

Oxenhope gardening club

Newsletter

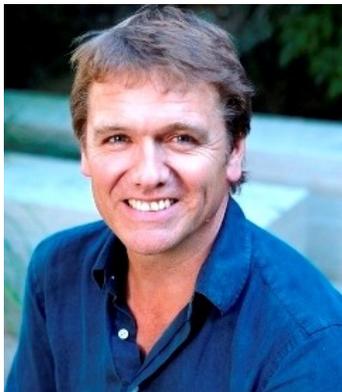
December 2011

www.oxenhopegardeningclub.co.uk



We've scooped Andy Sturgeon!

The calendar of speakers and trips for 2012 is shaping up nicely and the committee is thrilled to announce that



Andy Sturgeon is to speak at our October meeting.

A world-class garden designer, Andy won the 2010 Chelsea Flower Show best in show award.

BBC Radio presenter and horticulturalist, Joe Maiden, is booked for our March meeting.

In May we can look forward to a visit to Waddow Lodge Garden in the Ribble Valley. The garden's creator, Peter Foley, who is an accomplished speaker, nurseryman and broadcaster with BBC Radio Lancashire, is the guest at our September meeting.



See Waddow Lodge in May

Tom Hart Dyke is January speaker

Plant hunter, Tom Hart Dyke, will travel from Lullingstone Castle in Kent to be our special guest speaker on Thursday, 19 January at Oxenhope village hall at 7.30pm.

Tom was captured by guerrillas while searching for rare orchids, and held hostage for nine months in the Darien Gap of Central America, as described in his book *The Cloud Gardener*.

The Daily Mail said of him: "Surely England's most extraordinary gardener."

The Observer enthused: "THD is quite an exotic hothouse hybrid himself – the Lara Croft of flowers, a sweet 21st century David Bellamy."

Tickets for non-members are £10. Members free. For more information tel **01535 647974** or **644447** or visit www.oxenhopegardeningclub.co.uk

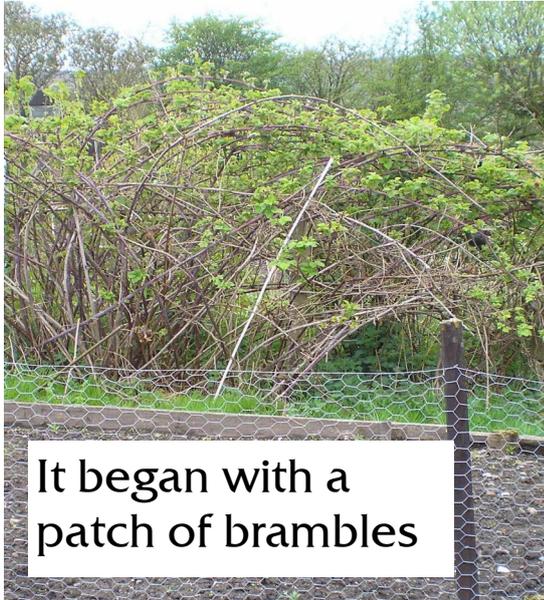
Message from the chair

Don't forget that subscriptions for 2012 are due after the AGM. If you know anyone who is interested in joining the club they will be welcome to subscribe in January and February.

Your subscription entitles you to a programme of top class speakers and visits on a variety of gardening topics.

From digging to Duraglit

Here is the second part of Wendy and Derrick Hopkinson's gardening story. Here we read how they began their allotment from scratch and ended up with award-winning produce.



We are most fortunate to have an allotment as well as our garden, to which we devote a considerable amount of time. It is a much bigger commitment than most people realise. Winter is the quietest time; but come spring the workload increases dramatically.

We decided to opt for small beds accessed from a central pathway to avoid stepping onto the soil unnecessarily and therefore compacting it. Crop rotation is also important because it helps to minimise pests and diseases such as club root – so don't forget to keep a record of what is grown where.

The system of rotation should start with root crops, then brassicas the next year and finally other crops such as peas and beans.

It is also important to keep the ground clean and sweet by applying lime in late autumn when most of the crops have been harvested.

The weather dictates when to plant out or sow seed directly; it really is not possible to hurry nature. Our conservatory becomes a greenhouse until the seedlings can be moved to the greenhouse proper and the cold frame. There is nothing like the excitement of seeds developing. Some seeds are apparently not viable and seed companies do request that you advise them of non-germination. They will usually replace them but by then you have probably 'missed the boat'.

We have introduced a small wildlife pond where we can watch wildlife and it's a home to our natural pest controller, the frogs! A small bed is given over to flowers to attract pollinators and brighten up the allotment.



As I write this my husband has been addressing one of the more smelly aspects of gardening; he has been shovelling manure for the last two days following deliveries from a family friend and many thanks to the horse!

We then enjoy all our produce, as do our family and friends. We spend hours boiling beetroot, peeling shallots and making endless soups, particularly green bean soup to cope with the glut. We have disappointments each year; certain vegetables do better than others for no apparent reason. This year was no exception. Tomatoes seemed to have struggled but without that big yellow ball in the sky it's no wonder!

Wendy and Derrick's allotment continued...

On the other hand for some reason we have had masses of cucumbers, in particular from a variety called 'Mini Munch' perfect for children's lunchboxes.

The last two years we have entered Haworth, Oxenhope, Lees & Crossroads Annual Flower and Vegetable Show and it has been a very enjoyable experience with some degree of success. I had to purchase some Duraglit silver cleaner last year but I don't wish to boast! The taking part in such a wonderful show is reward in itself and we highly recommend it. The standards are exceptionally high but advice is freely given and you make many new friends. It is well worth visiting just to see for yourself the enormous variety of entries and dedication of the exhibitors. The demise of several other local shows has seen an increase in the number of entries at Haworth so support is very important.



Tea and coffee rota

Don't forget to offer to help with the tea and coffee rota for future meetings.



Club coffers pay for the tea, coffee, milk and biscuits. All you need to do is set up, serve refreshments and tidy up.

Please ring one of the committee if you can help out:

Chairman, Richard Berry **647974**
Secretary, Belinda Marks **640607**
Treasurer, Sue Gibson **642684**

Annual general meeting

December 15

Don't miss our Annual General Meeting followed by a Christmas buffet.

Bring a dish to share at our faith supper.

This is your newsletter!

If you have been inspired by Wendy and Derrick's article, why not tell other club members about your gardening experiences?

Email your news to Jenny via the club website or jenny.hakney@talktalk.net

Save our printing costs

To save money we are trying to cut down the number of newsletters we print. If you could read it online contact Richard Gibson who will add you to the email circulation list.

richard.gibson@oxenhopegardeningclub.co.uk

