

# HARTLEY & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SPRING NEWSLETTER 2021

Please consider receiving newsletters, news and updates by email - send an email to Jenny G:

[hartleyhortsoc@gmail.com](mailto:hartleyhortsoc@gmail.com)

See our website for photos and news:

[www.hartleyhortsoc.org.uk](http://www.hartleyhortsoc.org.uk)



WANTED - information/photographs to share with our members in our Summer newsletter and website - please email me: [suezoghob@hotmail.com](mailto:suezoghob@hotmail.com)

**Wishing you all a very Happy Easter and Happy Gardening.**

The Committee hopes you are all staying safe and well during these unprecedented times.

**From our Chairman** - When we last met in March 2020 I was aware that a serious illness had broken out in China, but I had no idea then of the impact it would have on us and that we would still be closed down over a year later.

I am very pleased to let you know that we have booked a Zoom talk (details below) for the end of March 2021 to kick start this year's programme. Unfortunately, we have now had to cancel our April, May and June Meetings. Hopefully, Boris's roadmap will be successful, and we can resume normal service in July.

With so much uncertainty we will not be publishing our normal programme booklet this year but will continue to send out newsletters. Please make a note of dates of events from the newsletters.

I hope that you are all well and are now beginning to enjoy the warmer, sunnier weather in your gardens. It would be great to celebrate some form of normality by having a bumper Show in September with lots of flowers, fruit and vegetables-fruits of your labours. In the mean-time take care and see you soon. **Jenny R**

**Zoom Talks:** We have arranged a free online Zoom talk for members at **7.30pm on Wednesday 31 March**. The talk, '**Spring into Action and Get Set for Summer**', will be given by **Adam Pasco**, gardening journalist and former editor of 'BBC Gardeners World' magazine. Jenny G will send details and the meeting link to everyone on our email list. Please send a note to Jenny at [hartleyhortsoc@gmail.com](mailto:hartleyhortsoc@gmail.com) if you would like to receive our emails but are not currently on this list.

Our friends in **Chalk Gardeners Club** have also arranged Zoom speakers and have kindly offered our members the chance to join them. Jenny G will again send full details of these to our email list. Please send a note to Jenny at [hartleyhortsoc@gmail.com](mailto:hartleyhortsoc@gmail.com) if you would like to receive our emails but are not currently on this list.

**Summer Photo Competition** - photo of a group of ONE TYPE of outdoor Spring-flowering bulbs (eg daffodils, tulips, crocuses) Send your pictures to [suezoghob@hotmail.com](mailto:suezoghob@hotmail.com) by beginning of May and I will post them on our website – [www.hartleyhortsoc.org.uk](http://www.hartleyhortsoc.org.uk) Prize for the best photo

**Plant sale/swap and book sale/swap on 23 June 2021** if covid rules permit – more details in Summer newsletter – you might like to start growing some plants for this.

## Autumn Show Competition- Growing a Ginger Plant from a store-bought rhizome of Ginger

Ginger is a tropical plant that requires warmth, moisture and lots of nutrients. Give it the right conditions and you should have a lovely plant by the end of the summer.

There are many ways of growing it successfully. We suggest something like the following;-

1. Buy a good-sized piece of root ginger from the supermarket, say 4" with nodules on as potential shoots.
2. Place in warm water in a light warm place. Refresh the water regularly until you have some green shoots with roots attached.
3. Break off the green shoots very carefully with the attached roots. Discard any of the ginger that has not grown. Plant in a pot no bigger than 10" or 25cms in diameter, (7.5litres) containing good compost. The pot size is so we can put them onto tables to show.
4. Keep well-watered but not flooded in a warm place where it should grow rapidly.
5. Bring it along to the Autumn Show for judging-a prize is available for the best plant.
6. Before the Winter take the root out and use it as fresh ginger in your favourite dish. As a food it is very good for you.

