

Colinton Garden Club

www.colintongardens.org.uk

Newsletter 105
February 2014



Coming soon...

Monday 24th
February 2013

“A Hobby that got
out of Hand”

Stella Rankin
Kevock Garden
Plants
(plant stall also)

28th April 2013
AGM
and display
of members'
arts and crafts
projects
See p4

Ordering
Spring Fertilizer

Order form is
attached to this
newsletter - please
return to Billy
Wheelan by
Monday
24th February

From the pen of our Chair...

Dear Reader

I should like to wish all our members a very happy new year. May your gardening go from strength to strength, and I hope we shall see you at many of our garden club activities in 2014.



Our club certainly had a fine ending to 2013 - firstly a most thoughtful and interesting evening presentation in November on Japanese Gardens - how differently gardening traditions in Japan have evolved in comparison with our British style with the Eastern emphasis being on spatial design, spirituality and trees rather than flowers. Having twice been to Japan - once at Spring cherry blossom time and once at Autumn Maple leaf time, I couldn't help noticing the crowds and crowds of people turning out to see these wonderful sights - so there is one obvious similarity between East and West: we both use gardens for delight and relaxation, however different the gardens may be.

Secondly, of course, in December, a full house enjoyed the Christmas party and pantomime in a transformed church hall. What a wonderful atmosphere there was as we sampled the usual tasty buffet and wine, tackled the quiz, and then sat back and watched 'The Weed Formula' - an hour of silly fun (with some pretty obvious contemporary commentary as an undercurrent) cleverly written by Isobel Lodge, aided and abetted of course by husband John. As one of the players, I can tell you I saw so many people put so much time and talent into the production - the rehearsals were almost as much fun as the actual performance. A huge thank you is due to each and every person who made the party night so successful.



*The Doctor
gets the message
across to Colinton's
evergreen Flower
People in our
Christmas
Panto*

Pen of our Chair... continued

This year promises to be quite a blockbuster for our club - terrific outings planned and a varied and interesting series of evening meetings lined up; see our schedule (page 4) and the website for more details and do join in!

We'll be watching the Colinton Library garden that our club replanted last autumn, and hopefully be putting an explanatory poster up inside the library. On-going maintenance will be essential of course – if you would be willing to join the team, please let me know – equally if you have any suggestions for its development.

Our AGM in late April will include an arts and craft display of members' work - the theme of course being 'anything horticultural'. No matter what medium you like to work in – wood, embroidery, oil paints, photographs (the list is limitless!), do get your thinking caps on and while away the dark evenings still ahead of us to create your own masterpiece. There will be a small prize for the exhibit gaining the most votes from your fellow members!



Wicked Leeks (Christopher Davies) admires the final decoction

Penny

Have you visited Dave's Garden?

The website 'Dave's Garden' is dedicated to creating interactions between gardeners around the world (<http://davesgarden.com>). It was created in 2000 by Dave Whiting, a gardening enthusiast and computer programmer. Originally a trade list community, it has expanded into a huge international community (although still primarily USA-driven); there are about 11,000 UK members. Its PlantFiles, BugFiles and Birdfiles are comprehensive databases used by gardeners and wildlife enthusiasts worldwide. The newest feature is a Garden Showcase, which lets the user upload images of their garden or gardens they have visited and tag the individual plants with links that direct viewers back to PlantFiles for cultural information / seller lists.

Information provided
by Melody Rose
Administration Editor



Malope trifida 'Vulcan' as a cut flower

As I am always reluctant to cut flowers for the house from the garden, I decided to sow some annuals in a spare piece of ground specifically for filling vases. I rather grandly called this my 'cutting garden', and looked up Sarah Raven's book, Grow Your Own Cut Flowers (BBC Books) and the internet for ideas of what to sow.

Some plants were very successful, such as Antirrhinum "Orange Glow", which was nicer than its name, with peachy colours, and Ammi majus, a refined cow parsley. But the greatest success was a plant I'd never heard of before, Malope trifida 'Vulcan', an annual mallow. This grew into a strong, branching plant with large, rosy-purple flowers, and two or three cut stems gracefully filled a vase with no effort from me. I saved some seed from its large pods for next year, but it also has a white form, so I'll try that as well.

I bought my seeds from Chiltern Seeds www.chilternseeds.co.uk, but I think most seed companies stock it.

Ann Dean

Annual Tattie Sale

Balerno Parish Church Hall
Saturday 22nd February
10 am – 2 pm



Big selection
of potatoes,
onions and
peas on sale

Cymbidiums in the Botanics

Why not wrap up well and stroll in a right-hand loop from the John Hope Gateway to the glasshouses where there is a fine selection of orchids at the moment. Then follow the beech hedge back for a nice hot cuppa in the restaurant.

Fortunes of the Plant Hunters

While browsing through the book section in Dobbies, I came across a copy of the 'The Plant Hunters' by Carolyn Fry (Andre Deutsch, 2012) for the knock-down price of £4.99. This beautifully illustrated book covers plant collecting from the Ancient Egyptians to the leading plant hunters from 1600 onwards, including notable Scots such as David Douglas and Berwickshire boy, **Robert Fortune**. The volume has pockets containing copies of rare documents of botanical importance. There is also a corresponding Multi-Touch iBook (for Mac or iPad) (<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/book/the-plant-hunters>); a 'Widget' facility allows you to interact with the content by turning pages of pamphlets and enlarging botanical structures and maps.

