

# BIDEFORD GARDENER'S CLUB



## SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2021

***ALL MEETINGS AT BIDEFORD METHODIST  
CHURCH HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDEFORD  
ENTRANCE FROM HONESTONE STREET CAR PARK***

### ***DETAILS OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS***

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## SECRETARY'S PAGE

Well Friends,

It seems like forever since the last time we could meet with the problems of Covid-19 and all the lockdowns and restrictions. I also had two falls in May and July resulting in knee surgery for a ruptured quad tendon. If we had events in 2020 I would have been unlikely to have been able to take part. The surgeons and NHS staff at North Devon District Hospital were brilliant and even during the height of Covid everything was superb. It took a long time to get back to normal but very good now. I'm also pleased to say after June 21<sup>st</sup> we are able to resume meetings at the Methodist Church Hall and will commence with a Show Preparation Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021, unless Boris and his team change their mind. Please all attend and let's make the restart a memorable one with plenty of help and support. We need plenty of physical help to set up the staging and really need a team to run the afternoon teas which are a significant help in covering show costs. I know there is some reluctance from the excellent team who did this in 2019 due to scepticism over Covid-19 and mixing with the public, however the greater majority of exhibitor and visitors will be vaccinated by the show. I do hope they may reconsider and I'm sure if needed we can provide screens to protect servers if the lockdown measures aren't totally lifted by then. We can also have social distancing and one way systems in place if required.

Yes that's right we are going to have a Show this Summer after all and in fact it should be the best the town has seen. We normally host the National Begonia Society South West Group show each year and attract exhibitors from throughout the West Country and South Wales but as there is no Shrewsbury Show again this year the NBS Committee have asked if we can accommodate the two main National Championship Classes at Bideford. I've been working with the new Development Manager, Chris Farris at the Pannier Market and I'm certain we have the space for these. They are for 5 pots of Tuberous Double Begonias in up to 10" pots for the British Championship and 12 Blooms of Tuberous Double Begonias not less than 8 cultivars for the National Society Championship. Funding for these is paid by the NBS.

Our 54<sup>th</sup> Summer Show will be on the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2021 and will be really great event. We have booked David Domoney who presents ITV's "Love Your Garden" with Alan Titchmarsh and is the gardening expert on This Morning. He is costing us a good fee but has waived accommodation and travel costs so he can bring his family down for a long weekend break in Westward Ho! The date change was to avoid clashing with the National Begonia Society, National Show at Shrewsbury on 14<sup>th</sup> / 15<sup>th</sup> August but this has again been postponed until 13/14<sup>th</sup> August 2022. This makes our show a week before the South Wales Show which is now on the 14<sup>th</sup> August and we hope for great levels of exhibit. We know with ours being the only local show this year we should attract good entries and attendance. As usual our show will be at the Pannier Market and we hope to attract many more people. The last show in 2019 was very good but still many more could and should visit this great show so we will have the banners this year with the details on them. We have made the admission cost at £1.00 per adult but

accompanied children are free. For the 2016 show we brought back a Floral Art Section with great success. Schedules are available now for the Show and will be with this newsletter if you have previously entered the show. Feel free to ask for more copies or download it from our website page. Please, please get some Children's entries from your children or grandchildren, nephews and nieces.

Subscriptions have not been requested since the lockdowns and postponement of meetings and as there has been very limited expenditure since we last met, Your membership therefore will run through until our deferred AGM in December 2021 and anyone joining the Club at the Show will enjoy the additional 5 months until December 2022.

We give a big welcome back to all members and we hope all will continue their membership and help build the membership levels now we are able to resume events. Sadly we hear of local clubs closing down no doubt due to the long break forced by the Covid-19 pandemic and other enforced situations. Thankfully we intend to continue and this is the reason for bringing a big name to open the show and we will be publicising the fact that we are up, fully running for the rest of the foreseeable future.

Sharon Elliott looks after the provision of the teas at the meetings but we need some help to cover evenings and liaise with Sharon when she is not available to bring the milk and biscuits. Dave Hopkins will run the Raffle for the meetings as well. Pauline Spencer has the role of organising speakers and trips and is doing a superb job with booking the speakers for our events and liaising with the coach operators.

Best regards, Mike Avis, Secretary & Editor.

## **MEETING / EVENTS DETAILS**

### **TUESDAY 13th JULY – SHOW PREPARATION MEETING**

We want you all to attend and offer help in manning the stalls and entrances on the day but there is much to do before that with bringing in the staging equipment from the store at my nursery and setting up the market and getting classes marked out. The show day requires stewards to accompany the judges and mark up the cards and result sheets for Paul Mitchell to collate the prizes and awards. Steward sheets and facilities to offer help will be at the meeting. If you cannot attend but will help with the show please let me know by phone on 07710 454230 or email [mikeavis44@gmail.com](mailto:mikeavis44@gmail.com).

