



The **HARDY PLANT SOCIETY SOMERSET GROUP**

Newsletter No: 46

January 2011

Chairman's Letter

My annual report to the AGM pointed out that our programme this year was not quite as full as in previous years because the Visits Secretary's post had not been filled and there are limits to the additional tasks that existing committee members can be asked to undertake. With planning for 2011 already under consideration, we expected the same issue to arise again, but I am pleased to report that we have been able to mount an additional coach trip because one of our members, Ruth Boundy, has agreed to organise it for us. It promises to be a particularly attractive visit, with a return to Ashwood Nursery (this time with a conducted tour of John Massey's renowned private garden) followed by a visit to Olive Mason's garden (Dial Park). This will be on 9th March when there should be some late season Snowdrops and good displays of choice Narcissi and equally choice Primulas. Our thanks are due to Ruth for taking this on.

A visit is also scheduled to Througham Court with its Mathematical Garden, and some of the groundwork for this was undertaken by Jill Wrightson. This enabled the committee to put the finishing touches to what she had proposed. All of this shows the benefit of individual suggestions and contributions that can be made outside of the committee and I therefore urge you all to consider how you might contribute to our programmes in this way, particularly if you have discovered a garden that you would like us all to share.

In similar vein, I commend the article on the Autumn Weekend in this issue of the Newsletter, prepared by Mary Palliser. First it was good to have shared Mary and David's company during the weekend, but it was also good to have the fresh thoughts of someone for whom the Autumn Weekend was a new experience. I can relate very much to Mary's observations and I hope we may see some further newsletter contributions from her on other occasions. Sadly, no regional group has offered to host this event in 2011, but reflections such as Mary's on any part of our programme – or indeed any topic that could

interest members – this will help to make the Newsletter worthwhile and interesting.

I am writing these notes very shortly after the AGM and must offer my thanks and a warm welcome to Carole Fahy who has agreed to take on the Newsletter Editorship. I hope you will all make her task as easy as possible by providing material for her to include. I recently came across a poem by Trevor Bath in response to an earlier plea by Jerry Webb when he was looking after the Newsletter. It is as relevant now as it was then, and it is therefore re-published in this issue.

Records of programme events may come in photographic form as well as written accounts, and our website is just getting better and better. We have ideas for improving our own Somerset page and I am being much encouraged in this by the enthusiasm and expertise of Stuart Senior (whom I also welcome as our new Treasurer in succession to Richard Witherden).

The national HPS website has some excellent pictures of the Autumn Weekend and I do urge you all to take a look at it if you are not in the habit of doing so. It gives a good idea of what is going on – and it is a simple, but quite fascinating step to move on to the pages for other regional groups to see what they are getting up to. If you find ideas that we could adopt to improve our own activities, please let me (or any committee member) know.

Our own Somerset page provides a good record, with some attractive pictures, of our programme visits to Mottisfont, Little Court, Dewstow (in the rain!), Stoberry Park and Meon Orchard. Many of you take photographs during these visits and we are always glad to have access to them – particularly if we get to the point of including pictures in the newsletter as well as the website – an idea that we are considering seriously.

Those of you who attended the AGM will, I am sure, be seeing terrestrial orchids in a fresh light after the superb presentation by Chris Bailes. What a splendid note to strike for the last of our lecture/presentations this year! I have already looked up one of the websites he mentioned and there is no question but that I shall be going back to it – and it might well cost a bob or two!

Roy Stickland

Plant Profile: *AMICIA ZYGOMERIS*



There have been some puzzled faces when I have mentioned this highly desirable plant, which inexplicably is nothing like as well known as it should be. So I'm happy to be an evangelist. It is a herbaceous perennial belonging to the *Papilionaceae* genus. It may not be reliably hardy, though for me it has endured minus 10 continuously for over a week

and reappeared strongly the following Spring. That was in a sheltered well, drained soil with a generous mulch of composted bark over the crown.

The growth is tall and slender with delightfully shaped leaves and burgundy veined stipules at the leaf axils. The yellow pea-like flowers appear in late August/September. It reaches a height of around 7 feet, but only a couple of feet across, so it doesn't occupy a lot of ground space. It will last through the autumn until a sharp frost takes out the top growth, and it associates particularly well with large-leaved plants like bananas, cannas, ricinus or stooled paulownias or catalpas. And it is always noticed!

