



Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs

Issue LI I

Spring 2016

Her praises, then, let hardy poets sing,
And be her tuneful laureates and upholders,
Who do not feel as if they had a Spring
Pour'd down their shoulders !



Let others eulogise her floral shows,
From me they cannot win a single stanza,
I know her blooms are in full blow " and so's
The Influenza.

Thomas Hood



**Contact Details of the Officers & Committee Members of
The Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs**

President: Mrs. Lyn Spencer-Mills Tel: 01460 736389
Hoopers Holding, Hinton St. George. TA17 8SE

Chairman: Erland Plomgren Tel: 01278 741152
Lady Charles House, Holford, Bridgwater TA5 1RZ

Vice Chairman To be be filled

Secretary: Philip Harwood Tel: 01749 679182
Fernville, Bath Road, Wells, Somerset. BA5 3HR

Treasurer: John Dunster Tel: 01934 844777
8, Copse End, Winscombe, N. Somerset. BS25 1JS

Webmaster: Tina Franklyn Tel. 07557 980874
Apartment 3, 47 Lilliana Way, Bridgwater TA5 2GG
Email: webmaster@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Committee Members:

Mo Plomgren Tel: 01278 741152
Lady Charles House, Holford, Bridgwater TA5 1RZ

David Talling Tel: 01278 741116
Nutwalk, Holford, Bridgwater. TA5 1RY

Marie Wheatley Tel: 01935 881421
Yeoman's Wake, Higher Street, West Chinnock
Crewkerne. TA18 7QA

Sally Hawkes Tel: 01278 652658
Knaplock Farm, Stockland Bristol, Bridgwater. TA5 2QB

General Enquiries:
enquiries@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Website
somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Introduction

Hamlet: The air bites shrewdly – it is very cold.

Horatio: It is a nipping and eager air.

Hamlet



Whether it was the weather or the prospect of the old man's apparition which put the wind up the Prince of Denmark is beside the point. On this side of the North Sea we have not had much of a cold snap this winter. Spring has been a long drawn-out affair; blue tits visiting the nest boxes in early December, black thorn blossom in mid-January, the daffodils all the way through. As my Aunt used to say "Whatever next?"

What next indeed? Well, we, or you, can start by making a few notes from this newsletter to pass on to the appropriate persons in your club. Unexciting as it sounds, all that stuff about the Federation database, for instance, is important to your club and to our service.

The Federation does need to know the correct information about your club. So please keep us informed, by letter to the Hon. Sec. or email to: somersetfedmail@gmail.com

Who is the main contact? i.e. the person who is going to receive the information we send out – name, address, telephone number, email address (optional).

Whose name and duties go on the Somerset Federation website? Contact Tina on email: webmaster@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Special event coming up? Again contact Tina.

Do you want the material from the Federation sent to you by email rather than by post? Then contact Mo:- somersetfedmail@gmail.com

Please address any of these questions if appropriate to you. This avoids all sorts of confusion.

If you prefer, just drop me a line or give me a ring on 01749 679182

Thank you.

Pip

Hon. Sec.

Speaker Additions

Charlie and Tricia Clarke

British Bougainvilleas - Westdale Nurseries

Charlie and Tricia Clarke of Bradford-on-Avon in Wiltshire have been growing bougainvilleas on their 2 acre site for over 30 years. With this experience comes expertise, over 100 different varieties and medals at Chelsea and Hampton Court. Like other frost tender plants these exotics have a special appeal and here is a chance to learn and see them growing successfully in Britain.

Gardening clubs are invited to group visit to Westdale Nurseries, inspecting the greenhouses, enjoying lunch or tea in the café and shopping in the garden centre. Evening visits are also welcome.

Charlie also talk gives talks to clubs during the winter months. Details of talks and visits as follows:

Charlie Clarke, Westdale Park, Holt Road, Bradford on Avon. BA15 1TS

Telephone number 01225 863258 email: pacwclarke@aol.com

Bougainvilleas: The British Way. Band B - 40p per mile - plants for sale.

Mr Andrew Tolman, 41, Fownes Road, Minehead, Somerset. TA24 6AF.

