



# Garden Topics

March 2021

## Chairman's report

Welcome to our Spring newsletter.

We still find ourselves in lockdown, but there is now light at the end of the tunnel. Spring is one of my favorite seasons, with colour in the gardens and longer days. The daffodils have really excelled themselves this year, everywhere you look there is a mass of yellow. I hope by now that most of our members have had at least one vaccination.

Thank you to all our members who have continued to support us, even though we have not been able to enjoy all our usual outings and events. One of our major fund-raising events, the Molesey Carnival has again this year been cancelled.

Tony our Treasurer buys in plug plants which members grow on to sell at the Carnival, unfortunately last year he had already purchased the plants, but we were able to have a sale of the plants just prior to the first lockdown, which was a great success. We sold out and made a small profit. As this sale was a success Tony has again purchased plug plants and has been selling them at the depot on Sunday mornings. You will find further information about the plants in this newsletter. At this point I would like to thank Tony for his hard work in organizing the purchase of the plants, arranging for members to grow them on and for them to be on display at the Trading Hut on Sunday mornings.

Hopefully, life will gradually get back to some sort of normality, but at the present time we do not have any information as to when our lecture programme will start. We have provisionally booked the venue for this year's flower show, but only time will tell whether it will go ahead. I hope that you will all grow your flowers, vegetables and make your jams and chutneys in anticipation of competing at our show.

You will find information regarding the flower show and coach trips later in this newsletter. Please read the article on the flower show as we are holding a "Potato Pot Challenge" for children under 12.

Our long-awaited new website will go live on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This will be kept up to date regarding coach trips, lectures, flower show and Trading Hut news, so please check in regularly at [emgs.co.uk](http://emgs.co.uk)

We wish you all well and look forward to meeting up soon. Jean Billett

## Plug Plants

Our initial order of Petunia and Fuchsia plug plants sold very quickly and we had to order more. At the time of writing, we are still awaiting this second delivery of Petunias, and hope they will be here by Easter. For anyone who cannot visit the trading hut on a Sunday, please send an email to [tony\\_speller@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tony_speller@hotmail.co.uk) or call Tony on 020 8398 1774 with your requirements. A list of the varieties available is at the end of this newsletter. With Molesey Carnival cancelled again this year we hope to have these and other plants, including some tomato plants, available at the trading hut on regular Sunday morning sessions and Wednesday evening sessions during April and May. As one supermarket says 'Once it's gone, it's gone', so ordering now is the best way to secure your requirements.

## Membership

As you are aware memberships from 2020 have been extended to end 2021 at no cost. However, several members did not renew in 2020 because of our closure due to lockdown restrictions. If you are one of these, please renew at the trading hut as soon as possible, or send your £5.00, or £24.00 for 5 years, direct to our bank: Sort code 09-01-51, Account No 19487306, Account Name ESHER MOLESEY GARDEN SOCIETY. Alternatively, please send a cheque, payable to EMGS, to Mrs. Julie Alderman, 58 Speer Road, Thames Ditton KT7 0PW

## Show 2021

It was sad not to be able to have the show last year. I know most of us don't grow to show but the thought of being able show off what we have achieved over the summer somehow gives the season that little extra zest. You look along your row of tomatoes with pride and think – those are worth a show. So, I am happy to say that we are working on holding the flower and vegetable show this year on 14 August. And of course, there is the hotly contested allotment competition.

There may be constraints on how we organize the day and what we can do but at the moment we are planning a show to the usual format.

There are some small changes to the classes. Dried seed heads have been dropped and replaced with *three stems of flower of one variety of shrub (woody perennial)* and there is clarification to the mixed flower class: it is now *one vase of mixed flowers of at least 5 varieties*. The classes for the baking and photography will be published as soon as possible so that you can make a start on your ideas

As growing things seems to have taken off well over the last year, we thought it would be a good idea to have a new **class for children - potato pot challenge** - to give encouragement to the next generation of members. The idea is to grow a potato in a pot with the prizes going to the heaviest total crop and the heaviest single potato. We will have a grand showing event in the afternoon so the young grower can bring along their pot and see it emptied, weighed and exhibited. So that everyone starts from the same point, each entrant will get a genuine depot seed potato and a 3-litre pot. The magic mix of soil and care will be for the young grower to determine and show their skills. Children and grandchildren of members are all eligible. You will be able to collect pots, potatoes and entry form from the depot from Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> April. We can manage a maximum of 20 entries so don't wait. The upper age limit is 12 years.

We are hoping to revive the practice of having a flower stall outside the hall for members and to attract passers by so if you have spare plants or material you are breaking up and repotting can you pot it up so we can sell it at the Show?

It will be so good to get together for the show after the year we have had. I am sure we can make 2021 the best and biggest yet.

## Bus tours for 2021

We are hoping that we can organise a late summer or early Autumn garden bus trip, and that by the time of the next newsletter there will be more definite information to work with. Fingers crossed. We'd love to see you!

### Jolly Good Days Out with Glyn

Local guided days out and walks with Glyn ran successfully in short bursts at the end of last year and will be back from the end of June 2021. For small family or friend groups of 4-6, he's offering trips and guided tours together with local small group walks. Locations, all with plenty of interesting and quirky facts, include Home Park, Portsmouth, sculpture gardens, vineyards and the fascinating Crossness Pumping Station at Abbey Wood. Contact [julia@icelandtraveller.co.uk](mailto:julia@icelandtraveller.co.uk) for more details.

