



AFFILIATED TO  
ROYAL HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY

# CHILTERN EDGE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



**Chairman: Nigel Crush**

**Membership Secretary:**

**Society email [cehs561@gmail.com](mailto:cehs561@gmail.com)**

**Society website [cehs.co.uk](http://cehs.co.uk)**

## **From the Chair - May 2023**

The year seems to be going very quickly. Hopefully, hot sunny days are on the way. At the moment we are waiting to see what has survived the long cold winter. We have had the sad news that Jean Saunders has passed away, Jean made a large contribution to CEHS and will be missed. See tribute below.

We had just had the last of this series of talks which were a well-attended success. Our thanks go to John Windass for carefully selecting and organising the speakers, thanks also to Maureen Saunders for again organising the Front Garden Competition.

As the Wisley trip is being so well attended we had an operational surplus and we are using this to reduce the price of the June trip to £31.00 (remember it includes tea). Refunds will be given to those who have already paid.

### Spring Show

#### Spring Show Cup Winners

The Avern Cup, best exhibit in daffodil and narcissus classes;

John Windass

The Grove Cup, most points in daffodil, narcissus and tulip classes;

Wilma Crush/John Windass

Frank Pritchard Cup for best pot plants:

Sue Jones

Certificates of Merit for floral art:

Sue Hedges

Village Cup for best exhibit in flower classes:

John Windass

Geoff Mitton cup for Spring Front Garden competition:

Bob and Sylvia Newnham

Thanks again for the great effort to make the show a success. Considering the awful weather

we had before the show it was gratifying to see so many entries.

We are currently working on the schedule for the Autumn Show and note the categories for the photo competition are:

100. Bees.

101. Stairs or steps.

102. Rows of things.

103. Open

If anyone knows the whereabouts of the Avern Trophy could you please let us know or drop it off at 18 Kennylands Road.

### Spring Front Garden Competition

The gardens in Sonning Common Health in March and April were ablaze with golden daffodils and several magnolias which this year survived some quite hard frosts. Spring seemed reluctant to come but now at the end of April it is looking promising for a good early May bank holiday and also perhaps a fine coronation day with a bonus of sunshine too. The judges this time were Janet, Shona, Elaine and Jessica and we're judging individually I hoped they all managed to get round dodging the rain and grateful thanks to them all.

The top three gardens were this time larger gardens all with a good variety of shrubs and plants as well as a great array of spring flowers, competition was very close, with only one point between first and second.

First Sylvia and Bob Newman Reeds Lane

Second Michael and Betty Farina Inglewood close

Third Angela and Bill Cordell Baytree Rise

Maureen Stevens

### Jean Saunders

Jean was an active committee member for over 35 years and helped wherever she could with the organisation of the various activities of the Society.

In particular she was always at all the shows working hard behind the scenes in setting up &

clearing away & always with a smile. Her knowledge of the Society in all its aspects was very deep & she could be relied upon to recollect past members & committee & past activities.

She also was active in organising the annual garden picnic in a members garden & contributed to many social events her signature culinary dishes.

Jean's horticultural knowledge was excellent & she helped judge the front gardens competition & went on most of the coach trips. Jean was a good organiser & very persuasive in asking for assistance for the Society. Her own garden in Woodlands Rd & then at Peppard Rd when she downsized, were always a credit to her gardening skills.

Although Jean lived in the south for many years, she never lost her North East spirit & quick sense of humour & plain speaking and she will be sorely missed.

Mark Richards

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Trip for the year:

### Saturday June 17th.

Visit to The Manor House Garden and market town of Olney, North Buckinghamshire.