Tel: 01643 818092, mob: 07546874083 Email: andrew@atpgardening.co.uk

Topics: "Off the Beaten Track, Hidden Gems". About less well known gardens to visit.

"Glorious Gardens, a Gardener's Choice". On a similar format as above but better known gardens.

"Art of Topiary and Ornamental Hedges".

And from October 2016 "Stumperies, ferns and shady friends".

His fee is £90 inclusive of travel if within a 20 mile radius, or + 40p/mile outside this area.

Greg Morter, 2, Southbank, Castle Cary, Somerset. BA7 7HF

Tel: 01963 359415 Email: greg.cosmicwalk@gmail.com

Talk: From Seed to Fork : How plants have evolved and man has adapted them.

£50 - £70 Travel @35p per mile.

Chairman's Corner Spring 2016



Thinking back to the time when we bought our house here in Holford, I realise more and more that we are all custodians of our gardens. When the time comes for us to move on, it will be paramount to us, that the new owners will 'love' our garden as much as we do, and that they will continue to help it evolve and grow!

We first viewed the property in July 1999 and I remember vividly walking along the path to the front door with Mo, we were amazed at what we discovered behind the high laurel hedges, we must have passed this house a hundred times on our visits to Holford, never realising what a gem of a front garden lay behind them. The glory of course was the crowning moment, when Lady Charles invited us out onto the grassy 'patio' at the rear of the house and we were met with the vista of terraces and lawn, the gentle flowing stream and the numerous shrubs, trees and flowers that she herself had planted and maintained over the years.

Mo and I hardly took notice of the house, we were absolutely taken aback with the thought of working and enjoying such a lovely garden and whatever issues cropped up, we made up our mind to live here.

Sadly Lady Charles passed away in September 1999, but we were informed that it had been her wish that she hoped we would continue to purchase the house, which of course we did and so the rest is history.

As I have mentioned, Lady Charles had maintained the garden mostly by herself, although at times she did have a little help, so naturally there was quite a lot of work to be done. Some trees were damaged and had to be felled, paths renewed, the banks of the stream to be reinforced as although generally the stream does 'flow gently', we have had torrents of water after heavy rain and especially when the snow from the hills has melted.

Although Mo and I were delighted at our purchase, neither of us were - what you were call 'gardeners' as such, we knew what we liked, we had an idea of what one does and we both had a limited knowledge of plants. As a small child, Mo had been given a tiny plot of the family garden after the war, and she remembers partitioning it off from the rest with sea shells and stones and planting - with help from her granddad - seeds of marigolds, candytuft, nigella and nasturtiums and in the autumn with daffodil and tulip bulbs. Before Holford, we had lived in Surbiton in Surrey and we had a very pretty typical 'suburban' garden, it was as is the nature of the area - a little on the formal side, we bought bedding plants from nurseries and planted our hanging baskets, although we did always lean towards untidiness!! Neither of us really were that

experienced, but fortunately here in Holford, we had a neighbour that was! Walking up and around the garden, proudly showing off all the foliage, trees, shrubs, flowers and so on...we came across a huge mass of green foliage with white flowers.. 'Isn't that pretty?' I said... our neighbour replied, 'Erl, do you know what it is?' I shook my head...she then said in a very serious tone... 'thatis Ground Elder'.....!

I have lost count of the number of sacks I have dug up from the garden and taken to the tip and even now after all these years, it still pops up now and again but now I can spot it a hundred yards away!

I think Gardening is not just a hobby, it is an 'education', we learn, we make mistakes, we have failures, but we also have wonderful and exciting results. If you are 'gardeners' like Mo and I, we don't need to know the Latin names of plants, we do not try to compete with other gardeners, we watch Monty and Chris (you know who I mean!) and others on television, we get tips and ideas, we read gardening books and magazines, we listen to the radio but in the end, I think the best gardening of all, as far as we are concerned - is instinct.....and a few green fingers!

Have a great Summer, enjoy!

