



WHALEY BRIDGE Allotment & Gardeners' Society



MARCH 2018

Spring is here.

The vernal equinox blew in on a bitter easterly wind but, when we brave the outdoors, signs of spring are all around us.



Store news.

To help us prepare for the gardening year the store opens on Sunday 25th March from 10 a.m. to noon for compost, fertiliser and all your gardening sundries. Wednesday openings commence on 28th March 6 till 7 p.m. The latest price list is attached.

Recent events.

WBAGS Report on Social Meeting 15th March 2018

The first meeting of the year was attended by over 20 members and featured the now annual slide show given by Bob Kellock on last year's coach trip garden visits. The first was a visit in May to Don Witton's Euphorbia Allotment near Sheffield

followed by an afternoon in Sheffield Botanical Gardens. The second was in July visiting Bridgemere Garden Centre and Dorothy Clive Garden, and the final one in September a visit to Trentham Gardens. All were blessed with fair weather which will hopefully be the case on trips in 2019. Rosemary organised the refreshments and Roy officiated. To everyone's amazement Dave Parker yet again won a raffle prize.

Coming soon.

Roger has organised a talk on **Thursday 19th April** at 2 p.m. at the Uniting Church. Sarah Witts is the garden manager at the new RHS garden being developed at Bridgewater. It will be fascinating to get an insight into the early planning stages of this garden. I am sure we will follow this up with visits as soon as there is something to see.
Members £2/ guests £3

Our first outing of the year is to **Lea Rhododendron Garden and Forest Garden Centre**. The coach will leave Whaley at 9 a.m. on Thursday 17th May. The gardens should be at their peak and can be explored on well surfaced paths through the woods. Rosemary recommends sensible shoes!



There is a small cafe and plant sales area but the intention is to have lunch at the Tall Trees restaurant at Forest Garden Centre. Bookings to Rosemary £25.

Whilst you are germinating seeds and dividing plants don't forget to prepare a few extras for the **plant swap** at the store on

Sunday 27th May 10 a.m. till noon. Make sure they are potted and labelled and if you can provide a picture or cultivation notes that would save the little grey cells of our sales team.

We have a **coffee morning and plant sale** at the Mechanics institute on **Saturday 2nd June**, 9.30 a.m. Any surplus plants from the swap will be sold. Offers of help, raffle prizes and stall items are appreciated.

Membership news.

We are pleased to welcome new

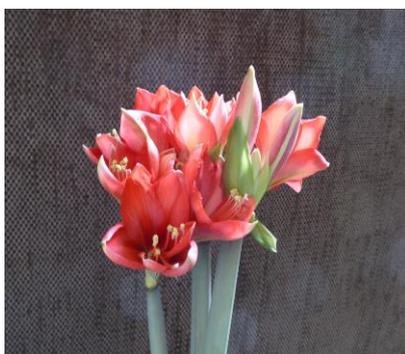
members – Mrs Linda Darby and David Woodward of Whaley and Mrs Lesley Berry from Chapel. Maureen Roberts, who was a member for many years, died on the 2nd March and we extend our sympathy to her family.

The annual subscription of £5 was due in November – please pay Bob or any other committee member or pay at the store if you have overlooked this. Your membership entitles you to use of items from the societies loan scheme and a list of tools available is attached.

Blooming lovely.



I bought amaryllis and hyacinths from our Christmas coffee morning and they have filled the house with scent and colour for three months. Roy and Rosemary make an expedition to the Dutch bulb sellers at Manchester Christmas Markets and hand select large and unusual bulbs.



My apple blossom amaryllis is on its third flower stem and a red/

green variety called Papilio had multiple flower stems at the same time.

Allotment news.

A tree specialist is surveying the safety of trees on the bank at the back of the plots. We will make a donation towards the cost of a skip and ask allotment holders who are not WBAGS members to contribute to the cost (or join the society). A trial plot with raised beds on the wet area was discussed but drainage problems are ongoing. There is a working group that meets regularly with the Town Council to try and resolve issues.

Out and about.

Chapel Garden Society have a talk on April 25th. Trish Khon will talk about her work at Sheffield Botanical Gardens. You may remember from our visit to the gardens that Trish and her husband are creating an area of Himalayan garden. There was an excellent display of mecanopsis on our visit – not a plant that I have much success with.



Any tips gratefully received.

I have recruited a car load to visit the plant hunter fair at Consall Hall – thanks for the company. Details of other local fairs can be found at planthunterfairs.co.uk

The NGS (Yellow Book) have some interesting open gardens in

our local area. The Cascades at Bonsall is open on 15th April. This garden will be the subject of a WBAGS talk by the owner, Alan Clements, on 4th October. Other openings include The Paddock at Chesterfield on 29th April, Tilford House at Ashbourne on 7th May and Higher Crossings at Chapel and Fir Croft Calver on 20th May. Give me a call if you would like a lift on 20th May (01663 733070).

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the local National Trust group have a talk on Biddulph Hall at Chinley Chapel Sunday School on 25th April 10.30 a.m. Guests £5. We will be making a visit to Biddulph Grange on 23rd August.

I will be serving tea/ coffee and cake (hopefully in the garden) from 1.30 p.m. on 9th June at 6, Meadow Close in aid of Chapel Mobile Physiotherapy Service. Please put this date in your diary and support this very worthwhile local charity.

A highlight of my recent trip to Cambodia were the beautiful flowers, shrubs and blossom trees. The lotus is an important Buddhist and Hindu symbol representing purity in body, mind and speech as it is rooted in mud but rises above the murky waters to show its beauty. These lovely flowers which flourish in the Mekong Delta are collected and taken to the temples as offerings.