Potentially they could be started at any time, but you do not want them growing too well before the first frosts when they could go outside in a sheltered spot. Mid-April would be about right and it would give everybody the same starting point.

**RHS joining offer:** enjoy 12 months for the price of 9\* Visit [rhs.org.uk/join/4004](https://rhs.org.uk/join/4004)

This is an Introductory offer payable by annual Direct Debit.

To see the latest in Community Gardening subscribe to the **RHS Blooming Brilliant News email** as we are an affiliated RHS group <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/d/3B2A40EB10594988>

**Sad news** - my father Fred Colechin died peacefully at home in February. He has been a member of the society for many years and some of you may remember him when he and my late mother Sheila owned Fairby Stores and Post Office. Sue Z

### Volunteering at Emmetts Garden by Janet Mace

I first started volunteering for the National Trust in the early 1990s. My children were both at school, and I hadn't yet returned to the paid workplace. I spent two years as a room steward at Ightham Mote, working one morning each week, and can remember saying, when I told them I had too many other commitments to be able to continue, that I would come back to the National Trust when I retired.



So eight years ago, I wandered round the National Trust Volunteering website looking for opportunities, and found they were setting up a new Monday gardening team at Emmetts. I met a very eclectic bunch of people on the first day I started, some of whom are now very firm friends. It was trying to snow that January day in 2013, and we were clearing some overgrown holly from one of the paths that leads to the bluebell woods. We dragged the branches to the bonfire – I felt like it was something from one of those old Christmas films!

Frederic Lubbock (1844-1927) bought Emmetts in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and set about creating the garden. He made a huge collection of trees and shrubs, much of which we can see today in the way he envisaged. There is often work going on which involves opening up views, etc.

I can't count all the different jobs I've done as a garden volunteer, but here are just a few highlights. The toughest job each year is the planting of the tulip bulbs amongst the cherry trees. Several thousand new bulbs are planted each November into hard, grassy, stony soil. **Tulipa 'Kingsblood'**,

'Pink Diamond' and 'Queen of the Night' are the three tulips which make up the 'lollipop' display of red, pink and black tulips under the flowering cherry trees. Frederic Lubbock was keen to display his collections in new and innovative ways. Old photographs exist to show that he established the tulip meadow before 1910 and in recent years this planting has been re-created. In 2014, 30 new cherry trees (*Prunus* 'Fugenzo') were planted.

A much gentler job involves picking a few plant and flower specimens on some Monday mornings for display in the Visitor Centre. We like to try to give visitors an early taste of what they might discover in the gardens. This delightful little task may go hand in hand with a bit of litter picking, sad but necessary.

By far the most common job is weeding! I'm sure you all know how laborious, yet vital this job is, and when several of us are working together, we can get an amazing amount done. If you come as a visitor, you may occasionally hear peals of laughter and chatter from the gardeners!

My favourite area in the garden has to be the rose garden. It is one of the highlights of June. It was originally created by Frederic Lubbock to provide a place of peace and loveliness for his beloved wife Catherine. She had a passion for pink roses, which is reflected in the planting today. The 21<sup>st</sup> century restoration commemorates the death of Octavia Hill (1838-1912), a pioneering woman who was one of the founders of the National Trust. She lived nearby at Ide Hill. There are always roses to deadhead from June right through to October. It's a privilege to be trusted to prune the roses, both in the autumn after flowering, and then again in the spring.



There has been a limited amount of volunteering happening over the last twelve months, with very strict hygiene procedures in place, to make sure for instance that we handle just our own tools, not anyone else's. I can't wait to be able to get back again, hopefully by bluebell time! **Janet**

### **Ribes Laurifolium**



Enid found this treasure 'lurking' behind a buddleia which should have been cut down by now. This is *ribes laurifolia*. Isn't it gorgeous? We don't even see it in bud - it just appears!

Happy Gardening  
Sue Z - [suezoghob@hotmail.com](mailto:suezoghob@hotmail.com)