

Amersham Gardening Association

www.amersham-gardening.org.uk

May 2018 Newsletter

From the Secretary

A few weeks ago I thought summer had arrived but the following week winter was back. The plants seem to have coped though many are behind in growth but gardens are looking lovely. Soon Amersham in Bloom will be planting and hopefully the displays will be as good, if not better, than last year.

Anyone who missed a visit to the Memorial Gardens in Old Amersham last year missed a real treat (see picture right).

Many of us are looking forward to our 4 day visit to Kent, these holidays have always been very enjoyable, as are the 1 day visits even if it rains. The committee are very grateful to the organisers of these, and wish you all a great gardening year.

Jean Bowling



Your data privacy

New General Data Protection Regulations come into force on May 25th. We hold a membership database that includes the following personal information: your name, address, email address, phone number and the approximate date you joined. This is held on a password protected computer, and backed up on a password protected One Drive in the cloud. The information is only used for the purposes of running the Association, and will not be released to any outside body or organisation.

Members who have resigned, or lapsed by more than 6 months from the annual renewal date, will be deleted from the database.

At any time you are entitled to receive a copy of the information we hold for you, and you can require that we delete your information from the

database. However, if so, you will not be able to receive any information (newsletters, booking forms for outings, etc), from the Association.

From time to time it is appropriate for committee members to be sent a copy of the most recent membership list, including your personal information. When this is done by email, the file that is sent will be password protected.

When you renew your subscription next year you will be asked to sign that you accept these conditions. As in the case of requiring us to delete your information from the database, failure to accept the conditions will mean that you will not be able to receive any information from the Association. For the present year it is apparently acceptable for us to assume your consent.

Plant sale, May 19th

Thanks in part to the excellent sunny weather on the day of the plant sale, we had a successful morning, raising £452.27, which was down on last year's takings, but nevertheless very satisfactory.



Prior to the sale there had been concerns about two factors which might affect our takings. Firstly, Saturday 19th was chosen by the Royals for a wedding and the cup final was also on that day, but fortunately both of these were later in the day. Secondly, the very late start to the growing season meant that it had been much more difficult to divide herbaceous plants and much of the annual bedding had not yet developed flowers, so was less attractive for some people. The latter accounted, in part, for the reduced profit.

As it turned out many folks were out early and we had a flurry of activity around 'opening time', selling was then steady until 11.20, after which we offered half prices.

We distributed some AGA leaflets, which could encourage some new people to join.

Thanks go to all the members who contributed in some way, by donating plants, sourcing plants, pricing up the plants, giving their time to man the stalls, helping set up/clear away afterwards.



Janet Philpott



Patron Saints of gardening

Shopping in early February, I could be forgiven for assuming that Valentine is the patron saint of florists and chocolatiers. In fact he is not, but is, as we all know, the patron saint of lovers, but also, which I did not know, of small intimate gardens – presumably because this is where lovers meet. It turns out that patron saint of florists is Santa Teresa Lisieux; there seems not to be a patron saint of chocolatiers, but St. Macarius the Younger is the patron saint of

Saint Fiacre of Breuil

Fiacre was a priest, hermit and gardener in the seventh century who was famous for his sanctity and skill in curing infirmities. He emigrated from Ireland to France, where he constructed a hermitage together with a vegetable and herb garden.

He is the patron of growers of vegetables and medicinal plants, and gardeners in general, including ploughboys. His reputed aversion to women is believed to be the reason he is also considered the patron saint of victims of venereal disease. He is also the patron of box makers, florists, hosiers, pewterers, tilemakers, and those suffering from infertility. Bizarrely, he is the patron saint of sufferers from haemorrhoids. He is commonly invoked to heal people suffering from various infirmities, because of his reputed skill with medicinal plants.

Saint Dorothy of Caesarea

Dorothy of Caesarea is the patron saint of fruit tree growers and orchards, horticulture, brewers, brides, florists, and gardeners.

