



# Welwyn Garden City Horticultural Society

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**NEWSLETTER No. 152**

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**Autumn 2022**

[www.wgchortsoc.co.uk](http://www.wgchortsoc.co.uk)

## Our Centenary Gardening Year

Happily, this past year has seen us resume our meetings back in St Francis' Hall. Judging by the number of members attending it does seem that meeting in person is more of an attraction than 'Zooming in' but we will see if this continues as winter sets in. The hall has also had new equipment installed, with a drop-down screen and new projector, which is a great help in setting-up for meetings. In October we celebrated our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in style with a small gift for all members and the chance to raise a glass to the next 100 years. Speaking of raising a glass – we hope to have a good turn-out for the last meeting of the year on 13<sup>th</sup> December where we will have mince pies and wine after the talk from Oliver Waring. The future is looking positive with new volunteers joining the committee to keep the programme of meetings and outings rolling along. On behalf of the committee, we wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and all the best for the new year.



*Alison Ewington – Chair*

### **3 - 4 December - The Society at the Christmas Tree Festival. St Francis Church - 12 – 5pm.**

For the first time the Society is entering a tree in this annual festival of over 50 decorated trees. Do come along and support this worthwhile event. Entry £2.50 (children under 12 free)

### **13 December - The Evolving Landscape of the Garden City: the next 100 years - Oliver Waring**

Needing no introduction to our members and returning now as the Landscape and Ecology Manager for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, it is 8 years since we enjoyed Oliver's excellent presentation on Caring for Trees in WGC. We are delighted that he will be joining us for our Christmas meeting to update us on the many enhancing changes that are taking place in the town and to look ahead with his ambitions for the next 100 years.

### **Our 2023 Outings to Hyde Hall, Leonardslee and Bressingham Gardens**

**22 February 2023 – Our Winter Lunch and Visit to RHS Hyde Hall, Chelmsford, Essex. £70 including coach, gratuities and lunch (drinks not included). Depart - 9.30 College Way, WGC.**

**If you wish to go to Hyde Hall please let Jenny know by 31 December.**

The coach will take us to RHS Hyde Hall Gardens, where we can see the winter gardens renowned for their early colour.



You will have some time to enjoy more of the extensive gardens or browse in the shop and café. We will go on to enjoy a three-course lunch nearby at The Rayleigh Club and then return at about 4pm.

**11 May - Leonardslee Gardens, Horsham, West Sussex. £50 including coach, entry to the gardens and all attractions (including Dolls House Museum) and gratuities. Depart - 9.30 College Way, WGC.**



The gardens have been extensively renovated by the new owners. We have timed our visit to make the most of the wonderful colour of the azaleas and rhododendrons for which the gardens are truly famous. Features include a lake, the famous dolls house museum, a sculpture park and art gallery. The



gardens and woods can be explored by winding paths. You will be able to take the day at your own pace stopping if you wish at a range of food and drink venues, including the delightful lake side Engine House Café.

**20 September - Bressingham Gardens, Diss, Norfolk. £45 including coach, gratuities, entry to the gardens and all attractions (this is a Steam Day so all the steam trains will be running). Depart – 9.30 College Way, WGC.**



Laid out in six linked gardens over 17 acres, Alan and Adrian Bloom's gardens are famed for their unusual trees and displays of perennials with



clever underplanting. There is plenty of colour throughout the year, but especially in the autumn for which the main gardens are designed. Facilities include cafes, steam train rides and a steam museum to allow you to make the most of the day. There is also a large garden centre next door.

All tickets are on sale at meetings or you can book by sending a completed booking form, as attached to this Newsletter, to Jenny Begg. Payment is by cheque or BACS.

Please note that to keep prices reasonable, we have not included refreshments in the ticket price for Leonardslee and Bressingham. At both venues there are full café facilities.

For Hyde Hall we have contacted all members who have booked about a change of menu. If you haven't received the new menu, please contact Jenny: [jennybegg@ntlworld.com](mailto:jennybegg@ntlworld.com) or 01707 324374.  
*Jenny Begg, Anne Freimanis*

## **June 14 - 16 2023 - Two Counties Garden Tour**

This is sold out. If you wish to go on the waiting list, contact Denise Madden at [gladers2@gmail.com](mailto:gladers2@gmail.com) or 07970 414288/ 01707 323951.