### Horticultural advice on Zoom

During lockdown we've all found ways to adapt and here is news of a free and informative online event offered by local chartered horticulturalist, Valerie Munro. Recent topics include daffodils and orchids always with wide ranging tips and information, and your questions answered. Valerie holds her Zoom Gardens on the first Monday

of each month at 13.00, next ZOOM GARDEN is on Monday April 5 at 13:00. Details of the link and for any other information: [valerie@auntieplanty.com](mailto:valerie@auntieplanty.com) [www.auntieplanty.co.uk](http://www.auntieplanty.co.uk)

## FLOWER OF THE MONTH - DAFFODIL TETE-A-TETE



The Flower of the Month for March – what could it be, but the Daffodil !

Daffodils are meadow and woodland plants; a member of the Amaryllis family, native to Southern Europe/Northern Africa, the centre of diversity being the Iberian peninsular. They became popular in the C16 and were commercially important by the C19. In 2019 the Dutch export bulb trade was valued at 350,000,000 euros and by 2006 Tete a Tete made up 34%.

Tete a Tete was bred by Alec Gray (1895-1986) in Cornwall in the 1940's. He was a qualified fruit grower and managed the Gulval Ministry Experimental Station near Penzance and the Duchy Farms on the Scilly Isles where he became interested in the local daffodil cut flower trade. He started breeding compact, early-flowering bulbs collecting some from trips to Southern Europe. Tete Tete was registered in 1949. Altogether he registered 110 cultivars a number of which, including Tete a Tete, received the RHS Award of Garden Merit.

Later he set up the Trewithian Nursery at Camborne. His collection is the basis of the National Collection now at Broadleigh Nursery near Taunton.

### GARDENING QUIZ

1. Which flower's name comes from the Ancient Greek word for star?
2. Which plant, widespread in Britain, if touched cause's chemical reaction which makes skin hypersensitive to ultraviolet light?
3. What is the common name for Salix Babylonica?
4. Which flower is also the goddess of the rainbow in Greek Mythology?
5. Most species of eucalyptus are native to which country?
6. True or false. Ericaceous plants like acid soil?
7. Who designed the Blue Peter Garden in 1974?
8. Which garden in the Cotswold's is notable for its miles of sculptured hedges?
9. True or false. Tulips were once so valuable in Holland that their bulbs were worth more than gold.
10. What is the national fruit of India, Pakistan and the Philippines?
11. Apples, pears, plums, apricots, and peaches are members of what family of flowering plants?
12. True or false. Daffodil bulbs can be used in place of onions in many recipes?
13. True or false. Garden gnomes are forbidden in The Chelsea Flower Show?
14. What colour is a Welsh poppy?

## TRADING NEWS

We have been lucky to be able to reopen after our usual Christmas break. Thank you to all the customers who have visited. I would also like to thank all the helpers who have worked extremely hard due to the large number of people who have visited us over the last few weeks. Thank you for your support.

There are good stocks of most items and we have recently had a delivery of all composts. We are now offering Peat Free Compost at £5.55 for a 50-litre bag. A number of people have asked for this as more environmentally friendly than some other composts. We now also have stocks of canes and stakes.

The spring planting bulbs are selling very well but we still have a good selection in stock, come and look what we have on offer plus there are still onion, garlic and shallot bulbs available.

Everyone who ordered potatoes has collected them, but we still have some stocks if you forgot to order last year. At £2.20 for a 2kg bag our potatoes are about a third of the price in the garden centers!

Please remember we take both credit and debit cards and there is no minimum purchase necessary or charge for this service.

Don't forget, if there is something that you are looking for and we don't stock it, please let me know and I will try and obtain it for you. We have got several special items for customers recently, so just ask. We want to stock items that you want.

**New, and old, members may like to be reminded the EMGS Trading Depot is on the Beauchamp Road Allotment Site (entrance between 104 and 106 Beauchamp Road). It is open every Sunday from February till November from 9.00 am until 11.00 am. We will be also opening on Wednesday evenings from 7.00pm to 8.00pm from Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April until Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.**

A reminder that parking is limited when the depot is open, so please only bring your vehicle on site if you are purchasing anything heavy. Also please remember that there is a site speed limit of 5 mph for obvious reasons.

## PLUG PLANT PRICES

Petunias	Crazytime	Black Mamba	65p
	Tumbelina	Bella	65p
	Tumbelina	Rosy Ripple	65p
	Surfinia	Heavenly Blue	65p
Fuchsias	Upright	Mini Rose	50p
	Upright	Winston Churchill	55p
	Hardy	Snowcap	55p
	Basket/Trailing	Hidcote Beauty	55p
	Basket/Trailing	Blue Eyes	55p
Begonia	Semperlorens	Dark Rose	9 for £1.50
Geraniums	Red, Orange, White, Pink or Rose		25p each

## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Aster
2. Giant hogweed
3. Weeping Willow
4. Iris
5. Australia
6. True
7. Percy Thrower
8. Hidcote
9. True
10. Mango
11. Rose (Rosaceae)
12. False
13. True
14. Yellow