Virgin and martyr, Dorothea suffered during the persecution of Diocletian, 6 February, 311, at Caesarea in Cappadocia. She was brought before the prefect Sapricius, tried, tortured, and sentenced to death. On her way to the place of execution the pagan lawyer Theophilus said to her in mockery: "Bride of Christ, send me some

sweet makers. He made and sold sweets in the city of Alexandria in Egypt. Later he gave up his successful business to become a hermit where he lived on raw vegetables, bread, and water.

This led me to wonder who is the patron saint of gardening. I came up with two about whom a reasonable amount of information is available (albeit much of dubious accuracy): St Fiacre and St Dorothy of Caesarea.

From about 1650, the Hotel de Saint Fiacre, in the rue St-Martin in Paris, hired out carriages. These came to be known as fiacres, which became a generic term for hired horse-drawn transport, and St Fiacre is sometimes regarded as the patron saint of taxi drivers.

Fiacre established a hermitage for worship along the Nore river, using a cave for meditation, a well for drinking water and the river for bathing. Soon, people were flocking to him for prayers, food and healing, ruining his peace. So he moved to France, where the Bishop of Meaux granted him a wooded area near the Marne river. There he built a hut and cleared some space for a garden. When he asked the bishop for additional ground for a garden, he was told he could have as much land as he could entrench in one day. According to legend, he simply dragged his spade across the ground, causing trees to topple and bushes to be uprooted, leaving him with a large property.

fruits from your bridegroom's garden".` During that winter, shortly after her death, and some storytellers say the very same winter's day, an angel disguised as a young boy brought the lawyer these gifts in a basket wrapped in linen. The basket the angel carried contained the most exquisite roses, some still in bud, and beautiful unblemished fruits. The young lawyer was astonished, because it was impossible to find these fresh flowers and fruits at that time of year. He recognised the miracle of the virgin Dorothy, became a Christian and was martyred.

I also came across a number of other Saints associated with gardening and horticulture:

- St Antonio de Padua - while not a garden saint, he is patron of finding lost things. One author writes "I find him especially helpful when trying to locate my lost garden tools". He is the patron saint of harvests and lost animals. Mention of St Antonio led me to the Orto Botanico of Padua; more on this below.

- St Barbara: patron saint of geology and protector against being struck by lightning, is said to be “a good one for gardens with difficult geological problems (big rocks, bad slope, rotten soil, etc.) and to keep one safe from lightning strikes while out in the garden”.
- St Elizabeth of Hungary: patron saint of rose gardens and rose growers.
- St Jude: not exactly a garden patron, he is patron of lost causes and desperate cases and is said to be appropriate for the “brown thumb syndrome” and gardeners with very bad luck.
- St Patrick: patron saint of Ireland and organic gardening.
- St Phocas: patron saint of gardeners, agricultural workers, farm workers, farmers, and fieldhands.
- St Urban: patron saint of vineyards and grape growers.
- St Werenfrid: patron saint of vegetable gardens, is invoked for gout and stiff joints (presumably because vegetable gardening can lead to backache).
- St Ysidro-Isidore: patron saint of farmers and large gardens. He often prayed and went to church while angels ploughed his employer’s fields. He is also patron saint of workers and shepherds – and presumably anyone else who can get angels to perform their work for them.

Orto Botanico, the botanical garden of Padua University

What is arguably the world's first scientific botanical garden was created in Padua in 1545. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It still has its original layout – a circular central plot, symbolising the world, surrounded by a ring of water representing the ocean. The plan is a perfect circle with a large inscribed square, which is subdivided into four units by paths. It houses a library that contains more than 50,000 historically important manuscripts and an extensive herbarium. Currently, there are over 6,000 species of plants, arranged according to systematic, utilitarian and environmental criteria, as well as thematic collections. It continues to serve its original purpose as a centre for scientific research.



How many calories in a greenfly?



I ask this because of the immense energy blue tits exert fighting over aphids on my plants.

I have managed to find some data online for the cotton aphid (*Aphis gossypii*), which appears to be about the same size as “our” greenfly. The results were reported per mg dry weight, but assuming that they are about 75% water, and an aphid weighs 200µg (and therefore 5000 make up a gram) this comes out to about 0.25 calories (little calories, not the big Calorie with a capital C = 1000 calories) per insect.



