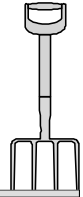
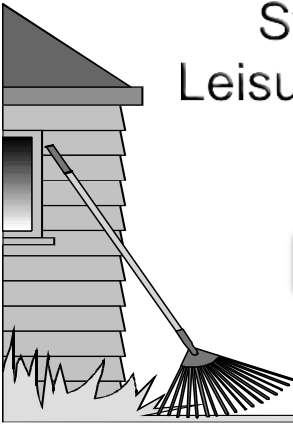


# Swindon Allotments & Leisure Gardens Association

Registered Charity no. 1138814

## Newsletter

### Autumn 2024



Reports

Horticultural Show

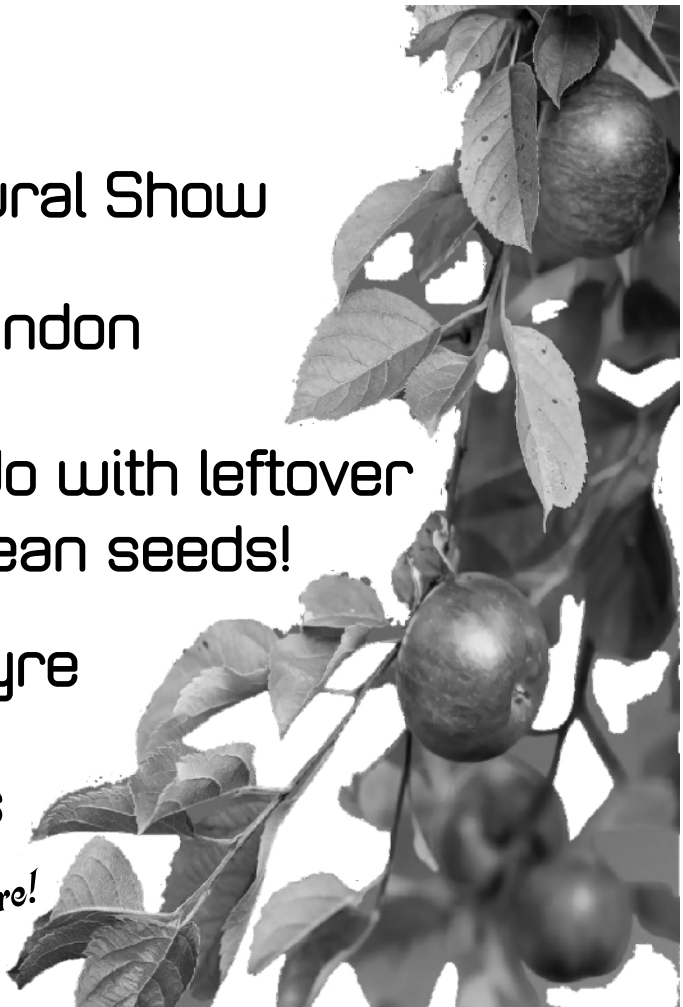
Trip to London

What to do with leftover  
runner bean seeds!

Apple Fayre

Speakers

*& much more!*



# Report from the Chair

Autumn is here again, and I'd say so far it is indeed a season of mellow fruitfulness – beautiful sunny days and a lovely freshness in the air. Gardening and harvesting activities continue across Swindon, and for all SALGA members the Kings Seed Order Catalogues are now available at the shop for you to start planning for next year.

We have a few changes on the way:

This will be the last newsletter that I edit, as I am no longer on the SALGA committee. When we were invited to join, Maurice and I could only commit to a year – and we've managed a bit longer than that. Maurice will continue as secretary for a while, but I'm laying down the chairperson's gavel as of now. It's been a great pleasure to get to know the other committee members, and all those who support and volunteer with SALGA. So the committee is in need of a couple of extra volunteers.

