



Taken at Hyde Hall July 2014

Photo: Jo Latimer

Summer 2015

Autumn Show 19th September 2015

Calling all members to enter. If you have never exhibited before, just have a go. Yours may be the best exhibit on the day. Make sure you follow precisely the 2015 schedule. Entry details should be phoned through to our Show Secretary Sharon Sperling between 6 and 9pm on the Thursday prior to the show. She will also be accepting e-mail entries to shows@meophamgardeners.co.uk. The entry form is available from the Shows part of the website. Please follow the instructions there and make sure they are received before 6pm on the Thursday. The fee is 10p for each entry.

Exhibits may be staged on the Friday evening between 8.30 and 9pm and between 10am and 12:45pm on the day of the show. The doors open at 3pm and admission to the show is free. Take the opportunity to buy plants, raffle tickets, tea and a slice of cake before the prize giving at about 4:15pm.

NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED

If you enter something in the show, please help clear up afterwards and be sure to take your own entries home. Buckets and black sacks will be provided to help with the operation. Please do not expect others to clear up for you.

For information relating to the Meopham Garden Association go to our website at
www.meophamgardeners.co.uk



Forthcoming Association Meetings & Other Events

September 11th Coach Outing to Bressingham Steam & Gardens, Norfolk

The cost of the outing including coach and entrance fee is £24. The coach will pick up at Hodsall Street at 8am, Meopham Senior School at 8:05am and Norwood Lane at 8:10am. Please let Hazel know where you will be joining the coach.

September 14th The Tradescant Family

John Trethewey

September 19th Autumn Show

Doors open at 3pm

October 12th Harvest Supper

7 for 7:30pm

This will be free to members and a guest. You will need to bring your own crockery, cutlery and glasses. More details will be given closer to the time.

October 16th Inter-Club Quiz Night hosted by Hartley Garden Society

November 9th 60 Years in Horticulture

Jim Buttress

Recent Events

May 11th Growing Vegetables in Containers

Vanessa Jones

We welcomed Vanessa Jones back for a return visit. This time she spoke about the many ways that some vegetables can be successfully grown in containers. She also showed examples of suitable containers.

June 8th Evening Visit to Rushcutters in Shorne

It was a dry but chilly evening for our visit to the lovely garden of Hilary Moore in Shorne. The garden was full of colour and interesting plants. Unusually it has a small stream running through it which enables Hilary to grow some of the moisture loving plants that many of us cannot.



July 13th Mini-Show and Bressingham

Unfortunately our speaker was unable to come so Sharon and Gail stepped in at the last minute to tell us about Bressingham and show a short video about the gardens.

The mini-show was well supported and the winners as voted for by those present were as follows:

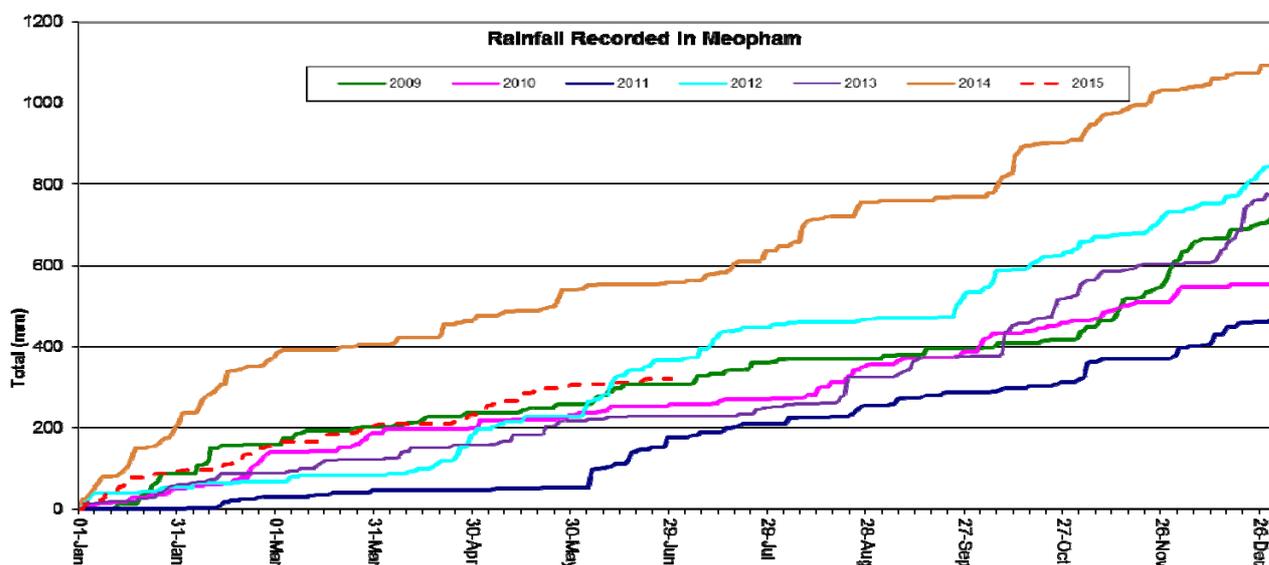
Rose for fragrance	Janet Oxford
Flowering pot plant	Barbara Macknish
Vase of Garden Flowers	Marion Johnson

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Rainfall

This graph shows the cumulative rainfall from January 1st to June 30th 2015 along with the annual rainfall for the 6 previous years. The total rainfall up until the end of June was 320.5mm or 12.6". During the meteorological Winter (Dec - Feb) 214mm were recorded and we had 150mm this Spring (Mar-May).