A blue tit expends about 24 Calories per day (a human being expends about 2500), and so would need to consume almost 10,000 aphids per day if it ate nothing more substantial!

Like the child who refused to pick up a penny lying on the ground, saying “I can’t buy as many calories for a penny as it would cost me to bend

down”, the tits on my plants seem to expend more energy than they gain.

Notice seen in a gift shop window in Dedham “Calories: tiny creatures that live in your closet and sew your clothes a little bit tighter every night”.

To my feathered friends - please don't grow your own in my garden



As I bend down to pull up bramble and hawthorn seedlings that appear all round the garden, I sometimes curse the birds that seem to regard it as fair game to grow their own food crops in my garden.

I recall some years ago seeing an L-shaped line of hawthorn seedlings in a wood – when I looked up, there was an L-shaped branch overhead – obviously a favoured roosting spot.

Having spent many hours in Perivale Wood Local Nature Reserve (<https://perivalewood.k-hosting.co.uk/>) pulling brambles to keep the paths and clearings open, in about 1976 I was involved in the opposite activity – deliberate planting of brambles in areas of what was to become the Brent River Park in Ealing.

Perhaps I should look harder at the brambles. The winter issue of *Chiltern* magazine has an article on the subject. It seems there are more than 300 microspecies of *Rubus fruticosus* in this country, and at least 40 (including some rare ones) grow in the Chilterns. They differ in their flower shape and colour, leaf shape, the colour of the underside of the leaf and the “armature” on the stems, with straight or curved spines, small pricklets, tiny needle-like spines, and long or short hairs. This considerable variation within a single species is due to two factors. Unlike many plants, brambles set seed by apomixis – the female part of the flower forms fruit either without fertilisation or with pollen from male parts of the same flower. Secondly, in generating the seed, brambles sometimes undergo doubling or tripling of the number of chromosomes, so producing new varieties that come true from seed.



You might think that botanists who specialise in brambles would call themselves rubologists from the Latin name of the genus, *Rubus*.

However, the website <https://definithing.com> tells me that rubology is the art of making yourself look busy, and rubology is also a trade mark for a company manufacturing essential

oils for massage and aromatherapy. Therefore they have taken the Greek name for brambles, *batos*, and call themselves batologists.

To avoid confusion, zoologists specialising in bats are called chiroptologists; bats are in the order *Chiroptera*.

Forthcoming meetings on Thursday evenings

28 June: Paul Green: Plants of the season

Paul Green is a nurseryman who runs Green's Leaves nursery in Newent, Glos. which was set up in 1994. He specialises in the rare and unusual plants from around the world which are suitable for growing in the UK. He is a regular contributor at Chenies Manor Plant Fair. This evening will be a practical session focussing on

the plants that he believes look good and are good value for our gardens. He will include rare and new varieties. Paul will bring along a range of plants to showcase and illustrate his talk. There will be plants for sale. Paul was due to come in 2016 – lets hope he does not get stuck on the M40 this year! **2**

6 July: Vincent Gradwell: Gardens of the Emerald Isle

Vincent Gradwell started gardening as a child and has continued throughout his lifetime, probably for 60 years. After completing his Diploma in Horticulture at RHS Wisley he followed a career of Management of Public Parks and Gardens throughout England. He is a lifelong lover of all types of plants and enjoys travelling to photograph plants and gardens around the world. In his early career at the City of Liverpool Botanical Garden he tended orchids and tropical plants. He says it's a thrill to see these plants in their natural environs. For 12 years he was a judge for the Green Flag Park Award scheme to encourage the improvement in public and community open

spaces, which had declined in the 1970's. He now continues as a judge for the South and South East in Bloom regional competition. He has written for horticultural journals and books including 'All Your Plants in Flower' which gives information on 156 plants which would provide 3 or more in flower for every week of the year. For over 15 years he has been a tour leader of specialist garden holidays to the UK, Europe, South Africa, St Lucia, China and Japan. He will have revisited Southern Ireland recently when he comes to talk to us about the many beautiful gardens there including Ballymalloe, JF Kennedy Arboretum, Powerscourt and Lismore Castle.