The Committee meetings take place on the first Thursday morning each month at 11.00am and last for 1.5 hours – we stick to the point (usually!) so that they don't get tedious, and we generally enjoy each other's company. If you'd like to help SALGA by joining the committee, please get in touch. Contact details for committee members are on the last page of this newsletter.

Another change is that Chris Cossey is also stepping down from his brilliant work on the Schools Gardening Competition. This takes place each year and the prizes are given out at the Annual Show – read Holly's report on this year's event, which was a great success considering the very un-gardener-friendly weather conditions this year!

As well as the SALGA activities, we're also promoting a couple of other Swindon events – TWIGS' Apple Fayre – a chance to bring your own apples along to be juiced, and also there are two chances to attend an event to make a Christmas Wreath. It's all in the newsletter – read on!

So I'll end this by saying thank you to all the SALGA members for your friendship and support over this last 18 months – enjoy the sunshine, keep warm this winter, and plan for next spring. One of the many pleasures of gardening is that we can guarantee every year is different and always new things to learn!

Best Wishes to you all,

Jane Farr

# Report from Treasurer

The SALGA financial position remains healthy. The shop continues to do good business, although sales are tailing off now as we approach the end of the year. I anticipate a small surplus on trading at the year end. Hopefully, I will be able to make a further contribution to the Buildings Renewal Fund.

Trips organised by Marilyn have been successful and she will be signing off by running a seasonal shopping/sightseeing trip to London in December.

The annual Horticultural Show was a great success, although the number of entries was slightly down on the previous year. A deficit on the day of £197 was caused mainly by two one-off purchases, those being a new supply of prize cards and a £50 increase in the cost of hiring the hall at Pine Trees.

The shop has been open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays this year and will be closing for the winter after business on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November. Seed catalogues are now available at the shop and will also be available at the upcoming monthly meetings. All seed order applications must be submitted by Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November, either to the shop or by post to Glenys Dingwall.

John Edgerton, Treasurer

## AROUND THE TOWN

As well as our monthly meetings, we thought we'd add in information about other garden related activities about the town. The TWIGS café and garden are having an Apple Fayre – you can take your apples along and get them made into apple juice – a good idea if, like us, you're still eating the chutney from two years ago!

There are also two opportunities to spend a day making a Christmas wreath and also enjoying a lunch with your fellow wreath-makers. Details of these events are to be found on the flyers printed elsewhere in this newsletter. Enjoy!

# SALGA Horticultural Show 2024

This year the annual show was again held at the Pinetrees Community Centre on the earlier date of Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August. The weather was on our side with it being a dry and warm day. Once again, our members managed to defy the everchanging climate challenges and the abundance of hungry slugs this year to produce a wonderful array of homegrown and homemade produce and handicrafts.

As in the previous year every person entering could enter 3 times in the same class which resulted in there being over 450 exhibits across all classes making the hall look very busy and colourful.

The photography class this year was expanded and there were a number of very good pictures entered. To enter this class you don't even need a brilliant camera as today's smart phones will take a very good picture – for example the overall cup winning picture showing a detailed image of a bee on a flower was taken with a smart phone!

The schools' competition was another success and my thanks to Chris Cossey for all his hard work engaging with the schools throughout the year to ensure a good number of entries. Also, thank you for his innovations in schools support including online support and live online question and answer sessions. It is very rewarding to see the children's faces when they attend the show to collect their cups. Chris's other community commitments mean he is standing down from his leading role in the schools' competition, although he will remain as part of the Schools' Competition Judging team. We would like to hear from any member who is willing to join the team to ensure this vibrant part of the show continues.

Despite children's entries being free of charge and the children's classes being expanded to include any child known to a member, including friend's children and neighbour's etc, the number of entries into the children's classes this year was again disappointing. As a club we need to rethink how we can encourage younger exhibitors and new gardeners in general. Your ideas, encouragement of children you know, and feedback

around this issue would be most welcome. Email us at [salgashowfeedback@gmail.com](mailto:salgashowfeedback@gmail.com)

A lot of work is undertaken by the committee to ensure that the day runs smoothly, including organising and booking the judges. This year this job was particularly difficult due to some last-minute problems with a judge's illness. The presentation of the winning cups was performed again by BBC Radio Wiltshire presenter Ben Prater. My thanks to Ben and his family who always make a point of enjoying the day with us and he gives us lots of free radio plugs as well.

