



AFFILIATED TO  
ROYAL HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY

# CHILTERN EDGE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



Chairman: Nigel Crush 0118 9722167  
Membership Secretary: Janet Evans 0118 3277709  
Society email [cehs561@gmail.com](mailto:cehs561@gmail.com)  
Society website [cehs.co.uk](http://cehs.co.uk)

## From the Chair - March 2024

Spring seems to have come very early and I'm just hoping some of my late flowering daffodils will last till the beginning of April for the show. I hope you are also thinking about what you can enter into the show. A copy of the schedule can be found on the website.

If you have any plants you could donate for the plant stall at the show these would be much appreciated.

Likewise if you would like to donate a cake for the cake stall at the show please email the society email (above) with details.

Details of our first trip this year can be found below. There are only 30 spaces for this trip!

## TALKS

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 19.30. "Growing Perennials and Woody Plants for Cutting" by Rachel Siegfried.**

Rachel Siegfried who runs Green & Gorgeous, a cut flower farm near Wallingford, makes a return! Since talking to us in April 2018 Green & Gorgeous has gone from strength to strength and based on her experience Rachel has recently written a book on the best perennials and woody plants for producing cut flowers. Her talk on this occasion will focus on these plants.

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April at 19.30. "Dispelling 10 Myths About Peonies - One of the Most Sought After Flowering Garden Plants" by Alec White**

Peonies are undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and flamboyant plants of late spring/early summer. There are however a lot of myths/old wives' tales about how difficult they can be to grow.

Alec White who runs Primrose Hall Peonies, one of the largest specialist growers in the country and home of national collections of several sub-types, will be visiting us to dispel some of these myths and hopefully persuade us to either "have a go" or perhaps add a new peony to our collections!

## TALK REPORT

**13<sup>th</sup> February. "The Trowels and Tribulations of taking on a Historic Garden!" by Maggie Tran.**

Cakes and country house gardens! Could that be the perfect way to spend a mid-winter afternoon?

Fortified with tea, coffee and cakes & biscuits generously donated by several members to help society funds, members were treated to an account of how newly-qualified head gardener Maggie set about discovering the charms, renovating and updating 6 acres of garden at Bramdean House.

Taking a year, largely just to discover what horticultural treasures were hiding in the garden, had proved invaluable. Though serious pruning of some "specimen" plants had also been necessary to give other "treasures" a chance and even reveal some

garden buildings! Fully rejuvenating some climbing roses had also taken up to 4 years.

The "signature" mirror herbaceous gardens had also proved both a challenge and delight. Originally precisely laid out some plants had migrated or disappeared over the years. Meticulous monitoring and measuring with close reference to original plans had been essential to restoring these beds to their former glory!

More fundamental changes had been decided upon for the large walled vegetable garden. Fewer staff together with current thinking indicated "no dig" was probably the way to go! So far so good!

Clearly an NGS garden worth visiting!

John Windass

### **Urgent message to Doggy Walkers Joggers and Cyclists**

Now the spring is on its way gardeners will be out in their gardens tidying and planting for everyone to enjoy, so please stop and admire and tell me the addresses of gardens we can judge the best spring front garden competition in Sonning common  
Maureen Stevens 9724779

### **Exbury, our first trip this year!!!!**

Saturday 11th May 2024 day trip to Exbury Gardens in the New Forest.

We have chosen to visit Exbury in May to see their vast collection of dazzling flowering Azalias and Rhododendrons as well as the late Spring and early summer collection of camassias, flowering cherries and flowering shrubs.

The gardens were created for the de Rothschilds family 100 years ago and stretches down to the banks of the tranquil River Beaulieu.

There is a recommended train ride available at £6.50 option to book when you arrive to see the gardens. There are options to hop on and off as well. The gardens have various impressive water features, delightful woodland valleys, Sundial Garden, stunning Azalea Bowl, newly created Centenary Garden, lots of robust footpaths and champion trees.

There is a restaurant, gift shop and picnic area near the entrance. A small cafe is further inside the gardens.

See the website [www.Exbury.Co.uk](http://www.Exbury.Co.uk). For more information.

Note coach has max 30 Seats so it's first come first served basis. Waiting list afterwards.

Mark Richards

### **Spring Show Photo Competition Topics**

1. Open
2. Patterns
3. Winter colour
4. Single spring flower.

### **RHS**

#### **Spring arrives**

Spring usually arrives by mid-March and the frequent sunny days provide the opportunity for an increasing range of gardening tasks. It's time to get busy preparing seed beds, sowing seed, cutting back winter shrubs and generally tidying up around the garden.

1. Prune bush and climbing roses
2. Plant shallots, onion sets and early potatoes
3. Plant summer-flowering bulbs

Bulbs make a fine display planted in containers or borders, especially daffodils, snowdrops and tulips in spring. They are one of the easiest and most rewarding garden plants to grow.

4. Lift and divide overgrown clumps of perennials
5. Top dress containers with fresh compost
6. Mow the lawn on dry days (if needed)
7. **HARD** cut back Cornus (dogwood) and Salix (willow) grown for colourful winter stems
8. Hoe and mulch weeds to keep them under control early
9. Start feeding fish and using the pond fountain; remove pond heaters
10. Protect new spring shoots from slugs

#### More to do this month from RHS:

- Divide summer flowering perennials
- Cutback buddleias
- Begin hoeing
- Get your begonias going
- Deadhead bulbs
- Protect new shoots
- Mulch for an easy life
- Coppice shrubs
- Start off dahlia tubers
- Begin mowing lawns
- Get going with Gladioli
- Check over alpines
- Repot Phalaenopsis orchids
- Hold off hedge trimming till birds are fledged
- Pinch out sweet peas green
- Clean your green house
- Tidy up the strawberry patch
- Sow peas outdoors
- Start indoor tomatoes
- Avoid sowing tender veg
- Direct Sow hardy veg
- Plant Onion sets
- Avoid Sowing Tender veg
- Prune Blueberry bushes

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#### 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 Chair if you want to borrow it. It can be posted to you if you do not live locally.

#### Letters/emails/articles

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.

**Sonning Common Summer Front Garden competition 2024**

I Nominate the front garden at .....

**Signed** .....

**Please print your name** .....

Please return completed form to  
to Maureen Stevens 4 Inglewood Close Sonning Common, RG4 9SY.  
Telephone : 0118 972 4779

**COACH OUTING TO EXBURY GARDENS ON Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

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 £34.00 Deadline 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024

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)

**CHILTERN EDGE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SPRING SHOW 2024 - ENTRY FORM**

Entries can be emailed to [cehs561@gmail.com](mailto:cehs561@gmail.com) and pay the entry money on show day

1st entrant: please use block letters

Surname: ..... First Name: ..... Title: .....

Address: .....

Please enter class numbers in the grid:-

Total number of classes entered:

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PLEASE SEND ENTRIES TO:-

Nigel Crush 18 Kennylands Road, Sonning Common

Colin Mather 4 Rowan Close, Sonning Common

Jessica Philbrick 3 Baskerville Road, Sonning Common

Sue Hedges Yew Trees, Hazelmoor Lane, Gallowstree Common

John Windass Hunton Cottage, Gallowstree Road, Peppard Commo