

ASH PARISH GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS

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EDITORS NOTES

Brian –

Stories to ernestperry33@gmail.com hard copy to Chris

R.H.S. LONDON AND WISLEY

We are affiliated to the RHS who's benefits include competitive insurance cover, free gardening advice, a free group visit to an RHS garden, (54 members to visit Wisley *club trip in Summer*) access to medals (*Banksian medal*) and show stationery and a free monthly copy of The Garden magazine (*see Brenda Winton if you wish to view*). Our membership number is 10564709.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- RHS Flower Show Cardiff – 13–15 April 2018
 - SPRING SHOW 7th APRIL
 - RHS Malvern Spring Festival – 10–13 May 2018.
 - PLANT SALE 12th MAY
 - RHS Chelsea Flower Show – 22–26 May 2018.
 - SUMMER SHOW 2nd JULY
 - RHS Chatsworth Flower Show – 6–10 June 2018.
 - RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show – 2–8 July 2018 (Preview 2 July)
 - RHS Flower Show Tatton Park – 18–22 July 2018.
 - AUTUMN SHOW 8th September
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PANT HALL GARDENS

David Wheeler

With a new gardening season just underway, I thought it time to seek out a new place, a new venture, a new gardener. My quest took me all of three miles from my own garden gate. Up I climbed the sinuous, single-track lane that shadows the Herefordshire/ Radnorshire (thus English/Welsh) border. Pant Hall - its walls painted an unlikely coastal-village pale blue - shoves into view at around 900ft above sea level, with hills rising higher still above.

Here, battling against occasionally malign forces - fog, rain, snow, frost, deer, squirrels, rabbits - Malcolm Temple, at an age when most men seek little more than a newspaper and a comfortable armchair, is fashioning an ambitious garden on six steeply sloping acres. It's both the culmination and continuation of his life's work in the visual arts, and there's a thread that links this new third-age endeavour with Malcolm's early years studying stage design at Wimbledon School of Art in the late 1960s when this fashion-conscious, frock-coated maverick, with progressive thoughts about all forms of art, was also obsessed by Victorian gardens and their long, shady walks.

An Essex childhood followed by Kent and London teenage years provided all the fizz needed to fuel Malcolm's pursuit of painting and sculpture, and the manufacture of stained glass, furniture, rugs, folding screens and huge, brightly coloured, papier-mache vessels -'creating', as he says so convincingly, 'magic out of ordinary things'.

College wasn't for Malcolm. Rather, he espoused the V&A and its stimulating lectures as his true learning ground -taking notes, sketching, seeing developing all the time an appreciation of eclecticism and 'crossover' (Picasso and Matisse, he reminds me, dabbled in a multitude of creative media).

Nascent gardening practicalities only materialised in 1999 when he met Karen Roberts, who became his wife and devoted gardening partner. From a series of temporary accommodations, they eventually settled in a west London house with a 120ft-long garden. There at last Malcolm could put his hands in the dirt, discovering for himself that bare earth is yet another canvas on which to express artistic ideas.

It led to his designing gardens and planting schemes for other people, including *Blackadder's* Tony Robinson in Maida Vale. Karen meanwhile was managing a volunteer group in the restoration of Chiswick House walled gardens. Their move to the Welsh borders came six years later. Malcolm might miss London ('I can walk its streets in my mind') but the acquisition of plentiful space appeared to realise a lifetime's dormant desire. In very little time, he has planned and planted a chiefly formal garden on inauspicious land. Others would have chosen flat terrain but, with Malcolm ever looking for a challenge, this steep, wayward and partly waterlogged former sheep pasture has given rise to a garden like no other. Malcolm has created vistas and rides by planting more than 3,000 trees and shrubs and found areas where earthmoving equipment could level a few square yards for his dance terrace, artist's chapel (with his own stained-glass windows), wildflower meadow and Cloister Gardens. And plans for a pier and bandstand are emerging.

Malcolm is 68; what about serious old age? 'I'm doing all the heavy work now,' he says, 'the future is all about maintenance and, if I need help then, I'll find a way to fund it.' Meanwhile, the roots most deeply descending at Pant Hall are his and Karen's.

