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# PLUCKLEY WITH EGERTON GARDENING SOCIETY

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## NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2019

### PEGS New Website

In December we launched our new website [www.pegsoc.org](http://www.pegsoc.org). You can now look up information about events, download booking forms and see the latest news from the society including full information on the Spring and Autumn Shows. We will soon be adding information about the various cups that have been presented to the society over the years and which we award annually at our Shows.

We are now starting to research the history of the society and if anyone has any memories of the society or maybe some old photos of events, particularly from its earlier years we would love to know about them. You can email us at [pegsoc@outlook.com](mailto:pegsoc@outlook.com) or call Mary Walker on 01233 756588.

### 2019 Calendar of Events



Sue Steward, our Events Organiser, has put together a wonderful and varied calendar of events for 2019. As well as the stalwarts of our Annual Schedule the Spring and Autumn Shows, we also have another Garden Talk and some exciting trips planned. By now you should have received your Calendar of Events in the post with your Annual Schedule though all events are listed on our website and advertised on Nextdoor if you mislay it.

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February Pippa Greenwood will be speaking to us at Egerton Millennium Hall – see below for details – we look forward to seeing lots of you there.

In March there is a visit to The Walled Nursery in Hawkhurst that some of you may already know. Recently they have had funding to restore some of their rare Victorian glasshouses and we are scheduled to have a tour of the nursery and a lecture and will no doubt learn more about the trials of trying to restore such fragile buildings. They always have interesting plants to buy and there is a lovely shop and great café in the restored Vinery.

May sees us visit The Orangery in Mystole. This is a 1 ½ acre garden in Chartham with extensive herbaceous borders, an ancient wisteria, large walled garden and collection of modern sculptures. The terrace affords splendid views over Chartham Downs. In June there is a visit to Balmoral Cottage in Benenden which is famous for its amazing topiary and in July a trip to The Hampton Court Flower Show. You must book your place by 5<sup>th</sup> April if you don't want to miss out on a place in the coach and discounted entry; Sue has emailed a booking form to all members and you can also download one from the website. Our last garden visit of the year is in August when we visit The Salutation in Sandwich and nearby Sweetbriars, both of which will be full of late summer colour.

Our garden social events are both in Pluckley this year. Judith Oakes will be opening her garden at Surrenden House to us for our Pimms Evening and Sue Steward will be hosting the Wine & Wander Evening in her beautiful garden at Jennings. In November we will be holding a general knowledge quiz in Egerton Millennium Hall.

## Talk by Pippa Greenwood - Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February

For our first event of 2019, Pippa Greenwood will be giving a talk on Growing Vegetables and Having Fun. She will also be answering questions on garden pests and much else garden related. You may know Pippa from her books or Gardeners Question Time, she is immensely knowledgeable on everything related to gardening.

Pippa trained as a botanist at Durham University then gained an MSc in Crop Protection at Reading University. In 1985 she joined the RHS at Wisley and ran the Plant Pathology Department. For over 13 years she was a regular on BBC2's Gardeners World and is a regular panellist on BBC4's Gardeners Question Time. She has presented her own series "Growing Science" on Radio 4 as well as guesting on many other programmes over the years. She has written a number of books including Pippa's Organic Kitchen Garden, Garden Problem Solver, Garden Pests & Diseases to name just a few. She also has her own website selling vegetable plants, products and offering an "Ask Pippa" garden question service. She lives in Hampshire where she gardens on a windswept hillside with strongly alkaline, heavy clay soil.

The talk is on Wednesday 20th February and is open to everyone. It should be an excellent evening so all keen or wannabe gardeners should come along and bring your friends.

Tickets cost £7.50 and can be bought from Pluckley Butchers, Pluckley Farm Shop, Sue Steward (01233 840320) or Mary Walker (01233 756588).

The venue is Egerton Millennium Hall. Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm start. Refreshments will be available.

## The Spring Show - Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April



Every year we hold a spring show where we exhibit some of the early flowers that grow in our gardens. While what is looking good is weather dependent, we always end up with a hall full of beautiful blooms.

