



## March 2024

### Dates for your Diary

**Tuesday, 16th April 2024**, 7 for 7.30 pm Jacqueline Aviolet talking and demonstrating the growing of 'Hardy geraniums'.

**Tuesday, 4th June** - Visit to West Dean Botanical Garden, Chichester, West Sussex. An early summer delight (information and booking form in this newsletter below)

**Tuesday, 18th June 2024**, 7 for 7.30 pm Peter Almond talking about 'Gardening for wildlife'.

**Saturday, 17th August 2024** Annual Flower Show, St Nicholas Church Hall, Summer Road, Thames Ditton 2-4 p.m.

**Friday, 27th September** - Visit to Waterperry Gardens, Oxfordshire. Fabulous autumn asters and much more (Information about visit in this newsletter below)

**Tuesday, 15th October 2024**, 7 for 7.30 pm Avis Marshall on 'Wonder of Bees'.

### Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2024. Firstly, I would like to wish you all a belated happy new year. What a start to 2024 for us gardeners, soggy and then frozen soil, but I am pleased to say that the weather has improved a little enabling us to spend a few hours outside. I cannot wait to get the vegetable and flower seeds sown. It is so lovely to see the beautiful displays of Spring flowers a cheerful sight on a miserable winter's day. Let's hope March will give us some favourable gardening weather. Also, I am looking forward to meeting you all again at some of the society's events.

### Tom Appleton

It is so sad to have to report that Tom passed away on 24th December 2023 and our condolences are with Ceinwen and his family.

Tom and Ceinwen became members of Esher Molesey Garden Society in 1985. During Tom's membership of the society, he gave us so much time. He was Trading Secretary from 2009 until 2015, but he did not stop coming on a Sunday morning to help until we were all locked down due to Covid. Tom also took on the role of Chairman from 2013 until 2017. Tom and Ceinwen attended the Garden Talks and had a table stocked with goods, bulbs and packets of tubers from the depot, to save people getting up early on a Sunday morning. Tom enthusiastically went on the Garden visits.

The flower show was always a priority - he spent all day there on his 60th wedding anniversary! His special pride was introducing the competition between allotments for a basket of flowers and vegetables which brought interest and friendship from other allotment groups. Tom was a keen

gardener and a member and trustee of Hampton Court Way Allotments Association where he served as treasurer, chairman and site manager with Eric. Tom was also a member of various societies and organisations to whom he devoted many hours.

Tom was a lovely man and will be greatly missed by all our members.

## AGM

Thank you to all the members who attended the AGM. The Committee agreed to stand again for 2024, namely myself Jean Billett, Chairman; Tony Speller, Treasurer; Drostan Stileman, Trading Secretary; Ann Beauchamp, Acting Secretary/Garden Talks. Other members of the committee are Julia Jones, Outings; Margaret Smith, Membership Secretary; Tracey Spreadborough, Flower Show Secretary; Madelaine Hern, Flower Show Manager. All were duly voted in. We do require a permanent Secretary. As a committee we only meet 4 times a year plus the AGM and would welcome any member who would like to join the committee.

I do hope we will see more members attending our garden talks and the AGM in 2024 as this is a good opportunity to meet other members of the society.

## Membership

Thank you to all our members who have renewed their membership for 2024. If you are a 5-year member, or have paid just for the current year, you should have received your new membership card by now. If you have not received it, please call Margaret Smith on 079 58015964 or Tony Speller on 020 8398 1774.

If you have not yet paid your 2024 membership subscription, please send a cheque to Margaret or pay by bank transfer as soon as possible. Our bank details are **Sort Code 090151, Account no. 19487306, Account name, Esher Molesey Garden Society (please enter your name as reference).**

Of course, you can always pay at the Trading Hut when making a purchase on Sunday Mornings.

A reminder that unless you are a full member or affiliated allotment member you are not entitled to use the trading hut. A membership renewal form is attached to this email.

Please remember that without your membership our Society would not exist.

Squires Garden Centres at Long Ditton and Hersham now offer EMGS full members a 10% discount on purchases of plants, garden equipment, composts, and other garden sundries. The offer does not include gifts, cards, and the café. The Society also has a discount card for RHS Gardens. This card allows 2 people entrance at half price (does not include special events). Please contact Jean Billett either by phone 01372465961 or email [jean.billett@ntlworld.com](mailto:jean.billett@ntlworld.com) if you wish to use the RHS card. You will need to show your current membership when using these offers.