God Bless

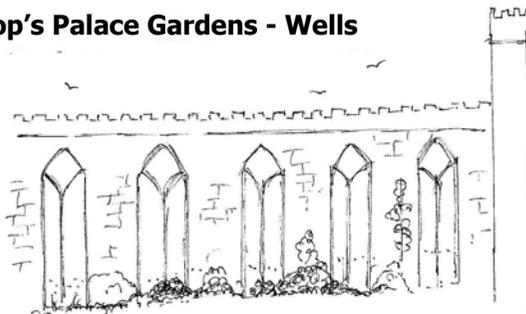
Erl



You got any of they salivias ?

No, sir but I got some very good spitoonias !

The Bishop's Palace Gardens - Wells



What a busy 2015 we had, a record number of people attended the Rare Plant Fair in March, our first Garden Festival was a huge success and the filming of The Huntsman went very smoothly. This year our Rare Plant Fair is on Sunday the 20th of March. The Garden Festival is from the 10th-12th of June with Roy Lancaster, Mark Diacono and Tom Hart Dyke, Claire Greenslade (Hestercombe) and Jane Moore (Bath Priory Hotel) speaking.

In the gardens our new St Andrews Cross border grew very well, it is full of plants with colours linked to the Bishop so lots of rich purple, gold, yellow and blue. The plants include herbaceous Clematis jouniana 'Praecox', and 'Pretty in Blue', Veronica 'Purpleicious', Roses, Lavender's and Heuchera to name a few. We planted colourful annuals in the stained glass window effect garden which proved very effective even on the dampest summer days. Purbeck stone is used to create the shapes and the low colourful annuals like Geraniums, Petunias, Ageratum and Begonias look fantastic. I actually have a soft spot for annuals which are becoming rare in parks and gardens so I am pleased I have an excuse to plant them!

During the historically mild late autumn and early winter we have emptied the Wells border and have split all of the plants which will be re planted and boosted with lots of new Roses, Philadelphus and lots of other new shrubs and perennials. The new planting will extend the season and make it more colourful throughout the summer and autumn. This summer we will begin preparing the large Winter Garden which will be full of lots of winter flowering/scented shrubs and lots of colour. The Winter Garden will be created either side of the path leading to the western rampart steps. Structure through the border will come from Irish Yews similar to those in the Hot Border. We look forward to welcoming you to the gardens in 2016 and are always happy to answer any horticultural queries that you may have. For more information please Email www.bishopspalace.org.uk or phone 01749 988111.

James Cross
Head Gardener

A Perennial Garden Pest!

A few years ago while on a visit to a 'Yellow Book' garden I spotted in the herbaceous, border a group of plants with glorious whorls of white flowers fading to a deep magenta pink. The garden owner enthused about this plant which he said was pest free in his garden, probably due to it's prickly leaves and the smell of citrus when the leaves are damaged. It was called *Morina longifolia*.

Filled with enthusiasm I went home and ordered some seeds, which to my delight germinated easily. I planted my seedlings out and waited. One day I noticed my seedlings had vanished!

My husband (who rarely shows any interest in the flower garden) had spotted a 'patch of thistles' and had helpfully removed them for me. He claimed it was my fault for not clearly marking them.

Undaunted I repeated the process the following year, I surrounded my plants with canes to make sure they were clearly marked. My husband struck again!! he came in and said "I don't know what you had planted there but there was nothing but a patch of thistles".

I will try once more and if I ever have occasion to visit that particular 'Yellow Book' garden again I shall tell the gentleman who owns it that in my garden *Morina longifolia* does have one serious pest.

Sally Hawkes



Anyone There

Your committee, who meet in congenial circumstances a couple of times a year, enjoy what we do on your behalf; otherwise we wouldn't do it. We would, however, appreciate a little assistance in various areas and if anyone reading this feels like offering to help then we would be delighted to hear from you. Contact the chairman or Hon. Sec., by phone, or email or just sidle up to us at the AGM and say you are willing to give a hand. Not only will you be warmly welcomed, you will enjoy it, too! And Lyn's cakes.