### **SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> AUGUST – 54<sup>th</sup> OPEN FLOWER SHOW.**

Schedules are ready now and we count on a fantastic event with all the things mentioned above. Staging of exhibits is from 7.30pm to 9.30pm on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August and this year on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> August from 6.00am to 10.00am to enable exhibitors travelling overnight from the North and Scotland to bring their exhibits in early to set up. Show lunches will be provided for judges as always and we hope to offer the facility for exhibitors travelling so far in the normal way. It should be the biggest spectacle of Begonias the Town has ever seen. This is a unique occasion to stage the two

Championship classes outside to the National Show and has been arranged to accommodate the wishes of exhibitors to have an event to stage their beloved plants.

If you have trophies from the 2019 show can these be returned very soon so I know who to chase up before the show.

### **TUESDAY 14<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER – MIKE AVIS – ROSES**

With the lockdown and available time to contact speakers this will be covered by myself, unless there is an opportunity to get another guest speaker in the meantime.

### **TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER – TRAVELS IN MADAGASCAR WITH HOWARD WILLS.**

Howard needs very little introduction and is a regular speaker for us, always with superb photography and new subjects. With the wonderful flora and fauna of Madagascar this promises to be a must see talk.

### **TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER – ALAN TOLMAN – OFF THE BEATEN TRACK**

Alan gave this talk to another club in 2019 and we were told of the excellent presentation. The illustrated talk covers hidden gems of gardens to visit, which as it suggests are off the beaten track. Know of a few we have gone to with a coach in the past.

### **TUESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & QUIZ NIGHT – Note 1 week earlier than normal.**

Having not held meetings since March 2020 or an Annual General Meeting in December 2020 we have to catch up on the review of club finances and activities and as mentioned before there has been very little demand on funds, other than the forthcoming show as subscriptions and balance sheet will cover the two years. We are hoping the same committee members will wish to continue and will hold a committee meeting in advance of this date to recommend and finalise the activities for 2022. One of our quiz sets obtained in 2019 will be used for the evening and we also welcome a bring and share buffet as usual for this pre-Christmas meeting.

We hope to have a New Year lunch and will confirm this at forthcoming meetings if members wish this to be arranged. Before the Covid situation we had intended this to be a Sunday Carvery Lunch and think this would be more popular with working members.

### **RAFFLES**

At all of these events, we shall be having a raffle at £1.00 per strip. We welcome prizes to be added to these raffles and of course, Raffle prizes for the Summer Show, which Pauline Spencer will co-ordinate and we hope for a superb set of items to attract the public to participate.

### **COMPETITIONS – Flower of the Month**

All meetings will have the usual Flower of the Month competition and we welcome entries for this.

**54<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL OPEN SUMMER SHOW - SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021 - Bideford Pannier Market. Admission is now £1.00 with accompanied children free.**

Much has already been noted in this newsletter but to emphasise the need for help it is repeated here. Having passed the milestone for the Club, celebrating 50 years of continuously staging a flower show in the town during 2016 we continue to run our annual event. 2019 was a wonderful event with good attendance and great exhibits. This year should be even better as we will not clash with the RHS show at Rosemoor. It will be a chance to show the area and its visitors just how good the local growers are and provide a great spectacle as usual. We have yet to confirm who will open the show but take any ideas on this score. We also hope to have Trevor Cummings with his woodturning of flowers which had a lot of interest last time. David Domoney will also be there to answer gardening queries and have his books for sale, with some signed copies being provided for the Show Raffle.

The schedule is available now and has a few changes this year. At this time we like to remind members of the need to get things growing on for the Show. It is no good waiting until a few weeks before to grow a plant. Last time we were really good on entries and attendance was much improved.

Some new schedule classes have been drawn up and it's available by download from the club website [www.bidefordgardenersclub.co.uk](http://www.bidefordgardenersclub.co.uk) email if you wish. There is still plenty of room to expand the show and just a bit of effort from members can do this. Please make the effort to exhibit and attend, with it on a Sunday you should be able to do this. Exhibitor fees will now be 20p/entry.

Please offer to help on one of the stalls or even sit at the entrances and take the admission money from the visitors. Door stewarding is a simple job for any member and just involves taking the admission fee and handing out a ticket, an excellent job for those who cannot stand around for too long, as is the Raffle sales table. Judge's Steward sheets will be brought along to the July meeting so please offer to help us out for the many stalls and refreshment counter. We really found the benefit of our own Teas in 2019 with great income, and Sharon Standen and Jan Thrower did an amazing job. I'm hoping they may feel able to do the same this year in view of the relaxation in Covid-19 restrictions, but fully understand as NHS staff they may be reluctant. If so we need extra offers of help. The Cream Teas were a superb income source.

