



## Newsletter November/ December 2018

### SOCIETY OFFICERS

**President:**  
Reg Davis

**Chairman:**  
John Chapman  
Tel: 418904

**Treasurer:**  
Rod & Sue  
Thomas.  
Tel : 627358

**Secretary:**  
Cynthia Filer.  
Tel: 514057

**Membership  
Secretary:**  
Keith Jackson  
Tel: 412792

**Flower Show**  
John Chapman  
See above

**Coach Trips:**

**Newsletter:**  
Keith Jackson:  
See above

### Very Sad News

We are very sorry to announce the death of our President, Reg Davis. Reg was also our Treasurer for 20 years until 2014. He took over as Treasurer at a very difficult time for the Society and guided us to a much safer financial state. He kept the books immaculately, attended almost every committee and members' meetings and, after his retirement as Treasurer, became our President. Reg also took a prominent role in managing the Trading Hut and was advising us right until his death on how we should continue with the future of the Hut. He was also a very keen gardener and exhibited in a great number of classes at the Flower Show. He will be sorely missed, both by the Society and all of his friends and we send our sincere condolences to Veronica, Teresa and family.

### The Trading Hut - An Update

Following the vote at the EGM which took place on 13 Sept the Trading Hut has remained closed and the stock removed. There are ongoing discussions with the Town Council to find alternative ways of using the facility. A sub committee of the main committee has also been formed to try to find ways in which the hut can continue to be used for the benefit of the members. All ideas are welcome so please let any committee member know of your views and ideas as we go through this period before the lease needs to be renewed

### Membership Fees

The closing of the trading hut will make it necessary to revamp the way in which membership fees will be collected and cards issued. I hope the system will work as follows.

All members will get an invoice during November either by the usual hand delivery or by email. This will also give a membership number and the Society's bank details.

There are three ways to pay. Direct to the Bank (instructions on the invoice). At the monthly meeting in December or January. By post to me or at the trading hut which I will open on some dates in January. Membership cards will be pre-printed with names and numbers and will be issued once payment has been made either at the meetings or the trading hut. I hope all goes smoothly

## Meetings

Our Speaker at the September meeting was David Usher who we have had on several occasions before and he certainly did not disappoint us this time. He gave us a talk on Gertrude Jekyll – Her Plants and Design. Speaking without any notes his talk ranged over her whole career; how she entered horticulture and garden design right up to her death. David was Head Gardener at Hestercombe Gardens for 15 years where he restored the gardens to Gertrude Jekyll's original design from the many drawings that were available to him.

The October meeting was a question and answer session with a group of our own "experts". This seemed a particularly popular session and members went out of their way at the end to request more such sessions. Topics covered a wide variety of issues including included problems with fuchsias (see below), how to grow turmeric and how to rid ourselves of various pests! Bert gave us a master class in begonias which was enjoyed by all and he challenged us to a 'growing potatoes in a bucket competition'. I must admit to being taken back a bit by all the discussion and next time I will try to make a note of all the questions and answers for publication. Bert mentioned a concoction which he has used to care for his plants over the years. I have included his recipe in the hints and tips section on the back page



The Social Evening will be on 13<sup>th</sup> December, the ladies of the Social Committee are working hard preparing an evening of fun and games. There will be festive food, a glass of wine and a Christmas Raffle.



Last year's social evening was a great success so come along and enjoy yourselves, all members welcome. Sarah Ireland, (with some help from Cynthia), has been very busy arranging our Speakers for next year's members' meetings. It certainly looks very interesting and we should like to thank Sarah for all her hard work.

**Jekka McVicar –Nov 8th There are a few tickets remaining so if anyone wishes to bring a friend a few tickets will be available at the door . Please ring 01934 514057 to check first**

One of the specimens brought to the panel showed clear evidence of Gall Mite infestation. So I have reproduced below the advice given earlier in the year to those who are now cutting back these shrubs for the winter

Man has spread the Gall Mite. Inadvertently transferred between growers on plants and cuttings, and from handling plants, on tools, and clothing, etc.

There is no known chemicals to control this pest, available to amateurs.

Examine the plant every 3-4 days for any signs of distortion and remove any growing tips showing damage with disinfected tools before and after every cut.