If you have never entered before please have a go. At its most simple, a fresh bunch of daffodils in a vase is all you need. Just bring your flowers to Pluckley Village Hall in the morning and display them alongside all the other exhibits. Each entry goes into a specific class and all the different classes are listed in our Show Schedule which has been posted to members. The show classes are now also listed on our website.

If you struggle with all those daffodil classes then Committee members are on hand to answer your questions, but come early as the morning gets busy! We have also written a helpful guide on hints and tips for getting started which you can download from the website. However, if you would prefer to talk to someone in person, call Val, our Show Co-ordinator on 01233 756317.

Whilst setting up is in the morning, even if you don't bring anything to show, come along in the afternoon and have a look at all the exhibits. We serve tea and homemade cakes and also sell plants from members' gardens.

We look forward to seeing you there.

# REVIEW OF AUTUMN 2018 EVENTS

## Saturday 1 September - PEGS Autumn Show



As ever we had a great turnout for our Autumn Show with lots of wonderful flowers and plenty of vegetables making for a splendid display. Congratulations to all our exhibitors for producing such a delight in the face of the long summer drought.

## Thursday 6 September - Garden Visit to Pashley Manor

On an early September day PEGS met at Pluckley Village Hall to catch the bus to take us all to Pashley Manor's Dahlia Show. What a treat was in store for us, the day was beautiful, the colours and plant combinations superb, and a fab lunch was enjoyed. The head gardener gave us a guided tour of the dahlias which was very informative and a lot learnt. The marquee was filled with a glorious selection of cut dahlias to tempt us to order some for the next year. What a great day out was had by all.



## Thursday 25 October - AGM

Our AGM was, as always, a friendly and sociable occasion with a chance to renew our memberships and enjoy a glass of wine and a fish and chip dinner with fellow society members. We had a good turnout and some lovely entries into our annual craft competition. The prize was won by Diane Dickens with a wonderful embroidered picture of sheep. If you know anyone who couldn't make it but would still like to renew their membership or maybe join as a new member, it is not too late. Visit our website and download our 2019 membership form and send it with £7.50 per household to Rebecca Southall. Her address is on the form.



## Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November - Talk by Helen Yemm

Egerton Millennium Hall was the venue for an entertaining and informative talk presented by Helen Yemm. Approximately 75 members, friends and visitors from local gardening clubs joined us for a lively and fact-filled presentation on "Early Season Flowers for a Cottage Garden". Helen spoke about how we might get more colour into our gardens by using bulbs, annuals and perennials to great effect at this time of year. She also added a whistle stop tour of her recommendations for extending colour in our gardens into late summer as well making the evening a great value event.





## Thank You to Pat Morss & Welcome to Mary Walker

Pat Morss stepped down as Chairman of PEGS at our 2018 AGM after serving in that role for the last 14 years. June Heathcote, the Society's President and a very loyal and supportive member of the Garden Society for many years, made a lovely speech thanking Pat for all her hard work and presented her with a card of thanks and a bouquet from the society.

Pat joined the Pluckley Gardening Society, as it was then known, in 1996 and soon became involved on the Committee working hard to help make the Society a success. As Chairman her message to the village was that the Garden Society was a social group for anyone who was interested in plants, visiting gardens, seeing beautiful things and eating cake! You didn't need to be a dedicated green-fingered gardener to enjoy membership and she made sure that events were always extremely welcoming and friendly.

Her legacy has continued and the Society now has about 75 members from Pluckley, Egerton and surrounding villages. By 2015 so many members had joined from Egerton that Pat and the Committee decided to rename the Society as The Pluckley with Egerton Gardening Society. Currently, about a third of the membership and half the Committee are drawn from Egerton with events taking place in both Pluckley and Egerton each year.

Pat stood down for family reasons but remains a devoted member of the Society and we look forward to seeing her at many future events.

