



Grayshott Gardeners

Newsletter

March 2024

From the Main Committee

As a small child I remember my father digging over the wilderness that was our back garden and creating a fruit and vegetable garden. What was interesting was that the surrounding houses were all laid to lawn and gradually our neighbours started growing their own produce by seeing what was achievable and by asking for his advice when they weren't sure. This was a lasting lesson in seeing what others have done and taking inspiration from it. Even now I will walk past gardens and stop to admire something or spot a plant/shrub that I want to know more about.

Nothing beats visiting a garden, seeing things up close and having someone to talk to about them. This for me is the joy of visiting gardens everywhere and seeing how others make use of their space.

Hidden Gardens is a case in point. Hopefully over the next year or so, you will join me in visiting different gardens and taking inspiration/ideas from them or just enjoy the experience of being there. Chinthurst Lodge is now full, but I am creating a waiting list, just in case a few people can't come and very shortly I will be announcing the date and details of a visit to [Greyfriars Vineyard](#) in September.

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing some of you at the Pruning Workshop and at the next meeting in March.

Carmen Harvey-Browne



Subscriptions

We would like to remind Members that Subscription renewals should have been paid by **end of February**. The earlier they are paid the better it is for the Club. In order to receive your 2024 Membership card, with **discount offers** and your Handbook with all the information about the varied and interesting lectures, activities and the Schedules for the Spring and Summer Shows we need your subscription.

The BACS payment A/C is:

Account name: Grayshott Gardeners

Sort Code: 30-93-94

Account number: 00806355

Reference: Subs

CHEQUE PAYMENTS to be paid to Grayshott Gardeners and sent to:
*Jane Jones, 2 The Brae, Glen Road,
Grayshott, Surrey GU26 6NF*

Pruning Workshop - 2nd March

We are looking forward to an interesting and informative workshop with [David Hurrion](#) this weekend.



Stop Press:

There are a couple of last minute places on the afternoon session so be quick and get in touch if you would like a slot:

Carmen Harvey-Browne –

events@grayshottgardeners.net

Spring Show

Finally, spring is just around the corner and the garden is awakening after the long, wet winter. Daffodils, snowdrops, camellias and hellebores have been out in flower for a while now – it's such a joy to have some colour back in the garden. I really love hellebores, but their flowers tend to nod downwards so you need to lift the heads up gently to fully appreciate their beauty.

When we first joined Grayshott Gardeners I decided to enter my hellebores into the Spring Show and noted that they should be displayed in a box which would be provided. A box? What type of a box? Hmmm! I didn't find out until the day of the show when I arrived with my six hellebore flowers and solved the mystery. What I SHOULD have done was to have read the 'Advice for Exhibitors' in the GG Handbook! There is a wealth of advice there including a description of the box! Pansies and violas are also displayed using a box and its black lid shows the flowers off to great advantage. The Show Rules are on page 7 of the 2024 handbook while the Advice for Exhibitors are on page 8.



Remember too that the shows aren't just for flowers, vegetables and plants as there are also classes for home produce, photography and even craft. There's something for everyone!

I mentioned the forthcoming Flower Arranging workshops to you in the last newsletter:

Flower Arranging Workshops

Monday 4th and 11th March

10am – 12 noon

Held at Sue Erler's House in Grayshott

Book via Carmen:

events@grayshottgardeners.net

Don't worry – I don't know where Sue lives either! Directions and further details will be emailed to you – in the meantime, book your space now. We'll be able to try out our new skills at the Spring Show by entering the Class 51: For Novices - 'Take 5 Flowers'.

As a thank-you for entering the Spring Show, and also as a bit of fun, all entrants will be given a free fuchsia with a view to displaying everyone's at the September club night.

Plant of the Month

Camellia



C. 'Lily Pons'

The acid soils of Grayshott suit both Rhododendrons and Camellias. Camellias belong to the family Theaceae (including “tea”) and originate from tropical and sub-tropical areas of East and South Asia, the Himalayas, China and Japan.

They have been cultivated in China for centuries but were not introduced into England until 1739. There are over 200 different species and some 26,000 cultivars. Colours range from the purest white through cream, pale yellow, pink to dark red, with the bright yellow stamens.



variety unknown



C. 'Charlotte de Rothschild'

Camellias range in size from shrubs to 50-60 feet tall. They are easy to cultivate, relatively slow growing, long-lived evergreens and require little attention other than deadheading and a light pruning after flowering to maintain their shape. Camellias will thrive in sun and shade, but in drought conditions may drop next year's buds.

C. sasanqua flowers early from December to January whilst C. japonica and C. williamsii hybrids flower prolifically in February – March.