The slight question over its hardiness, plus the fact that it is not the easiest plant to propagate, may explain why it is so seldom seen. Softwood cuttings must be trimmed as close as you dare to the base of the node to remove all trace of the hollow stem, and even then the strike rate can be depressingly low. I seldom do better than about 30%. But so rewarding a plant is well worth the challenge.

The following poem is reprinted from the January 2004 issue of the Newsletter, and it gives us an opportunity to remember and salute the late Trevor Bath, who wrote the poem in response to a plea by Jerry Webb. The plea remains equally valid now. Do we have a poet to cap Trevor's versifying?

Post Haste

Mr Webb is very worried
For members haven't hurried
To supply him with the articles he needs.
Writing only takes a minute
-- Well, it does once you begin it,
And it's much more fun than pulling up those weeds.
Write on holidays in France,
Lists of all your favourite plants;
Even variegation's (*) not beyond the pale.
All those off-beat colour schemes
That inspire you in your dreams,
And handy hints on how to kill a snail.
Was your garden once a shambles?
Tell us how you beat the brambles.
Or nostalgia's always greeted with applause
--reminiscences of Lambrook,
--Anecdotes about Jean Sambrook –
Just be careful not to risk the libel laws.
Influential books worth noting
(Not just noting, try some quoting)
The successes that you've had – and the mistakes
Compost making as a topic
Tends towards the philosophic
-- or there's recipes for making Hardy Cakes.
Weekend revels in each Region
-- happy memories are legion,
-- your experience of gardening is wide,
So each man and ev'ry female
Should be sending off an E-mail
To keep this Webb-site fully occupied

(*) For present members who may not remember him, the reference to variegation relates to the late Stephen Taffler, a member of the Somerset Group whose passion for variegated plants led to the establishment of the Variegated Plant Group. Trevor Bath for his part will be remembered for his specialism in hardy geraniums, his discerning plantsmanship, his gentlemanly demeanour and the entertainments that he devised for the Winter Lunch. Any aspiring successors?

Winter Lunch

Grateful thanks to Ann and Peter Owen, ably supported by Sandra and Jim Macqueen, for a truly wonderful event. The ambience was warm and welcoming and the food spectacular as ever. They really did us proud and everyone who was there will have departed with a very warm glow of satisfaction.

The Hardy Plant Society Autumn Weekend

10th - 12th September - Wotton House, Dorking, Surrey.

Although we have been members of the HPS for a number of years we had never been to this event. Inspired by the excellence of the speakers at the Pudsey Study Days we had enjoyed while in Yorkshire, and the thought of an easy way of revisiting Wisley, we debated if the birthday weekend of the non-gardener could be spent with plants rather than at a bookfair or archaeology conference, both with the greater appeal. The location of an hotel built around the house of the Evelyn family where the diarist, John, wrote "Sylva" with its important grade 1 listed garden, tipped the balance. Any lingering doubts were quickly dispelled by the very warm welcome from the local Southern Counties Group and other members of the Society.

The format for the meticulously planned weekend was a visit to Wisley with its flower show, private garden visits and evening lectures. A range of gardens had been selected for plantaholics, including a newly landscaped restoration with a 85m cascading rill, and a garden where the owner had the rare gift of subtly blending and constrasting plant colours to a high level, much as Nori Pope did at Hadspen. Five gardens were visited on one day with two more plus Wisley on the other. As the programme gave an outline of what to expect at each garden, reinforced by a short introduction by the owner, there was plenty of time at each to enjoy the garden, refreshments and buy plants. And Wisley, for us, was as satisfying as ever and after a lapse of over three years it was good to see the development of the new borders and inside the new glass house as well as the trial fields and the late summer borders. We had intended to give the flower show a miss but ended up ordering ferns for a new project and finding some of the seen rarities in the plant centre the next day! And other high points were the two evening lectures on Wisley by David Jewell and Colin Crosbie which were not only informative but hugely entertaining – few nodded even at 10pm!

My only criticism, apart from the hotel's inadequate toaster, is that all of the individual gardens were open for the National Gardens Scheme, though not all

together on one weekend. Were these the very best gardens in the area? Could the clout of the national society not be used to gain entry to some important private gardens not normally open? So if you are looking for an outstandingly organised, interesting weekend of garden visiting in like-minded company, and plant buying that is totally stress-free, then do consider attending any future autumn weekend.

