



Tilehurst Horticultural Association

Newsletter April - June 2018

Dates for your Diary

21 April	Beanpole Day Plant Stall at Caversham Court Gardens
26 April	Talk by Linda Petrons - Gardens for Childrens' Hospices 7.45 p.m. in Village Hall
6 May	NEW! Plant Stall at Beanpole Day Event at Discovery Centre Thatcham
7 May	May Bank Holiday Shed Opening 10.00 a.m. until 12 Noon, Gratwicke Road
31 May	Gardeners' Roadshow 7.30 p.m. Village Hall
9 June	RBH League of Friends Fete Plant Stall at Victoria Rec

Alec Simmons



It was with some sadness that I learnt that Alec had finally lost his battle with ill health.

A member of the THA for over 30 years, Chairman for 6, then President for 7. He was a gentleman, with unfailing wit, enthusiasm and tenacity.

I remember the first Plant Sales stall that the THA had at the Village Fete; it was mainly just Alec and me, the majority of plants being mine. A long, tiring day at the end of which we made very little money, Alec said that he would happily have written a cheque rather than have to go through that. But it

didn't stop him, and look what the THA now earns from plant sales; but it could have ended there. As I said, tenacity.

He will always be part of the THA through the Alec Simmons Trophy, which was purchased upon his retirement as President, in recognition of his contribution to the success of the THA.

(By our President Lynne Jones)

2018 AGM Report

Terry Bryant has retired as Chairman and from the Committee, as has Show Secretary Sheila Cox and Committee Member Teresa Brown.

Our new Chairman is Christine Imber. Three new Committee Members were elected - Angie Cox, Claire O'Brien and Matt Ordidge. Claire was also confirmed as our new Show Secretary.

Our Treasurer, Colin Robinson, announced his intention to stand down at the next AGM and we are therefore seeking a new Treasurer to learn the ropes during this year.

The Chairman's report, and that of the Treasurer, drew attention to the fact that usage of the Trading Sheds appears to be in decline. Trade at Oak Tree Road has enjoyed a resurgence, thanks to noticeboards outside the shed, but at Gratwicke Road, and indeed overall, the level of trading has dropped. Members are urged to support the sheds by making use of them. Our financial position is, however, sound, boosted by the income from our Plant Sales.

The Show Secretary announced that, following input from a Focus Group set up to rekindle interest in the Show, changes have been made to sponsorship.

Trading Sheds - Opening times -

Sunday - Gratwicke Road: February, August, September, October & November 10.00 – 11.00hrs

March- July 10.00 – 12.00hrs - December and January closed.

Saturday - Oak Tree Road: March – July 10.00hrs – 12.00hrs .September – 10.00 – 11.00hrs, Closed all other times and for the whole month of August.

The main sponsor of this year's Show will be local estate agency **AM Property Management**. We are looking for members with properties in prominent Tilehurst positions who would be willing to have a board in their garden advertising our Show. Please contact the Show Secretary on show.tilehurstha@gmail.com if you would be interested in participating. There will also be opportunities for businesses to sponsor classes on the Show tables.

The Committee will be reviewing our data protection procedures in the light of the new General Data Protection Regulation which comes in on 25 May 2018.

Plant Stalls 2018

21 April - Beanpole Day, Caversham Court Gardens, 10.00 a.m. until 3.00 p.m. Contact: Pauline Sinclair Tel 9453658

6 May - Beanpole Day, Discovery Centre, Thatcham 10.30 a.m. until 3.30 p.m. Contact: Pauline Sinclair Tel. 9453658

9 June - RBH League of Friends Fete, Victoria Rec, Tilehurst 11.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m. Contact: Sylvia Hickman Tel 9429947



We are asking for your support with contributions of plants for all of these events; any surplus seedlings or perennial plants are welcome. Thank you if you took away runner beans from the AGM to grow for us and we look forward to receiving the results. Please bring plants to the stall on the day if you are there, or contact Pauline or Sylvia for drop-off arrangements beforehand. We would also be delighted to see you if you can spare some time to wear the green apron for the THA and help man any of the stalls on the day!

