

AHS Newsletter No. 116 August 2022

Founded 1885

<https://www.abingdon-hort-soc.org.uk>

Clubs and Societies Day 2022 Linda Berry

The 2nd June saw a warm and sunny day for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations clubs and societies day held on Rye Meadow. Members of the committee helped erect and then man a stand and we saw a great deal of interest with a couple of new members signing up. Peter Girling's 25-year-old Rebutia with its bright orange flowers was our star attraction.



Mottisfont Abbey and Gardens. 7th July 2022 Robin Carter

This was my first effort at organising a trip which I found rather daunting. Many thanks to Angela Hughes for being my mentor and most helpful guide.

We had 32 members and 3 guests on our trip to Mottisfont. Everyone said they enjoyed the day the weather helped by being warm and eventually sunny. All our participants arrived at the pickup up points before time which helped me as we started off a little early. One thing to note if you go on any outings please get on at the pick up point you gave me. Otherwise we could be waiting for you or go flying past. The journey took just over an hour and we all arrived relaxed thanks to our driver Dave.

Mottisfont is well worth a visit with an interesting house and part abbey and extensive grounds to wander around. The huge rose garden was past its best but still nice to walk around. My apologies for this, the house was closed until the Monday before we visited and I decided to wait for our visit until it was open. Part of the grounds are along a small river it was so nice to see clear clean water with large trout swimming around. We left at 4pm and arrived back tired around 5.15.

Exbury Outing Angela Hughes

On 12th May a group of 43 members enjoyed their first trip out since September 2019. The garden at Exbury looked fantastic with the rhododendrons and azaleas in full bloom and the colours were stunning. We were very lucky that we arranged our trip to the garden at just the time when everything was at it's best. We also enjoyed a ride on the steam railway which took in parts of the garden that were not accessible on foot. The weather was very good to us which made for a very enjoyable day.

Talks etc.

David Bingley

Those of you who attended the last talk will have noticed we will be taking a register of those who attend. The Northcourt Centre committee have updated the Health and Safety Fire Policy for users of the venue. It is a requirement for group leaders to compile a list of all meeting attendees. From now on it will be necessary for members and visitors to sign in on arrival. Thanks for your cooperation with this important matter.

Dates for your Diary -: The Autumn Show is on Saturday 10th of September. The schedule is on the AHS website. You can either view the categories directly or print a schedule by following the instructions. More information about the show will be sent out later. Due to Covid 19 we have been unable to organise the Summer Garden classes.

https://www.abingdon-hort-soc.org.uk/show_schedules

Tuesday 18 October 'Winter Containers' by Paul Williams

Tuesday 15 November 'Floriade' by David Bingley.

Winter Flowers.....a view. (See our talk on 18 October).

Wallflowers have always been popular as they provide agreeable colour (and smell), but are untidy and best in large swathes of planting, There are dozens of varieties, and some are much better than others. You often don't know which variety you are getting unless you select the seeds and plant them in July/August for the following Spring.

Bulbs and corms can be expensive to buy, but many are perennial and will return in subsequent years, providing you remember where they are, and don't damage them with later plantings. There are varieties of narcissus that flower very early, so are worth considering. Cyclamen are easy and will spread given time. Anemone blanda look good in early Spring. Winter aconites also look bright, but are invasive and spread quickly.

Snowdrops are usually purchased 'in the green' i.e. when the foliage has grown and the flowers finished. They flower around February, but take several years to get established in the right conditions. Primroses (Primula and Polyantha) are nice but later to flower. Croci are good, but nice coloured ones often revert to the usual blue/purple after a few years.

Viola (Pansies) are popular for bedding. Planting times are important as are the correct varieties. I have never been successful with Winter flowering pansies grown from seed, but good plants are available. Most are not genuinely Winter flowering even though they are called that. You don't see many flowers in January.

There are a few plants that provide colour in the Winter. Hellebores have become very popular and are now available in pastel shades and black. They look somewhat ragged in appearance, so not everybody's choice. But they also look rather luxuriant. Again, best grown in groups and take several years to get established. Nerines flower late, nice colours but will probably be over by December. I also have some hardy Fuchsias that look good in November, but they will be gone after early frosts.

Reliable small shrubby plants are the Heathers and Callunas. I have one white one that flowers in the Winter. Get the right one for Winter, few are suitable for alkaline soils. Good for acidic soils like the new Forest area. The other possibilities include a number of flowering shrubs that keep their berries through Winter. Popular shrubs include Daphne vars. and Viburnum.

Obituary

We have recently heard the sad news that a longtime society member Roy Smith died a few days short of his 90th birthday.

After retiring as a cobbler, starting aged 15 at Baileys shoe shop, he was a regular on the societies day trips. Roy was also a successful exhibitor at the shows, his prize cards were proudly kept!

ARCHIVE LIST FOR ABINGDON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1885

1. Spring and Autumn show schedules and year books 1957-date
2. Newsletters 1993-date
3. Some history notes from Jackson's Oxford Journal and newspapers.
4. Organised trip announcements
5. Cups and awards notebook 1973-1990
6. Minute books 1885-1922
 1983-1990
 1959-1971
 1971-1982
7. Folders of various loose pages, publicity, show posters, events etc.
8. Accounts books and fees 1975-1982
 1982-1993
 1923-2009
9. Expenditure 1967-1994
10. Show prizes awarded 1979-1988
11. AGM Minutes

Access to these records is at Oxfordshire History Centre

<https://apps2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/srvheritage/resultsSearch?archiveName=calm>