Feedback from last year's show led to an improved hall layout which enabled the refreshments to be served and consumed in the hall and added to the 'buzz' in the show. My thanks go to the catering team of Sandra and Christine assisted by Wendy and Maria.

Raffle sales were again excellent due to the high calibre of prizes, and my thanks go to Cindy Matthews for her hard work in organizing the raffle and running it on the day. Profits from the raffle go to help cover the cost of the show.

My thanks go to my hardworking committee of five who spent Friday afternoon setting up the hall ready for everyone to arrive early on Saturday, their hard work during the day and finally the take down when it was all over. We are only a small committee, so any new members as well as on the day helpers would be welcome.

Lastly, feedback is always welcome and enables us to continuously improve the show. If you have any feedback please send it to the following email address: -

[salgashowfeedback@gmail.com](mailto:salgashowfeedback@gmail.com) or speak to a committee member.

Mick Carter

# SALGA Primary Schools Competition 24

We contacted all 70 Primary Schools in the Swindon Borough Area enquiring if they wanted seeds and inviting them to take part in the Swindon Schools Gardening Competition. Unfortunately, this year Kings Seeds were unable to donate any seeds, so Holly kindly donated some of her magic seeds and they were requested by 8 schools.

5 schools entered the competition by sending in photos of their entries. Janet, Chris and Ali visited the schools. Each school we visited received a £15 voucher to spend at the SALGA shop.

It was great to see that all the schools who entered, were very enthusiastic about their gardens. We met the children at each school. It was clear that they were involved, knowledgeable about the plants and how to care for them.

This year the entry requirements for the Schools Trophy was the most imaginative and attractive, raised, one metre square planter. The reason for this is because it is difficult to judge between different schools who have different sized gardens and by using this criteria it was easier to compare entries.

In mainstream education the demands of the curriculum mean that less time is available to fit in activities such as gardening. It was therefore good to see Badbury Park Primary School enter this year for the first time. We were pleased to be able to give advice and put the school in contact with other organisations who can help with resources such as The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and The Wiltshire Gardens Trust.

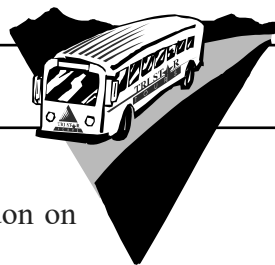
It was also good to see a SALGA member giving up their time to help Greenmeadow School.

## School Awards

|                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Westrop Primary School        | The Schools Trophy                 |
| Greenmeadow Primary School    | The SALGA Endeavour Children's Cup |
| Bishopstone CE Primary School | Best Small School Garden           |
| Eastrop Infant School         | Best Vegetables                    |
| Greenmeadow Primary School    | Best Fruit                         |
| Bishopstone CE Primary School | Best Flowers                       |
| Badbury Park Primary School   | Highly Commended                   |

Chris Cossey

## Trip to London



Marilyn has organised one final coach trip to London on Thursday the 5th December.

The coach will drop us as near to Harrods as possible but it is understood there will be a 10 minute walk to reach Harrods. There are museums in the vicinity if you prefer to go to a museum.

The return journey departs from the same drop off point and no other stops are available.

This is a heavily subsidised trip offered at £20 per person.

**Depart Gorse Hill 8.00 a.m. Depart London 4.00 p.m.**

**Cost £20 - based on 35 persons travelling.**

**This includes the driver's gratuity.**

**Tel: Marilyn Stott on 07803 550465**

**or email [marilynjean@btinternet.com](mailto:marilynjean@btinternet.com)**

# Seed Orders

Kings catalogues are now in the Shop at Pickards Field. If you want a copy, please pick one up. The relevant order forms and a letter giving all the instructions necessary are with the catalogue.

