



# Welwyn Garden City Horticultural Society

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

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NEWSLETTER No. 158

Autumn 2024

## It's (nearly) Christmas!

We have had a great start to this season's talks with excellent attendance. But we can always fit in a few more people so do encourage any gardening friends to come along and give us a try. Thanks to everyone who has helped keep the show on the road – every contribution of time and effort helps - no matter how big or small.

The last meeting this season is on 10 December where we will be serving wine and mince pies from 7.30pm before the meeting starts at 8pm. On behalf of the committee, we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a 'blooming good' New Year.

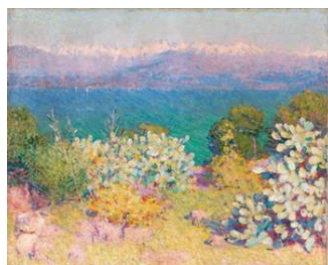
*Alison Ewington, Chair*



## 10 December - Christmas drinks and December talk

**Please join us for Christmas drinks from 7.30 onwards and then enjoy our talk.**

**Caroline Holmes - *Impressionists in their Gardens: Living Light and Colour***



Caroline is a renowned garden historian, author and presenter, and a design consultant. She has written 12 books on garden history 'with a twist' and lectured extensively.

This talk explores gardens through the senses of the Impressionists from three continents – Europe, North America and Australia – enjoying the essentially similar pleasures of the garden, but engaging with the light from their skies in order to create motifs to paint.

*Laurence Bauer and Sue Friend*

## Our 2025 Garden Holiday - Final Call

**30 June - 3 July. £529 per person, including hotel, breakfast and dinner, travel, entry to RHS Bridgewater and all gratuities. Single supplement of £49 (if available), lunches and other garden entries are not included.**

We will be visiting Shugborough Estate, Dunham Massey, Arley Hall and Gardens and Biddulph Grange but the star of the show is our visit to RHS Bridgewater.

There are a few places left. If you are interested in booking a shared room, please contact Jenny Begg - [jennybegg@ntlworld.com](mailto:jennybegg@ntlworld.com) or 01707 324374 – as soon as possible as she is keen to get the final numbers confirmed with Tailored Travel. Jenny is also keeping a waiting list for single rooms.

*Jenny Begg*



## Christmas Tree Festival

**7 - 8 December at St Francis Church**

Come and see our Society's Christmas Tree as well as so many other brilliant tree designs and dressings, including one from the All Aboarders.



## Give A Gardening Gift this Christmas – Society Membership

Have you got a friend or family member who is interested in gardening? Perhaps they would like Membership of our Society as a Christmas present? Then they could enjoy:

- 8 fascinating lectures - with tea and coffee provided!
- Access to outings including an annual lunch, a day trip and this year's summer holiday.
- Members' plant swaps (usually in May & October).
- Three newsletters and an informative website.

All this for an annual Membership of only £15. Membership Secretary, Denise Madden, would be happy to assist. Contact her at 1 The Glade, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7LG or [gladers2@gmail.com](mailto:gladers2@gmail.com)

## Our 2025 February Annual Lunch and September Outing

Tickets will be on sale at our meetings or you can book by sending the completed booking form, attached to this newsletter, to Anne Freimanis. Payment is by cheque or BACS.

### 5 February - Our Horticultural Society Annual Lunch. Welwyn Garden City Golf Club, Mannicotts, AL8 7BP. 12.30 for 1pm. £35 including lunch (but not drinks).

Members and their friends are welcome to our Annual Lunch where we can enjoy a three-course meal with tea and coffee. We have arranged with the Golf Club a private room that overlooks the golf course, where we can meet old friends and catch up with each other over a relaxed, table served meal. Our menu choices are set out on the booking form. There will be a bar (not included in the price). We do hope that you can join us to say goodbye to the winter blues!



### 12 September - Beth Chatto Gardens. £45 including coach, gratuities and garden entry. Depart 9.30am College Way, WGC.

Beth transformed an overgrown wasteland which was deemed unfit for fruit farming, into a series of informal gardens. As the conditions within the garden vary widely,

five distinct areas have been created providing useful examples of working with nature to find the right plant for the right place. The world famous Gravel Garden with its unirrigated, drought tolerant planting and the Reservoir Garden which has recently been re-designed as an open area full of late season interest will,



no doubt, inspire us all. Together with the Woodland Garden, the Water Garden and the Alpine Scree Garden, there is a lot to see. There is a tea room serving light refreshments and who could resist the Chatto Nursery brimming with collectable plants!