Pip H

Corfu

I had little knowledge of the island of Corfu but I knew that Prince Philip was born there, and that one of my favourite authors, Gerald Durrell had lived there and wrote the wonderful book (amongst others)..'My Family & Other Animals'....and that the island had been the location for one of the James Bond films, so flying into Corfu Town airport last August on a family holiday, I was amazed how lush and green the landscape appeared (obviously I hadn't done my homework!) Driving across to the north of the island, I was even more surprised how there were very few open spaces but the most beautiful scenery was seen across to the coast, from the highest points of our journey (Amalfi Coast, eat your heart out!)

Acres and acres of olive groves and plantations of kumquat were seen along the roadsides, fig, cypress and now and again the magnificent Judas Tree, 'though not 'blushing' its wonderful dark pink flowers at the time of our visit.

During our holiday, we were told a tale, that legend has it that a man asked God that when he died, he would like his wife to be buried with him, when she too passed away. God agreed to this and so the man and woman were laid side by side, then they grew into an olive tree and from the one trunk, two limbs of the tree evolved representing the husband and wife living together in eternity. We all thought this a rather touching sweet little story, until my granddaughter pointed out to us one day, whilst we were at a local restaurant with its own olive grove, that there were **three** 'branches' growing from one trunk of a particular olive tree.....now how do you explain that to a ten year old!

Mo (Plomgren)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Message from the 'Data Base Secretary'

When receiving your newsletter or any correspondence from the Federation, would you **please** inform me if we are sending this information to the 'correct' contact for your club? Recent renewal forms from some clubs do not indicate who should be the main recipient! I am sure you would appreciate, that with over two hundred and forty odd member clubs, it's not possible to 'guess' who we should be contacting!

We would also be extremely grateful if you could advise us, whether you are willing to have your contact email address published on our website, and also if you are happy to receive the newsletter by email.

For those of you with email access, please contact me direct with your 'up to date' details: enquiries@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

or telephone: 01278 741152

If I do not hear from you, I will assume you are happy with the current arrangement.

Thank you for your co-operation, *Mo (Plomgren) Data Base Secretary*



Website News

The website has recently been overhauled and updated and we hope that you like what you see. To make it **YOUR** website we welcome your feedback and ideas on how to make the website work for you.

The website is here for you to use - advertise your events - have a link to your website - have details of your Club programme - there are many ways you can promote your Club and help get in new members.

Information for the website, can be sent to:-

webmaster@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

giving details of what you want published. The Noticeboard is there for major events such as a Flower Show, Plant Sale or other such event. The adverts will be displayed in date order with the earliest one first. If we have a lot submitted then those a long time ahead will need to be held over until nearer the time. Posters that you are using to publicise the event would be appreciated. The Noticeboard is for member clubs only.

Photographs of member's gardens can be displayed and we intend to have a page for these - please submit the photos separate from text and preferably as an attachment to your email. Brief details of where the garden is situated and when it was taken will help - please indicate what wording you would like to go with the photo. The photos will be changed on a regular basis. Any format accepted but please send the photos as an attachment and not inserted in a document.

All text items for the website can be sent in using: Microsoft Word - Open Office Text - Word Pad - Notepad - Apple Pages - or almost any other word processor programme. If you prefer, just send it as part of an email.

Please send it as a normal page and do not send it in a web page or HTML page format even if your word processor allows that.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Email: **webmaster@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk**

Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs AGM

Thursday 19th May 2016

Hosted by Martock & District
Gardening Society

Doors open 6.15pm for a 7pm start

Illustrated Talk @ 8pm

Refreshments - Raffle - Plant Sale

www.somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Federation AGM

Martock Gardening Club has kindly agreed to host the event. The venue will be Martock Parish Hall, with timing as follows: Doors open 6.15pm, light refreshments available and also plant sales. The AGM will start at 7pm and then there will be a short interval, followed by Mike Burks, Managing Director of The Gardens Group, speaking on the subject of Gardening Trends.

Location

MARTOCK PARISH HALL- Church Street, Martock. TA12 6JL

(Easting:346225.00, Northing:119176.00)

Martock's Horticultural Heritage

Horticulture has been an important pursuit for the people of Martock for centuries; and the cultivation of one plant in particular has been extremely important to the prosperity of the village. So significant in fact that it was named after the village. The Martock Bean (*Vicia Faba* "Martock") is a type of broad bean which has been grown in the village since medieval times and was first mentioned in parish records as early as the twelfth century.

