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Charlton & Blackheath
Amateur Horticultural Society
Founded 1950

www.cabahs.wordpress.com

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2021

Grow Friends, Grow Fit ... Grow a Garden!

This month we welcome award -winning gardening journalist Adam Pasco who will talk to us about creating a garden for all seasons. Many members will be familiar with Adam through his work on BBC Gardener's World magazine and his contribution to horticulture in a range of areas.

As galleries and museums re-open, the Royal Academy is holding a show of works by David Hockney appropriately titled *The Arrival of Spring, Normandy, 2020*. (from May 23rd). Whether or not you like Hockney's work there is a joyous celebration in these images, much needed by us all at the moment.



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Although the spring sunshine can be very warm, we have had some very chilly nights and, despite the protection afforded by the walls around my garden, the frost has got in and damaged several of my plants, including Hosta Empress Wu, which had put on some very strong new growth. She will not recover, I fear.

Our first "real" event of the year was held at Charlton House yesterday, when the walled gardens opened for the first time in over a year and we hosted a "Bunnies in the Beds" late Easter trail for the children. The event was held jointly with Royal Greenwich Heritage Trust and the Old Pond Garden volunteers and we had about 450 visitors through the gardens, so I think you could say it was successful! We had a small plant sale which raised £317 and the Trust's donation boxes collected £130, which will be directed back into the gardens. The volunteers worked incredibly hard to create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, with a real community spirit. With brilliant timing, our event coincided with the Green Goddess pop-up pub, Chealsons who serve coffee from the back of a Black Cab and Balkan Bakes for snacks.

This was the first time we used the Long Border garden for an event and it worked so well that we are now confident that our big Plant Sale on **May 30th** will go well. Please bear that date in mind for growing on your spare plants to donate, for helping on the day and for coming along to buy! The Blackheath & Greenwich WI will be selling cakes alongside us, very tempting.

As part of the information displays on Sunday, we asked Pauline, of the Greenwich Collection & Archive, for any photos of the gardens which she could find, and she came up with the amazing photograph below. It is clear that this features none other than the Old Pond Garden! We only know the photo was part of a fashion shoot in the 50's for Hardy Amies, we will forward you more information when we find it.



Gardeners World magazine - this month includes a very useful “2 for1” card for savings when visiting many gardens, so even if you don't buy the magazine regularly, perhaps buy this one. There is also a very good article/quiz to find out how pollinator-friendly your garden is, with some useful ideas.

Gardening notes

- **Hever Castle and Gardens** have their annual tulip display from 12-25 April, 10.30 - 4.00.
- The **RHS** is inviting people to become ‘citizen scientists’ by recording sightings of garden pests which will in turn help science teams. Visit rhs.org.uk/helpourresearch.
- ‘**Dear Friend and Gardener**’ a collection of letters between the late Christopher Lloyd and Beth Chatto is being re-released. Published by Aurum Press at £9.99.
- Do continue to check **RHS** podcasts, The **London Gardens Trust** lecture series and Garden Masterclass websites for details of their events.

Please check out our website for further activities to get involved in.

Pat's10 jobs for April:

1. Make sure to inspect roses for aphids which congregate at the tip of shoots.
2. Sow annuals this month direct such as Ammi and Larkspur into finely cultivated soil and make sure to label. I'm forever digging over where I've sown seeds.
3. You can now plant container grown trees and shrubs, water well and make sure the first flare of roots is just below the surface. Add a mulch and a little plant food.

4. Plant out sweet peas making sure to pinch out shoots. They take a while to settle before they get going when they will need tying in to their supports.
5. Move self sown seedlings such as foxgloves to better places and water well. I found a crop of tiny thalictrum seedlings which I hope to nurture and grow on.
6. Prune shrubby herbs such as thyme and sage to keep them compact and trim lavender to prevent it from becoming woody and leggy.
7. Divide agapanthus if flowering has declined in pots. Replant into John Innes No 2 with added grit but don't overpot or they will fail to flower.
8. Cut slightly tender perennials such as penstemon and verbena bonariensis down to new shoots on last year's growth.
9. Sow runner beans, pumpkin and squash towards the end of the month under glass and prick out tomatoes, but you will need somewhere warm to keep them until this cold spell is over.
10. If you have room consider adding bird friendly shrubs such as holly and pyracantha to provide shelter from predators and berries for food later on in the season.

And hope for some warmer weather soon ... don't forget to protect those seedlings!

Finally, I am sorry to bring you the news that Jane Dyer has died, after a short illness. She was a very long-standing member of our Horticultural Society, served on the Committee, was the Show Secretary for many years (when we had a proper show!) and in recent years ran the raffle. Her name featured on the Show Table cup for many years, evidence of her garden skills and dedication to the Society. Last year Jane donated her prized RHS Banksian medal from 1986, and her Bronze medal from the National Rose Society to the CABAHS history project. She was a well-known face to many members and will be missed.



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