

GLYNNEATH & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

www.glynneathgardeningclub.com



Members' newsletter

April 2014

Hello everyone

For the past four years Isobel and I have been producing this quarterly newsletter, with the help of some other members who have written articles for us. More recently, Isobel has also been acting as Programme Secretary to obtain the speakers for our meetings. We have also very much enjoyed having our garden party in Isobel and Andrew's garden for the past three summers. Due to a family bereavement this year, Isobel is no longer able to continue her work with the committee. We are all very grateful for her hard work, and look forward to seeing her back at the meetings very soon.

John Laker has agreed to arrange the speakers for the coming months, and Sue Stevens will be doing the newsletter with me. I am looking forward to working with both of them very much, and hope that you will continue to enjoy the newsletters. If you have any ideas for future editions or an article you would like to write for us, then we would be delighted to hear from you.

Margaret

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY: APRIL-AUGUST

Change of plan!

When we picked the dates for the forthcoming trips we did not realise that the first one would have fallen on Easter Saturday, so it has been changed to **Saturday 10th May**.

Apologies for any confusion.

If you have any queries about any of the trips, Diane's telephone number is 01639 721034.

Friday 25 th April – 1 pm	Instead of meeting in the Training Centre we have been invited down to Rheola to meet Chris Day and see the recently restored Gardener's Cottage and the progress on the garden and greenhouses. Drive up and park near the walled garden. You can pay for the trip to Picton if you have not already done so.
Saturday 10 th May	TRIP TO PICTON CASTLE & GARDENS Nr Haverfordwest. More details on the following page.
Friday 23 rd May – 1 pm In the Training Centre	MARY WILLIAMS, Crime Reduction Adviser, S Wales Police Scams and Rogue Traders – how to avoid them and what to do when you've been 'had' Your chance to pay for the trip to Hampton Court in June.
Saturday 21 st June	TRIP TO HAMPTON COURT CASTLE & GARDENS, nr Hereford. More details on page 2.
Friday 25 th July – 1 pm In the Training Centre	LORRAINE RUDD – more details later. Followed by a plant swap – bring what you have spare, and take home something new. You can pay for the trip to Hestercombe if you have not already done so.
Saturday 9 th August	TRIP TO HESTERCOMBE HOUSE & GARDENS, details overleaf.
Friday 29 th August – 1 pm In the Training Centre.	JULIET HODGEKISS, will be coming to tell us about her work as Head Gardener at St Fagan's.

Our website address is: www.glynneathgardeningclub.com

TRIPS FOR 2014

As you know, we received several suggestions for the trips this year, and decided the fairest way to decide would be to vote for the four that you would like best. The 4 chosen are:

PICTON CASTLE & GARDENS



**Saturday
10th May**

**PLEASE
NOTE NEW
DATE**

The castle is situated close to the Cleddau estuary, comprising 40 acres of the most beautiful woodland gardens and grounds in West Wales.

There is an art gallery; also a shop with a wide selection of locally produced crafts, gifts and plants.

Maria's courtyard restaurant at the castle is the ideal place for lunchtime or afternoon teas.

**The cost of the trip will be £16.00
to include coach and entrance to the gardens.**

We will be leaving Glynneath at 9 am.

HAMPTON COURT, Nr HEREFORD



**Saturday
21st June**

Hampton Court Castle & Gardens are situated in the beautiful Herefordshire countryside. The castle dates back to 1427 and has 12 acres of gardens that have been transformed over the last 10 years. There's so much to see here.

Don't forget to look at the oldest grape vine in the UK (it's huge!) also check out the maze. A visit under the tunnel is a must and the waterfall is really lovely.

Maybe time then for some refreshments in the impressive café.

**The trip will cost £16.00
This includes coach and entrance fee.**

HESTERCOMBE HOUSE & GARDENS near Taunton, Somerset.



**Saturday
9th
August**

Hestercombe House and Gardens are set in 50 acres of lakes, temples, cascades, tranquil woodland walks, and formal terraces with vivid colours, and views that take your breath away.

There is a warm and welcoming Stables Restaurant and Coffee shop and also the Gift Shop is full of beautiful things for the home and garden. The Garden Centre is well stocked with a wide variety of plants.

**The cost of the trip will be confirmed later,
to include coach and entrance fee**

RHS AUTUMN SHOW Three Counties Showground, MALVERN



**Saturday
27th
September**

Always a firm favourite, with loads to see and do, plenty of stalls and places to eat.

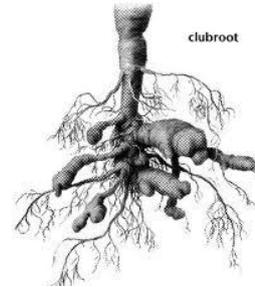
Last year members of the Gardeners World team were there, and Mary Berry was also in attendance.

