



Blossom at East Malling Research Centre

Photo: Jo Latimer

Spring 2014

July 14th 2014

Floral Arranging Practical and Mini Show

Prior to our July meeting, members will be asked to sign-up to take part in the floral arranging practical which will also be related to a class in the Autumn Show. Participants will need to bring secateurs but all other materials will be provided for a small charge to cover the cost.

There will also be a small show with the winners voted for by those present. The classes are as follows:

1. A rose selected for fragrance
2. A flowering pot plant (pot no larger than 20cm (8"))
3. A vase of garden flowers (Association vases will be provided)

There is no charge for members to attend but for £2 non-members will also be welcome to come along and take part. There is no need to pre-book your entries, just bring them along on the evening and exhibit.

For information relating to the Meopham Garden Association go to our website at

www.meophamgardeners.co.uk

Forthcoming Association Meetings & Other Events

May 12th	Blue for All Seasons	Julia Jarman
June 9th	Evening Garden Visit	Broadview Gardens, Hadlow College
July 11th	Coach Trip to RHS Hyde Hall and The Beth Chatto Gardens	

The cost of the outing is £23/person which includes entrance to the gardens. The coach will leave Norwood Lane at 8:30am and Meadfield Road (opposite Meopham School) at 8:40am. Please let Hazel know where you wish to join the coach.

July 14th	Floral Arranging Practical and Mini-Show (details on front page)	
August 11th	The Arts and Crafts Movement and its Gardens	Stephen Harmer

Recent Events

February 10th Member's Forum & Seed Swap

Our year began with a lively Member's Forum and the first opportunity to see what was available in the seed swap.

February 16th Snowdrops & Hellebores at Meadow View, Hodsall Street

Once again Barbara Macknish opened her garden to the public to view her magnificent snowdrops and hellebores which looked stunning in the Spring-like sunshine. The opening and subsequent sales of snowdrops has raised over £700 for the Eleanor Foundation.

March 10th Coast to Coast – Sharon Sperling A Tale of Two North American Gardens

Our Show Secretary, Sharon Sperling told us about two of her favourite gardens in North America; a botanical garden she had visited in Alaska as well as her own garden in the Catskill Mountains in New York state. She showed us some fantastic photographs and told us about some of the regulations they need to abide by because bears visit their garden which is within the park boundary. She sings to the bears when out in her garden in the hope that they will leave them alone!

March 22nd Spring Show

After the dreadful winter we've endured we wondered how we had logged so many entries on Thursday evening. We had excellent help on Friday evening and everything was set up well.

Show morning dawned dry and fine. By 11 o'clock the Village Hall was filling up with colour and scent – oh and frayed nerves. This year 245 entries were promised on Thursday. 22 of our members entered with 4 of them entering over 20 exhibits each. There was a real tussle between Barbara, Janet and Lorraine for the cups this year, with Barbara Macknish coming out on top with the Hasler Vase and Harvel Spring Challenge Cup. Lorraine Davies won the Melliker Cup and Janet Oxford received the Diploma for Best Bloom in Show. We displayed 11 pots of 'Jon Bos' Hyacinths in Class 1 with Jo Armstrong proving to be the winner and receiving the Chairman's Cup. The Domestic classes were well supported with Claire Williams earning the Meryl Burgess Salver this year. Gail King won the Oldham Goblet for her 'Foliage Arrangement' in the Floral Art Classes.

The Junior classes were both entered this year, with one entry in the 11 – 16 year old category. Kate Duggan made some delicious Brownies which received a first prize. The 10 years and under class, a drawing of a snowdrop, was well supported by entries from

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Meopham Garden Association

Meopham Community Academy, member's grandchildren and 1st Meopham Rainbow Unit. There were 15 entries in all, with Annabelle Church winning, Mia Brodie coming second and Anna Abbonizio-Parry claiming third.

Many villagers attended the afternoon to take part in the raffle and enjoy tea with homemade cakes.

Sharon Sperling (Show Secretary)

April 14th Keeping Chickens as a Hobby

Amelia Revel

Amelia gave a super talk and we were all enthralled and captivated by the three chickens who accompanied her.