## **Looking Forward to Our 2023 Meetings Programme**

### **14 February - Bordering on Insanity - Timothy Walker**

No apologies for inviting back one of our most popular speakers. His first presentation to us was in 2003 when he spoke about a year in the life of the Oxford Botanic Garden, where he had started his horticultural career as a post graduate having read Botany at University College, Oxford, and where he became Director of the Botanic Gardens. This time he looks exclusively at the herbaceous border in his wife's garden, covering the principles and practicalities of creating a border that is interesting all-year-round.



### **14 March - The Worshipful Company of Gardeners - Peter Waine**

Peter was Chair of the WGC Centenary Foundation and will talk about another of his many roles, as a recent Master of The Worshipful Company of Gardeners. It sounds as if we should know all about them but...do we? His reputation as a great raconteur goes before him.

### **11 April - Garden in a Bottle - Marina North**

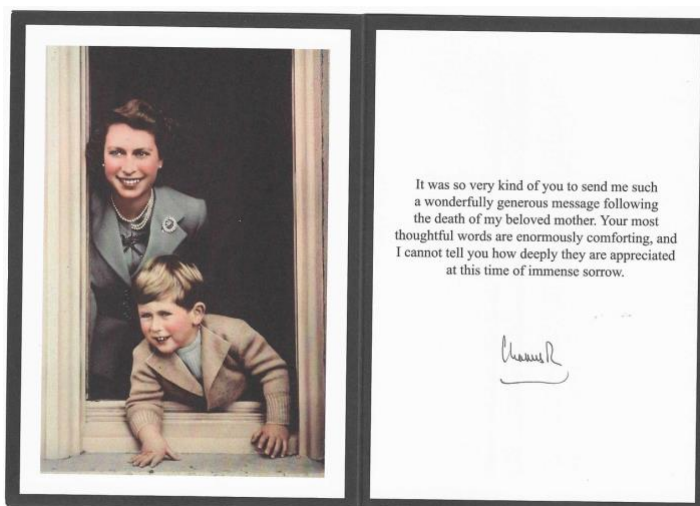
Marina will explain what a terrarium is and will demonstrate how to make a large closed jar version using a variety of plants. She will explain how to maintain the health of a mini-ecosystem. She will bring a variety of terrariums to display and demonstrate different options. These can be bought on the evening.

### **9 May - Cottage Garden Style – design ideas for the modern garden - Andrew Sankey**

Andrew is a garden landscaper and designer, a nurseryman and a lecturer with a special interest in the evolution of the cottage garden style. He will bring copies of his recently published book, "The English Cottage Garden" to sell and sign.

## **A Card from Buckingham Palace!**

A letter was sent on behalf of the Society to King Charles expressing our condolences on the death of the Queen. (The Queen was the Patron of the RHS to which we are affiliated). We have received a card in reply which will be added to our archives. It has a charming picture of both the Queen and the new King from the 1950s with the message *'It was so very kind of you to send me such a wonderfully generous message following the death of my beloved mother. Your most thoughtful words are enormously comforting, and I cannot tell you how deeply they are appreciated at this time of immense sorrow. Charles R.'*





## Contact Details for Past Speakers

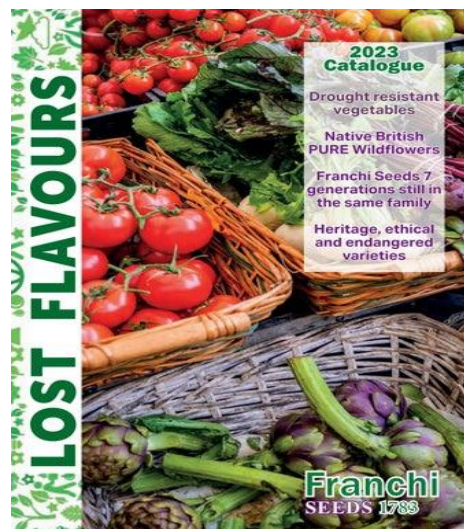
We had two very informative and entertaining talks in October and November.



Here are the contact details for our speakers: Luke Whiting, Meadow Sweet Nursery in Huntingdon. The Nursery specialises in home grown alpinas, sempervivums and unusual perennial plants. <https://darcyeverest.co.uk> [info@darcyeverest.co.uk](mailto:info@darcyeverest.co.uk) or 01480 497 672.