The only challenges might be how to shed the pounds from consuming all the cakes and scones at the various gardens and to find any surplus lawn at home to be removed to accommodate the new plants purchased.

David Palliser

Choice Plants Fair – 19 March 2011

Jane Hunt is organising a Spring Plant Fair to be held at Worle Community School, Weston Super Mare on 19 March 2011. There will be a number of good nurseries from Somerset, Devon and Gloucestershire in attendance and refreshments will be available. Entrance to the fair will be £1 and on-site parking is free. The anticipated start time is 11.00am but at the time of going to press details were still being finalised. Please contact Jane for more information. All monies raised are going to fund the School's horticultural department which has very little funding.

Becoming a Master Composter

I suppose for all gardeners, composting, seeing 'muck turn to magic,' is something that is dear to our hearts. Through my local council, I recently discovered their Master Composter scheme. I wanted to find out more, so booked a place on the two day course which, unbelievably in this day and age, was free.

Day one found a group of us, dressed in our best outdoor and wet weather clothes, at the recycling and compost area where we spent the day learning about the scheme and its partnership with W.R.A.P. (Waste Resources Action Programme) and Garden Organic (GO), formerly HDRA. (Henry Doubleday Research Association). The Master Composting course's aim is to promote composting in the community.

On day two we were taken by coach to the Garden Organic garden at Ryton. This was a fascinating day. We learned everything we needed to know about composting. The difference between hot composting, where the breakdown of the heap can be done in just 12 weeks, and cool or cold composting, which takes between 6-12 months and is what happens in most of our gardens.

To make really good compost, ideally the mix needs to be layered with half 'green' waste (uncooked kitchen waste, grass clippings, soft green plants and young weeds - nitrogen rich). If the compost becomes smelly or slimy it's probably too green and needs some more brown. If you have ants in your compost, it's probably too dry. One of the main components to make healthy compost that breaks down quickly is air – one of the reasons gardeners turn their compost. Garden Organic says you really don't have to turn it, you can add lots of air by crunching up cardboard and adding it to the mix. Egg boxes, corrugated cardboard, cereal packets etc. can all go in. If you have mushrooms growing at some stage it's a healthy sign and GO say to add slugs and snails if you don't like killing them, although there's no guarantee they won't escape and return to the garden.

To activate the compost, GO suggest adding Comfrey leaves or young nettles, both of which can also be used to make excellent plant food by soaking them in water until they break down, but don't put it too near the house as it has a vile smell. Getting the males in the family to 'spend a penny' on the heap is also a good activator. Human hair, although it takes a long time to break down, contains useful plant nutrients. Any old clothes made of wool or cotton can also be composted.

We played the 'Garden Organic Virtual Compost Bin' game, which can be borrowed if you want to give a talk at a school or gardening club, and makes finding out what can and can't go into compost fun and interesting. We also looked at the creatures that you would expect to find in the heap; the bugs that do the work. After a great lunch in GO's restaurant we went on to build some compost bins with the winning team being given some vegetable seeds from the Ryton veg garden.

Finally, we were all given Master Composter manuals, made of course from recycled material. However, to get full 'graduation' we have to spend a minimum of 20 hours in the year promoting composting in the community. This can be done by talking to groups or even chatting to your neighbours about how to compost, by writing an article about it or by attending a show to 'sell the idea'. You are not on your own, there's a whole army of MCs doing the rounds, going to shows, manning stands and our MC co-coordinator at the council keeps us up to date with what is going on.

So what have you got to lose? You could make like-minded friends, get free membership of GO, spend a fascinating two days of training as well as do your bit to save the planet. Why not ask your council if they have a similar scheme?

Susie Hughes

PROGRAMME 2011

Please refer to Newsletters for further details and booking slips. Location maps or directions will be supplied following booking a place on an event.

All meetings at West Monkton Village Hall are free to members (except Saturday 16th April), but there is a modest levy of £2.00 for each visitor/guest. The Group will have a plant stall and a book stall at most of the lecture meetings listed.

All study days, coach trips and garden visits must be pre-booked with Janet Murley (01884820840, janet.murley@btinternet.com). **Except March 9th**, which is organised by Ruth Boundy (01823668678, rubyfield@btinternet.com) (Please refer to Newsletters for further details and booking slips. Location maps or directions will be supplied following booking a place on an event.