The data below is from the Met Office statistics and the averaging period referred to is the 30 years from 1981–2010.

It was a wet, windy but mild start to the year. Storms between the 8th and 10th January brought 100mph gusts to Scotland. Stornoway Airport recorded 113mph, one of the highest gust speeds recorded at a low-level UK station in recent years. The second half of the month was more settled but cold with the lowest temperatures of the winter or during the whole of last winter. There were some sharp frosts and on the 23rd Upper Lambourn (Berkshire) recorded -8.8°C. February began cold and dry with fog affecting parts of south-east on the 10th. The second half of February saw some heavy rain and strong winds, especially in Scotland. Mean temperatures were just below average and it was wetter than normal in Kent although overall sunshine levels were well above average.

March started and ended unsettled with rain and strong winds. After a brief settled spell mid-month, widespread gales at the end caused some localised damage and disruption to rail services. Overall though the south-east was drier and sunnier than average. April began unsettled but warm still conditions on the 9th and 10th lead to very poor air quality with advice given to avoid strenuous outdoor activity due to high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide. Mid-month was mainly dry and sunny with 25.6°C recorded at Faversham on the 15th. However, the final six days were unsettled and cold with some sharp frosts. The temperatures for March and April were just above average. It was provisionally the sunniest April in a series from 1929 with less than half the average rainfall for most areas. This May was provisionally the coldest since 1996 although Faversham recorded 23.8°C on the 11th. It was also the fourth substantially wetter than average May in the last five years. Sunshine was slightly below normal in many areas. June began wet with unseasonably strong winds and continued rather cool but dry and bright. It was the sixth month out of the last seven to be sunnier than average for the UK. A developing heatwave saw Heathrow record 32.5°C on the 30th with July 1st being the hottest July day on record.



In The News

Unusually the journal Nature has broken ranks and highlighted that far from being essential in “feeding the world” – and especially the drought prone areas such as Africa – genetic engineering is less useful than conventional breeding. Reports show that traditional breeding techniques are years ahead in developing crops to withstand drought and poor soils. Since its launch in 2010, the Improved Maize for African Soils Project (IMAS) has developed 21 conventionally bred varieties which have increased yields by up to 1 tonne per hectare. In contrast, the project’s researchers say that they are at least 10 years away from developing a comparable GM variety.

In another programme - The Drought Tolerant Maize for Africa project - 153 new, conventionally bred varieties have improved yields in 13 countries. It is estimated that by 2016 the extra yields from these conventionally bred, drought-tolerant maize varieties could help reduce the number of people living in poverty in these 13 countries by up to 9%.

<http://www.gmeducation.org/feeding-the-world/p217989-resisting-drought:-conventional-plant-breeding-outperforms-genetic-engineering.html>

Vandana Shiva argues that biodiverse ecological agriculture in women's hands is a solution not just to the malnutrition crisis, but also the climate crisis. Industrial agriculture grows commodities for profits of the agrichemical (now also Biotech) and agribusiness corporations. Only 10 percent of the annual GMO corn and soya crop goes to feed people. The rest goes for animal feed and biofuel. This is clearly not a food system that feeds the world. By way of contrast, indigenous biodiverse varieties of food grown by women provide far more nutrition than the commodities produced by industrial agriculture.

[*Women and Biodiversity Feed the World, Not Corporations and GMOs*](#)

The Indian government has sold out to Monsanto and Agribusiness that have benefitted from handouts, tax concessions and land grants all at the expense of small-scale farmers who produce all the food that is needed in the sub-continent. A parallel is drawn between the current situation in India and the destruction of Mexican farming communities when the North American Free Trade Area came into force.

[*Hypnotic Trance in Delhi: Monsanto, GMOs and the Looting of India's Agriculture*](#)

A strain of genetically modified wheat developed in the UK has failed to repel pests as intended in field trials. Scientists had wanted to engineer a variety with an odour that deterred aphids, nicknamed "whiffy wheat". While it worked in the lab, out in the field, the wheat was still attacked by the pests.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-33262885>

Oilseed rape flourishes without bee-killing chemicals. The first harvest results of winter oilseed rape planted without neonicotinoid seed treatments have come in, and farmers are experiencing a better than usual crop – yields are higher than the 10 year average.

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/>

US House of Representatives Agricultural Committee voted against introducing mandatory labeling of GM food and thus pre-empted the rights of states and other communities to do so. Subsequently the House passed the bill against the wishes of some 90% of Americans. (One can speculate how such legislation would be handled by the "harmonizing" of regulation envisaged as part of the TTIP negotiations.)

[*House Ag Committee Says 'No' to GMO Labeling, What's Next?*](#)

[*'Corporate Influence Has Won': House Passes Anti-GMO Labeling Bill*](#)

Genetically modified diamond back moths have been bred in order to reduce the level of serious pest damage caused to cabbages, kale and broccoli. Males with a “self-limiting” gene produce female offspring that do not survive long enough to have their own offspring and can reduce greenhouse populations within eight weeks. Follow-up studies in the US will include field cage tests followed by small-scale field releases.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/scientists-breed-genetically-modified-moths-to-curb-global-pest-problem-costing-farmers-billions-of-dollars-10395257.html>

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