27 September: Sabatino Urzo: RHS plant trials: past, present and future

Sabatino Urzo is Team Leader for the trials team at RHS Wisley so is well qualified to update us on this subject. His team spearheads the assessment of award-winning plants of fruit, vegetables and ornamentals in a process to receive the prestigious RHS AGM. He is also involved in RHS holidays to Italy. He came from a farming family and developed a passion for gardening when very young by helping his grandfather grow fruit and vegetables on the family farm in Pozzuoli, a small town just outside Naples. He then got involved in plant cultivation and design at his father's nursery

and gained a BSc in Plant Production at the University of Naples and an MSc at the University of Pisa in management and design of green areas and landscapes. He has studied design and floral display at Greenwich College, and was a horticultural trainee at Chelsea Physic Garden. He undertook further training at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Edinburgh before joining Wisley in 2010. He describes himself as an energetic public speaker, so we shall look forward to the experience.

25th October: Quiz night

Make a note in your diary now that our annual quiz night will be on October 25th.

As usual we will have tables of 8 people, so start thinking which of your friends know things you don't – music and musicians, geography, history, general knowledge (or should that be general ignorance), etc.

Again as usual, there will be a buffet supper, and while we will provide water, please feel free to bring your own wine, beer or soft drinks, and perhaps a few snacks to keep you going through the first half of the evening.

Dahlia tubers are edible

The RHS Hyde Hall Garden has a new Global Growth Garden, started in January 2016. It is circular, with a central octagonal glasshouse, and divided by paths into four quarter circles. Each quadrant is filled with edible plants from a different continent: Europe and the Middle East; North and Central America; Asia; and South America. The aim of the designers was to provide a mixture of familiar and unfamiliar food plants.

One that surprised me was the inclusion of dahlias in the North and Central America section. I exert considerable effort to preserve my dahlia tubers over winter, ready for what I hope will be a splendid display of flowers in summer. However, in their native Mexico, dahlias were a food of the Aztecs, and were originally imported into Britain as a food crop in the 16th century, as an alternative to potatoes. It was in the Victorian era that people stopped eating them, to enjoy the flowers instead.



Dahlias are related to the Jerusalem artichoke, and like the artichoke, the tubers contain inulin, a non-digestible carbohydrate that is a probiotic – it fosters the growth of beneficial gut bacteria. This may have a socially undesirable effect – the bacteria produce lots of gas as they ferment the inulin. It has been said that Jerusalem artichokes should only be served when dining with close friends or bitter enemies.

Outings to book now. See the booking forms with this newsletter

Afternoon visit to Cedar House, Wednesday 15th August, 2:30 pm, own transport

Sarah Nicholson, one of our members, is opening her beautiful garden up especially for Amersham Gardening Association. It is a chalk garden with a steep sloping lawn leading to a natural swimming pond with aquatic plants. There is a collection of wild flowers including native orchids. Shaped borders hold a great variety of trees, shrubs and perennials. Also there is a lodge greenhouse and a good

collection of half-hardy plants in pots including dahlias and agapanthus. The cost is £6 per person which includes tea and cake, proceeds for NGS.

Cedar House is in Bacombe Lane, Wendover HP22 6EQ. There is only room for 10 cars so sharing is essential. If you can offer a lift or need one please let me know on the booking form.

Afternoon visit to Waltham Place Organic Farm, Tuesday 17th July, 2pm, own transport

An afternoon trip to White Waltham (near Maidenhead) by car. Afternoon tea provided. An interesting garden, but numbers on a tour are limited: **only 24 places available**. There is an excellent organic shop. Parking is very limited – car share please as far as possible.

Afternoon visit to Huntsmoor, Stoney Lane Bovingdon, Herts

Wednesday 5th September 2 to 4 pm – own transport

Cost £7.50 to include refreshments, all proceeds to Cure Parkinsons

This two acre garden has year round interest and is highly recommended by those who have visited it. It contains many special trees and shrubs. A large lawn with herbaceous border gives way to a formal rose garden and onto a central Koi pond with waterfall and rockery. A walk through the specimen trees, past a wildlife

pond and bog garden brings you to a newly formed border, a log cabin and a spectacular view of rolling English countryside. There are a few parking spaces in the drive for those with limited mobility and there is more parking in a nearby field. Access into the garden is easy and there are plenty of places to sit.

