



FRENSHAM & DOCKENFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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NEWS and recent events...

by Sharon Bleach



Rose Zephirin Drouhin with Salvia Love and Wishes which seems to be having a very positive effect against Blackspot and mildew. Photo taken this week!

How quickly time seems to be going this year, or do I say that every time?

The daffodil displays in the gardens around here have been fabulous and of course we had fantastic displays at our Spring Show. The tea and cakes were as usual very popular and provided a great opportunity to catch up in person with old friends and some new members. It is just amazing how quickly the plants have come on around the garden, we already have roses in flower along with a fabulous display of wildflowers (weeds in some places). The usual pests are also back in force with snails and slugs emerging after the recent rain and greenfly already settling in on the roses. The biggest issue in our garden at the moment seems to be Alder beetle, which are busy munching their way through not just Alders but also Birch leaves and roses....I wish the birds and bats thought they were better food, but judging by the numbers still on the plants they cannot taste very good!

We had a really interesting talk last month from Sarah Squire who is the Chair of the Squires garden centre group. Very interesting to hear from Sarah how the business started and has grown over the years. They focus on meeting local needs and source a great many

of their plants locally. Sarah talked very openly about the challenges facing garden centres in terms of reducing their environmental impact through use of plastics and peat etc. Clearly a significant challenge for all such businesses, and very good to hear of the progress they are making.

There was also an FDHS guided tour of Wisley this month more on that later but here is a fabulous photo to get you thinking about planning your own visit...





Wisley garden visit on 6 May 2020 - For a number of years we have been enjoying the right to an annual free RBS garden visit for the FDHS as we are an accredited member of the Surrey Horticultural Association, which is part of the RHS. Many of us visit Wisley on occasion anyway, yet always we are pleased and entertained by the volunteer guides on these FDHS tours who take us round and show us what is best at the time of visit - and always have knowledgeable and entertaining tales to tell. We have gone at different times of the year for the sake of variety, and in May we were fortunate to be taken to see not only flowering camellias, rhododendrons, a huge swathe of light blue camassia bulbs flowering above the uncut grass near the rose garden, but also the superb plants in the alpine house, which are changed every day so the best of the best can be shown, and of which we took many photos!



COMING UP...

Thursday 26th May 2022 The Marindin Hall, Frensham – starting at 7:30pm with coffee and tea and the chance to catch up with other members. **Adam Bolton from Surrey Wildlife Trust will be talking about Surrey Heathlands, and its flora and fauna.** Note this is a change to the previously advertised title.

Saturday 18th June The Frensham Fayre is on, we will be holding the FDHS plant sale and would welcome contributions from members for our stall. We look forward to seeing many of you there as there will be a great array of different plants to tempt you.

The FHDS rose competition will also be held at the Frensham Fayre. See the item below by Ruth Murphy for full information, including how to enter.

Wednesday 8th June and Thursday 23rd June we are planning to hold a couple of **tea/cakes and garden visits** to members gardens. Please email me with your preferred date if you would like to visit a member's garden. I will put together the visit details closer to the dates so that hosts can contact people with where to go and timings etc. If anyone else is prepared to host 4 or 6 other members for a visit on either date please let me know at bleachsharon@gmail.com

Wednesday 22nd June we have a **Garden Outing Day** to the Rogate area to visit two different gardens. This outing was postponed from a couple of years ago due to Covid and so we are delighted to be able to finally make these visits. See below for how to sign up for what promises to be a great day out.

Saturday 17th September a Nettle workshop (10am to 4pm) led by Brigitte Kaltenbach of BeeKayMakes at the Marindin Hall costing £55 per person. Payment to be made on email confirmation of a place. Tea and Coffee will be provided but please bring your own packed lunch. Places for this workshop are very limited and so if you are interested in attending, please contact Ruth Murphy on Ruth Murphy secretary@fdhs.org.uk or by phone on 07786 176760.