SAT 15th JANUARY

LECTURE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield 10.30am for 11.00am.

Neil Lovesey - "The Bee Friendly Garden" - Neil started Picket Lane nursery 8 years ago, he is a nurseryman and bee keeper. He will talk about all types of bees and which great variety of plants they all need

SAT 12th FEBRUARY

LECTURE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield 10.30am for 11.00am.

Sally Leaney - "Garden Design" - Sally trained in garden design with John Brookes and is a member of the Society of garden designers

WEDS 9th MARCH

COACH TRIP

Ashwood Nurseries, Nr Stourbridge - Tour of owner's private garden followed by visit to **Dial Park** - Olive Mason's garden

SAT 12th MARCH

LECTURE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield 10.30am for 11.00am.

Sally Gregson - "Hellebores" - Sally is an ex-chairman of our group, a nursery woman and excellent speaker

SAT 2nd APRIL

LECTURE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield 10.30am for 11.00am.

Stuart Dixon - "Dreaming Spires - Delphiniums, Eremurus, Hollyhocks and more". Stuart is a horticultural lecturer, writer and broadcaster. He has restored his 18th Century garden at Hebb's farmhouse which has been featured on BBC TV

SAT 16th APRIL

GROUP PLANT SALE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield 10.00am to 12.30pm.

Admission £1

WEDS 15th JUNE

COACH TRIP

Westwell Manor and Whitehill Farm Nursery, Nr Burford, Oxfordshire

MON 4th JULY

GARDEN VISIT

Yews Farm, Nr Martock

WEDS 13th JULY

COACH TRIP

Througham Court and Pan Global Plants Nursery, Gloucestershire

SUN 7th AUGUST

PLANT SWAP & LUNCH

At Ellerker House, Pecking Mill Road, Evercreech. Details TBA

FRI 19th AUGUST

GARDEN VISIT

Forde Abbey and “Lift the Latch”, Nr Chard

TUE 6th SEPTEMBER

GARDEN VISIT

Holt Farm, Nr. Blagdon

SAT 17th SEPTEMBER

LECTURE & 50/50 PLANT SALE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield 10.30am for 11.00am.

Mark Stainer - “History of the Garden at East Lambrook Manor”. Stuart is a horticultural lecturer, writer and broadcaster. he has restored his 18th Century garden at Hebb's farmhouse which has been featured on BBC TV

SAT 15th OCTOBER

LECTURE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield, 10.30am for 11.00am.

Paul Bygrave The garden year at Forde Abbey and its plants

SAT 19th NOVEMBER

AGM & LECTURE

At West Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Heathfield 10.00am for 10.30am AGM and 11.15am lecture.

Mary Payne -“So you think it’s all over - Late Blooming Perennials” - Mary is a well known garden designer and broadcaster who created the marvellous 'Prairie garden' at Lady Farm

SUN ??

WINTER LUNCH

Events – all must be pre-booked

If you would like to book places on any of these events, complete and return the entire enclosed Booking Sheet. As you will see from the Booking Sheet, you can receive the Joining Instructions for each event either by email or by post. To receive these details by email, simply fill in your email address on the Booking Sheet **even if you believe I already have a note of it**. If you choose this option, not only will I email your Joining Instructions prior to each event, but I will also send you an email confirming your booking. If you prefer this option **PLEASE** print your name clearly and remember to advise me of any change to your email address. Should you wish to receive this information by post, **PLEASE** remember to send me **TWO** SAE for EACH event you wish to attend.

Visit Notes

WEDNESDAY MARCH 9th *This event is being run by Ruth Boundy

ASHWOOD NURSERIES, Nr Stourbridge - Tour of owner's private garden followed by visit to **DIAL PARK**- Olive Mason's garden. I first visited the wonderful garden of Olive Mason's at Dial Park during the Primrose Study Day which was organised by the local HPS last year. The first thing I thought as I was going around was what a lovely garden for Hardy Planters! It is crammed full of rare and unusual plants particularly snowdrops, narcissi and primroses in the spring. I was so impressed by the design of the garden with wonderful paths leading you to new areas. She has a lovely collection of ferns and some topiary which lends some formality to what is really a very relaxed garden. I think everyone will enjoy looking at this superb plainsman's garden, and urge you to take this opportunity of visiting an outstanding garden.