THIS MONTHS RECIPE

Rhubarb & orange polenta cake

(SERVES 8-10 | PREPARE 15 minutes | COOK 1 hour +)

With both oranges and rhubarb now at their sweetest and best, bring them together for this simple, versatile cake recipe. It works well in slices with tea or coffee, or is delicious as a pud with crème fraîche or ice cream

- 150g butter, plus extra for greasing
- 200g caster sugar
- Finely grated zest and juice of 1 large orange
- 3 Medium Eggs, beaten
- 150g polenta
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 75g ground almonds
- 400g forced rhubarb, trimmed and thickly sliced
- 1 tbsp granulated sugar

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4. Butter and line a 20cm-deep, loose-bottomed cake tin. Cream the butter until soft, then beat in the caster sugar and orange zest, and continue beating until pale and fluffy. Beat in the eggs a little at a time. Fold in the polenta, baking powder and ground almonds to give a soft mixture that drops easily off a wooden spoon. Spoon half the mixture over the base of the cake tin.

2 Arrange the rhubarb over the cake base, then drop the rest of the mixture over the top, leaving some gaps. Bake for 1-1 1/2 hours until well risen and golden and a skewer inserted into the centre emerges clean and dry.

Make holes in the surface of the cake with a skewer, then scatter the granulated sugar over the top of the cake and drizzle with the orange juice.

Leave in the tin for 15 minutes, then remove and place on a wire rack to cool. Serve warm with crème fraîche or vanilla ice cream, or cool completely and serve sliced with tea or coffee.

Arrange the rhubarb over the cake base, then drop the rest of the mixture over the top, leaving some gaps. Bake for 1-1 1/2 hours until well risen and golden and a skewer inserted into the centre emerges clean and dry.

ZOMBIE DEATH FUNGI TARGET THE WORLD'S ANTS

FIFTEEN newly discovered fungi can all control the brains of ants in cruel and unusual ways in the moments before killing them.

Zombie ant fungi are parasites that are mostly found in tropical forests. Once inside its host such a fungus alters the ants behaviour in ways that favour its own reproduction, for example by compelling the ant to seek

a place other ants are likely to pass. The fungus then sprouts a long stalk, sometimes right through the back of the ants head. Infectious spores bloom at the end, making it easier for the fungus to brush onto another ant.

"Besides their beauty, its striking how these fungi evolved and are so well adapted morphologically and ecologically to infect their hosts," says Joao Araujo at Pennsylvania State University.

Araujo and his colleagues have now described 15 new species of zombie ant fungus from the Brazilian Amazon, Japan, Australia, Colombia and the US.

They were collected by Araujo or by travelling colleagues.

The 15 species include fungi that force ants to bite into tree trunks, plant stalks or leaves before dying.

One fungus, called *Ophiocordyceps blokebornesii*, is found in Missouri and infects a species of carpenter ant that builds its nests in dead logs. The fungus compels the ant to die after biting into the wood inside a dead log. There, the fungus can infect a new victim while staying sheltered from the elements.

In the Amazon, *Ophiocordyceps monacidis* forces a species of odorous ant to die under a type of moss. The fungus mimics the moss's sex organs with its spore-spitting stalks. Araujo isn't sure exactly why. Unveiling the diversity of zombie ant fungi will help us understand how these sinister parasites evolved, says Araujo. What's more, the fungi might one day be used to control agricultural pests.

APGC TRIPS 2018

Sunday 13th May RHS Malven Spring Show. Cost £38 each (transport and Entry Fees) Leave Hall at 8:0am, returning approx 6:30pm. Non Returnable Deposit £20 to be paid by 2nd April.(stopping at Wyevale Swindon SN2 7SE, on outward journey) <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/malvern-spring-festival/about-the-rhs-malvern-spring-festival>

Sunday 8th July East Lambrook Manor Gardens. Cost £24 each (transport and Entry Fees) Leave Hall at 9am, returning approx 6pm. Non Returnable Deposit £10. <http://www.eastlambrook.com/pages/>

Saturday 18th August Great Dixter. Cost £25 each (transport and Entry Fees) Leave Hall at 9:30am, returning approx 6pm. Non Returnable Deposit £10. <https://www.greatdixter.co.uk/>

On all the above trips a comfort break will be made in both directions.