In the morning there will be a guided local forage for the right nettles (bring gloves, sturdy shoes and suitably protective long sleeves), followed by learning how to extract the nettle fibre, turning it initially into cordage. After lunch the nettles will be processed alongside Brigitte talking about folklore and tales about nettles. Participants will go away at the end of the day with everything needed to start processing their own nettle fibre, plus some nettle string, a lock of nettle fibre and a small length of spun nettle yarn!



It is wonderful to announce that our annual Rose Competition will take place as part of the Frensham Fayre on Saturday 18 June 2022. Last held in 2019, at which Sheila Aiken won the coveted Rose Cup (Perring Cup), it should be good one. I do hope our rose growers are busy nurturing their prize blooms ready to show off and members have been overheard exchanging their 'secret' feeding regimes including banana skins!!

The competition will be held in the marquee and broadly follow the same format as the previously run Rose Evening, with the overall winner being awarded the Perring Cup. However, this year we are also encouraging non-members to enter as well and will offer the overall winner a year's membership of FDHS.

The basic rules are:

- 1 Roses must have been grown in your own garden
- 2 Exhibitors should only enter one rose per category
- 3 Exhibitors to supply own vase (jam jar is fine)
- 4 Votes cast by Fayre visitors
- 5 Winners will receive prizes based on votes received
- 6 Overall FDHS member winner awarded the Perring Cup

Categories are: **Best scented rose**
Best rose bud
Most unusual rose
Most romantic rose
Fit for a Queen

On the day of the Fayre, please bring your prize blooms to the Marquee to register and stage entries by **1pm latest**, please. **Voting** is due to commence at 1pm with **winners** being announced around **3pm** and **prize giving** soon after.

It would be helpful if you could let me know if you intend to enter the competition, although no need to specify which category at this stage.

Email - Ruth Murphy secretary@fdhs.org.uk or call me on 07786 176760.

Let's brighten up the marquee and make this competition a good one – good luck everyone. We look forward to seeing you on the day.

The Hunter Cup

Edward Hunter (16th July 1876 – June 1965)



Edward William Hunter was founder and chairman of Sun Printers and Sun Engraving of London and Watford. He formed his first company Anglo Engraving in 1898, just after finishing his photoengraving apprenticeship and after various acquisitions renamed the conglomerate Sun Engraving Company in 1911.

By 1935, the firm was producing 70% of Britain's mass-market magazines. The company undertook pioneering work on titles such as Picture Post, for Hulton Press, breaking U.K. records with weekly production runs of over a million copies. They also printed Women's Own, Farmers Weekly, Vogue, Country Life, The Smaller holder magazine and Amateur Gardening. The latter two publications sponsored medals for many years at the societies shows. In 1945, Edward, sold the business for £1million to new owners who renamed it Sun Printers Limited and Edward, stayed on for a number of years as Chairman.

As well as loving his garden, he was a keen fisherman, and had a special compartment built into his car, (a 1929 Bentley 4½-Litre two-seater drophead coupe) behind the driver's seat to take fishing rods for his weekend trips from his London home at No 5 Upper Phillimore Gardens to his country retreat at 'Easeway', Frensham in Surrey.

He was the uncle of the well-known Brooklands racing driver Hugh Hunter, who recalled: "Although a reasonable driver, my uncle used the car quite hard indeed in – indeed in my youth it was used to pull a caravan". For many years, Edward kindly hosted the societies shows at his Frensham home in 'Easeway', Frensham. Edward was also a member and former President of the Frensham Royal British Legion Bowls Club from 1936-56 and also presented the Bowling Club with the Hunter Cup, which is a village cup competition.

In 1942 approximately 500 acres of the Black Down hilltop were offered for sale by the Cowdray estate. Suggestions that a road should be constructed across the ridge to a café at the end of the promontory so appalled Edward Hunter, that he purchased the land and gave it to the National Trust in 1944 in memory of his wife, Mabel. The circular stone bench at the Temple of the Winds is dedicated to her.