We depart from Sainsbury's car park bus stop at Hankridge Farm at 8:30am. The cost of this trip is £23 per person

WEDNESDAY JUNE 15th

WESTWELL MANOR is a garden set in thirty acres of meadow. It was designed by the owner's wife who died last year. Each of the twenty or so garden rooms leads to another, some traditional, some surprising and original. There are twin rills lined by a pleached lime alley, an unusual lavender terrace, a water garden, a moonlight garden, an alder basket and splendid herbaceous borders. There is a vegetable garden and a nut walk and much, much, more.

WHITEHILL FARM NURSERY

The garden consists of informal woodland and mixed shrubs and a variety of planted areas and ponds, a rose garden and shrub and herbaceous borders, ornamental grasses and bamboos. All of the plants grown on the nursery are planted somewhere in the garden.

We depart from Sainsbury's car park bus stop at Hankridge Farm at 8:30am. The cost of this trip is £25.50 per person A cup of tea and cake will be provided. Bring your named box for your purchases!

MONDAY JULY 4TH
YEWS FARM MARTOCK

One acre theatrical, strong layout. Long season planting, mainly perennials - A contemporary garden of personal inspiration and discovery.
The cost of the visit is £6.00pp. There is tea included in the price.

WEDNESDAY JULY 13th
THROUGHAM COURT

The eighteenth century and Arts and Crafts hybrid house lies at the heart of this three-acre garden. It is an amalgam of traditional and contemporary design. Science has been a deep inspiration, The owner is a scientist turned garden designer. She has worked with Charles Jenks. There is wit and humour too - A remarkable contemporary garden still in the making.

PAN GLOBAL PLANT NURSERY

A rare plant nursery in the walled garden at Frampton Court - A Great Treat!
We depart from Sainsbury's car park bus stop at Hankridge Farm at 8:30am. The cost of this trip is £23.50 per person

Greetings from your new Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

Hi! Firstly, a reminder about subscriptions for 2011 which fall due in January. Thank you to those who paid at the AGM and for those who pay by standing order: to the latter, I hope you've informed your bank about the new rates: £5 single and £8 joint. For those who prefer to pay by cheque, the usual payment slip will be included with the January Newsletter.

Secondly, we now have our own website! Those of you who occasionally access the National HPS website (<http://www.hardy-plant.org.uk/>) will have seen that we have some Somerset Group pages. But you may also have noticed that many of the other HPS Groups have their own websites which gives them greater editorial freedom. Well, courtesy of BT, we in Somerset now have our very own site at <http://hps-somerset.btck.co.uk/>, free of charge! It is accessible directly, or via the National site.

I would very much appreciate your feedback on the site. Its prime purpose is to attract new members by demonstrating what an active, sociable and knowledgeable bunch of people we are! To this end, there are two opportunities

for everyone to contribute. Firstly, on the Home page, we have a Plant of the Month featured: please email me with a picture and a paragraph of anything you judge to be particularly worthy in your garden at any time of the year. And secondly, the Tips & Techniques page is a vehicle for you to share your experiences with other members (and the world!) on such topics as propagation etc. You'll find two terrific articles by our Chairman already posted!

Thirdly, Sue Taylor has a very large stack of *The Garden* magazine and *The Hardy Plant Journal* that she wishes to dispose of. If you're interested, please let me know by return and I'll pass your details on to Sue.

Stuart Senior

South West Rock Garden Flower Show

SATURDAY 26th MARCH 2011

St. LUKE'S COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND SPORT
Hart's Lane, Off Hill Barton Road, Exeter EX1 3RD
(on the Pinhoe/Broadclyst road next to Sainsburys)

Plant sales open at 10 a.m. (13 nursery stalls)

Show opens at 12 noon until 4 p.m.

Entry £2 (AGS members free)

Hot and cold refreshments available

Free parking

There is a book stall selling new and secondhand books. The show also contains an artistic section, featuring photographs and paintings of rock garden plants in the wild and in a garden setting. Roger Stuckey

The Nursery List for 2011

This will be available during January and it will contain some exciting new entries. Members are asked to help with the distribution in the usual way by delivering bundles of leaflets to the nurseries that are in reasonable reach. Do any of us really need an excuse to visit a plant nursery?

Batches should be available for our January meeting. Our new website, that Stuart Senior has put so much work into, will also allow us to improve quite dramatically the presentation of the Nursery List on the internet, and you will find it very worthwhile to become a regular browser of the website and commend it to all your friends.