Place damaged shoots in a plastic bag and seal placing the bag in the domestic waste bin. The advice from DEFRA was to destroy the whole plant, but it is now felt that with greater vigilance the swift action, the plant could be saved and only the damaged areas removed.

Or, burn shoots showing damage.

DO NOT place any infected plants on the compost, or in a green bin.

Severely prune hardy fuchsias in the spring and dispose of the material as above. Cutting back plants to ground level and destroying the old growth will mean less places for the pest to overwinter.

Be careful where you get fuchsias from and be on the lookout for plants with damage.

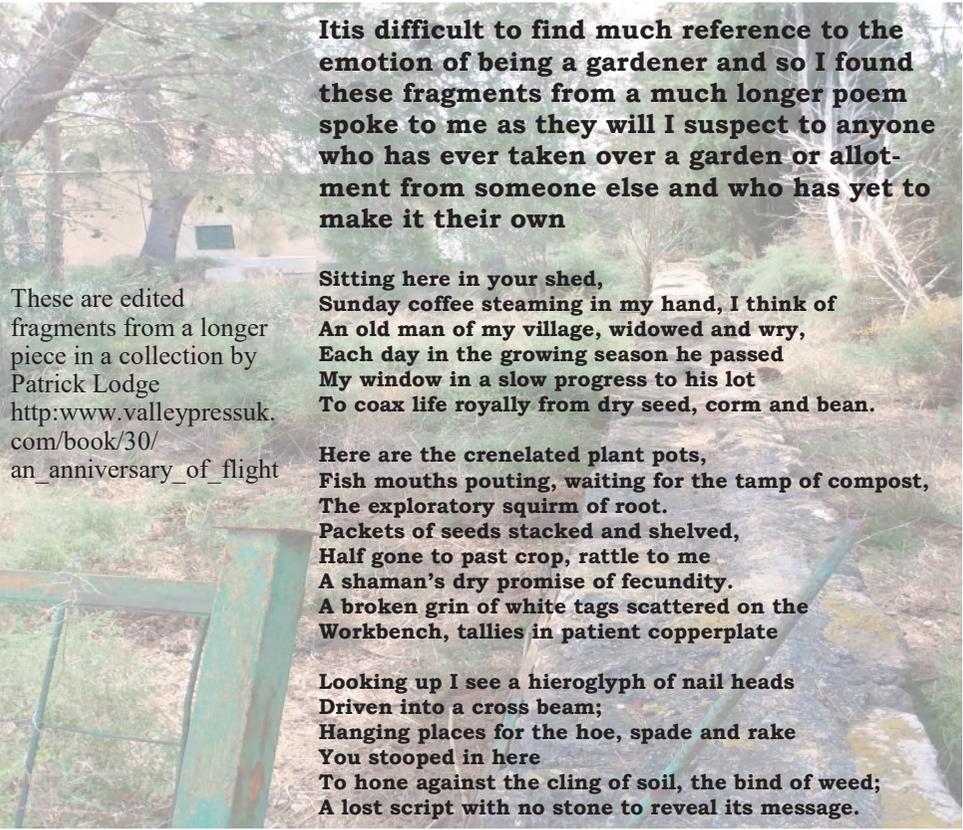
Don't take cuttings of fuchsia from public areas. If offered a cutting, think twice.

Check your plants weekly during the growing season.

Tell your neighbours so they can look for damage on their plants, remember if a neighbour gets it and you do nothing, then you will get it too and so will your friends and other close neighbours. .

It is most active from May to September.

Look on The British Fuchsia Society website [www.thebfs.org.uk](http://www.thebfs.org.uk) for photographs and more information .



