

Aston Clinton, Buckland & Drayton Beauchamp Horticultural Society

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President Mrs Lorna Price



Chairman Mrs Sue Lipscomb

Dear Members,

I realise the winter is not over yet, but the weather it has produced has been quite extraordinary. Read Ralph Weston's articles to discover more about the effects of this unusual, and mostly unwelcome, weather locally. Forgetting the ridiculous amount of rain that has fallen for a moment, it is the fact that it has been so mild that has had an effect on the daffodils that many of us are growing for the Spring Show. Some of my daffodils that I had hoped would reach a state of perfection(!) by April 12th have already come into bloom and are residing in a vase in the house. Certainly many pots need to remain outside in a shady location in order to hold them back. Others, of course, need the greenhouse now or sunny porches or windowsills inside in order to progress in time. What a game this is, but one that I must admit I really enjoy.

Do have a good look at the Spring Schedule that will come with this newsletter. I really do hope that it will inspire many of our members to enter this year. It is not just a show full of daffodils so it would be great if you could find the time to enter the photography classes with a photo following the theme of 'Spring is in the Air'. Children's photographs are of a flower or a plant. There are also, of course, sections to enter your spring flowers, cookery or handicrafts too. Please do encourage your neighbours, family and friends to enter this year or maybe just come along to enjoy the afternoon with us.

Also, with this newsletter, you will receive the programme for the year. Do look at the talks and events that have been organised this year and we would be delighted if you could join us for as many as you can. It is the first time for many years that we have organised a coach trip and you will be able to discover more details about this inside the newsletter or on the website. I am certainly very keen to go up to Barnsdale Gardens, originally created by Geoff Hamilton.

*With very best wishes,
Sue Lipscomb*

NVS talk on leeks and Onions

The recent talk by Ivor Mace was very interesting. He told us how he got interested in gardening at a very early age of 11 and how he developed his parents garden on a sloping site at the top of the Rhonda valley.

He went on to explain how he went over to polytunnels and greenhouses. He was doing so well that one year he won nearly as much money as he was earning, but said that prize money is not as good now!

He explained how he grows his prize winning onions and leeks in detail, however I don't think that I shall be emulating his time or effort.

A couple of useful pointers though are that we can over fertilize. This is because plants absorb nutrients from the water in the ground by the process of osmosis which works when the soil solution is weaker than that in the plant. This is important if you are growing under polytunnels or glass since the natural rain water is not washing out the nutrients. So whether you are growing outside or inside use your fertilizer carefully.

Ivor finished up on the downside with pests and diseases and told us of some new bugs that are spreading across England and where, if your ground is infected you cannot grow onions for the next 20 years!

Society Diary

All talks are held in the Anthony Hall, Aston Clinton and start at 8 pm. They are all free to members, but there will be a raffle and produce & plant stall to defray costs. Non-members are charged at £2. Coffee and tea are served in the interval.

Wednesday 9th April

Talk with slides '**Hughenden Manor Gardens**' by Frank Parge

Thursday 10th April

Entry night for the Spring Show

Anthony Hall time 6.00 -7.45 pm

Saturday 12th April

18th Annual Spring Show and Plant Sale

2 pm in the Aston Clinton School Hall. Entry £1

Saturday 12th April

BAHS Spring Show

Hosted by Loosley Row & Lacey Green Horticultural Society

Sunday 11th May

Plant and Produce Stall at School's 'Village Market'

Time from 11am: Aston Clinton School

Please bring as many plants as possible

Wednesday 14th May Talk with slides: '**Cape Town to Victoria Falls**' by Tisa Abel

Wednesday 11th June

Talk with slides: '**Flower Arranging**' by Mrs Blacklock

Thursday 10th July Coach trip to **Geoff Hamilton's Garden** at Barnsdale, Rutland

Aston Clinton Weather

It is well known that this winter's rainfall from the recent storms has been the heaviest for many years. Here in Aston Clinton we seem to have escaped the worst effects of the storms compared with other places. However we have not escaped completely and I have had reports of trees coming down, fences being blown over and several lake-sized puddles on several roads. Whilst Aston Clinton has not been flooded, the water table has come up and created flood pools in my garden as the pictures on page 3 show. This is not so surprising since it has been known for a long time that there are a number of springs in the village.