Kings give you, our members, a huge discount on items in their catalogue as well as a commission to the Association. Catalogues and order forms are available in the SALGA shop at Pickards Field. These will be familiar to those of you who have ordered before and we hope you continue to order again this year.

1. All packet SEEDS including vegetable, fruit, herbs and flower seeds qualify for a 45% discount. Onion sets and shallots sets also can be bought at a 45% discount.
2. Artichoke crowns, garlic sets, horseradish, mushroom spawn do not have any discount.
3. Sundries have a 10% discount applicable.

The above items have a delivery fee of just £2.35.

4. Potatoes are available at the lowest price shown in the catalogue regardless of number of packs ordered. They incur a delivery fee of £3.75.
5. Fruit trees, bushes & soft fruit plus Artichoke crowns, garlic sets, horseradish and mushroom spawn have no discount but again have a delivery fee of £3.75.

This means if you order both potatoes and Fruit etc, you will be paying £7.50. for this delivery.

I should be grateful to receive your orders and please ensure they reach me before Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November.

If you take a catalogue and don't wish to keep it, please return it to the Shop so that someone else may use it.

Glenys Dingwall

# SALGA Speakers

Many thanks to those of you who have passed on suggestions to Sandie and I regarding possible speakers for future meetings. I am delighted to report that several of our speakers next year have come from these suggestions. Please keep the ideas for speakers coming- our email addresses are: avmuirhead@gmail.com and sandiemulcahy@gmail.com.

Thursday October 17<sup>th</sup>

The Cutting Garden

Speaker: Moira White

Thursday November 21<sup>st</sup>

Christmas Floral Art

Speaker: Sue Castle

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December or Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December - date to be confirmed  
Christmas Wreath Making workshop Please refer to the flier about this elsewhere in the newsletter and contact Sue directly if you would like to attend this festive activity.

Thursday December 19<sup>th</sup>

Our very popular fish and chip supper and quiz night.

Thursday January 23<sup>rd</sup>

Topic still to be agreed

Speaker: Andrew Tolman

Many of you will remember Andrew spoke to us around COVID time.

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February

How the Great Bustard was reintroduced to the UK near Salisbury Plain from Steve Colwill, Manager of The Great Bustard Group.

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March

How to grow the food you can't buy Speaker: Katherine Crouch

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April

Why, when and how to prune. Speaker: Philip Aubury

Sandie and I have more interesting speakers booked for the remainder of 2025 and look forward to telling you about them in our next newsletter.

Sandie Mulcahy and Avril Muirhead

# A trip to Kew

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July this year was memorable for a number of reasons: first, as usual, the USA's annual celebration of their independence from our good selves, the British; second, our chance to vote as to whether to keep Mr Sunak's government – or not; and third but by no means least, SALGA members went to Kew Gardens, and a grand time was had by all.

Maurice and I enjoyed the trip so much that I thought I'd write a small piece in praise of outings in general and Kew Gardens in particular.

Going by coach with SALGA was by far the best way to get to Kew: no driving, no navigating, no parking – just get on the coach and relax. We were a full crew, including some who'd come at the last minute to replace those who were on election duties at home.

Our route around the grounds was largely determined by how far we reckoned we could walk, so we started off down the **Great Broad Walk**. It's always a pleasure to see massive displays of plants that we have at home as a single plant squashed into a small border. Here, were swathes of rudbeckia, salvias and lilies, all at their July best.

We then visited the **Marianne North gallery**, which was an eye-opener – quite different from any other botanical art I've seen.

Marianne was very much a Victorian. In fact her entire 60 years of life were within Victoria's reign. She had the financial means to do whatever she wanted, and what she chose to do was travel the world painting plants. She painted in a style that was part botanical drawing in its accuracy, but broadened out into landscapes, so that plants are shown within their natural habitat. Some are close-ups of a single plant, or a seed-pod. Others show the plants in their natural landscapes, with amazing views of mountains and jungles, and the people who lived there.

