain a good service of provision to member clubs. This, therefore, depends upon your co-operation. So if you have not replied yet, please do so .

If you have had a speaker who entertained you satisfactorily at your club meeting, if you had a judge at your show, both of whom do not feature on the list, please send a name and address to Judy Combes and she will do the rest.

We still need more as many names retire. Please share your experiences for the benefit of others.

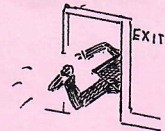
Jot a note to Judy Combes, 6 Ridgway, West Chinnock, Crewkerne , Somerset TA18 7PY

Please give as much contact information as possible, I have been a real Miss Marple recently, trying to trace people, my grateful thanks to all those who have responded - JC

Things not to say when recruiting new Committee Members



1. I am giving up after 40 years—it's been very hard work with little or no support from anyone
2. We need somebody with advanced computer skills and a double first in Information Technology
3. We are going to FOLD now,if no-one steps forward to stand on this bridge ALONE.
4. Quite frankly, I've had enough of taking a couple of valium before each meeting.
5. I, the Chairman, the Secretary, Treasurer and the rest of the Committee won't be here next month. We shall be in Spain...
6. I am tired of looking after you lot and am going into rehab for an indefinite period.
7. What we are looking for is somebody who has an understanding of the complexities of insurance and the Data Protection Act.
8. Someone else can introduce the speaker, I'm going across to the pub.
9. It's no good just saying you've only got a biro and a bit of Basildon Bond—we need more than that in this Day and Age.
10. It's a bit tricky and dangerous in the old kitchen, I know, and Beryl did scald herself rather badly with the old leaky urn, but she's recovering OK and we could do with a team to organise the refreshments tonight.
11. It's going to be time consuming, hard work and thankless, but I 'm sure some brave soul will enjoy it.
12. We want someone who is young, attractive and ready and willing to address the Nurenburg Rally.
13. If you have 3G,4G,Samsung Ultra Plus, email, Ipod, Ipad, Kindle+++, PDF,DDT,wi fi hi fi,ho fi, ho fo—then you are just what we are looking for!
14. What we don't want is any passengers and freeloaders.
15. We want people who are going to WORK.
16. Charles has been at the helm in his mastery fashion since the second Zulu War. But, irreplaceable as he is , he very reluctantly feels its time to give way. In his time he has looked after all aspects of the club and will still be lurking in the background to put his oar in whenever required. So who is going to step into his rather big shoes? Who's it going to be then, eh? Bit of a challenge, I know ! So, come along !
17. Hands up, any volunteers tonight !



FEDERATION INSURANCE



One of the benefits of membership to the Federation is that we arrange insurance for our member clubs and societies with Aviva Insurance. All the administration and collection of premiums is arranged by the Federation Treasurer, which helps to maintain the premiums at a competitive level. Of the 252 member clubs 199 have chosen to take advantage of this service taking out Public Liability Insurance, Cups and Trophies Insurance and in some cases items of property. Accidents can happen at any time and by taking out insurance they have protected their club, committee and members against any claim for damages or negligence resulting in an injury. Cups and trophies are insured against damage or theft anywhere in The United Kingdom provided they are stored in a safe place.

It is essential that clubs are insured against such eventualities as someone tripping over an umbrella or bag which has been left in a vulnerable position or an exhibit falls on someone's foot at a Flower Show causing injury resulting in a claim. It is most unlikely that the owners or trustees of the hall would be covered against such accidents. If however someone fell through the floor of a stage due to say dry rot and an injury was sustained this would not be covered by the club's insurance but a claim would be made against the hall, similarly if an injury was caused by a faulty electrical appliance supplied by the hall this would be claimed on their insurance. It is essential therefore that clubs do check with the hall what is covered by their insurance.

The public liability insurance for instance only applies to official meetings, events or functions organised by the club and it is advisable that these are included in their programme of events. If for instance a group of members decided to pay a visit to a garden independently and an accident occurred it would not be covered by the club's insurance. Alternatively if this visit had been organised officially by the club and say a member pulled down a branch of a shrub for closer examination and it sprang back into someone's face causing an injury resulting in a claim, providing the club had sufficient public liability insurance they would be covered.

Just one final note it is worth pointing out that any clubs insuring cups or trophies should regularly reassess the value of such items bearing in mind the value of silver nowadays.

If anyone has any queries regarding insurance please do not hesitate to contact our Treasurer John Dunster on 01934 822069 who, if unable to answer your query himself will obtain the correct information from our insurers.



Seasonal Work at Stoberry Park Garden, Wells

Autumn is a good time to make changes to beds and borders. The look of the bed is still fresh in your mind and it is easier to visualise changes you would like to make. We have been working in the hot borders in the Walled Garden, digging up, dividing and replanting into smaller groups or relocating to other parts of the garden. *Ligularia przewalskii* have been reduced in number and placed at the back of the border where it will have room to spread and tower above other plants. It is a striking tall perennial with lobed leaves, an asset growing through spring and summer, with many cheerful yellow flowers from mid-summer through to late autumn. We have removed nearly all of the common *Crococsmia* as it is taking over. We have decided to keep a few plants around the edges of the more exciting *Crococsmia Lucifer* to hide the metal supports we use to keep the great leaves upright. An over enthusiastic *Rudbeckia lacinta* 'Herbstonne' has also been divided and used at the back of the border, at 1.2m it is a welcome background plant. With these adjustments we can enjoy the position of the large *Phormiums* throughout the bed, *Cotinus coggygriapurpureus*, *Ceratostinga willmotianum*, various beautiful *Verbascum* hybrids, *Campanula lactiflora*, *Salvia microphylla* and many more. We have kept in check a 'slow growing' bamboo which has enabled us to appreciate a lovely shaped *Echinops*, globe thistle.