More information on this year's Show can be obtained soon from the website:
www.rhs.org.uk



BRASSICAS & CLUBROOT

Bill Crew



MY ALLOTMENT

If clubroot was a category in our Show then I could win first, second and third prizes, hands down!

Seven years ago my allotment was a chicken run; that is until a fox changed things. Over many years garden waste, including brassicas affected with clubroot, was thrown over the fence for the chickens. Hence when the chicken run was converted to an allotment plot, I inherited a “minefield” of clubroot.

WHAT ARE BRASSICAS?

Brassicas are the common greens, such as cabbage, cauliflower, sprouts, kale etc.

WHAT IS CLUBROOT?

Clubroot is a fungal infection of the roots of brassicas, leading to swollen and distorted roots and stunted growth with wilting and yellowing of the leaves.

Clubroot exists as spores in the soil and can survive for more than 20 years, waiting for a suitable plant to infect. There is no known chemical cure.

CLUBROOT RESISTANT VARIETIES OF BRASSICAS

In recent years, plant scientists have developed some clubroot resistant brassicas. These include:

Autumn/winter cabbage -	Kilton, Kilaxy
Cauliflower -	Clapton
Sprout -	Crispus.

These varieties are excellent and have given clubroot-free results in my minefield.

HOW TO GROW NON-RESISTANT CLUBROOT VARIETIES

The vast majority of brassicas are not resistant to clubroot. Although clubroot cannot be eliminated completely it can be controlled to the extent that useable brassicas can be grown, even in “contaminated” soil.

Clubroot thrives in damp, acidic conditions, so these are to be avoided.

METHOD

1. Sow seeds in new (unused) multipurpose compost, in small plug trays
2. When seedlings are about 1 inch (2.5 cm) transfer to 2 inch pots using new compost.
3. When the roots fill the 2 inch pots, transfer to 5 inch pots, using new compost.
4. Grow on until the roots fill the 5 inch pots.
5. Plant out into the final well-drained bed as follows: Dig a hole big enough to take the plant, dust it with lime and add some “groworganic” or “blood, fish & bone” fertiliser.
6. Firmly bed in the plant.

RESULTS

Although some clubroot was still present, early growth in clubroot-free multipurpose compost, was enough to produce excellent results with varieties such as Hispi, Greyhound, Minicole and Primo on my “contaminated” allotment.

In the January issue, Bill Crew suggested we try growing some new varieties of vegetables for the New Year, as well as the old tried and tested ones. How are you getting on? We would love to hear from you – will you continue to try something new, or will you be returning to the old favourites?

We all know that fruit and vegetables are good for us – are you getting your five a day? This month, Margot has let us have some interesting ideas for cooking vegetables, which sound delicious.

NEW WAYS WITH VEGETABLES

Margot Hollyer

BRUSSEL SPROUTS

Slice them finely in food processor, add zest of lemon and salt and pepper.

Put a knob of butter in pan and add the mixture -cook very quickly keeping them still crunchy.

Sprinkle with lemon juice and add a spoonful of cream. Serve hot.

KALE

Finely chop the kale, rinse and put it, still dripping wet, into a hot pan with a little butter or oil - *no more water needed.*

Quickly turn leaves over until bright green, add a sprinkle of chilli powder or cayenne pepper, some coarse salt and freshly cracked black pepper, top with yoghurt.

CARROTS

Wash and finely chop carrots in processor; put in a pan with small knob of butter, half an orange zested and squeezed, coarse salt and black pepper,

Cook quickly until still crunchy, add a generous squeeze of maple syrup and a pinch of cinnamon.

Some curls of courgette added just before serving make a colourful dish.

SAVOY CABBAGE.

Finely slice cabbage, a white onion and a green apple.

Put into pan with golden caster sugar (about a tablespoon of sugar just to balance the vinegar)

Add salt, pepper, a pinch of cloves, knob of butter, and a dash of white wine vinegar.

Cook slowly, covered until done. Should be soft but not over-cooked.

The same can be done with **red cabbage** using red onion, red apple, cider vinegar and brown sugar.

IMPULSE BUYING

Margaret Walters

Revive, our re-cycling shop was having a busy morning when a certain lady from Gardening Club came in. While managing to chat amidst the hustle and bustle about the latest speaker and the forthcoming trips, her eyes were scanning the shelves. And what did she see but a set of storage jars decorated with culinary fruits, complete with botanical names. After just a *little* hesitation, they were bought, for the princely sum of £2.

Now they grace a gardener's kitchen. We may have more, you never know. Call and see. As we say "Stock changes daily".

Was that an impulse buy or pressure selling?

I didn't even know I needed some storage jars!