*Anne Freimanis*

## **Our 2025 Speaker Programme**

**Meetings are at St Francis of Assisi Church Hall, Church Road, AL8 6QJ. Doors open at 7.30pm with refreshments served before the talk which starts at 8pm.**

### **10 February - Kerry Austen - All aspects of growing and caring for roses**

Kerry Austen is a horticulturalist with a passion for roses. She previously worked at the Gardens of the Rose and RHS Wisley. She is the current Team Leader and Head Gardener for the Rochfords International Rose Trials.

### **11 March - The Woodland Garden and the Howardsgate Borders in WGC: the inside story - Adrian de Batt and Nick Evans**

Adrian is a longstanding member of our Society and a keen advocate of the Piet Oudolf naturalistic style of gardening. He and his wife have been opening their beautiful garden, full of perennials and grasses, for the NGS for the past 18 years. He will be talking about the challenges and rewards of his volunteer work for the Council in helping to renovate and maintain the double herbaceous borders which run down the centre of Howardsgate.

Nick started his horticultural career in 1970 at Kew's satellite gardens in West Sussex and worked for some 35 years at Capel Manor as their former Gardens Manager and Director of Estates. In 2019, Nick was approached by the WGC Centenary Foundation to create a

Centenary legacy garden. This is now the Woodland Garden in the Campus. He will talk about the trials and tribulations involved, eventually bringing this vision to fruition in 2021.

**Please note that the AGM will start at 7.45.**



### **8 April - Anne Rowe - Lost houses and gardens around Welwyn Garden City**

Anne Rowe is a freelance landscape historian who has coordinated research for the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust since 1998 and lectures in landscape history.

She has written books about medieval parks and the history of Hertfordshire landscapes.

### **13 May - Dusty Gedge - Green roofs and biodiversity**

Dusty Gedge is a green roof and urban green infrastructure professional, an ornithological/wildlife consultant and a nature photographer.

He is the co-author of *Small Green Roofs*, a guide that has helped lots of small roofs sprout across the globe on sheds and garages.

Delivering biodiversity on green roofs is the ultimate aim of his work.



*Laurence Bauer and Sue Friend*



## Rose Pruning and Care Course



**Rochfords  
International  
Rose Trials**

### **ROSE PRUNING & CARE** **a practical course**

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January and Saturday 1<sup>st</sup>  
February 2025\*. 10.30am – 2.30pm**  
**£30, to include a light lunch and course notes**



Run by Rochfords Head Gardener, Kerry Austen (our February speaker), at their trial grounds in Birch Green, Hertfordshire, the course will include a presentation on pruning, planting and general rose care to ensure you get the best from your roses.

Following lunch, there will be a practical demonstration and pruning session. You will have the opportunity

to prune rose varieties currently in trial, including shrub roses, hybrid teas and floribundas. Email [roses@rochfords.net](mailto:roses@rochfords.net) for further details and to reserve your place.

## Highlights of Our Recent Outing to Wisley

We started our day with a very informative set of tours, each designed to suit the pace of our different groups. Since we last visited much has changed –



although the most loved features remain, often with a new twist and fresh planting. The atrium at RHS Hilltop now showcases the best of the RHS's research and world-class collections and, of course, Wisley's famous double mixed borders which run either side of the Broadwalk never fail to

impress. They were particularly impressive this year and enjoyed by us all.



*Photos: Sue Friend*

**There are many more photos for you to enjoy on our website**

**<https://wgchortsoc.co.uk/past-outings/>**

## Welwyn Hatfield – Tree and Woodland Strategy 2024-2029

The Council has launched a wide-ranging consultation on their strategy for the long-term management, conservation and enhancement of trees and woodlands in our area.

We really do benefit from having such a wealth of trees in the town and nationally important woodlands nearby. Please take time to have a look at the detailed report at:

<https://www.welhat.gov.uk/downloads/download/541/tree-and-woodland-strategy-documents>

and then, to respond to the proposals and take part in the survey go to:

<https://www.welhat.gov.uk/trees-grass-hedges/tree-woodland-strategy-consultation>

The consultation is open until 20 December.

**If you have any news, seen 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.**