Sunday 9th September RHS Wisley Gardens. Cost £4 each (for those using minibus only) Leave Hall at 1pm, returning approx 5pm. Free for those who meet us at Wisley at 1:30pm. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley>

GARDENING CALENDAR APRIL

Spring trim for Cape fuchsia - Despite their South African origin, Cape fuchsias often perform well with impressive hardiness. A collection of varieties, including *Phygelius aequalis* 'Yellow Trumpet', *P.x rectus* 'Winchester Fanfare' and *P.* 'Trewidden Pink', have all established well. They flower for several months, right through July and into autumn.

Shoots can now be shortened, cutting back to strong sideshoots, shaping the plant and relieving congestion. New shoots will put on up to 60cm (2ft) of growth by summer, and carry impressive heads of trumpet-shaped blooms.

The root of the problem - If you have young plants in small, black plastic pots with the roots growing out through the base and sides you might be wondering how to remove the plant without damaging the roots.

The answer is that you don't have to. These clever little pots encourage cuttings to root well, and to let their roots grow out through the gaps. Once at this stage, the whole pot can be planted into a larger container, where the roots will spread out into the fresh surrounding compost without disturbance.

Erythronium californicum 'White Beauty' - Dog's-tooth violets establish well in slightly shady woodland sites, and vigorous varieties such as 'White Beauty' quickly spread to form bold clumps. These can be divided after flowering. Mix plenty of compost into the soil and keep moist

Heathers - Clip old flowers off winter-flowering heathers. Take care not to trim back into old wood.

Snowdrops - Divide any congested clumps, spacing out the bulbs when replanting. Plant them fairly deeply, watering in well with a liquid feed.

Spring bulbs - Mark any congested clumps that have flowered poorly with a label to remind you to lift and divide them later in the year. Give every clump of bulbs a thorough soaking with a liquid feed.

Soil preparation - Continue forking over the soil between shrubs, teasing compost into the surface. Prepare areas where summer bedding will be planted out in late May.

Boost your borders - If you have any gaps in borders you can drop in your blooming pots or aquatic baskets or they can be dropped into the top of an ornamental patio pot.

A succession of these pots will provide bloom right through spring. Once flowering is over they can be moved from their prime location. Keep them well-fed and watered,

and allow the bulbs to die down naturally. Look after them well and they'll reward you with more blooms next spring.

Alternatively, you can sow quick-growing hardy annuals directly into the soil during April.

Roses - Complete rose pruning in March before they start into strong growth. Shorten all shoots, cutting back to an outward-facing bud.

Keep spring pots in bloom - A little attention to spring-flowering pots will ensure they look their best right through until May. It doesn't take long, so pop out for a few minutes the next time the sun is shining and pick off dead flower-heads from primulas and winter-flowering pansies.

This should encourage plants to develop further flowers. Also pick off the faded heads from spring bulbs, such as daffodils, but leave their foliage intact. Compost in pots can also dry out, so check with a finger to see how moist it is, and water well if it has dried out.

Mulch - Spread a thick layer of compost or well-rotted manure as a mulch around established shrubs and along the base of hedges to help conserve moisture in the soil and keep down annual weeds.

Sweet peas - Sow sweet peas outside where you want them to flower.

Buddleia bushes - If established buddleia bushes have not yet been pruned, cut back tall old stems right away to about 1m (3.3ft) from the ground.

Winter-flowering jasmine - Trim over lanky winter-flowering jasmine, *Jasminum nudiflorum* plants and tie in long shoots to their supports to tidy the display.

HOW TO PRUNE CLEMATIS

There are over 295 species of evergreen and deciduous Clematis in a variety of colours, heights, shapes and forms. Clematis can be grown in many places around the garden on walls, pergolas, fences, through trees or shrubs, and in containers. To thrive they need moisture-retentive, but well-drained soil, with roots in the shade, and stems, leaves and flowers in the sun or partial shade.

Planting and pruning

Plant with the crown 5-8cm below soil level and cut back to just above a bud at 15-30cm above soil level in February or March to encourage branching.

Young growth is brittle so care is required when tying in stems.

Knowing how to prune and train Clematis is important. By following a few simple rules you should get good results.

Pruning falls into three main groups, however, remember there are always exceptions to the rules.

Clematis have opposite buds so cut straight across stems when pruning.

Pruning group 1

Name: Small flowered species and its cultivars including *Clematis montana* and cultivars, such as 'Elizabeth', 'Tetrarose' and *C alpina*.