After his death, his youngest daughter Eileen Petrovitch (a solicitor) took over 'Easeway' and renamed it 'Hunters' and carried on the tradition of holding the shows in the house indoor Badminton Court until 1978, when the shows reverted back to the Marindin Hall. (Eileen married Milorad Petrovitch in 1941, a Serbian refugee who qualified as Doctor in the UK.) Edward presented the cup to the Society in 1950 and won it, himself in 1964 and Eileen won it in 1967, 1969 and 1970. Edward, also won the Stevens Cup in 1961.

We will visit 2 gardens not far apart, both of which are offering us tea/coffee and cake/biscuits! And there is time in between the garden visits for what we will probably want to be a light lunch, in the circumstances, somewhere nearby.

We will again be suggesting driving in cars and asking people to car share if possible, so it would be very helpful to let Caroline Plant know at 07900-287361 or by email to caroline.tonkinxxx@gmail.com by **Friday 17th June** if you would like to come, if you would be prepared to offer a lift, or if you would like a lift. The cost to visit both gardens is £19 per head. Details are as follows:

10.30 am - Down Place, home of Selina Thistleton-Smith

Set on the South Downs with panoramic views out to the undulating wooded countryside. A 7-acre hillside chalk garden with extensive herbaceous, shrub and rose borders merging seamlessly into its surrounding landscape that have been moulded into the sloping ground. There is a well-stocked vegetable garden and walks shaded by beech trees, which surround the natural wildflower meadow where various native orchids flourish. In the words of Selina, who will give us a tour of the garden - "It is always difficult to predict which of the orchids will be in the wild flower meadow as our climate plays havoc with all the timings of flowers and vegetables, but there almost definitely will be plenty of pyramidal and common spotted orchids and hopefully some bee orchids as well."

2.30 pm - Sandhill Farm House, home of Rosemary Alexander, founder of the English Gardening School, who will give us a tour of her garden, followed by tea/coffee and cake/biscuits.

The garden's character is built around the seasonal differences between the front and rear gardens. The former is principally a spring, partly woodland garden, with choice early spring flowering shrubs and a succession of bulbs from snowdrops through to tulips. Here there is also a white garden, a large leaf border and terraced area.

Highlights in the rear garden are the roses, and the red and grasses border. Perhaps the most spectacular rose of all is the China rose 'Crimson Bengal' which can flower continuously for eleven months of the year. Through both front and rear gardens there are deft touches, rows of clipped box balls lining a flagstone path, the small potager-style vegetable garden, red border and grasses border, the green and white border and the cottage area planted beneath three native field maples and silver birch.

Details of how to get there etc. will follow nearer the time.

I found a book on my bookshelf the other day all about Companion Planting by Brenda Little (ISBN 978 1 84773 334 4). I had forgotten all about it over the years but was fascinated to see that one of the tips was to use banana skins to help keep roses healthy. This is something Annabel Sommerfelt does and has reported great benefits to her rose health as a consequence. The other good companions to roses mentioned in the book are – garlic, parsley, onions, mignonette and marigolds.

I try to help my roses by following a Sarah Raven tip of planting the very strongly scented sages around them and have certainly found that not only do they look and smell good but also I seem to have less blackspot than in the past. Another Sarah Raven catalogue tip (as yet untried by me) is to use Epsom salts diluted in water. Water your roses regularly throughout the season. Reports back on how you find these tips or other ideas are very welcome please and we will report back to all members in another newsletter

AND FINALLY....

FDHS 75th anniversary in 2023 – next year will be the 75th anniversary of the founding of the FDHS. The Committee think this is something to celebrate! Many of you will remember the very good lunch and celebration for the 70th anniversary which was held at Quinnettes in Churt.

We are setting up a small team of members to sort out how we celebrate next year and are looking for a few volunteers – will you volunteer please?

The next newsletter will be issued towards the end of August. Anything you would like to see included – just send it through!

I look forward to catching up with you at the different meetings and events in the next few months.

Best wishes and happy gardening.

Sharon



All unattributed articles are by the Editor Sharon Bleach.