## Plug Plants

We are expecting delivery of our plug plants in late March, just before Easter. This year we have also decided to order Geraniums. The main order is for 'Dancer' but we are not sure if the colours will be separated or a mix, only time will tell. The initial price for these is 5 for £1.00. Also included is a new zonal Geranium 'White Splash', but these cost a lot more and will be 60p each (a real bargain compared with other sources). As most of our profit from the sale of these plants comes from Molesey Carnival we can keep our prices to members the same as last year, despite the increased cost from our supplier. So, Petunias are initially at 65p per plant and Fuchsias at 50p. The Begonia semperflorens are 6 for £1.00. Pictures of the plants on offer are attached to this email.

For FULL Members of EMGS, who have already paid their subs for 2024, we are again offering 5p per plant discount on Petunias and Fuchsias. Truly a bargain for members when compared to any other source. Email Tony Speller ([tony\\_speller@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tony_speller@hotmail.co.uk)) with your requirements, and only pay when plants are delivered.

There is a BUT, though. Can you help grow some of these plug plants on for us to sell at Molesey Carnival, please? A warmish environment, a windowsill or a bit of room in a green house, is sufficient. We will supply compost, pots etc and deliver and pick up from you. Growers who have helped in the past are now unable to do so now, and we are desperate for help. Please contact Tony Speller, by phone 020839821774 or by email [tony\\_speller@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tony_speller@hotmail.co.uk) if you can help. Thank you.

## Flower Show Photographic Class

We are pleased to announce that we are reintroducing the photographic class for this year's show, the categories are -  
Autumn Colours; Wildlife; The Joys of Spring

## EMGS Garden Days Out in 2024

For 2024, we have chosen to visit West Dean Gardens near Chichester and Waterperry Gardens, near Oxford. Both offer a wide range of interesting features, a good café and are within easy travelling distance. We'll leave by coach as usual from the Marquis of Granby car park. We look forward to seeing you. Everyone is welcome so do bring friends too.

### **Tuesday June 4 – West Dean Botanical Garden, Chichester, W Sussex. An early summer delight.**

Nestled at the foot of the South Downs, West Dean Gardens in West Sussex is one of the greatest restored gardens open to the public today. Visitors can explore a wide range of historic features on a gentle walk around the grounds. From surreal trees to the restored walled garden, West Dean Gardens proudly presents its rich creative and social heritage.

An impressive collection of working Victorian Glasshouses, a 300-foot pergola, a spring garden with flint bridges and the occasional fibreglass tree offer year-round interest to garden visitors.

The cost of the day, which includes entry to the garden is £56. Booking Form attached to this email.

Find out more at <https://www.westdean.ac.uk/gardens>

### **Friday Sept 27 - Waterperry Gardens, Oxfordshire. Fabulous autumn asters, and much more**

Made famous by Beatrix Havergal who established and ran her *School of Horticulture for Ladies* here from 1932 to 1971. It's now home to 8 acres of beautifully landscaped ornamental gardens, a quality plant centre and garden shop, gallery and gift shop, museum, and tea shop. We have chosen the date on the advice of the Head Gardener so that hopefully we will see the best display of their outstandingly 'blousy' Waterperry asters.

Our day includes access to the grounds, plant shop, gift barn, gallery, and café. By visiting on a Friday, the ornamental garden is free with a current RHS card, and there is an afternoon house fresco tour too.

The cost of the day is £45. The ornamental garden is free with an RHS card, or 11:50 and entry is optional. The afternoon fresco tour, also optional, is £5.00.

Find out more: <https://www.waterperrygardens.co.uk/>

## Trading Depot

The Depot has now reopened after the Christmas break (Sunday mornings from 9am until 11am). There is a good supply of composts, manure, etc and packets of summer plants. The plug plants should be delivered in March, and we will notify when they are available at the Depot.

## A Homemade Garden trough using Hypertufa

Old Belfast sinks coated with the following mix make attractive garden troughs especially for alpines. Wash and dry the sink then paint it with Unibond Adhesive. Spread over an inch (2.5cm) deep a mixture of 3 parts sand with 2 parts peat, one part Portland cement and just enough water to make it tacky. The peat will encourage moss and lichen. You can speed up the process by painting it with sour milk!

The Alpine Society website has greater detail and more updated instructions using bark instead of peat. [www.alpinegardensociety.net](http://www.alpinegardensociety.net)

## Open day at the Home of Compassion

The Home of Compassion, Thames Ditton are holding an open day on the 16 March 2024 10am – 4pm. Have a tour of the home and enjoy a complimentary brunch or afternoon canapes.