

Newsletter Issue 45, September 2019

Dear Members,

As I write I am enjoying what I fear will be the last of the late summer sunshine and reflecting on some of my horticultural hits and misses of the year, as well as the exhibits on display at our Autumn Show last week. If you weren't able to make it (or even if you were but fancy a recap) a short video clip is available on our website showcasing the magnificent efforts of our exhibitors. I am also looking forward to a suitably autumnal end to our year with our resident "Fun-Gi" Peter's talk on 9th October and our announcement afterwards of our 2020 programme of events. As a final plea, now more than ever, we would be particularly pleased to hear from volunteers with a little spare time to help the Committee with all that running the association entails.

Georgina Ellerton (Chairwoman)

Among the most reliable of autumn flowering plants are the sedums, close relatives of the native yellow stonecrop *Sedum acre*. They are nice juicy succulents with bright heads of tiny flowers which invariably attract bees, butterflies and hoverflies. Most have pink or red flowers but there are also white varieties ('Iceberg'), and even a variegated white one ('Autumn Charm'). 'Purple Emperor' has striking purple foliage and stems as well as dark flowers. They prefer full sun, die down in winter and are easily propagated from cuttings. The large garden sedums have recently been renamed *Hylotelephium* (no, I don't know either!) but will continue to be simple *Sedum* for most gardeners.

The smaller sedums are commonly used for green roof planting, being able to cope with severe drought and turning a pleasing reddish hue in these conditions.



Recent events

The Autumn Show was blessed with a lovely day – and with a very gratifying number of entries.

Cup Winners for the Autumn Show: Gordon Austin Cup (best exhibit of roses) **Jill Long**. Hugh Chandler Cup (best exhibit of cut flowers) **Trevor Sears**. Hickmott Cup (best exhibit of foliage pot plant), **Jack Simmons**. Simmons Cup (best flowering pot plant) and Grindling Cup (highest points in the vegetable section) **Richard Ashwell**. Moss Silver Rake (best exhibit in fruit or vegetable classes) **Peter Long**. Waddington Cup (best floral arrangement, "Farmer's Market") and Miss Campbell-Tiley Cup (best floral arrangement, "Girls can step out") **Catherine Bullock**. **Wendy Newman** was awarded a Certificate of Merit for her wonderful French Apple Flan.

Cup Winners for the year: Farnham Cup (Gardener of the year) and the RHS Banksian Medal (highest total prize money in all shows) **Richard Ashwell**. Miss Farnham Cup, "Cook of the Year" (highest total points in cookery and preserves sections in all Shows) **Rosemary Pullen**. George Baker Salver (highest total points in men's cookery classes in all Shows) **Jonathan Griffiths**. E.J. Pullen Trophy for photography and Billy Wilson Memorial Trophy for floral arrangement **Catherine Bullock**.

The Shirley Pollock Memorial Cup (for an outstanding contribution to the Association) **Corinne Despeghel**.

Prizes were presented by **Robin Amy**, son of the late Dennis Amy who was an enthusiastic exhibitor for many years, particularly in the Preserves classes. The Amy family have very generously given inscribed silver spoons, each one to be given to (and kept by) the winner of the most points in the preserve classes in the Autumn and Spring Shows. Robin presented the first spoon to this year's winner **Margaret Ashwell**.



Pictures from the Autumn Show: *left*, the prizes to be won and, *right*, dahlias and other colourful cut flowers on the show bench

Coming up soon

The last event of the year is the **AGM on Wednesday October 9th**, at which your editor will be talking about *Fascinating fungi: the good, the bad, and the ugly*. There are drinks and nibbles before the talk and a brief AGM afterwards. Don't miss it!

This is a **BAFTA (Bring A Flower To Admire)** event, so bring along one flower in your own container, and vote for the winner from those on show (yes, you *can* choose your own but....)

Topical Tips from Jane Swift

What a richness of colour we have in the autumn. This is a good time to plant trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials while the soil is still warm enough for the roots to establish.

Heucheras, hardy and evergreen, are very popular now. There are so many colours to choose from, to suit many situations. Sadly, vine weevils just love them so keep a close watch, especially if planted in winter pots. Now is the time to clean the greenhouse, both inside and out. This allows maximum light inside and will remove pests from the benches.

Make early sowings of Sweet Peas (under cover) and Broad beans. Tulips and Lilies can be planted at the end of the month.

After the strange weather this year, the lawn may need some extra attention. Rake out the 'thatch' with a spring tine rake and aerate, if necessary, by pushing in a garden fork about 15cm/6 inch deep and rock it back and forth to enlarge the holes. Repeat at 15cm/6 inch intervals. Finally feed the lawn with an Autumn Lawn Feed. Regularly rake up leaves from the lawn and put into bags (punched with a few holes) to make leaf mould. If kept moist, after a year you should have an excellent mulch for the borders.

Lastly, Surrey Gardens Trust has organised what should be a most interesting lecture on the Deepdene at Dorking, the restoration of the Hope Mausoleum and the Deepdene estate, on October 2nd. Details

<http://www.surreygardenstrust.org.uk/deepdene-events>

Check out our new logo, and website www.witleygardening.org for information about the Association. Suggestions for additions or improvements will be most welcome. We want to keep you up-to-date.

Visit our Facebook a/c <https://www.facebook.com/witleygardening>.

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