More from Gilbert White's Calendar of Flora 1766

Snow in March happened then as well

February 1: Thaw, wind and rain (none for many weeks). The great titmouse begins his spring notes; moles work much, rooks assemble on their nest trees.

February 13, 14, 15: Continued rains that occasioned vast floods in some parts; in some parts the fall was a very deep snow, in others a freezing rain which broke and defaced multitudes of trees.

February 22: On my return from London I found snowdrops and winter aconites in bloom and crocus blowing [in full bloom]; the hazel blowing with vast numbers of their catkins opening, which gives the hedges a yellowish tinge; the primrose is also blowing.

March 1: Soft grey weather with a sinking glass. Great black hellebore, bear's foot or setterwort [different names for *Helleborus foetidus*, the March 10: The daisy, bellis, blows. Teasel emerges. Pear tree buds for bloom. Wood ruffe appears, or rather say not disappeared all the winter thro. Common mint sprouts. This and other things are forced before their times by this hot sunshine. Frog croaks and spawns. Toad appears. The air is full of gnats.

March 23: Snow and thick ice.

March 24: More snow and a freezing wind. The bloom of the wall fruit is in danger. Apple tree buds for bloom.

March 25: More snow and ice.

March 26: A very deep snow.

March 28: Snow melts very fast in the sunshine. Crown imperial buds for bloom. A small grasshopper appears in the cucumber frame, hatched no doubt in the mould of the bed.

April 2: Great rains and the snow gone.

April 4: Bees gather on the willow bloom. Black snails appear. Mrs Snook informs me that her tortoise in the garden came forth from under the ground of ye 17 of March, it being a very sunny season. In common years it did not use to appear until the beginning of April.

April 7: Animalculae [tadpoles] in frog spawn grow in length. Lamb's lettuce shoots.

April 11: Asparagus sprouts. Medlar buds. Pezizas [orange peel fungus] appear still. Several ichneumon flies appear.

April 21: Young ravens are fledged. The berries of ivy ripen; it flowers in October and is the flower the bees and flies feed on.

stinking hellebore] in flower in Selborne wood. The flies in the dining room begin to come forth out of their lurking holes. Earwigs appear.

March 6: Red deadnettle flowers. The wren regularly sings. The moth, *Tinea vestivora*, appears. The yew tree buds for bloom. The buds of the apricot swell. The rook begins to build. The jackdaw comes to churches and steeples.

March 8: Saw of first butterfly, a brimstone; some people saw several of these, and several that were coloured with black spots. Dog's mercury buds for bloom. Very hot sunshine and a steady barometer. Field cricket appears at the mouth of its hole, which it has rounded out very elegantly. Those that I saw had only rudiments of wings, from whence I should suppose that ye old ones of last year do not survive ye winter.

April 22: Garden strawberry buds for bloom. Black beetle appears on evenings.

April 23: Young apricots. Bear's foot or wild black hellebore flowers in the stony lane towards Alton; this is a different species from that on the hill; has a much greener flower and greener leaves. The other has whitish flowers and blackish leaves.

April 24: The lapwing or bastard plover is paired and flies around with a querulous note. The wild duck sits. The snipe poises in the air and whistles; this it does only in breeding time. The sandpiper in a flock on the banks of oakhanger ponds. The swift returns.

April 25: Cuckoo pint, arum, shows its spathe.

April 27: Common fern or bracken sprouts. The chafer or tree beetle appears.

April 28: The uplands glow with pileworts and dandelions, the wet meadows with marsh marigolds. Colt's foot shedding its down. Young peaches and nectarines appear.

May 1: Soft showery growing weather for many days. All plants grow very fast.

May 7: Crown imperials and fritillaria out of bloom. Cock redstart sits on top of the high walnut trees and sings a very weak song consisting of two or three notes. Apple tree blooms.

May 10: young grasshoppers appear, but are very small. Melon shows both male and female flowers.

May 14: Great and small bindweed shoots up.