In medieval times Martock beans were usually dried and used in soups, stews and gruels, the mainstay of the medieval peasants winter diet. The deep clay loam soil common in the area grows heavy crops of beans. In 1633 Thomas Gerard wrote that Martock was "seated in the fattest place of the Earth of this Countie, especially for errable, which makes ye inhabitants soe fatt in their purses...". The bean helped to make Martock a prosperous place "inhabited by wealthy and substantial men". The significance of the crop to the development of Martock is also apparent from a saying recorded in the eighteenth century, "Take a Martock man by the collar and shake him, and you will hear the beans rattle in his belly".

Beans however are only part of the story of Martock's horticultural heritage. Martock and District Gardening Society can trace its roots back to March 1890 when a group of villagers met in the Martock National Schoolroom to organise an annual village flower show. Under their management the first Martock Horticultural Show was held on 3 September 1890. The show was a village occasion with entertainment for everyone. In addition to numerous classes for flowers and vegetables, there were competitions for allotments, front gardens, wild grass collections and trussed fowls. The Martock Military Band was in attendance and there was dancing on the turf, maypole dancing, coconut throwing and a demonstration of silk glove making. The entertainment lasted throughout the afternoon and well into the evening.

In 1891 the show was enhanced by the provision of the newly invented electric lighting for the field and a "tastefully decorated" poultry and butter tent. An anonymous lady from Australia sent prize money for competitions between cottagers' children.

On 25 January 1894 the first Society dinner was held at the White Hart Hotel. Forty one people attended and thirteen toasts were drunk!

Thereafter the Society continued to flourish and shows were held annually featuring additional attractions including the Queen of the May, a troupe called the Glee Singers, athletic sports and an event described as a "treacle roll" race.

A plaque at Martock Recreation Ground records that the dashing pioneer airman Graham Gilmour landed his Bristol Boxkite biplane there on the occasion of the

annual flower show in August 1911. This must have been a truly sensational event for the people of the village who witnessed it.

Our annual show no longer features dancing on the turf, the curiously named "treacle roll" race, or dramatic aircraft landings, but it continues to be a hugely popular village event. In recent years the show has grown in popularity and we have seen a steady increase in the number of exhibitors and exhibits. We are now looking forward to holding our 127th annual show in August 2016.

We are proud of our horticultural heritage in Martock and hope that you have been interested to read a little bit about it. We wonder whether any other villages in Somerset have such a long or interesting horticultural history.

With thanks to the Martock Local History Group for the information in this article about the Martock Bean. For further information go to www.martockhistory.co.uk

Gareth Isaac

Chairman, Martock and District Gardening Society



SOUTH WEST ALPINE FLOWER SHOW & PLANT SALE

ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY EXETER GROUP

West Exe Technology College

Heatherleigh Road

Exeter

EX2 9JU

Saturday 30th April 2016

Plant Sales open at 10am (13 Nursery Stalls)

Show Opens at 12 Noon until 4pm

£3.00 (AGS Members Free - YES FREE)

New Garden. New Hope.



In September 2012 when I moved to a small, rural Somerset village I left behind not only Surrey suburbia but also a garden I had tended and, hopefully, improved for more than thirty years. A couple of fairly superficial viewings of my, then, potential new horticultural domain had clearly shown me that there was a fair bit of work to be done but mitigating factors were the stone walls on three boundaries and a large daphne which looked to be in good condition. Once the garden was actually mine I realised there was a mammoth task ahead in rescuing it from years of neglect

Tearing a thick blanket of ivy out of a hazel tree might be hard work and getting the ivy roots out even harder but at least it's a straightforward operation; deciding how to prune a completely anonymous rose isn't. Is it a rambler? Is it a climber? Is it a bush rose of some sort that has never been pruned and has just been tied up to a trellis to stop it falling over? Gardening books didn't help; they assume you know the identity of the plants in your garden. Getting rid of an ugly, rickety, Heath Robinson fruit cage was easy (I just leant on one corner of it!) but getting rid of great spreads of ground elder isn't. I have now crawled on hands and knees round the garden on three separate, annual occasions, spending many hours plying a hand-fork to tease out their brittle roots. And how do you get them out from being entwined in the roots of spiraea without killing the spiraea? Again, the gardening books don't help but I'm pretty sure I'm winning the battle. And as for broad swathes of celandines: one false extraction move with the trusty hand-fork and the little bulblets attached to their fine roots drop off into the disturbed soil, never to be found again until, next year, they appear as more celandines. Some people like celandines. Some say they are pretty but when you don't want them and you've got them everywhere, they're not.