The Manor House Garden is a private garden owned by Kathy and Simon Brown who have agreed to open their garden to us only and provide homemade tea and cake and a 45 minute tour of the garden by Kathy and Simon showing the highlights. The rest of the visit we can explore the garden at our own pace. We arrive at the garden at 2pm. The garden is 4.5 acres containing formal garden, herbaceous borders, art garden, containers, cottage garden and wild flower meadow. All designed and cared for by Kathy. Kathy also has a small shop on site. Website is [www.kathybrownsgarden.com](http://www.kathybrownsgarden.com)

In the morning we are stopping at the nearby Georgian market town of Olney (north Buckinghamshire) which has plenty of tea shops and cafes and shops as well as a museum called Cowper and Newton. The museum has a historic garden and celebrates Olney and the two historical figures of Mr Cowper a historical poet and the Slave abolitionist Mr Newton who penned the hymn Amazing Grace.

You will have the morning to explore the towns facilities and visit the museum (there is an entry charge which is not included) if you wish.

The cost per person is £31.00 each to include coach, drivers tip, entry to The Manor House Garden, **tea and cake** and the tour.

Please advise of any dietary requirements for the tea and home made cakes.

Mark Richards

### "Heavenly Hostas" a talk by John Baker.

Well, what a joy to have such an interesting, informative and engaging talk on such a cold, damp and miserable night! Everyone who braved the weather and turned up to Peppard Memorial Hall had a real treat.

There was so much to be learned listening to John, with his wonderful selection of slides and we were all very grateful for him coming to speak with CEHS once again. He was solo on this occasion, as his wife Dr June Colley was at home, very busy up against a deadline to edit and complete their journal ready for publication.

British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society.

John Windass introduced him and at the end of the evening thanked him very much on our behalf.



Hostas grow in the wild in Northeast Asia, chiefly in China, Korea and Japan. They were first imported and grown in Europe in the late 1700s and the plant was named in honour of the Austrian botanist Nicholas Hosta in 1812 (but they are also known as Funkia).

There are now thought to be over 11,000 varieties though many of these are not available commercially. It is generally

recognised to be about 40 species of hosta. There are around 6,500 officially registered varieties, with around 100-150 new hostas being registered each year, with over 1,000 varieties readily available for purchase by UK customers.

Hostas enjoy a neutral to acid soil and like most perennial plants, they like it to be rich and well drained. However, unless listed as 'sun-tolerant', they are best planted where they are likely to be in shade during the hottest part of the day.

Top tip! Shade netting or landscape fabric placed at the bottom of a pot to cover the drainage holes before you plant is an excellent idea; this stops slugs (and worms) from entering the pot from below but still lets water through.

John noted that they are best planted in plastic pots and containers. We should give them protection in the winter with mulch or cover with a fleece. When it comes to feeding, it is good to use a slow release fertilizer, eg Miracle Grow or Lawn Feed but ensure the latter doesn't contain weed killer. Most Hostas produce flowers in July and some have fragrance similar to lily, these attract pollinators.



Spraying plants with a garlic wash is one of the most effective ways of deterring slugs and snails. It is also a root stimulant and protects against aphids on other plants. It is best to begin early in the season.

Method : Crush two large garlic bulbs (not cloves), in a plastic bag to save mess; add to 1 litre of boiling water in a pan and boil for 10 minutes. Leave to cool (outside to avoid a lingering garlic smell in your kitchen!) When cool, strain through a sieve & store the garlic solution in a capped bottle in the fridge.

Application: Add two tablespoonfuls to 1 litre of water in a spray bottle and then spray your plants every two weeks or so on a dry evening, so that the garlic solution stays on the leaves longer and can be more easily absorbed.

When planting a new hosta, be vigilant. Check it regularly and at the first sign of a leaf being eaten, search around in the evening until you find the slug or snail responsible and dispose of it/them.



And now ..... how to combat the dreaded slugs. The question that had been poised on everyone's lips and the advice we were longing to hear!

Apparently, the thick leaved plants are not attractive to the critters, as they do not have teeth, just sucking up the tender leaves!