Weather Statistics 2013 – 2014

During the wet winter (beginning December 2013 – end February 2014) we recorded a total 539.5mm (21.2") of rain, which is almost as much as we recorded during the whole of 2010 (554mm, 21.8").

On the 2nd May this year we surpassed the rainfall total for the whole of 2011 (470.5mm 18.5"). The garden appears, generally, to have responded well to the increased moisture:



Photos 2014: Mike Hughes

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In the News

Bees: Pesticide Pushers Spin Bee Crisis to Protect Profits

As bee collapse threatens global food supply, report claims chemical industry is employing Big Tobacco-style PR blitz to deflect blame and have created their own greenwashed "save the bees" campaigns. Monsanto has decided to buy out one of the major international firms devoted to studying and protecting bees.

<http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2014/04/28-6>

http://www.naturalnews.com/035688_Monsanto_honey_bees_colony_collapse.html

5 Reasons Monsanto's 'Science' Doesn't Add Up

Simply put, 'sound science' always supports the position of industry over people, corporate profit over food safety, the environment and public health.

<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2014/03/02-0>

GM

Corporate-funded Science Media Centre has released a biased pro-GM report, commissioned by David Cameron, with attacks on anti-GM research. Since none of the authors is independent of GMO industry funding, it should be treated as a sales pitch. Unfortunately its conclusions and analysis went unchallenged in most of the coverage in the media.

<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2014/04/29-0>

<http://www.prwatch.org/news/2014/04/12442/science-media-centre-spins-pro-gmo-line>

The French government has banned any strain of GM maize from being grown in its soil.

<http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2014/05/05-4>

A BBC program (17/02/2014) headlined "Genetically modifying potatoes produces *substantially higher yields*" as a result of resisting potato blight. However, no mention was made of conventionally bred Sarpo varieties, many of which are also highly resistant to potato blight.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01sdh1z>

Glyphosate

The *International Journal of Toxicology* in January revealed that glyphosate-based formulations like Roundup pose a threat to human health through cytotoxicity and oxidative effects. Such formulations were also found to be lethal to human liver cells.

http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/02/04/roundup-glyphosate-toxicity.aspx?e_cid=20140204Z1_DNL_art_1&utm_source=dnl&utm_medium=email&utm_content=art1&utm_campaign=20140204Z1&et_cid=DM38969&et rid=418065896

Silencing the Scientist: Tyrone Hayes on Being Targeted by Herbicide Firm Syngenta

Hayes studied a Syngenta product, atrazine, a pesticide which is already banned by the European Union, but is applied to more than half the corn crops in the United States and widely used on golf courses and Christmas tree farms. When Hayes found results Syngenta did not expect — that atrazine causes sexual abnormalities in frogs, and could cause the same problems for humans — it refused to allow him to publish his findings and tried to smear and discredit him.

<http://www.commondreams.org/video/2014/02/21-0>

Gardening Which? Reports

(April 2014) Some weed killers (eg aminopyralid) survive composting and may be present in some government-funded recycled composts. It advises that such composts can be tested with broad bean seeds.

(May 2014) The European Parliament has voted against the introduction of new plant registration that would have cost about £500 per plant - more than many plant breeders could afford.

TTIP (The far-reaching EU-US Trade Pact that is being negotiated in secret)

"All over the world, communities and nations are developing new ways to rebuild local economies. In the U.S. and Europe, a growing number of people are taking a look at the processed foods at the supermarket and opting instead for healthier choices: foods that are local, in season and grown with fewer pesticides. In emerging economies like Brazil, policies favour local farmers growing sustainable foods for school lunch programs and in doing so have lowered hunger rates dramatically. Perhaps most importantly, these policies haven't solely focused on individual consumer choices. People are using their rights as citizens to make sure governments from local to national support localization. Now, an unprecedented new proposal in the U.S.-EU trade agreement seeks to target localization, particularly in emerging economies around the world."

<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2014/05/05-6>

<http://www.iatp.org/documents/trading-away-localization-in-ttip>

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