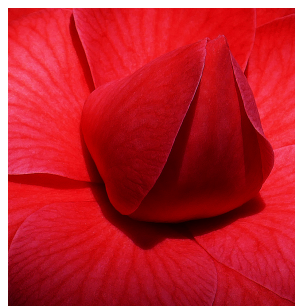
C. 'Ave Maria'



C. sasanqua 'Yoimachi'

Most are frost hardy, but we have lost C. transnokoensis to frost when grown in a pot. Camellias dislike cold winds and early morning sun.

Camellias may be propagated from semi-ripe cuttings in summer and hardwood cuttings in winter. Camellias grown from seed are unlikely to be true to type. The main disadvantage is that the delicate petals, especially the white and pale varieties can get badly discoloured after frost or heavy rain.



Camilla in bud



C. 'Charlotte de Rothschild' in a pot

To have Camellias in a Grayshott garden, it is a risk worth taking.... and you can always enter in the Spring Show!

Project 500

Our target was to raise £500 from the sale of snowdrops during the winter. Thanks to the very generous support from our members and visitors who bought every snowdrop taken to our meetings, you raised **£700** in total for our club funds and a delighted Hon. Treasurer. Thank you everybody!



Gordon Rae VMH

February Meeting

Darren Everest

Specialist Dahlia & Sweet Pea grower

'Sweet Peas'

Grayshott Gardeners were treated to an informative and amusing talk by Darren Everest on how he came to cultivate and show sweet peas and about the rivalry of showing sweet peas between him and his father.

We were treated to a detailed description of how to display blooms for show purposes, how side shoots need to be taken off to get the best blooms on straight stems, and making sure they are not water damaged in transportation to avoid water marks. He illustrated how to show sweet peas using his preferred method of fifteen stems in a vase for exhibiting nationally. Starting with seven stems at the back of a display, five in the middle and three at the front.

Lots more tips and information on how to grow sweet peas can be found on Darren's website <https://www.darreneverestsweetpeas.co.uk/>



Sue Wheeler (Programme Secretary) & Darren

More details of the presentation and additional photos can be found on our website

www.grayshottgardeners.net

March Meeting

It is our great pleasure to welcome

Tony Kirkham

Former Head of Arboretum, Gardens & Horticultural Services, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

to the club this month for our

[Keynote lecture](#)

'Trees a cut above the rest'



Tony joined Kew as a supervisor after completing a diploma course there.

Over the next 43 years he was responsible for the development of the arboretum into the world-class venue it is today, caring for over 14,000 specimens.

Well known through many books, articles and television programmes, his infectious enthusiasm for all things arboricultural has won him a place in the hearts of the general public.

Do come along and join us for what promises to be a very entertaining evening.

The meeting will be held in

Grayshott Village Hall

Wednesday 13th March 2024

Free light refreshments

Raffle

Doors open at 7.15pm ready for the meeting to begin at 8pm.

Jobs for this month

Gardening in March

(excerpts taken from the RHS website)

Spring usually arrives by mid-March and the frequent sunny days provide the opportunity for an increasing range of gardening tasks. It's time to get busy preparing seed beds, sowing seed, cutting back winter shrubs and generally tidying up around the garden.

1. Prune bush and climbing roses

These general tips for rose pruning will help you improve the health and lifespan of any rose.

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/roses/pruning-guide>



2. Plant shallots, onion sets and early potatoes

Onions are such a versatile vegetable – they feature in so many recipes, and growing your own means you'll always have them to hand.



3. Plant summer-flowering bulbs

Bulbs make a fine display planted in containers or borders, especially daffodils, snowdrops and tulips in spring. They are one of the easiest and most rewarding garden plants to grow.



More Jobs for this month

Lift and divide overgrown clumps of perennials

Top dress containers with fresh compost

Mow the lawn on dry days (if needed)

Cut back Cornus (dogwood) and Salix (willow) grown for colourful winter stems

Hoe and mulch weeds to keep them under control early

Start feeding fish and using the pond fountain; remove pond heaters

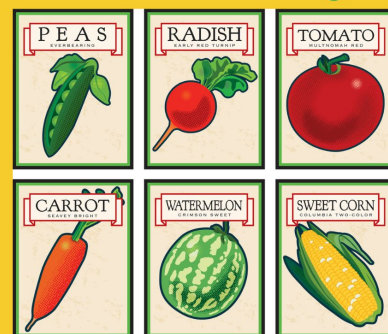
Protect new spring shoots from slugs

In other news...

The Petersfield Seed Swap

Saturday March 9th, 10am - 2pm

Winton House Centre, 18 High Street



Swap seeds & seedlings to try something new

Meet fellow gardeners in a friendly setting

Gain gardening advice from experts & local organisations

Join gardening workshops

Be inspired for the upcoming growing season

What will you grow this year?

www.growingtogether-pod.com

