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Charlton & Blackheath
Amateur Horticultural Society
Founded 1950



www.cabahs.wordpress.com

NEWSLETTER May 2023

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

Our next meeting will be on Monday 15 May at 7.30pm at **Charlton House Old Library**. Dr John Hughes will be talking about the famous sub-tropical gardens at Tresco Abbey in the Scilly Isles. Dr Hughes will be bringing along a few plants for sale. There will be a show table with a prize for "Best on the Table" along with a raffle. Refreshments will be provided by Frilly's Café. See below for information about some great summer trips. Anna will have more details and would like you to sign up to any that interest you.

Acting Chair

You might have already noticed a new name at the top of this Newsletter. At the committee meeting on Tuesday 9 May, Stella Butler (your newsletter editor) was elected to stand in as Acting Chair until the next AGM. I joined the committee last autumn and so still have much to learn but I am looking forward to the challenge and pleased to be helping out in this way. I moved to Blackheath in 2018 and was delighted to discover CABAHS on a visit to the Old Pond Garden at Charlton House in summer 2020 when the world began to open up again. The plant sales have been fantastic for my garden which is still very much in the making. I have been volunteering at the lovely OPG since I retired a couple of years ago and appreciate the friendships made and the skills learnt!

Dates for Your Diary

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| Sunday 21 May | Charlton House: Plant Sale and Community Day. 11am to 3pm
Stalls will include WI, Charlton Society, Blackheath Flower Club
Friends of Charlton Park, CCRA and Charlton Neighbourhood Forum..
Tours and talks at Luke's Church and the Producers Market |
| Friday 9 June | Fulham Palace and Gardens (the former home of the Bishops of London):
We will meet once again at Cannon Street Mainline Station, taking the
District Line to Putney Bridge, then a six-minute walk to our destination.
Entry free to house and gardens but an online (free) booking is required if
you want to tour the house. Please sign up on Monday evening. |
| Saturday 15 July | Great Dixter: Shared cars for travelling to this world-famous
garden. Please sign up Monday evening - use the first column for sharing
your car and second column if you require a lift. |
| Thursday 7 September | RHS Wisley Flower Show: This horticultural festival, 5-10 September
(commercial plant stalls) will be fantastic and the World Food Garden will
be looking its best, showcasing over 140 veg/fruit species and its harvest |

on display for all to see. You'll be able to actually enjoy refreshments amongst the vegetables beds. Details to follow.

Members Trip to Petersham House 23 April

Our first outing of the year was to Petersham House and Nurseries on Sunday 23 April. This was Petersham's only opening for their private garden in 2023, under the National Gardens' Scheme, listed in the famous Yellow Book. It was a great day out, with members enjoying the array of stunning tulips within the borders, with yew-hedging 'rooms' acting as a contrasting background. We enjoyed being in the cosy and bustling greenhouses for refreshments and chat and some of us were very tempted by the enormous array of gardening goods for sale within the glasshouses and outdoors. To finish the afternoon off the more energetic members strolled along the beautiful riverside back to the station.

Read more and see pictures of these fantastic gardens at <https://cabahs.com/2023/05/08/members-trip-to-petersham-house-and-nursery-23rd-april-2023/>

Out and About..

- Charlton Community Gardens are holding a plant sale at three of their members gardens on Thursday 18 May from 5pm. <http://charltoncommunitygardens.org.uk/>
- RHS Chelsea Flower Show Tuesday-Saturday 23-27 May. Promises to be the usual stand-out festival of everything gardening. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show>
- May is a great time to take a walk through London's 'Pocket' Parks: start at St Paul's follow the London Wall pass through 15 parks and end up at Tower Hill <https://londonist.com/london/great-outdoors/a-walk-through-the-city-of-london-s-pocket-parks>

Pat's 10 jobs for May

1. Pulmonaria start to look untidy around now so cut back hard to encourage a new flush of fresh foliage.
2. Cannas and dahlias can be hardened off now (put out in the day and bring in at night) ready for planting out but look out for slugs and snails.
3. Tie in shoots of clematis and sweet peas to their supports as they are making very fast growth. I tend to Chelsea chop clematis around now which makes for more bushy plants.
4. Prune spring flowering shrubs now immediately after flowering cutting out very old stems. A lot of the leaves on shrubs this winter got frost damaged so try cutting them out then feed and top dress with compost around base of the shrub.
5. You can now direct sow hardy annual such as sunflowers and nasturtiums although resulting seedlings are beloved by slugs.
6. If you don't wish to share your soft fruit harvest with the birds protect bushes now with soft netting so that birds don't get caught.
7. Sow climbing, runner and French beans now under cover. The nights have been so cold I have yet to do mine but hopefully they will catch up.
8. Earth up potatoes whether in the ground or in pots as growth comes through and keep watered.
9. Make sure to sow things like Limnanthes the poached egg plant and Calendula which are wonderful for pollinators and add great colour to the garden.
10. Many UK moths take flight in May and they'll be attracted to any night scented flowers you may have such as jasmine and honeysuckle. My Lonicera americana is in full flower now so try and have something available to encourage them.

May Plant of the Month: *Lunaria rediviva* (perennial honesty) from Anna

My display of annual honesty (*Lunaria annua*) has been extremely poor this year because I forgot to transplant last year's seedlings to more suitable locations where they would have had room to thrive and bloom in richer soils. However, I do have an 'ace' up my sleeve and that is their 'cousin', the perennial honesty which I can rely on year-on-year. This is an underrated perennial and should be more well known. At the moment it is the star in my garden, with delicately-scented, pale mauve flowers held aloft from their large, soft-green, heart-shaped and beautifully veined leaves. This is a clump-forming plant, reaching a height of about 60-90cm and mine really needs to be divided next spring (if I remember), looking gorgeous growing in partial shade surrounded by lower-growing *Lamium maculatum*, Maidenhair fern, *Euphorbia robbiae* etc. After a long flowering period, elliptical, papery seed heads will form in the autumn which is an added bonus. This perennial is another very worthy recipient of the RHS's Award of Garden Merit and I wouldn't be without it. I do, however, have to share it with the slugs and snails!



Pat remembers Doreen Gunning

Some of you will remember Doreen Gunning who died recently and whose funeral took place last Thursday at St Luke's in Charlton. Doreen was a very active member of CABAHS who organised her own coach trips to the Thriplow Daffodil Festival each year and to Great Dixter and other places and were always well organised until she had to give up to care for her husband. Fond memories.

On the CABAHS website....

(If clicking through a problem, copy the URL into your browser search bar)

- Get details of all the winners at the Spring Show and see Sharon's "Perfect Pot of Pipits" which won "Best in Show" as well as pot plants, shrubs and vases of spring flowers...
<https://cabahs.com/2023/04/19/spring-show-2023/>
- **Read about Anna's visit to the Salters' Garden, City of London.**
The City of London is a wonderful place to explore and is full of hidden- away gardens for us to access. We came upon this garden in early spring when we were meandering (slightly lost, really) towards the Barbican to visit the Conservatory. Salters' Gardens is one such hidden-away space originally built in 1981 to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the Worshipful Company of Salters....
<https://cabahs.com/2023/05/13/anna-visits-salters-garden/>
- **Enjoy Carolyn H's lovely pictures of Springtime at Sissinghurst** including colourful tulips...
<https://cabahs.com/2023/04/24/springtime-at-sissinghurst/>

Happy gardening all!
Contact us on: cabahshortisoc@gmail.com