Mary Walker is our new Chairman. Mary has been a member of the Committee since 2013, having joined the society a few years earlier. She is a keen gardener and many of you will know her beautiful garden in Egerton as she opens it regularly for PEGS events, including last year's Pimms Evening. Mary and the Committee will continue to arrange a varied and interesting programme of events each year and ensure they are as sociable and welcoming as ever.

## Winter Gardening Tips

The inclement January weather is upon us, so by now leaves should have been raked off the garden, bagged up for composting down and beds tidied - though leaving some berries for the birds.

Seed catalogues are dropping through the letter box at the moment and what a treat it is to sit down with a cup of tea and browse through them choosing flower and vegetable seeds to plant in the spring. Why not pick something a little more unusual and try growing them ready for the PEGS Spring or Autumn Shows.

Don't forget to get an early start with your potatoes by chitting them now on a sunny window sill. Bybrook Barn has seed potatoes and they were available at half-price recently. Also, try covering the soil where you intend to grow potatoes with a clear polythene sheet, this warms up the soil so you can plant a few weeks earlier than normal. You can replace the sheet after planting and only remove it when leaves start to show. Expect First Early Potatoes in mid-June!

## **Snowdrops & Early Spring Gardens to Visit** (Please check details before visiting)

*From 9th February*

Hever Snowdrop Walk – 80,000 snowdrop bulbs planted in the past few years

*10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> February*

Compton Ash, Faversham ME13 8XW

*Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February*

Great Comp Snowdrop Sensation 10am-4pm & Plant Fair 10am -12.00 Platt TN15 8QS

*24th February*

Doddington Place Snowdrop Day and Plant Sale  
Doddington ME9 0BB 11am – 4pm

*16<sup>th</sup>, 17th & 18th February*

Knowle Hill Farm, Ulcombe ME17 1ES 11am – 3pm

*17th February & 3rd & 24<sup>th</sup> March*

Mereworth House, Mereworth ME18 5NB 2-5pm

*23rd & 24th March*

The Old Barn, East Peckham TN12 5NA

*24<sup>th</sup> March*

Godinton House TN23 3BP 1-4pm  
King Johns Lodge & Nursery TN19 7AZ 11am – 6pm

*7<sup>th</sup> April*

Godmersham Park 1pm – 5pm CT4 7DT

*10th April*

Great Maytham Hall 1-4pm TN17 4NE

*19<sup>th</sup> April*

Oak Cottage and Swallowfields Nursery TN25 5JT

*20<sup>th</sup> April*

Winchelsea's Secret Gardens 1-5.30pm

*27<sup>th</sup> April*

Watergate House, Fordwich CT2 0DB

## **Spring Plant Fairs**

(Please check details before visiting)

*Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> February*

Snowdrop and Early Spring Fair, Hole Park  
11am – 3pm Rolvenden TN17 4JA

*Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March*

Hardy Plant Society Spring Plant Sale 11.15am  
Lenham Community Centre

*6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> April*

Great Dixter Spring Fair

*Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April*

Spring Fling Plant Show, Great Comp

*12<sup>th</sup> May*

Godinton Plant Fair

## **Great Gardens to Visit**

Our Committee Members have been thinking about gardens they visited on their holidays and recommend the following places if you happen to be in the area!

Bodnant Garden, Conway, North Wales. National Trust. Sue's all-time favourite! Huge gardens with woodland. A complete terrace was devoted to multi-coloured Dioramas. It was simply stunning, swaying in the breeze. Make room in the car, plant sales are amazingly cheap.

The Walled Garden at Scampston, Nr.Malton Yorks. Fabulous garden, very unusual plants. Good to go Aug/Sept when the grasses, designed by Piet Oudolf, are in full sway. Great nursery & now RHS Partner Garden.

Kartause Ittingen, Warth Switzerland. Lovely old monastery with beautiful gardens, art gallery and restaurant in a peaceful setting.

## **And finally... a request**

If you know of any lovely gardens that you think would be great places for the Society to visit on our outings next year and are within a reasonable distance from Pluckley/Egerton we would love to hear about them.