Then there's the problem of what to do with the spaces created by cutting back, really hard, big old lopsided shrubs that've been allowed to become woody and misshapen. Do you leave the spaces empty – like missing front teeth – in the hope that something welcome and interesting now emerges from its former smothering gloom or do you plant something new that you like? Decisions, decisions. And what about the rather grandiose water feature built into one of the stone walls? It would be more at home at, say, Hestercombe or Mapperton. Do you live with it or do you fill in the basin and try to make a sort of rock garden with it? More decisions. One decision I have made, though, is to do as Prince Charles does at Highgrove for one of the more informal parts of his lovely garden and rename my rather grass-free lawn a "mown green space"!

It's said that a cared-for garden is a permanent work in progress, although I do sometimes feel that my garden is all work and not much progress. However, I take encouragement from not having killed anything that I've tried to rescue and restore and I had an extra bonus last autumn when, suddenly, two large clumps of cyclamen and a hellebore appeared for the first time since 2012! Earlier this week, sitting in the garden with a well-earned mug of tea after mowing my green space (and cutting all the edges) the sound of the water from the newly cleaned-out water feature and the beautiful perfume from the daphne, now in full bloom, were truly magical – and the bonus hellebore is now a mass of deep pink flowers.

Vee Cockerell

Why? Why? Why?

"Annuals" mean disappointment once a year.

Your lawn is always slightly bigger than your desire to mow it.

Whichever garden tool you want is always at the back of the shed.

The only way to ensure rain, is to give the garden a good soaking.

Weeds grow at precisely the rate you pull them out.

Nothing ever looks like it does on the seed packet.

Autumn follows summer, winter follows autumn, drought follows planting.

The only way to guarantee some colour all year round is to buy a garden gnome.

However bare the lawn, grass will appear in the cracks between the patio paving stones.

Evergreens go a funny shade of brown in the winter.

Daffodils

One of my favourite plants is the daffodil. Travelling around the Somerset roads, especially the country lanes, they brighten up the dullness of the verges with their splash of yellow. With their trumpets they seem to me to be trying to shout out 'look at me - am I not beautiful, am I not worthy of a second look?' I know we get patches of snowdrops littered along the roadside verges but they, although good to see, are not a patch on the tall soldierly looking daffodil.

David Talling

'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud (Daffodils)

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

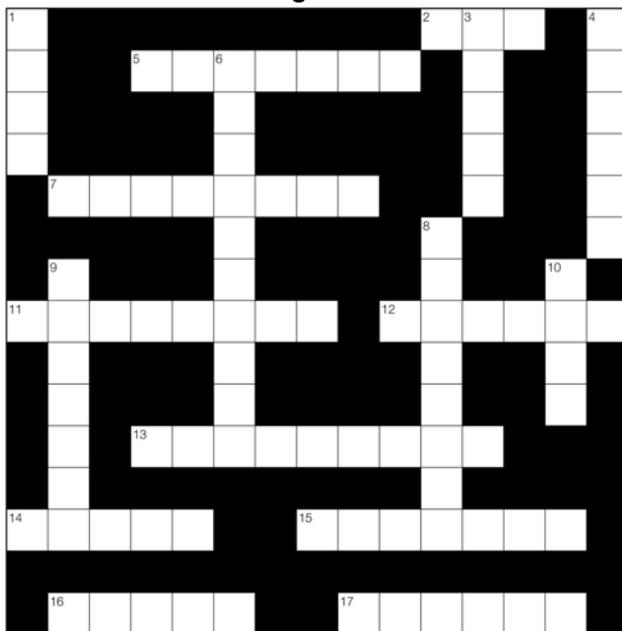
Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

