

NEWSLETTER –XMAS 2020



Wishing All PEGS

Members

A Very

Happy Xmas.

2020 has been a very challenging year for lots of us; so many plans have had to be cancelled and opportunities to see friends and family have been really restricted. We are all hoping that 2021 brings a chance for us to restart our normal lives again.

For many of us, our own gardens have become more important than ever. Places to forget the madness going on around us, spaces to enjoy the magnificent weather we had through the summer and providing endless opportunities to fill those hours we would have been doing other things if we could.

It is sad that we have had to cancel so many of the lovely PEGS events we had planned and forgo those opportunities to meet up socially that we are used to. Next year we intend to run as many of those cancelled events as we possibly can. We will publish the events and dates as it becomes clear which ones we can still do. Where an event is unfeasible we will try and replace it with something similar.

Our social events, the "Garden Get Togethers" in Carol Washer's and Trudy Britton's gardens will be back on the calendar as we hope, will be our Spring and Autumn Shows. We hope that a trip to Leonardslee in May to see the magnificent rhododendrons will be possible though we need to think about whether we are happy to travel there by coach. We can still have the tour of Godinton Gardens but sadly the trip to see the Magnolias at Sandling Park is no longer open to us. We also need to find out when RHS Hyde Hall are holding their Flower Show.

On the talks front, Caroline Halfpenny who was due to talk to us about Scented Plants is keen to reschedule, Maureen Rainey from KWT who gave us the wildlife talk would like to come back again but most excitingly we have Chris Beardshaw booked to talk on 11 November. This is a long standing booking we hope he is able to honour!

So, during 2020 Coronavirus has given us many personal challenges but our gardens have also faced their own challenges. With garden centres shut at the start of the year it was hard to buy new plants and seeds sold out quite quickly on line or were simply unavailable. The early warm weather and beautiful summer helped those of us who missed our foreign holidays but the long drought and high temperatures made it hard going for some of our plants.

The PEGS Committee thought it would be interesting to write a little bit about their gardening year and / or give some photos to publish to remind us of the wonderful summer.

Sue writes:

Most of my summer 2020 gardening was spent watering, even those stalwarts of the dry garden achillea and salvias started to wilt. So, the decision was taken to opt for even more drought tolerant plants - grasses. Visiting the website of Knoll Gardens, I chose the selection of grasses headed 'dry, sun baked' and ordered a statuesque Miscanthus Malepartus with gorgeous wine-coloured plumes, a dusky pink flowered Pennisetum Karley Rose, and could not resist a pink Sanguisorba that might need just a touch of water. All arrived in perfect order and are safely planted. The hardest part was digging up the lupins and all the other thirsty plants. Concerned there would be a lack of colour in the early part of the year, I copied an idea from Knoll and dotted large drumstick Alliums throughout the border. Can't wait for 2021. If you are missing the delights of walking round a lovely garden, I can recommend visiting knollgardens.co.uk and clicking on their 'virtual garden' it's a stunning 10 minutes, pity it's in Dorset.

Kathy writes:

At first having so much time to spend in the garden seemed wonderful and filled lots of idle moments. There was always something that needed attention and in May and June the garden was just a delight; everything flowered early and we got tomatoes ripening earlier than ever before. However, by July I too was also struggling with the watering; the pots and vegetables needed water each evening often with heavy watering cans as the old house always suffers from low pressure. (Now sorted.) Usually, I never water established flower beds but some of herbaceous plants were really struggling and I had to start giving plants near trees an occasional evening soak but even so many of my late summer plants ended up diminutive versions of their usual selves.

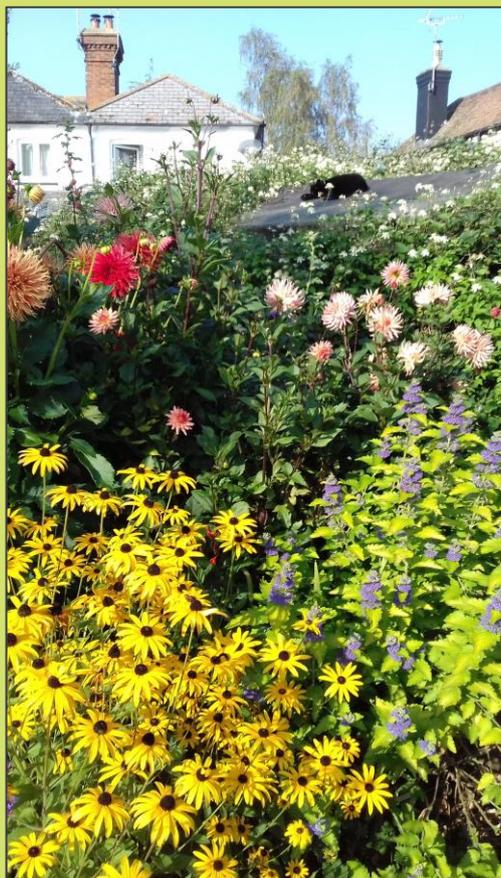
I could grow more Mediterranean and drought resistant plants but here on the Wealden clay they would simply drown and rot during the winter. Trial and error to find good tough plants seems the best way forward.

All is not doom and gloom, the roses as we go through November towards Christmas are giving their best late season display ever!

And photos from Val's garden:



And Mary's garden:



2021 Membership

You don't need to worry about renewing your membership this year as it will automatically be rolled over into 2021. However, if you have changed any contact details during the last 12 months then please let us know at pegsoc@outlook.com so we can still keep in touch.

Sue & Mary's Late Winter Gardening Tips

All the gardening magazines are advising us to start sowing veg and flower seeds, but beware getting too excited and overdoing it. Make sure you have enough space in your greenhouse or cold frame to keep seedlings protected until after frosts have finished.

When tidying up the garden, don't cut back penstemons or deadhead hydrangeas until spring. Leaves and old flower heads help protect the plants and new growth from frost.

However, do trim hellebore leaves down to the ground, it not only helps to show off the lovely hellebore flowers but allows air to circulate and prevent Black Spot.

Gloomy January days are good for sitting down with seed and bulb catalogues and planning what you would like to grow in the coming year.

Start off your sweet peas if you haven't already done so. When 2 pairs of leaves show, put them outside in a cold frame or sheltered spot.