



WHALEY BRIDGE Allotment & Gardeners' Society



JANUARY 2020

Happy New Year, after the winter solstice the shoots of spring bulbs are bringing the first signs of the Spring to come. Snowdrops and primroses are flowering in my garden and, strangely, a Lewisii that I bought from Aldi 3 years ago is covered in flowers.



Coming events.

Here are just a few dates to add to your diary but full details will be included in the diary of events produced by Bob and Rosemary.

Our usual review of last year's trips will be presented by Bob in his slideshow and social meeting at the Uniting Church on Thursday 5th March at 2 p.m. This includes refreshments and a free raffle.

The store opens on Sunday 22nd March from 10 a.m. till 12 a.m. followed by the first Wednesday opening on 25th March from 6 till 7 p.m.

Our first talk of the year will be on Thursday 16th April, 2 p.m. at Whaley Bridge Uniting Church. Sally Hodgson farms at Higher Plainsteads on Monks Road above Glossop. This traditional hill farm runs an Environmental Stewardship and countryside educational access scheme in conjunction with Natural England and welcomes many visitors to the farm. Sally is also a dry stone waller and teacher of this skill. The farm is being managed to restore species rich hay meadows and create habitats for wildlife by conserving dry stone walls, creating scrapes etc. and Sally has seen an increase in ground-nesting species such as plover, curlew and snipe as well as insectivores through sensitive land management.

Our first outing of the year will be on Thursday 21st May. Our morning stop will be at the National Trust property of Chirk Castle. Completed in 1310, this is the last of the castles built by Edward 1st to control the Welsh which is still inhabited today. As well as the medieval towers and dungeons you can visit the C17 rooms inhabited by the Myddelton family and discover the story of the C20 tenant – Lord Howard de Walden.



A stroll through the gardens with clipped yews, herbaceous borders and rock gardens brings you to a terrace with magnificent views across the Shropshire and Cheshire plains. There is a cafe here serving hot and cold food.

We will then visit the nearby Dibley's nursery. This family-run business was established in 1976 and the nursery is situated in a 10 acre arboretum containing many specimen trees and shrubs including rhododendron, sorbus and acers.

Dibleys hold the national collection of Streptocarpus and have won 25 Chelsea gold medals for their plants.

Many of will have seen their stands at RHS shows. Our own member, Annette Dunk, regularly wins prize at our local show for Streptocarpus and these beautiful indoor plants can often be kept in flower for 9 months of the year. This is an RHS partner garden so bring your card if you

are a member; also don't forget your National Trust card if you have one.



Our annual plant swap will be on the morning of Sunday 24th May so don't forget to pot up and label any plants you are giving during your Spring tidy-up or grow a few extra seedlings to bring along and swap. Alternatively just come and pick up a bargain for a small donation.

Our Spring coffee morning and plant stall will take place at the Mechanics Institute on Saturday 30th May.

Membership news.

Our condolences to Mary Nother on the death of her husband Tony.

Last year we made donations of £100 each to the following organisations – the Macclesfield Christie Hospital Project, Whaley Hall in remembrance of our founder member Bob Pierce and Buxton Mountain Rescue Team. Similar donations will be made this year as agreed at our last AGM.

Our membership secretary, Bob, reminds **members who have not yet renewed** that their £5 subs is now **overdue**. It can be paid to

him directly, at meetings or at the store, by cheque, cash or BACS direct bank transfer. **Please don't delay, do it now !**

Allotment news. Whaley Bridge allotments are one of three local groups chosen for the Bags of Help scheme at Tesco. Money is being raised to install raised beds on the plots that continue to be beset with drainage problems. Each time you reuse a bag you are entitled to claim a blue token which can be placed in the voting box near the exit.

Out and about.

For one year only, Whaley Bridge Carnival will be held on Saturday 1st August rather than the last Saturday of June. This is to mark one year on from the Todbrook emergency. Many organisations in the town are planning to work together to provide a celebration so save the date for your diary.

Chapel Garden Society always have an interesting and informative programme of talks held at Chapel Town Hall at 2 p.m. which are free to members and £2 for guests. They start this year's programme with:-

January 29th – Andrew Wetters – Which came first the chicken or the egg.

February 26th – James Elison – A talk on apples.

March 25th – Maureen Sawyer – Hard working plants for small gardens.

April 29th – Barbara Wilkinson – Planning a herb garden.

May 27th – Patrick Harding – Food for free.

There are plant hunters' fairs at Carsington Water on Saturday 14th March, Bramhall Hall on Sunday 5th April and Adlington Hall on Sunday 10th May. These specialist plant fairs provide an opportunity to meet nursery growers and get specialist advice as well as buying something different from the mass produced stock at garden centres. For other events see www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk

John Taylor and Peter Holden will again be opening their delightful cottage garden at 108, Macclesfield Road for the NGS on the 18th and 19th July from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at £3 p.h. I enjoyed a visit last year, there were many good ideas and interesting plants for small gardens and the cake was excellent.



Other local openings include Higher Crossings on Crossings Road, Chapel on Sunday 24th May from 2 till 4 p.m.

Please send any items for inclusion in the next newsletter by the end of March to: aizlewood@sky.com

Happy gardening!