**It is difficult to find much reference to the emotion of being a gardener and so I found these fragments from a much longer poem spoke to me as they will I suspect to anyone who has ever taken over a garden or allotment from someone else and who has yet to make it their own**

These are edited fragments from a longer piece in a collection by Patrick Lodge  
[http://www.valleypressuk.com/book/30/an\\_anniversary\\_of\\_flight](http://www.valleypressuk.com/book/30/an_anniversary_of_flight)

**Sitting here in your shed,  
Sunday coffee steaming in my hand, I think of  
An old man of my village, widowed and wry,  
Each day in the growing season he passed  
My window in a slow progress to his lot  
To coax life royally from dry seed, corm and bean.**

**Here are the crenelated plant pots,  
Fish mouths pouting, waiting for the tump of compost,  
The exploratory squirm of root.  
Packets of seeds stacked and shelved,  
Half gone to past crop, rattle to me  
A shaman's dry promise of fecundity.  
A broken grin of white tags scattered on the  
Workbench, tallies in patient copperplate**

**Looking up I see a hieroglyph of nail heads  
Driven into a cross beam;  
Hanging places for the hoe, spade and rake  
You stooped in here  
To hone against the cling of soil, the bind of weed;  
A lost script with no stone to reveal its message.**

### **The Next Generation of Gardeners Recognised**

Children from Walliscote, Mendip Green and Windwhistle schools were invited to the Mayor's Parlour on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September to receive their trophies, certificates and medallions for winning the Weston Horticultural Society's 'Plant a Wheelbarrow' competition. A great time was had by all and the children were given a guided tour of the Mayor's Parlour where they learned about the history relating to some of the treasures and adornments that belong to the town. They also had fun dressing up as the Mayor and sitting at his desk.

### **Next Years Garden Competition**

There will be some changes for next year's garden competition categories.

The large gardens will be judged as general gardens.

The front gardens category will be open to container gardens

There will be two new sections

The most improved garden and the best new garden.

These last two sections will need to be supported by some photographic evidence so this is an early heads up to start taking pictures.



**SOS We urgently need someone to volunteer to organise trips/ visits next year now that Brenda has retired . Please contact Cynthia on 01934 514057 if you can help**

## Teds Tips for November and December

I am delighted to say that I am going to be able to offer you some advice from a much more authoritative source than recently. Ted Gill a long time show and allotment gardener is allowing me to use his almanac, which he wrote some years ago, as the basis for this bimonthly advice column

I also intend to reprint Ted's original booklet and in the New Year it will be available for sale to members who would like a copy. November and December are obviously not the busiest months in the gardening calendar but there are jobs to be done which can prepare for the next growing season if the weather allows us to get onto the plot.

### Vegetables.

If the weather allows now is a good time to prepare an area for winter peas and broad beans. Blood fish and bone is an ideal fertiliser for these crops and when the area has been prepared plant out those which have been grown elsewhere or sow direct if the ground is not too cold. Remove any dead leaves from Brussels sprouts, check any potatoes planted in containers or greenhouse border are watered and thriving. Cut down asparagus fern and lightly fork the bed, then mulch with good compost

### Flowers

Cut down chrysanthemums, lift them and pot them up into large pots in the greenhouse. Similar treatment is good for the dahlias. We used to wait for the first frost, that seems to be later and later so I wait until they are looking a bit rough (from recent winds for example) and I need the space usually for wallflowers. When I lift the tubers I usually store them upside down for a bit to stop any moisture in the stems from rotting out the crown. When dry I keep them frost free till I can pot them up in the spring. Try to prune back plants to reduce the chance of wind damage. Pick up leaves and put in bags to create compost for the future. Finally try to leave a few areas a bit unkempt for wildlife.

### General Maintenance

I am sure we have all had that gym workout when we get out the lawn mower in the spring and try to start it. So a little preventative work now is a good idea. Modern petrol has more and more ethanol and other stuff in it. It's OK for vehicles which are used often but garden tools with tiny carburettors and infrequent use suffer from gummy deposits. It used to be suggested that draining the fuel and running the motor till it ran out of fuel would be a good precaution. Apparently that just dries out the gaskets in the carburettor and causes leaks when refilled. A small amount of additive added to each can of fuel is really the only answer. Unless you use the specially refined stuff from a garden machinery store which is very expensive but cheaper than a strip down. A service now is a good idea as it is difficult in spring when everyone suddenly wants it done. Clean greenhouses will let in more light so that is another task for a crisp winter day

### Bert's Potion

Fill a bucket with 1 gallon of boiling water.

Add 1 mug full of soda crystals and 1 mug of Daz (or similar detergent).

When cold, use 1 mug of the solution to 1 gal of water then put it into the sprayer and use it on all plants to control white/black fly and any other pests once or twice a week.