The gallery at Kew houses 832 of these paintings from all over the world – seems she was a single-focus kind of woman! Before the advent of photography, her style was very innovative, and the paintings are still considered to be of scientific and botanical importance.

Our next exploration was not a trip around the world, but a trip through the **Princess of Wales Conservatory** - we were able to wander through ten climate zones – probably as many as a 3 month cruise, and at no cost at all!

As with the Broad Walk, the pleasure for me is seeing species that I carefully and inexpertly nurture at home, now in their full glory. I loved the cacti and succulents – so now I know that my three inch high barrel cactus can grow to be three foot high, and with ferocious spikes!

Another wonderful experience was the tropical zone, hot and steamy, and with those massive water lily leaves that a small child can apparently stand on. Even better, you can walk behind and below the pond, and view the plants and fish eye to eye – quite fascinating also to see what a waterfall looks like from underneath.

I won't bore you with any more descriptions: I'd simply say that this is just a tiny selection of the treats on offer at Kew. What I will do is give you the briefest of histories of this garden.

Kew Gardens started out as Kew Palace. It was apparently a fairly small dwelling by palace standards, and favoured by Princess Augusta, mother of George III. In 1759 she founded the Botanical Garden with 9 acres of the palace grounds, and the collection grew over the following century as plant specimens were brought back from across the globe.

The Royal Horticultural Society was founded in 1804, and we have them to thank for getting Kew Gardens made over from the Crown to the State, and opened to the public in 1840.

The gardens are now a UNESCO site, and also home to the Millennium Seed Bank (MSB) - the most diverse wild plant species genetic resource in the world, with over 2.4 billion seeds.

So a big thank you to the RHS, and to the Kew gardeners, and to Marilyn Stott for arranging this SALGA trip.

Jane Farr

## VOLUNTEER OUTINGS ORGANISER(S) NEEDED

As you know, SALGA organises regular day trips and Marilyn has done a brilliant job with this over the last few years. The coach trips are always full, and a really friendly and enjoyable way to spend a day with fellow gardening enthusiasts. Once we've arrived, everyone goes off to do their own thing, so it's a very relaxing experience.

We have one more trip this year, which is a trip to Oxford St London on Dec 5<sup>th</sup>. (Details elsewhere in the newsletter)

Marilyn has really loved doing it but has now decided that this year will be her last, and the committee is wondering whether any of our members might be interested in taking this on.

There wouldn't be any pressure on when, where or how often. Several members and committee members have had some experience in the past and could offer assistance. If you think organising an outing for next year might be something you would be interested in doing please get in touch with either Jane (07939 567934) or Cindy (07906 725879).

*Start your preparations by making a Christmas Wreath*

Thursday 5th December or Saturday 7th December 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Christmas Wreath Making Workshop

All materials provided including a  
Two course lunch for £45.00

At Jessamine Cottage 156 Drove Road Swindon SN1 3AG

For tickets and any dietary requirements Call Sue Castle on 01793 345654 Or 07950 042766. Email: [Suzicastle@Gmail.com](mailto:Suzicastle@Gmail.com)



## Membership Report

Membership can now be renewed for 2025 at the shop, at meetings, by post or by email. For those ordering seeds this autumn, renewal can be included in their seed order.

1 At the Shop at Pickards Field – Renewals and new members.

2 Electronically – using a Membership form, which can be downloaded from the website, and submitted to me by e-mail at [deniswmatthews@gmail.com](mailto:deniswmatthews@gmail.com) plus payment of the £7 by bank transfer. Usually, Membership cards can be collected at the shop. If you would like your card posted, could you please add an extra 85 pence to your bank transfer to cover postage.