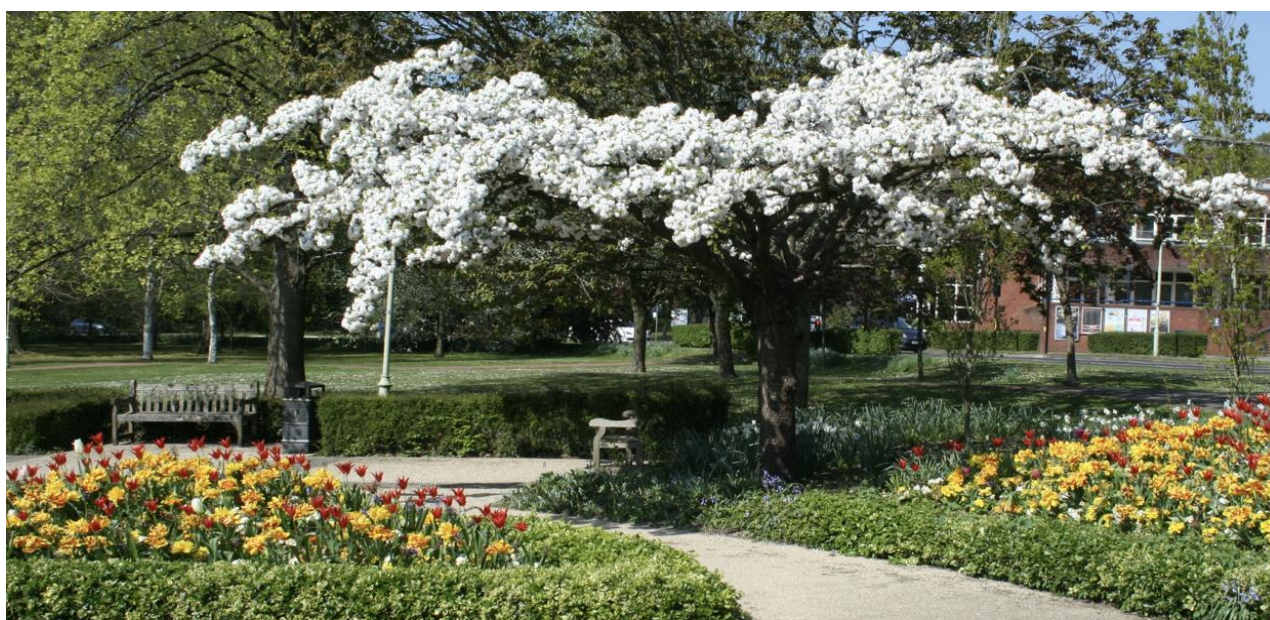
**Paolo Arrigo of**

*Franchiseeds of Italy* Paolo represents the 7<sup>th</sup> generation of the oldest family-run seed company in the world, established in 1783. [Seedsofitaly.com](https://Seedsofitaly.com) has their catalogue and lots of tips, stories and plant heritage histories.



## Looking Forward To Spring

We may be heading towards the chills of winter but here are some photographs from Steve Williams and Don Lee that remind us that spring is waiting in the wings. The winter garden at Anglesey Abbey is an old favourite with us all and the Campus bedding scheme always catches the eye.







## All Aboarders – Summer at the Station

It has been 'All Change' at the WGC train station recently, with 2 projects completed alongside our regular planting, watering and tending. Since the creation of the large flower beds on platforms 3/4 last year, the team has improved the soil and pruned back the hedges leaving a large space to fill.

Luckily, we were offered plants by Garden on a Roll, owned by the Society's President Antony Henn. He brought over 100 plants to the station, placing them carefully and explaining each specimen to the volunteers. We worked hard to get them all dug in and will be looking after them very carefully over the winter and looking forward to a fantastic display next year.



Another recent highlight is the installation of an original station name sign in the waiting room on platform 3. This sign was rescued by Malcolm Cowan when it was decommissioned so we are very grateful to him for looking after it and loaning it to the display. The waiting room also features old travel posters and a gallery of historical images so there's plenty to see while you wait for a train.

*Beth Mateer*

**If you have any news, seen interesting plants in our public spaces or have plants in your garden that you would recommend please let the Editor know: Anne Freimanis, [a.freimanis@icloud.com](mailto:a.freimanis@icloud.com) or 01707 323277.**