Household Ammonia: slugs find their food by smell, a 1-10 solution of household ammonia to water (500ml bottle of ammonia to 5 litres of water) can be sprayed on the leaves to disguise their scent. Spray each evening for instant protection. Ammonia diluted in this way will not harm your hostas but will kill slugs on contact. Useful for those newly hatched slugs that are hard to pick up and those hiding at the base of leaves; watering the soil around your hosta with dilute ammonia will kill the soil living slugs; however bear in mind it will also kill worms.

Epsom Salts are good too. Not only do they kill off the slugs and snails, but also help the plants to grow.

Barriers: work best when applied early in the season before the first leaves are fully out. Then you can be sure you are keeping molluscs

away rather than trapping them inside the barrier.

Copper tape: can be bought at garden centres although it's quite expensive. Put it round the base of pots (an electrician told John it is best when in contact with the ground) or for plants in the garden cut the rim off a large plastic pot, place around the plant and stick the tape to that.

Rumour has it that Vaseline or WD 40 smeared or sprayed on pots works. Likewise coffee grounds, fine grit or sheep's wool.

Beer traps work both for slugs and snails. Pour the beer into a container with its rim at ground level. Yoghurt, coleslaw or cottage cheese cartons work well with no more than 4cm (1.5") of beer in the bottom. Since it's the yeast in beer that attracts the slugs you can make your own bait. One recipe suggests 2 cups water, 2tsp sugar or honey, 2tsp flour, 1tsp dried yeast granules. You'll need to empty your traps every 2-3 days. Disposal of contents is easy, apparently the birds, hedgehogs and frogs do it for you!

John told us of when the BBC came to visit their garden with Monty Don and filmed. This film can be found on YouTube - "Hanging Hostas of Hampshire."

Hopefully, one day we may be able to pay a visit to the 'Hanging Hostas Garden' at "Narra", Frensham Lane in Lindford, Hampshire. It is part of the National Gardens Scheme, with its 2000 hosts.

Sue J.

### RHS Gardening in May

Summer's on its way

As bulbs fade and herbaceous borders grow in leaps and bounds, it is now clear that summer is approaching. Sowing and planting out bedding can begin, depending on regional weather variations, and you can take softwood cuttings. It's also time to get back into the lawn mowing regime, as the lawn will be loving the warmer temperatures this month brings

Top gardening jobs this month

1. Watch out for late frosts. Protect tender plants
2. Earth up potatoes, and promptly plant any still remaining
3. Plant out summer bedding at the end of the month (except in cold areas)
4. Water early and late to get the most out of your water, recycle water when possible
5. Regularly hoe off weeds
6. Open greenhouse vents and doors on warm days
7. Mow lawns weekly - but consider leaving some areas uncut for wildlife
8. Check for nesting birds before clipping hedges
9. Lift and divide overcrowded clumps of daffodils and other spring-flowering bulbs
10. Watch out for viburnum beetle and lily beetle grubs

### RHS Entry Discount Card



The Society now has a discount card which offers two adults a 50% discount off entry to any RHS Garden (Bridgewater, Harlow Carr, Hyde Hall, Rosemoor and Wisley).

The card is currently held at 18 Kennylands. Contact the Chairman if you want to borrow it. It can be posted to you if you do not live locally.

We welcome your comments/articles/letters these can be sent to CEHS at [cehs561@gmail.com](mailto:cehs561@gmail.com) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

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COACH OUTING The Manor House Garden and market town of Olney, North Buckinghamshire.

**Saturday June 17th.**

Pick up points are Kidmore End turn (9.00am), Sonning Common Post Office (9.05 am), and Peppard Stores (9.10am) returning at approximately 5.45pm

Name	Phone number	Pickup Point

Members/Non-members £31.00 Deadline 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023

I enclose cheque/cash in the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_ Please make cheques payable to C.E.H.S

Signature: Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed form to Mark Richards c/o, 18 Kennylands Road, Sonning Common, RG4 9JT

Any queries contact Mark Richards Telephone 07789553838 or email [markr3939@gmail.com](mailto:markr3939@gmail.com)