The RHS Banksian Medal for most points in horticultural sections, is here once more for this year's show and this only applies to the horticultural classes of the Open Show not the NBS section. The National Begonia Society has again allocated medals and rosettes this year and pays for a judge for their section plus the annual donation of £200 from the South West group and this year £750 from the NBS for the championship classes. The judges are Robert Bryce, as for the Championships and Chris & Sandra Davies for the regional show.

## **CLUB WEBSITE**

With the trend towards internet presence for organisations we have joined the wider world by opening a club website account through 1&1 Internet as our host. It's a reasonable cost per year covered through my account and was free to join. The website itself has been developed and maintained by myself using Serif Web Plus8 which I have for business purposes. This makes it compatible with Smart Phones and Tablets. We will welcome input to it and we have a Facebook page running too. Have a look for that and "Like" us it helps a lot.

One thing it does provide is a live source of information that I can update with any changes of details on speakers, events, trips etc. Far more suitable than the 3 newsletters we issue but of course they will still be available for everyone. If you lose your newsletter or need one for a friend they are available on the website at a touch of a button.

New members can now also join through the website, and book trips by downloading the form and there is a facility to make enquiries on any activity of the club. The pages include a Home Page, About the Club, News & Events, with drop down menu for Events, Trips and Meetings, Shows and the Contact page. If you are an internet user, as many people are today, then have a look and give your feedback. The website is accessed from [www.bidefordgardenersclub.co.uk](http://www.bidefordgardenersclub.co.uk). Make sure you type that in correctly.

## **TRIPS**

With the cancellations of all trips in 2020 and 2021 and considering the varied success of 2019 trips by car and coach we want to ensure this activity is better in 2022. For any local trips arranged it will be by car to keep costs down but for any more distant trips we will probably use Taw & Torridge Coaches who provide an excellent coach and driver for the trip.

## **FINAL NOTES**

This is a reduced newsletter and held back in publication by the continuing Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdowns and restrictions. Thankfully we have been more fortunate than some areas with the levels of infection and with the roll out of vaccinations in our area. Like most of our members I've had my two jabs and I would complement the NHS staff for the way this has been carried out so efficiently. I'm also pleased to say I felt no side effects whatsoever from either injection. Many of you know I had surgery on my right knee following a fall at my nursery which ruptured the quad tendon, not a pleasant experience and one that had me on crutches and a knee brace from May 2020 to early July. The surgeon then released me to Physio and allowed me to try driving the car. The first attempt failed and I fell trying to get into the car causing the same injury a second time. This time it needed a stronger repair using art of my hamstring to beef up the tendon. Fabulous service at NDDH by William Griffith Jones and his excellent team. Took until September before I could drive but with Covid lockdowns and working from home on video meetings meant I could do all my normal activities with a bit more restrictions than usual.

As I prepare this newsletter I would pass on the information that our Chairman, Dave Hopkins, also had a few health scares in the time since we last met. Having been taken into hospital he was told he suffered two heart attacks. He was in for a few days and has now recovered but taking things a bit easier. I pleased to say from seeing him this week at the market he's looking a lot better.

As most of you know we were delighted in 2019 to receive a continued great donation of £750 from the Bideford Bridge Trust which was complemented in April by £500 from Bideford Town Council, we also had another very unexpected and anonymous donation of £500 as well and our thanks go to the donor for this. These donations along with the £200 from the NBS South West Group, ensures the viability of the Summer Show and that of providing good speakers for meetings and running excellent trips too. We didn't apply for grants last year but made it clear that wish to return to seeking them after the Covid lockdowns permit us to hold events. With an excellent year in 2019 and a surplus on the year of over £1600 we will use some of this for obtaining the guest opener for the Show, David Domoney and improved marketing of the show and events and to purchase a small amplifier system for meetings as we find many speakers are too quiet when giving their talks. We already have a good system for the Show but it is too bulky to use at meetings. If we have a small system it can be stored safely at the meeting venue.

You are more than welcome to bring guests to the club meetings, we do now ask for a £2.00 admission charge at normal meetings in the hall for casual guests and of course would waive this should they become members, which we hope will be the case.

Unfortunately not everyone has access to the internet or we could issue newsletters via this method however we do publish an online version through our website or will send this via email. For this reason we avoid sending by post and ask for them to be collected or handed out to members in your area. The newsletters will be available along with Show Schedules from Moreton Nurseries market stalls.

A final note to every new member, we wish you a very warm welcome and indeed are pleased to think we have attracted some new ones in the past few years and many who have become very active with our events and meetings. Make the Club your own and take part in as many activities as possible. We hope you will find the Club very friendly and informative. We try to promote this and actively seek your help and suggestions. We will have posters for the Show at the July Meeting and for all events if you can get these around town. It is your Club, we just carry out the work to our members wishes.

See you at the very exciting forthcoming events.

Mike Avis,  
Editor & Secretary.