Description: They bear small, flattish, usually single flowers in late spring to early summer on the previous seasons growth.

When to prune: Immediately after flowering, after the threat of frost has passed (late May).

Pruning: Keep pruning on established plants to a minimum unless renovating. If a plant requires regular pruning it is in the wrong place. To prune, thin where growth is dense, or exceeding its allotted space. Cut individual stems back to healthy buds, or to their point of origin. To thin out new growth, cut a third to a half of stems back to the base. Cut any weak or damaged growth back to strong buds.

Renovation: Old, congested plants can be thinned (as above), or completely renovated by cutting back all stems almost to the base. Do not repeat such hard pruning for at least three years.

Pruning group 2

Name: This group covers most deciduous large flowered hybrids e.g. Clematis 'Nelly Moser' that flower in May/June. Some flower again in late summer.

Description: With careful pruning the two flower flushes can virtually overlap, providing a long uninterrupted flowering season.

When to prune: Late winter or early spring, before new growth begins.

Pruning: Cut any weak or damaged growth back to its point of origin or to the ground. Leave an evenly spaced framework. Cut all other stems back to a pair of healthy buds. These should produce flowering shoots. However, these plants can be grown with minimal pruning, cutting back hard every three or four years (as for group one renovation). The first flush of flowers is lost after hard pruning but the second is greatly enhanced.

Pruning group 3

Name: Large flowering cultivars such as Clematis viticella and its hybrids such as 'Gravetye Beauty', and small flowered species and their cultivars e.g. C 'Bill MacKenzie'.

Description: Flower in late summer on growth made during the current season.

When to prune: Late winter or early spring, when buds show signs of growth.

Pruning: These climbers make new growth from the base each year; so can be cut back hard on a regular basis. Remove any dead growth on which buds are not visibly breaking, back to the base; new ones will usually develop from ground level. Cut back the remaining stems just above a pair of healthy buds, about 15-30cm above ground level.

Other types of Clematis

Evergreen Clematis Most evergreens such as Carmandii can be pruned using the principals set out in pruning group one.

Evergreens can become quite heavy and require substantial support.

Only prune established plants if it is necessary to restrict growth.

Herbaceous Clematis

Herbaceous species do not require pruning, but growth, which has died down, can be cut at the base in autumn or early spring.

After pruning care

Mulch Clematis annually with organic matter but avoid covering the crown. A mulch is any substance spread on the ground to protect plant roots from heat, cold, or drought.

Feeding with sulphate of potash at a rate of 8g per square metre in spring may encourage flowering.

All pruned material can be shredded and added to the compost heap.

CLUB EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES – APRIL 2018

1st Surrey Chrysanth. DAFFODIL SHOW, Abinger Hammer Village Hall

For information please contact Kevin Taitt 01420-474528

2nd Ash Parish Fuchsias my way, with Derek Dexter

For information please contact Beverley Ames 01252-686303

3rd Jacobs Well Sweet Peas, with Darren Everest

For information please contact Pam Lomax 01483-767225

3rd Lightwater SPRING SHOW

For information please contact Lynn Bull 01276-502497

5th Aldershot Floral Design The Spirit of Spring, by Catharine Gledhill

For information please contact Dee Kelly 01252-350944

5th Sunningdale Herb Growing, with Clair Brown

For information please contact Pat Bond 01344-623891

6th Dunsfold/Hascombe Bulb Show, then Growing for the Kitchen by Paul Patton

For information please contact Sue Simper 01483-200286

7th Ash Parish SPRING SHOW 2.30-4.30 Ash Victoria Hall

For information please contact Beverley Ames 01252-686303

7th Bramshott/Liphook SPRING SHOW, and Fuchsia & Begonia Sale 2.00–4.00

For information please contact Ann Haussauer 01428-723045

7th Churt SPRING SHOW 2.30 pm Village Hall

For information please contact Anne Butler 01428-713543

7th Ewell SPRING SHOW 2.30-4.30 Blenheim High School

For information please contact Lynne Mason 0208-393-9257

7th Frensham SPRING SHOW 2.30 pm Marindin Hall

For information please contact Ruth Murphy 01252-793267

7th Headley Hants SPRING SHOW 2.30 pm Village Hall

For information please contact J. Howard-Duff 01428-714073

7th Limpsfield Creating a garden, by Bennet Smith. Red Cross Hall Oxted

For information please contact R. Meakin 01883-715496

7th Milford SPRING SHOW 2.30 pm Village Hall (Not 31st March)