Aston Clinton rainfall this winter has been recorded by a member of our Horticultural Society. Rainfall in December 2013 was 85.5mm, January 2014; 198mm and February 2014; 148 mm, a total of 429.5mm. This compares with the previous winter when the rainfall in December 2012 was 116.0mm, January 2013; 66mm and February 2013; 45 mm, a total of 227.0mm. This year we have had a tad over 8 inches more rain this winter. Let's hope that the sunshine this first day of March is promise for the whole month. Over in Dagnall, in Hertfordshire, they have had up to 27th Feb 283.4 mm of rain and that is 250% above the 6 year average.

Much Pottering

When will it stop raining? I do hope that by the time this is published the weather will not only be warmer but drier. The weather has made it almost impossible to get out on our gardens and allotments to even start clearing the detritus from last year. The biggest problem is the water table which is so high, as can be seen by these photos, so that it is impossible to dig and cultivate the soil in order to sow seed and plant out onions and shallots that traditionally go in first. Weeding the raspberries and other bushes, where kneeling is necessary has resulted in very muddy jeans! I have just started turning over part of my vegetable patch in the garden and it is very sticky and difficult. Assuming the ground has dried out by April, it is not too late for planting potatoes. Easter is late this year but the traditional day for planting potatoes is Good Friday. This is because it is the one day in the year when labourers were given the day off.



Spring has started in my garden with the snowdrops and early daffodils giving a bright display.



In the meantime I and other gardeners have been sowing seed and starting off the onions and shallots in pots so that they will have a flying start when planted out. Preparations for the Spring Show are progressing and my show daffodils have been brought into the greenhouse. Whilst not everybody can concentrate on growing a wide range of daffodils for the show, there are plenty of classes for the novice to try, using daffodils growing in their your garden.

Spring Show 2014

Our Spring Show and Plant Sale is on Saturday 12th April at 2.00pm in the school hall. Entry night is the previous Thursday **10th April 6.00 – 7.45pm at the Anthony Hall**. Those of you who have trophies, please return them to Ken Halls by entry night at the latest. Full details of the classes are in the schedule delivered with this newsletter but the show includes all the regular features and classes including a section for daffodils, children, floral art, spring flowers, handicrafts and domestic. There are plenty of challenges for everyone to have a go and enter something. There are also teas and a raffle to help defray costs.

We need help to set up the show on the Friday afternoon from 4pm. Perhaps more importantly we need as many people as possible to clear away the tables etc. after the show closes at about 5pm. Contributions to the raffle would be much appreciated. Anyone who would like to learn to be a steward on the Saturday morning would also be most welcome; you will get one of John and Evelyn's superb lunches!! Please contact either myself or a member of the committee.

Remember that there is the plant sale as well. The Society will be selling trailing geraniums, fuchsias, sweet peas, a range of perennials, primulas and other early pot and bedding plants.

Looking forward to seeing you all there.

Ken Halls Spring Show Secretary

**BARNSDALE GARDENS VISIT
THURSDAY 10th JULY 2014**

- * Return trip on Coach from Aston Clinton + Garden Entrance **£20** per person
- * Coach from the lay-by by The Bell, Aston Clinton, 8.45am for a **prompt** departure at **9.00am**

- * Estimated arrival time at Barnsdale Gardens, 11.00am
- * Barnsdale Gardens are in Rutland (The Avenue, Exton, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 8AH)
- * The Gardens have a "no-picnic" policy, but there is a Tea Room, serving refreshments, seasonal snacks & light meals
- * The Gardens also have a Plant Nursery
- * More details can be found on the Garden website www.barnsdalegardens.co.uk
- * Planned return time **3.30pm**, arriving back in Aston Clinton circa **5.30pm**

The money.....

- * Post-dated cheque for **£20** per person, required to secure place, by latest March 31st
- * Cheques payable to **ACB&DB Horticultural Society** and post-dated **1st June 2014**
- * Cheques will be cashed mid-June, as advanced payment is required for the Coach & Gardens
- * In the event of a cancellation, cheques will only be returned if someone is found to take your place

To book yourself on the Garden Visit.....

- * Please contact Diane Kolonko
 - Mobile: 07930 337253
 - Email: dianekolonko@f2s.com
 - Post form below to 13 Green End Street, Aston Clinton
 - * 49 places available, first come first served & cheque secures the place
- Please provide phone and email contact details when booking

ASTON CLINTON, BUCKLAND & DRAYTON BEAUCHAMP HORTICULURAL SOCIETY

Booking Form for Barnsdale Visit on Thursday 10th July 2014.

Please send metickets at £20 each

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO:- **ACB&DB Horticultural Society**

I enclose a total of £..... to cover the cost of the tickets.

Please return the booking form and money to Diane Kolonko.

Name:.....

Tel.....