It was even suggested that if I learn the Latin names I would stand a better chance of winning the next quiz!

Margaret C

A TASTE OF SPRING

Growing up in a small village in Cornwall, I was used to everyone growing their own vegetables and you looked forward to everything in season – the first pulling of rhubarb, newly dug potatoes, the first picking of peas, and best of all, the runner beans.

We also had about 200 hens, which helped to fill up part of the garden; so plenty of fresh eggs too, and baby chicks in the springtime.

Easter was the traditional time to pull the first pink sticks of rhubarb for a tart or crumble. Everyone has a favourite recipe for that, but have you tried adding a small amount of chopped stem ginger to the fruit? It seems to bring out the taste of the rhubarb beautifully.

If you have any favourite recipes you would like to share, please let us have them, and we can include them in future editions of the newsletter.

My email address is
margaretjcurtis@btinternet.com

SPRING IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Saturday 1st March was a DRY day, the first for a long, long time. At 9.30 am Sue and David picked me up and we went down to the National Botanic Garden to celebrate St David's Day. Going up the main path, it was great to see the drifts of snowdrops under the trees, and the daffodils, crocuses and hellebores all doing their best to provide some colour.



Although it has been so wet this winter, nothing seems to have suffered, and all the new growth is coming through in the herbaceous borders. The hemerocallis (day lilies) are really sprouting alongside the lake and should be a picture later on.

It was a lovely atmosphere at the Garden with the little ones in their Welsh costumes, a choir singing in the Great Glasshouse, and the dancers Fiddlebox performing in the courtyard.



In the Pharmacy there was an outstanding display of tapestries, entitled **PATCHWORK MEADOW**.

The squares have been made by people and organisations from all over the country. The artists range from a 4 year old to some over 90, and their "patches" depicted a huge range of wild flowers.

It was incredible the work that had gone in to them, and impossible to choose the one you liked best.



To see more of the tapestries, the website is www.plantlife.org.uk
You will find them under Patchwork Meadow.

The Garden has many activities throughout the year, and if you want to know what is going on they will send you their free newsletter. The website is www.gardenofwales.org.uk and if you go to the Home page you can sign up for e-news by inserting your name and email address.

*Margaret,
3rd March.*

SOUND AS A POUND

DISCOUNT STORE,
PET & GARDEN
SUPPLIES
BEDDING PLANTS FOR
SPRING

Stephanie Williams
38 High Street,
Glynneath

Tel: 01639 722444

THE LAMB & FLAG GLYNNEATH

Tel: 01639 721995

Weekly food offers:
OAP Menu
Tuesday & Thursday
12 – 3 pm

Carvery - £7.50
Wednesday & Sunday
12 – 5 pm

NELSON'S COACHES

Tel: 01639 720308

We do a wide variety of day
trips, so if you fancy
shopping,

A trip to the seaside
or going to Cardiff
to see a show

There is a trip you will
enjoy.

GLYNNEATH ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

The shop carries a wide range
of garden products, and is open
Wednesdays 2 - 3 pm
Saturdays 10 – 11 am

It is situated just inside the
allotment gates in Llewellyn St.
You do not need to be a plot
holder – it is open to anyone.

ROY'S FRUIT & VEG 83A HIGH STREET GLYNNEATH

Tel: 07773 771516

As well as fruit & veg,
We stock bedding plants,
Hanging baskets,
Compost and fertiliser.

These advertisements help
towards the cost of printing
this newsletter in colour.

We can all help the
community by shopping
locally and supporting our
local businesses.

No-one likes to see empty
shops, so as the saying goes
– “Use it or lose it”

ngs gardens open
for charity

If you are looking for a garden to visit, you can get full
details from the NGS website of gardens anywhere in the
country:

www.ngs.org.uk

You can order the Yellow Book 2014, which has listings
of thousands of gardens open for visiting.

Or if you go to “Garden Search” and put in your postcode
you can find what's open in your local area.

A couple of years ago Isobel and I went to the open
gardens in Talybont on Usk. There were three gardens
in the village to see that day, within walking distance of
one another. Seeing the gardens and having afternoon
tea in the Usk Hotel made for a very pleasant afternoon
indeed.

The owners of the gardens open under the scheme
provide tea and home made cakes, and often have
plants for sale. They raise thousands for their favourite
charities each year.

EASTER PAST

Back in the days when it was OK to pick wild flowers,
my mother and I used to collect primroses on Good
Friday, in order to decorate the village church for
Easter.



The service in the
evening was very sombre
– with no flowers and a
bare altar.
But on Easter Sunday the
church was transformed,
with a riot of spring
flowers.

We look forward to seeing you at the meetings
and on the trips

A VERY HAPPY EASTER TO YOU ALL



from Margaret & Sue