May 16: Field cricket sings. Mole cricket makes its jarring noise. Cranberry makes red shoots but has yet no bloom. Sundew covered in clammy moisture but has no flowers. Quince tree in blossom.

May 19: Bees swarm. Hop trefoil flowers. Rye shoots into ear. Broad leaved pondweed emerges and floats on the water. Great water plantain shoots. Young rooks are perchers. Potato emerges. Some rooks have flown and forsaken their nests.

May 21: The downy seeds of the common white willow shed and drive before the wind. Chickweed and speedwell going out of flower.

May 23: the green scarab, commonly called the rose fly, appears. Garden columbines flower. Field crickets sing most merrily.

May 24: The hazel shows rudiments of nuts. The beech is out of bloom and shows the rudiments of fruit.

May 25: Horse chestnut flowers. Guelder rose flowers. Backward apples in full bloom still. Walnut casting its male bloom.

May 27: Discovered the rudiments of a wasp's nest; it had ten cells complete [sic], three of which were each furnished with a single egg. Killed the breeding wasp that belonged to it, which was very large.

May 28: Dandelion seeds everywhere.



Looking Up and Down in a Small Cottage Garden

Earlier this year Elin and I became members of AGA. 5.5 years ago we moved to this beautiful area after 27 years in Northwood, South Herts; from a spacious, west facing clay-based garden, with tall trees and two elegant sheds, to Willow Lane off London Road East, with its "clay with many flints" geological description. Our garden, facing and sloping SW, is about 110x50ft with a 5.5m header at its rear after which is a neighbour's field for livestock.

To the North there are woods full of birdsong and wonderful movement from the incessant south-westerlies. When we moved in there were 3 trees, 3 sheds, a few shrubs, a cobble wall a few steps and just weedy grass. There are now two sheds and a greenhouse, masses of plants & shrubs, seating corners, a veg

garden and a pond. We like gardening and are keen to learn.

From 15, 16 & 17th June and 10, 11 & 12 August, from 3-5pm we are open with the National Garden Scheme. Yes, there are steps, since the terrain is sloping, though half the charms of our garden and a main feature, are the constant ever changing views of the planted areas from high and low viewpoints. This is something difficult to create in more level gardens. "WOODSIDE" is the garden name if you look on the NGS website, or in the County listing. Due to being in a cul-de-sac parking is limited, so visiting is by appointment, on 01494 261236.

We'll serve tea and home-made cake.

Elin & Graham Stone

Attract worms into your garden



A short piece in *The Garden* in April tells us that the RHS is starting a campaign to call on people to make their gardens more attractive to worms, quoting Darwin who called them the most important animal in the world, describing them as “nature’s ploughs”. The first way to attract worms listed is “growing your own produce [because] research shows that worms are common in vegetable beds”. While this is doubtless so, I am not sure that if I took a plot of barren land and planted lots of vegetable plants that would bring in the worms. Surely there are worms in the vegetable plot because I have worked the soil and added lots of organic matter that will feed the worms, and not because growing vegetables *per se* attracts worms.

Many years ago my zoology teacher at school told us that worms are attracted to, and will move towards, the smell of chocolate. Although I spent three years as a student in Birmingham, I never got around to checking whether this is so. There was a strong smell of chocolate around the Birmingham suburb of Bourneville, where the Cadbury’s factory is. A Google search for “worms chocolate” was no help; it just brought up a lot of items about people claiming to have found worms or maggots in chocolates.



Visit to Cherney Gardens and Rodmarten Garden and House, April 25th



We arrived at Cerney Gardens via some very picturesque narrow lanes. The countryside had burst into bloom and the journey through the Cotswolds was very beautiful. After a brisk uphill walk, passing the magnificent house, we entered the Victorian walled garden and were welcomed with coffee and delicious cake that would have won first prize in any cookery competition! Then the heavens opened and everyone took shelter in the bothy, greenhouses and gazebo. Luckily it cleared up quickly and we explored and admired the spring flowers especially the tulips, hellebores and a fine medlar tree. The woodland area was carpeted with wild garlic, primroses, bluebells and many other wild flowers.