Plant Profile - *Musschia wollastonii*



Many of you will remember our visit to Meon Orchard last August where there was much to admire (see the report in Newsletter No. 45), not only the three National Collections, but also many difficult and tender plants which were looking their best in late summer. One plant in particular caught the eye of my Head Gardener who persuaded Doug Smith to part with a seedling.

By coincidence, he'd just written an article about it for the Hampshire Group of Plant Heritage which he passed on and is happy for me to share with you. The plant in question is *Musschia wollastonii*. It is restricted to Madeira and has a pretty

limited distribution even there - it is decreasing in the wild and considered endangered. It is one of three species, all endemic to Madeira: the others are *M. aurea* and *M. isambertoi*. (I suspect it is named after Thomas Vernon Wollaston, 1822 – 1878, who was a prominent entomologist and a contemporary of Darwin: he made a number of trips to Madeira, investigating its natural history.)

Musschia wollastonii is a short lived, generally monocarpic (i.e. it dies after flowering) subshrub. For the first two to three years of its life it develops into a neat rosette, a metre or more tall with oblanceolate, doubly serrated leaves up to 50cm long. As it grows, the old leaves are shed and it develops a definite trunk. It is when the plant flowers that its botanical classification (*Campanulaceae*) becomes clear. The flowers are produced in multi-branched panicles up to a metre high and wide, producing a most impressive pyramidal inflorescence. They are a pretty yellow with a green or purple tinge, each perhaps 2cm tall. In this country it flowers in August. It is grown from seed, which is produced in copious

quantities if you have flowered it. The seeds, sown in the spring with a little heat (if you have a propagator even better) come up like mustard and cress. Once all risk of frost is past, the plants are happy to stand outside. They are generally better in light shade, but take the full sun once established. Pot them on regularly in rich compost. (Doug uses 50:50 multipurpose and John Innes No3 with added perlite.) You will probably need to do this three times in the first year, ending up with 3-5 litre pots. If so they probably won't need feeding, but will need regular watering.

In winter put them somewhere frost-free. They are extremely easy to over-winter: they don't rot, and cope with fairly low light levels if necessary. They like to be just moist, but will need regular watering if pot-bound. Even if you neglect them and find them completely limp and dehydrated, they will quickly plump up, given a good soaking. Next spring, once growth starts, check the root ball; when in doubt, pot on again. If they fail to flower, repeat the process for another year. They will generally be in 10-20 litre pots by then. They will then generally die, so wait until the seed has set and start again the following spring!

Stuart Senior

(Pictures and the bulk of the text courtesy of Doug Smith.)

Grass Cuttings

God: Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colours by now. But I just see green rectangles.

St. Francis: It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

God: Grass? But, it's so boring. It's not colourful and it doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees; only grubs and worms. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

St. Francis: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green, poisoning any other plant that crops up in it.

God: Well, the Spring rains and warm weather make the grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

St. Francis: Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it, sometimes twice a week.

God: They cut it? And bale it like hay?

St. Francis: Not exactly Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

God: Why? Is it a cash crop?

St. Francis: No Sir. They pay to throw it away.

God: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

St. Francis: You aren't going to believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.....

CORNUCOPIA

Cornucopia is the twice-yearly digest of the best writing from the Newsletters of the HPS local and specialist groups. To subscribe, send a cheque payable to 'The Hardy Plant Society' for £2.20 (1 year) or £4.40 (2 years) to: Pam Adams, HPS, Little Orchard, Great Comberton, Pershore, WR10 3DP

The Popes at Hadspen

From 1998-2005 Nori and Sandra Pope made Hadspen House one of the most talked-about gardens in Britain, largely because of their systematic exploration of colour. Believing that what they learnt about colour in planting design was very valuable and should be passed on to a new generation of gardeners, garden writer Noel Kingsbury and designer Daniela Coray in collaboration with The Garden Museum have launched '*The Hadspen Garden Online Archive Project*', a pioneering approach to gathering and disseminating our experience of gardens.

Anyone who has photographs of Hadspen or notes made at the time on the plantings, is being invited to make them available for reproduction on the website. Please contact Daniela Coray on: info@hadspengarden.org or dc109608@falmouth.ac.uk.

A reminder that your names and addresses are kept on a home computer. This information is not released to any other source. If you have any concerns please contact a Committee member
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