A note on Robert Fortune: he was an intrepid traveller into the remoter regions of China, and in 1850 introduced the white-flowered *Rosa x fortuniana* to Britain. However, it did not flourish, but has since more than proved itself as a versatile rootstock in warmer climes. Fortune's adventures in the China tea trade are ably chronicled in '**For All the Tea in China**' by Sarah Rose (Penguin, 2011).

Opinions are mixed as to the earliest usage of that phrase. One possibility is New Zealand's Marlborough Express of 1907: <http://english.stackexchange.com/questions/63479>

*A short time ago the Celestial maiden would **not** exchange one of her tiny, disfigured feet **for all the tea in China**; if she lives long enough she will probably weep salt tears of regret that she is not in the fashion, and, even though respect for one's elders is commoner in China than it is in, say, New Zealand, may in her heart feel bitterness against her parents for not having been up-to-date.*

In 1995, my only vision of 'bound feet' occurred outside a village house in Hong Kong's New Territories. Standing beneath a Bauhinia tree, yon Ah Tai's steely gaze instantly froze my finger on the shutter button. I digress again – Editor.



*Flower of Bauhinia blakeana (Wikipedia)
– a tropical 'orchid tree'*

Members' recipes: Melon and Parma Ham Salad

supplied by Billy Wheelan

1 Charentais melon, halved and deseeded
1 papaya, halved, deseeded
70 - 90g Parma ham, cut into strips
1 bag mixed salad leaves

For the dressing:

2 tbsp lemon juice
2 tsp honey
1 tsp wholegrain honey
4 tbsp virgin olive oil
Sprigs of basil for garnish

Serves 6

Make up the salad dressing by whisking all the ingredients together and seasoning with salt and ground pepper

Slice the melon and remove the skin. Chop the papaya into cubes, removing the skin

Arrange the fruit on individual plates with strips of Parma ham, then arrange a small portion of salad on top. Just before serving, spoon salad dressing over and garnish with basil

East Lothian Garden Trail

Scotland's Gardens has just announced another new initiative for 2014 - The East Lothian Trail with ten participating gardens, which starts on Tuesday 17 June and continues until Saturday 21 June. All gardens will be open on 20 and 21 June, 1.00 - 6.00 pm and at specific times on the other days – detailed leaflet available at www.scotlandsgardens.org
Pre-paid ticket for all 10 gardens costs £20; accomp. children free.

Club Website

www.colintongardens.org.uk
for details of all Club activities
Webmaster: Sonia Duffy

Dates for your diary.....

Monday 24 February 2014	'A hobby that got out of hand' Stella Rankin, Kevock Garden Plants, Lasswade – there will also be a plant stall 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan – Upper Hall
Monday 24 March 2014	'Victorian Gardens - from Loudon to Jekyll and Lutens' Dr Philip Lusby, RBGE 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan – Upper Hall
Monday 28 April 2014	Annual General Meeting and Display of Members' Arts and Crafts – Contact Margo Gilchrist (tel: 0131 441 7339) if you have any queries about display of items on the night. 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan – Upper Hall
See below for details to date of Evening Open Garden / Local Open Gardens & Plant Sale / Summer Outing	

New members sought
Club membership has dropped slightly of late. So you are invited to bring a guest for free to the next meeting - please introduce to the Membership Secretary

Colin Whitehead,
21 Laverockdale Park,
Edinburgh EH13 0QE

membership@colintongardens.org.uk

Newsletter delivery

If you do not receive your newsletter, please contact Bob Jones, Communications Officer
(Also, send him photos of your garden / plants for the website gallery)

0131 445 2745

publicity@colintongardens.org.uk

Outdoor Season Schedule 2014

Thursday 27th February	Snowdrop Outing to Cambo in East Fife There are still a few places on the coach Contact Susan Plag: Tel: 0131 441 7936, e-mail: smplag@gmail.com
Monday 19th May	Evening Open Garden By kind invitation of Anne Duncan: including a triumph of tulips At 'Roscullen', 1 Bonaly Road, EH13 0EA from 6.30 to 8 pm
A Saturday morning in June Could you oblige?	Open Gardens & Plant Sale We are looking for three gardens within walking distance of each other in Bonaly - Dreghorn Loan - Thorburn - Barnshot area for a Saturday morning viewing. Susan and Steve Plag have offered to serve tea and coffee. As in the past, this is a horticultural and social occasion, and in no way competitive. Please start thinking about cuttings etc for the plant sale Contact Susan Plag: Tel: 0131 441 7936, e-mail: smplag@gmail.com
Saturday 19th July  Tickets available at February meeting	Summer Outing This year, our whole-day outing by coach takes in three private gardens in Berwickshire and Peebleshire Our first stop is Lennel Bank in Coldstream Then a short drive to Anton's Hill, where a sandwich lunch will be provided In the afternoon we travel on to Portmore, near Eddleston Cost of £30 includes travel, morning coffee / tea, sandwich lunch, afternoon tea and admissions / tours Coach leaves Westgarth Ave at 9 am prompt , returning by approx. 5.30 pm