In the afternoon we went to Rodmarton Manor, a private Arts and Crafts house owned by the fourth generation of the Biddulph family. We were given a most informative tour by John Biddulph and admired the craftsmanship surrounding us.

The garden is very much a work in progress as the present owner only took over from his father two years ago, thus he is planning to upgrade and develop it. He has a full time gardener starting soon and hopes to resurrect the greenhouses and propagate their own plants.

Each part of the garden has a different character and is designed as a series of outdoor rooms all with spectacular views over the Gloucestershire countryside. The terrace has some interesting mature Portuguese laurels with twisted branches which provide structure and form to this area. The huge walled garden has some humorous new topiary depicting birds, what birds was open to debate, were they chickens or sparrows?



This was a thoroughly enjoyable day out and I was incredibly grateful that we managed to dodge the showers and the sun shone on the righteous!

Felicity Vickery



Visit to Upton House and Farley Hill, May 17th



May 17th saw fifty AGA members, on a beautiful sunny day, at Upton Grey Manor House garden, owned and gardened by Rosamund Wallinger. After moving into the house, she discovered that the garden had been originally designed by Gertrude Jekyll, so, after finding the original design, she lovingly restored the garden to its original form. However, she did mention that some species of plants had been improved in the intervening years so she had changed some of the planting.

We were warmly welcomed by the owner with coffee and cake and given a short talk on the history of the garden. We were then free to wander round the various 'rooms' in the garden and both Rosamund and her head gardener were on hand to answer any questions. Due to our long, cold winter, not many flowers were out but there was an abundance of beautiful irises, peonies and asphodels in the borders. It was easy to see the Jekyll garden layout in the different areas of the garden, especially with the plan we were given and also in the summer house which held pictures and copies of original Jekyll plans.



Our next garden was at Farley Hill Place, owned by Margaret and Tony Finch. This was a totally different garden – a working garden as it was more of a market garden. Once again we were given a warm welcome and a short talk. Some of us had ordered a ploughman's lunch, which was delicious.



The main planting was within a huge walled garden. There was some nice planting, including a beautiful blue abutilon tree and a delightful wisteria. The couple grow a lot of vegetables for sale at a local market. They also have a small nursery selling plants at very reasonable prices so in true AGA fashion we descended on the plants and filled the coach! Margaret Finch very kindly gave us an excellent price for some geraniums we needed for the AGA plant sale. It was a very pleasant day out.

Liz Moulton

Some requests for help

We always need people to meet and greet members and visitors at our meetings.

If you can help, please contact Felicity Vickery Tel: 01494 726284, email felicityvickery@yahoo.co.uk

We need people to help with the tea and coffee at our meetings. There is a rota so you are not expected to help at every meeting. If you can help, please contact Liz Moulton Tel: 014494 784913, email libbym6740@gmail.com

Please remember the raffle at each meeting. The profit on the raffles makes a very useful contribution to our expenses; subscriptions alone do not cover the cost of meetings and speakers.

Publicity. If you know where you could put a publicity poster please contact david.bender@btinternet.com

At present we have posters in the following places:

White Hill Centre, Chesham	Amersham Council Offices
Robertson's butcher, Chenies parade	Amersham Station
Van Hage garden centre	Coleshill Village Hall
Little Chalfont Library	South Heath Garden Centre
Amersham Library	Bevan's Greengrocer
Amersham Community Centre	

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Discounts for members

Remember to take your membership card to claim your discount

East Building & Timber Supplies , 43 - 47 Chiltern Ave, offer a 10% discount on compost, gravel and pebbles, etc to AGA members.

[South Heath Garden Centre](#), Meadow Lane, South Heath, Great Missenden, HP16 9SH, offer a 10% discount on some items.

Past newsletters

There is an archive of past newsletters from May 2014 to the current issue on our website at <http://www.amersham-gardening.org.uk/newsletter.html>

Local events

If you know of local garden events, open gardens, etc, please email newsletter@amersham-gardening.org.uk

to let us know as early as possible, so that information can go out in the newsletter and on the website

Photos from outings

You can see lots of photos from our outings at <http://www.amersham-gardening.org.uk/outings.html>