

# MEOPHAM GARDEN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2001

## Christmas Social

Our next meeting on Monday 10th December will be the occasion of our Christmas Supper. The meeting starts an hour earlier than normal, at 7.00 p.m. The meal is due to start at 7.30 p.m. Mr Paul Clarke, well known for his interesting talks, will furnish our after dinner entertainment.

Once again local caterers will provide the meal. Tickets, priced at £14 each, are available from Bill Roberts and should be purchased before the end of November. Please let him know if you prefer the vegetarian alternative to the main dish and which of the desserts you require. Also please let him know who you would like to sit with. Friends and family are welcome to join us. Anyone who needs transport for the occasion should contact a member of the committee.

## Recent Events

13<sup>th</sup> August            Mr B. Bossom            The World of Roses in Colour

Mr B.Bossom has bred many new roses and so was able to speak at great length about the processes involved in getting a new rose introduced.

10<sup>th</sup> September        Mrs P Jeffrey            Herbs for Health

Herbs have been used for thousands of years to cure our ills whether taken internally as a 'tea' or applied externally as poultices. Some herbs such as camomile and lavender can be tied under the hot tap whilst running a bath to provide a calming or relaxing bath. Though Mrs Jeffrey suggested that you had somebody to clean the bath for you afterwards! Basil, an Indian native, enjoys high heat and humidity and has been described as the 'antidote to everything which isn't wholesome'. As with any medicines it is important to seek medical advice before taking because some herbs, such as comfrey, may have side effects. A very interesting and well presented talk.

8<sup>th</sup> October            Mr N. Gossune            Gardening in Miniature with sinks and troughs

A well-organised and informative talk that spanned all aspects of preparing and using natural and fabricated containers for growing a wide range of small plants including alpines, primulas, small bulbs, hebes and miniature trees. Mr Gossune's suggestion to use polystyrene boxes as foundations for lightweight hypertufa troughs was new to many members.

## Autumn Show

Once again we enjoyed a very successful show with a good display of material and 220 entries in the 46 classes. The plant stall was popular for its fresh produce, the refreshments were a great attraction and the raffle well-supplied with donated prizes.

The Prizes were presented by our Vice-Chairman, Mr David Mansfield

<b>Mr Douglas Nicholson</b>	<b>The Vegetable Society Certificate and Medal (best vegetable)</b>
<b>Mrs Winifred Hughes</b>	<b>Hill Cup (best exhibit in the floral art section)</b>
<b>Mr David Mansfield</b>	<b>The Stevens Cup (best exhibit in flowers section)</b>
<b>Mrs Barbara Macknish</b>	<b>Townsend Vase (most firsts in domestic classes)</b>
<b>Mr Douglas Nicholson</b>	<b>Championship Cup (most firsts in all classes ex. domestic)</b>
<b>Mr Douglas Nicholson</b>	<b>Garden News Shield (most points for vegetables)</b>
<b>Mrs Claire Williams</b>	<b>Coronation Cup (most points in domestic class)</b>
<b>Mrs Liz Jardine</b>	<b>Everard Bowl (most successful new exhibitor)</b>
<b>Garden News Top Tray awards</b>	<b>Gold - Mr Dennis Tobin, Silver - Mr Douglas Nicholson</b>

## Forthcoming Events

10 December Christmas Supper followed by a talk by Paul Clarke

14 January Annual General Meeting

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Monday December 10<sup>th</sup> from 7pm

### Menu

Leek, potato and cheese soup

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Roast Turkey with all the trimmings

OR

3 cheese crepes with tomato, basil & rosemary sauce (V)

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Sticky toffee pudding & walnut sauce

OR

Mango mousse

OR

Meringue stuffed with mincemeat and Baileys

OR

Cheese and biscuits

Tea or Coffee

£14/head

Please state choice of menu and seating preference when purchasing tickets

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## Historical Snippet

One of the most unusual Italian gardens of Kent must be that of Hever Castle. William Astor acquired the castle in 1903 and between 1904 and 1908 he created a unique Italian garden which contains a great many pieces of statuary and sculpture collected in Italy by Astor when he was American Minister there. The garden was designed by Frank L. Pearson and includes a Pompeian walk packed so full of sculpture as to be overwhelming. The opposite wall has an arched colonnade and water from springs trickling over plants. This was reputedly copied from the Avenue of the Hundred Fountains at the Villa d'Este. The Pompeian walk ends at a lakeside with a theatre and classical loggia flanked by columned screens. However, unlike most gardens in the Italian style, Hever lacks a vista or even a view from the house.

Similar projects on a smaller scale were carried out throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At Leeds Castle the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape park with lakes and cascades has been extended during the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by a topiary maze with, at the centre, an underground grotto. As recently as 1999 the Italian style Lady Baillie Garden was opened. Even today some of the small modern gardens are still trying to retain some of the old ideas. Accessories such as pergolas, urns and gazebos are as common today as they were nearly five hundred years ago. There is less controversy today and more diversity.

All gardens in England have changed with time, with various styles being introduced by different people, often as an attack on the designs of others. However, there was never a sharp break from one style to another. When looking at any garden history it is important to look at the transition. It is also obvious that an Italian garden, set in a different climate and with different scenery, could not be transposed to the English countryside. It is important to note that the gardens of England were never copies of their Italian counterparts but were merely influenced by them. The Italian style could incorporate other elements and the Kentish gardens took only those Italian elements that would fit into the specific nature of the county. Italian gardens were works of art and were all about design and taste. This was always their appeal.

(Conclusion. Adapted from an essay by Ann Kneif)

### Members' Ads

**For Sale** 18" Electric lawn scarifier. As new condition. Little used. £25.  
D Nicholson

**For Sale** 4 Aluminium and glass coldframe covers. 3 feet x 4 feet. (Frames can be constructed from wood, brick or by trenching a soil patch.) £4 each.

*(Please give your contributions for the next edition of the newsletter to a committee member by the end of January)*

## Poetry Corner

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being  
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,  
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,  
Pestilence-stricken multitudes!—O thou  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed  
The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow  
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill  
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)  
With living hues and odours plain and hill—  
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere—  
Destroyer and Preserver—hear, O hear!

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,  
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,  
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,  
Angels of rain and lightning! they are spread  
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,  
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head  
Of some fierce Mænad, ev'n from the dim verge  
Of the horizon to the zenith's height—  
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge  
Of the dying year, to which this closing night  
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,  
Vaulted with all thy congregated might  
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere  
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst:—O hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams  
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,  
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,  
Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,  
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,  
All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers  
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou  
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers  
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below  
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear  
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know  
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear  
And tremble and despoil themselves:—O hear!

Ode to the West Wind (Verses 1-3) by P.B. Shelley