3 By Post – For existing members, send me your name and address and a cheque for £7. For new members, please complete a membership form which is below, or under “Membership” on the SALGA website **salga.org.uk**. A stamped and self-addressed envelope would be very welcome if you require your membership card sent to you. My address is: Denis Matthews, 3, Clevedon Gardens, Swindon SN4 9EZ

4 At live monthly meetings.

We would very much like you to pay by bank transfer as our bank has introduced significant charges for cheques.

Bank details: SALGA Account **00020536**, Sort Code **40-52-40** and **include your name** as a reference.

Please supply the following details for any new membership

Membership Number (for renewals).....

Name .....

Address .....

Post Code..... Telephone.....

E-mail address (please write clearly).....

Allotment site, (if any).....Plot number .....

***GIFT AID If any member of the household is a UK taxpayer, SALGA asks that the membership is made out in that person’s name and the declaration below is signed accordingly. For every £5 subscription that is “Gift Aided” SALGA receives £1.75 from the exchequer at no additional cost to the member.***

I am a UK taxpayer and would like SALGA to treat all subscriptions I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify otherwise, as Gift Aid contributions.

Date.....Signature .....

IF YOU HAVE SIGNED THE GIFT AID DECLARATION  
PLEASE GIVE YOUR FIRST NAME IN FULL

.....

# Runner Bean Chilli



What to do with all those leftover runner bean seeds?!

Not many people seem to realise that dried runner beans can be eaten – in fact, they're very tasty! They make a fine alternative to red kidney beans, without any of the food miles associated with importing ingredients from distant continents. This vegetarian recipe for a dried runner bean chilli is just one example of how you can cook them. The possibilities are endless, so do experiment with other recipes of your own.

*200g dried runner beans, soaked overnight in plenty of water  
(in the morning the beans should be the size of butter beans)*

*2 onions, chopped*

*1 red pepper, chopped*

*1 Scotch Bonnet chilli, finely chopped*

*1 tsp dried oregano*

*60g pickled chopped jalapeños, drained*

*225g mushrooms, sliced*

*1 tbsp smoked chipotle sauce*

*500g passata*

*salt to taste*

*olive oil for frying*

In a saucepan, boil the runner beans in water until they have softened (30-40 minutes). Drain the beans but retain the water they were boiled in, which will have turned quite dark.

Fry the chopped onions in olive oil until they start to soften. Add the chopped pepper, chopped Scotch Bonnet chilli and dried oregano, and fry for a further couple of minutes. Add the jalapeños and sliced mushrooms, and fry until the mushrooms have shed their liquid. Add the beans and stir them in to the mixture.

Add the chipotle sauce and the passata, and stir the mixture together. Add in enough of the retained water from the beans to give the liquid the consistency you want. Bring to the boil and then simmer gently for 30 minutes. Add salt to taste, then serve on top of a bed of plain boiled rice or couscous. Maurice

# SALGA officers & committee members

|                      |                 |              |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Chair                | Position vacant |              |
| Secretary            | Maurice Moylett | 07901 638248 |
| President            | Don Reeve       | 01793 423918 |
| Treasurer            | John Edgerton   | 01793 642965 |
| Membership Secretary | Denis Matthews  | 01793 312114 |

## General Committee Members

|                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| Cindy Matthews | 01793 312114 |
| Viv Dipper     | 01793 322421 |
| Patrick Hawker | 01793 526944 |
| Sandie Mulcahy | 07795 355115 |

## **Show Committee**

Chair:

Mick Carter      07769 721739  
michael\_carter32@yahoo.co.uk

Acting Secretary:

Glenys Dingwall      01793 274653  
gantfoss@gmail

Treasurer:

John Edgerton      01793 642965  
jedgerton1@virginmedia.com

Viv Dipper

01793 322421  
viv.dipper@hotmail.co.uk

Holly Barrand

07877 204047  
holly.barrand@btinternet.com



Website: [www.salga.org.uk](http://www.salga.org.uk)