Gardeners' Roadshow

Our May meeting this year will take the form of a Gardeners' Roadshow, when you will have the opportunity to bring your gardening questions and problems to our panel of experts. If you don't know what it is, what's wrong with it or how to look after it, please bring your questions, plants, plant material or even a photo and we'll do our best to find the answer for you! There will also be a "Plant Swap" table, so please bring a plant for someone else to take home with them. Of course, the Show Bulletin will also be a feature of our final meeting of this season. Entry £1.00 + a donation for refreshments.

THA Summer Show

Preparations are well underway for our 2018 Summer Show on 4 August. The schedules will be available at our April Talk and online and in both sheds shortly afterwards. Our special class this year is a "Potato in a Pot" which was sold at the AGM, with the winner being the entry on Show Day with the largest weight of potatoes. It's time to start preparing for your Show entries and planting seeds now the weather is warming up. Dahlias will be starting to show signs of growth too; keep checking our Summer Show pages on the THA website for updates and tips.

www.tilehurstha.org.uk/SummerShow2018/SummerShow2018SeasonalTips

For those who follow us on social media, our show hashtag is

#Grow4THAShow

As always, can we remind members on social media to like and follow our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Flanders Fields

The THA is participating in a Festival of Remembrance to commemorate the end of WW1, which will take place at St Mary Magdalen Church on the weekend of 21 & 22 July 2018. www.stmarymagdalen-tilehurst.org/flanders-field
We are creating a display in the central aisle of the church and would be grateful if you can help by donating or "lending" the following types of plants, if possible, in square pots to make it easier to place in the arrangement - grasses, red field poppies, cornflowers, zinnias, herbs.

Rewarding Opportunity for Gardening Volunteers

Prospect Park NHS Hospital is inviting volunteers to help maintain and develop the garden of the hospital's therapy centre. The therapy centre offers sessions of crafts, yoga and other interests to patients and has an attached garden. Volunteers would work at times when the centre was not in use. The hospital, located in Reading, is run by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust which has a well-developed volunteering scheme.

Volunteers would work in the garden and also help the staff with their knowledge of gardening for use in therapy.

Contact: Emma Davies, Therapy Manager, Prospect Park Hospital, Tel: 0118 960 5168
Email: emma.davies@berkshire.nhs.uk

Discount for Members

Charlton Garden Centre, Charlton Road, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8EP, have agreed to give a 10% discount on most items to members who are personal shoppers (not telephone or internet orders) at their garden centre. Please note this is not applicable for purchases from their florist business, or for vouchers. To get the discount, members must show their membership card and quote the code TIL000 before their purchases are rung up on the till. Thanks to Christine and Ken Imber for recommending this company to us; they have a particularly good range of seed potatoes.
www.charltongardencompany.co.uk/

Gee Tee Bulb Company - Online bulb company. Use the voucher code TOP-UP at the checkout to get a 10% discount. www.gee-tee.co.uk/

If you can recommend a local, or online business that may be happy to offer us a discount, please let us know.

Peat Free Compost

We have recently taken delivery of a small amount of peat free compost. This is in 50ltr bags of New Horizon compost and will be sold at £5.50 per bag. From our own market research this would seem to

be a competitive price for a peat free compost. We would be interested to gauge the demand for this compost and whether we should stock more in the future. We would also be interested to hear of your success (or otherwise) using peat free compost. Feedback can be provided via the newsletter e-mail newsletter.tilehurstha@gmail.com or speak with a committee member.

Royal County of Berkshire Show

The Association is once again planning to put an entry into the Inter Village Competition at the Show which will take place on 15 and 16 September.

It is hoped to give further details of progress in the next newsletter.

April Talk – 26 April

Linda Petrons from Greenfingers will talk about Gardens for Children's Hospices. It is planned that in addition to the normal tea and biscuits we would offer a tea or coffee together with homemade cake for £1. The proceeds from the refreshments together with the raffle proceeds will be donated to this very worthwhile charity.

The Trading Sheds

We are always actively looking for volunteers to help in the sheds as cashiers and helpers on Saturday at Oak Tree Road and Sunday at Gratwicke Road. If you feel you could help please contact one of the committee members or drop us an e-mail or phone Nigel Turner on 0118 9414102.

Newsletter

Copy for the next newsletter is required by 12 June.



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