



## THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY

Now the soil is finally warming up a turn around our gardens reveals new growth every day. The robins are getting cheekier and I can't seem to fill the bird feeders fast enough.

### COMING EVENTS

**The trip to Maenen Hall** on May 13th is going ahead – speak to Rosemary if you want a last minute seat.

Now is the time to dig up all those self sown seedlings and pot them for the **plant swap** at the Elnor Lane store on Sunday 15th May 10 till 12.

Our first **coffee morning** of the year is on Saturday 21st May 9.30 a.m. at the Mechanics Institute. You can support the society by coming along to help, donating items for the stalls and raffle or just coming for coffee and biscuits. There will also be the usual plant stall.

Our outing to **Thrumpton Hall** in Nottinghamshire is on Monday 27th June meeting 8.45 a.m. in Whaley. Booking and payment of £30 by 15th June please. This 2 acre garden features lakeside walks, flower borders, a rose garden and box bordered sunken herb garden all enclosed by an 18th century ha-ha. The landscaped park is bordered by a river and contains many rare trees including Cedars of Lebanon, catalpas, prunis, maples, redwood, ginko and two of the most ancient larch trees in the country. We will also have a tour of the Jacobean house with its unique carved

staircase, Great Saloon and State Bedroom.



The original house once belonged to the Catholic Powdrill family who lost it due to their alleged involvement in the regicidal Babington Plot. The legacy of Powdrill House can still be seen in ancient timbers, a priest's hole and a secret staircase leading to the family chapel. The current owner – Miranda Seymour – has written about the house in her memoir "In my Father's House". There is a tea room available for light refreshments.

### ALLOTMENT NEWS

Plot holders are now busy planting for the coming season with legumes and brassicas being hardened off and planted out. Raised beds are being netted to prevent butterflies laying eggs.



Drainage is still a major issue on the new plots with a range of creative methods being used to prepare the ground. It will probably be several years before these plots become productive.



### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We are sorry to report the death of a previous longstanding member of our society, **Charles Johns**, who died on 23rd March aged nearly 99. He joined the society in 1988 and was treasurer for a number of years. He was heavily involved in the design of the Spitfire and worked at Avro during the war years.

**Anne Lear** passed away on 11th March after illness and our thoughts are with her husband, Derek and extended family. The Lears shared their beautiful gardens at Green Oak, Taxal on many occasions to raise money for charity. Their support for the education of Justin Mwetela in Kenya has enabled him to progress to technical college. Anne was very much a hands on gardener and a welcoming hostess.

**New members** are always welcome and we have had a number joining us since the last newsletter – welcome to Jan Hoyle and Maurice and Christine Lomas from Chapel and Wendy Cameron, Lisa Guest and Cynthia Barker from Whaley Bridge. We look forward to meeting you at future events. 38 former members have not renewed their subscription; hopefully this is just an oversight as we would hate to lose you.

#### STORE NEWS

Sales from the store are going well and this facility seems to be appreciated by members.



**Another satisfied customer being served by the 3 D's.**

Our current supplier has been taken over by a larger company who are asking for an increased order to get the level of discount we have previously enjoyed. The store team are seeking ways to overcome this so they can continue to offer excellent value for money. The store will close for the season on Sunday 10th July but orders can still be directed to David Osborne or Dave Parker who will do their best to oblige.



**CAPTION COMPETITION?**

#### RECENT EVENTS.

The talk on 21st April by Trish and Peter Kohn was well received. 25 members heard about how they came to acquire a remote croft abandoned about 70 years ago at Kerracher on a sea loch near Kyleske. The site was only accessible by boat or on foot as the nearest road was 2 miles away. This retirement project started in 1992 and over the next 16 years they developed an exotic garden. Sited at sea level and sheltered by mountains and a tree belt the temperature ranged from -3 to 18 degrees with exceptionally high rainfall in the winter months. Buttressed wooded slatting was erected as a wind break, also a polytunnel to keep plants from winter rain and alder trees were grown to improve drainage and give extra shelter. As expected there were many trials and tribulations but with the help of local people machinery was delivered by landing craft from a nearby fish farm including a digger to drain and prepare the ground. Bracken was cleared and lime and fertiliser used to change the pH from 4 to 6.5. A large shed was built and a jetty so that a local boat taking tourists up the loch to view the highest waterfall in Scotland could call and bring visitors to view the garden and buy plants. High winter tides were a constant problem and salt water from winter gales had to be washed from leaves with fresh water. Eventually 3,000 species of imported plants from around the world were established, an old rowan tree was kept to deter witches! Transformation of the barren coastline was achieved but eventually maintenance of the garden became too much for the couple and, following the

cessation of the boat trips, their customers dwindled and they decided to give up the garden which is now reverting to nature. The speakers are now active as "Friends of Sheffield Botanic Gardens."

#### OUT AND ABOUT

**Chapel gardening club** have a coffee morning and plant sale at the Methodist Church on 14th May from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Their talk in May at the Town Hall at 7.30 p.m. is on Modern Roses by Tony Bracegirdle.

**Mellor Open Gardens** have 20 gardens open for charity on 2nd May 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Plant hunter fairs** for that special something are coming to Carsington Water on Monday 30th May and Sunday 31st July and also to Henbury Hall, Macclesfield (SK11 9PJ) on 16th/17th July.



**The donated daffodil bulbs** are giving a welcome splash of colour on the Buxton bound station platform.

