



Oxenhope

Gardening Club News

May 2022

Welcome to the May newsletter.



Welcome to the May newsletter, the last issue until September. We were so sorry that we had to cancel the coach trip to Renishaw Hall in June, but unfortunately, we didn't have enough people committing to the trip, so to avoid losing our deposit, we took the decision to cancel. However, the good news is that Joan Roach, one of the committee members, has kindly offered to open her lovely garden in

Oxenhope on the afternoon and evening of June 23rd. There will be two sessions, 2-4 and 5-7 and delicious cakes, tea and coffee will be served. We will be asking for a £5 donation to club funds. The address will be sent out later via members email address.

I have chosen the auricula as plant of the month. My father grew auriculas in every of the many gardens we moved to and from being a small child, I have always loved them. The first time I saw them displayed in an auricular theatre was on a visit many years ago to the wonderful Calke Abbey in Derbyshire. Well worth a visit both for the gardens and the house.

The committee hope you all have a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you at the plant sale. **.Sandra.**

Auricula : Plant of the month.



The Auricula is a species of the genus of 'Primula' and has been carefully bred over the past 400 years from just three wild forms into the thousands of hybrids that exist today. Auriculas were first recorded in England in the Elizabethan period as a pastime of the elite but it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that they became a widespread passion amongst horticulturalists of all classes. As early as the mid 1600's, both striped and double auriculas

were being developed .Especially highly prized were the forms of striped doubles,

some of which were recorded as fetching five to twenty pounds per plant, a fortune for that time. The striped auricula started a trend that was to last for 200 years.

For there is no flower so evocative of the past as the Auricula - and if the modern world is ever to improve out of its present chaos of violence, it could do worse than adapt itself to be suitable, once again, for this most civilised and highly trained of plants.

Sacheverell Sitwell, 1897–1988

Alpine', double' and border' auriculas can be grown in the garden. They are vigorous, free-flowering plants that are often scented, being generally undamaged by rainfall. They are very easy to grow as long as you ensure they are in a free-draining spot in part-shade. Or you could plant them in a low patio pot or alpine trough which can be moved to a shady spot in the summer months. However, as well as these varieties, you could also grow some of the other auricula varieties which need protection from the weather, like the edge' variety

illustrated below by building a mini theatre. The first 'edge' auricula was introduced in 1757 having an unusual edge to the flower petals. Initially the edges were seen as the Royal Family of the auricula world, unique and rich in colour



Auricula Theatre Calke Abbey.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century. Auricula 'theatres', were cropping up around the country, within the grounds of stately homes, with gardeners paid not only to maintain a grand collection, but also to hybridise new and better varieties. The finest growers in the country were the descendants of the original Flemish weavers based in Lancashire, their skills having been

passed down from their forefathers, who had been employed in the woollen mills around 1570. Even to this day, the north of England is still the stronghold of auricula fanciers.



Mini Auricula theatre.

Be inspired to create your own mini theatre so that you too can grow more of these wonderful plants.(lots of examples to be found on Pinterest!)

“The perfection of a stage auricula is that of the most exquisite Meissen porcelain or of the most lovely silk stuffs of Isfahan and yet it is a living growing thing.” Sacheverell Sitwell

Places to buy auriculas.

Ashwood nurseries, Kingswinford DY6 0AE

Woottens of Wenhaston, Wenhaston Suffolk IP19 9HF

May Plant Sale.

The plant sale will be held on Thursday, May 19th at 7.30 pm. There will be a wonderful collection of plants for sale and a delicious selection of cakes to be enjoyed with a cup of tea or coffee, not forgetting the opportunity of winning something good in the raffle. Members donating plants should aim to arrive around 7pm.(or earlier!)

Club visits.

July 21 we will visit Elaine Robinson's garden near Hebden Bridge.

August's visit (date TBC) to the Hepworth Garden at Wakefield.

Gardening events: Open Gardens NGS.

Millrace Garden 84 Selby Rd Garforth Leeds LS25 1LP 1-5 Sun May 22.

Rudding Park Follifoot Harrogate HG3 1JH 1-5 Sun May 22.

Hill Top Westwood Drive Ilkley LS29 9RS 11-4 Sun May 29.

Scampston Gardens Annual Spring Fair 10-4 Sun May 29.

Compost bins for sale.



A committee member is offering 2 compost bins for sale @£10 each. Contact Joan Roach at plant sale

Tea and coffee rota

Thank you to those of you who have volunteered in the past to help with the rota.



If you can help please sign the rota sheet on the refreshment counter.

Or ring Ruth Shepley 01535.643437

www.oxenhopegardenclub.co.uk