Gardening Crossword



Horticultural by John Dunster

Across

- 2. See 17 across
- 5. Cattle trip up
- 7. In food production does it compete with the chicken
- 11. Unite precious metal
- 12. 1 down & 12 across - Occupied girl
- 13. Motor country
- 14. Thick part of the garden seat
- 15. Uprightness
- 16. Flower usable for soup
- 17. 17 & 2 across - Valuable stick

Down

- 1. See 12 across
- 3. Rosie weaves this basket material
- 4. King Edward for instance
- 6. Needs a dance partner
- 8. Sedate girl
- 9. The meadow beyond the river
- 10. Nearly red

Answers, if required, will be in the next edition of the Newsletter

Gardening Crossword - Autumn 2015 Answers

Across: 2. Cutting 4. Pests 5. Patio 8. Pelargonium 11. Compost
 12. Snowdrops 14. Bed 15. Water 16. Spade) 18. Fuchsias 23. Vegetables
 24. Wheelbarrow

Down: 1. Mistletoe 3. Hanging 6. Brambles 7. Diseases 9. Root
 10. Strawberry 12. Seeds 13. Conifers 17. Plant 19. Holly 20. Garden



Fun Corner



"Your first job is to prepare the soil.

The best tool for this is your neighbour's motorized garden tiller.

If your neighbour does not own a garden tiller, suggest that he buy one."

-

A new business was opening and one of the owner's friends wanted to send him flowers for the occasion. The flowers arrived at the new business site and the owner read the card: "Rest in Peace." The owner was annoyed, and called to complain. "Sir, I'm really sorry for the mistake, and sorry you were offended," said the florist. "But even worse, somewhere there is a funeral taking place today, and they have flowers with a note saying, "Congratulations on your new location."

I'm a gardener and I'm OK
I sleep all night and I plant all day!
I dress in grubby clothing, and hang around with slugs.
Oh I'm happy in the garden
With dirt and plants and bugs . . .
(to the tune of Monty Python's "I'm a Lumberjack")

A toddler who was found chewing on a slug.
After the initial surge of disgust the parent said,
"Well . . . What does it taste like?"
"Worms," was the reply.

The difference between weeds and flowers is
the weeds are the easiest ones to pull out.

How do you know you are a Master Gardener?

There is a decorative compost container on your kitchen top.
You would rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothing store.
You prefer gardening to watching television.
You plan holiday trips to arboretums and public parks.
Dirt under your fingernails and calloused palms are matters of pride.

God made rainy days,
so gardeners could get the housework done

Final Cuttings

With 237 affiliated clubs, the Federation is probably the largest of its kind in the UK. Small clubs do struggle to maintain a vibrant membership so if you feel that the Federation can assist in any respect, please get in touch. There was quite a bit of correspondence in the RHS magazine 'The Garden' on the subject so if you feel that your club is alone in this respect you are wrong. Certain steps can be taken, like, for instance more publicity. Here the Federation website is open for such situations. Keeping in touch with other clubs helps; again visit the website for contacts. The Library will help you with this if you do not have access to a computer.

Let us know if you know of a potential club who is not affiliated and keep your own details up-to-date by communicating with us – use the database or 'phone the Hon. Sec. Or even send a postcard.

As you have heard, the Register of Speakers and Judges is being completely revised this year. You will be asked for names and addresses of speakers and judges, you would recommend to other clubs, who are not on the SFGC list already. In the meantime, if you do have a name or two at hand, please send in the information - just a name and address – we do the rest by invitation.

Finally, if we get things wrong, tell us, please. Ensure the post goes to the right person and the correct contact name is on the website or with the Hon. Sec.

Thank you and happy gardening, early or late. Now go and enjoy it the daffodils.

Pip Harwood 01749 679182



Stuck for a judge?

Some organisers of shows are having difficulty in securing judges for their village shows, particularly for cookery classes and flowers. A simple suggestion is to contact the local school, the local flower club, flower shop or the WI, even other clubs. Try it.