For information please contact S. Miskimmin 01483-421589

7th Thursley SPRING SHOW 2.30 pm Village Hall

For information please contact Pat Clake 01252-706869

- 8th Tilford SPRING SHOW 2.30-4.00 Tilford Institute
For information please contact Janet Arm 01252-783133
- 9th Elstead Preparing for your Shows, with Barry Newman
For information please contact Alison Gravett 01252 703318
- 9th Esher/Molesey Encouraging wildlife in your Garden, with Andrew Halstead
For information please contact Ann Beauchamp 0208-9791415
- 10th Ewell Buckets of Colour, with Ian Clemens
For information please contact Lynne Mason 0208-393-9257
- 10th Merrow Clematis through the seasons, Leeds Everett. Bring & Buy Sale
For information please contact Jenn. Bayley 01483-572781
- 10th Nat Veg Soc. The Two Hour a week allotment. Peter Almond, at Redhill
For information please contact Beth Otway 01483-420989
- 10th Wokingham Hogarth Hostas, with Jonathon Hogarth Bradbury Centre wha-
general@outlook.com
- 10th Worplesdon Confessions of a Gardener, with Alan Sargent
For information please contact Sheila Dyke 01483-481841
- 10th Merrow Clematis through the seasons, Leeds Everett. Bring & Buy Sale
For information please contact Jenn. Bayley 01483-572781
- 11th Virginia Water SPRING SHOW and talk Harry's Night
For information please contact Linda Gillham 01932-564834
- 11th Grayshott Summer in the Garden, with Steve Bradley
For information please contact Ros. Henshall 01428-607879
- 14th Banstead SPRING SHOW 2-5 pm Community Hall, Banstead
For information please contact Diana Beck 01737-271243
- 14th Chiddingfold SPRING SHOW
For information please contact Georgia Lacey 01428-683120
- 14th Ewhurst SPRING SHOW 2.30-4.30 Village Hall
For information please contact Anne Dyball 01483-271812
- 14th Grayshott SPRING SHOW 2.00-4.00 Village Hall
For information please contact Ros. Henshall 01428-607879
- 14th Witley SPRING SHOW 2.30 pm Chichester Hall
For information please contact Gina Ellerton 01483-488460
- 17th Brooklands SPRING SHOW (and AGM) Barb. Royston 01932-569441
- 18th Chiddingfold Bugs and Pest Control, with Steve Bradley
For information please contact Georgia Lacey 01428-683120
- 18th Sandhurst Late Spring Show, then Heathers with John Hall
For information please contact Chris Dresler 01420-768965
- 19th New Soc. Camberley The Grounds & Gardens at Titsey Place, by Rhod Jones For
information please contact Chris.Thompson 01252-837640
- 19th Peaslake/Shere Secret Gardens of London, Colin Jones. Peaslake Memor. For
information please contact Hall Scilla Roe 0790-155-4415
- 21st Hardy Plant Soc. Space, illusion and other mysteries, with Paul Hervey For
information please contact Brooks Sandy Hartley 01372-727715

23rd Bookham/Fetcham Bees, with Anthea Sokell

For information please contact Anita Laycock 01372-750818

24th Milford An A-Z of Gardening Tips, with Mark Saunders

For information please contact S. Miskimmin 01483-421509

24th Tilford Gardens of Japan, with John Baker

For information please contact Janet Arm 01252-783133

24th West End Island Hopping, with Mr. Colin Jones

For information please contact Judy Douch 01483-475133

25th Leatherhead The Flower Gardens of London, by Colin Jones

For information please contact Euan Niven 01372-279079

25th Ripley From Tree to Bowl, Wood turning demo. By Greg Moreton

For information please contact Liz Cooper 01372-458313

26th Frensham/Dockenfield Selborne Lavender Fields, with Tim Butler

For information please contact Ruth Murphy 01252-793267

26th Claygate Plight of the Humble Bee, with Jenny Murray Band

For information please contact Marie Barltrop 01372-467888

26th North Warnborough Propagation the Phoenix Way, by Marina Christopher

For information please contact Pam Forey 01256-703412