We plan to make changes to other borders in the garden. All this as well as the regular maintenance throughout the seven acres! We certainly have lots to do.

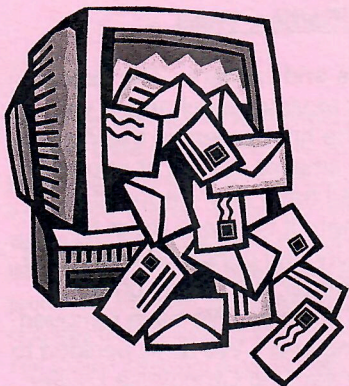
In addition to the traditional English herbaceous style of the Walled Garden, we have a Sunken Garden, close to the house, it is an area of intimate spaces. There you can find *Begonia omeiana*, *Dryopteris erythrosora*, Hostas, Acers and various *Heucheras*. We also have the Lower Garden, a link to the surrounding countryside and the amazing view of Wells, Glastonbury Tor and beyond. Here there are also several more beds packed with a great variety of plants, which give interest throughout the whole year.

We welcome visitors by appointment, as individuals or as a group. You can relax in the garden, enjoy refreshments and delicious Cream Teas, Chocolate Heaven or Champagne and Strawberries! For groups with a minimum of twelve you can also book a guided tour of the Garden.

Please contact Frances Young on 01749 672906 or visit the website: www.stoberry-park.co.uk or stay@stoberry-park.co.uk



Michaela Cross, Senior Gardener



CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS

Please note that from the 1st of December 2012,

the email address for the Federation will be

Mo-somersetfedmail@gmail.com

FINAL CUTTINGS

With a year in which the lowlights were typified by the slugs the size of cucumbers, a thought struck me that perhaps show organisers could incorporate this new trend with a show category. The Great Green / Grey Slug was lurking under every flower pot, at the base of every precious plant. Some of mine were well worth a First Prize in the local show.

Which brings me to a few highlights of the year, among them two splendid Summer Shows. Both at Somerton and at Bleadon, you Intrepid Gardeners worked miracles in totally adverse conditions to produce flowers and vegetables of an extraordinarily high standard. I am sure this was replicated all around the counties. Congratulations to all the courageous organisers and tireless exhibitors whose efforts brightened up a dull summer.

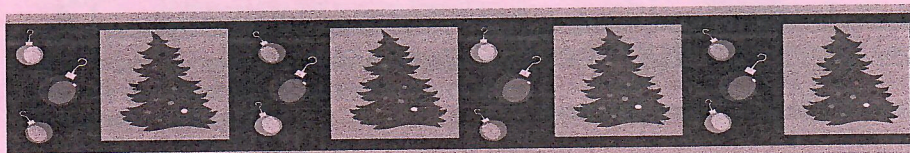
Since the last newsletter we have said goodbye to Ivybridge, Hardy Plants Devon, Wessex Daffodils, Wootton Courtenay and Burlescombe & Westleigh.

We warmly welcome Tintinhull Gardening Club and Uplyme & Lyme Regis Horticultural Society to our membership and wish them well. The total membership now stands at 252.

Ending on a note of exhortation. If we have got something wrong, please tell us. We do need to have club contact details correct. The Federation also needs information from you, the clubs, on new speakers, judges in particular, and suggestions on improving the provisions, So, Hon. Secs., please give us the info which can be shared for the benefit of all members.

My thanks to all contributors and in particular to Judy and Mo.

The Mad Media has promised an Artic Winter. When you receive this it may be seasonal enough to wish you all on behalf of your Committee well for Christmas and for a Floriferous and Productive New Year .And if it's still soggy, may the sun shine next year. . .



Somerset

Federation Committee Members

President

Mrs Lyn Spencer-Mills 01460 76389
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Mrs Judy Combes 01935 881936
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7PY

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Lady Charles House, Holford,
Bridgwater TA5 1RZ

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Vice Chairman

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Mr Ted Gill 01934 628758
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40 Upper Bristol Road,
Weston-super-Mare BS22 8DA

Secretary

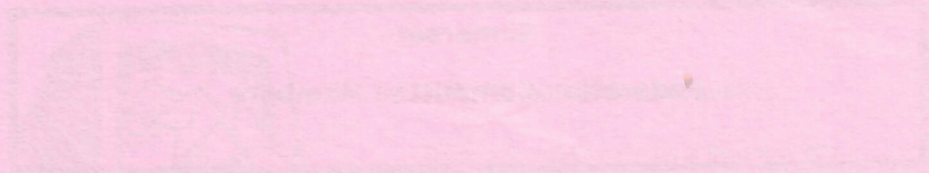
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Mrs Marie Wheatley 01935 881421
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