



Northampton & District Fuchsia Society NEWSLETTER



JANUARY / FEBRUARY / MARCH / APRIL 2021

EDITORIAL

Most of you will know by now that Ernie Sayers sadly passed away just before Christmas at the age of 94. He was the last of the founder members of our Society. Much of this newsletter is devoted to photographs of Ernie and tributes by members.

Our meetings continue to be cancelled until further notice. With the spread of the new variants of Covid-19 and talk of a new 'Tier 5' to bring some control over numbers, and to relieve pressure on the NHS, there can be little prospect of gathering until well into the new

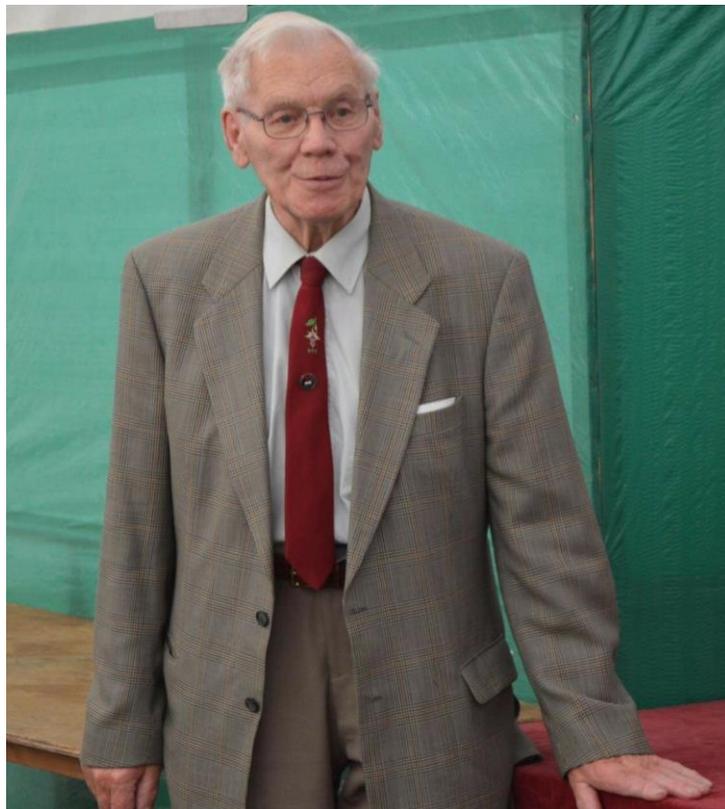
year when we have all been vaccinated.

It is hoped that we shall be able to stage our Fuchsia Show at the beginning of August and the Show Schedule, Entry Forms and Backwards Calendar will be distributed with this newsletter. If any of you receiving these by email would like to have copies sent by post please send a 'Reply', with your address, and I will post them to you.

Keep Well, Keep Safe.

The Editor

ERNIE SAYERS 1926 – 2020



ERNIE SAYERS 1926 – 2020

A tribute to Ernie from our Chairman, Bob Malin:

Ernie was born in 1926 in Kent as a member of quite a large family. I first met him when I was putting together the flower show for the Northampton General Hospital fete. I contacted all the local horticultural groups asking them to support the flower show. Ernie contacted me and we had a meeting in his lunch break at the Chronicle and Echo, where he worked, and our friendship was forged and I joined the fuchsia society.

Ernie was a founder member of the Northampton and District Fuchsia Society in 1967. He was always very willing to share his vast knowledge of growing and showing the fuchsia with new members and regularly gave talks at society meetings.

Being a very competent grower and showman of the fuchsia, he grew some wonderful plants and, on several occasions, opened his large garden on the Kettering Road for our society members to look around his greenhouses and hardy fuchsia beds. Betty, his wife, always helped with the tea and homemade cakes.

A few years ago Ernie was given one of the top awards by the British Fuchsia Society in honour of his contribution to promoting the popularity of the fuchsia and his hard work over many years. When we visited shows throughout the country everyone knew and respected Ernie.

Within our society he held the posts of Show Secretary, Show Manager, Chairman and finally President.

Thank you for everything Ernie.

Bob Malin



ERNIE SAYERS 1926 – 2020

I have known Ernie for more years than I can remember. When I first started growing and showing he was one of the first to offer his help in any way he could, always telling it as it was, that's what I liked about him. You knew just where you stood. His knowledge of fuchsias was endless and was always passing it on to anyone who cared to listen. Along with others he was there for the society when problems arose some years ago; thankfully things came right in the end which I know was a huge relief to him. When I won his trophy for the first time it was with a lot of pride and my lasting memory of him is when I was running the B.F.S Midland Show I asked him one year if he would like to present the awards. His face lit up with pride but he was very emotional about it; that's how much he cared. That was ERNIE, HE CARED, R.I.P Dear Friend.

Malcolm Beerman



Ernie and his wife, Betty, at the 45th Anniversary Dinner

So it is with much sadness that, at the beginning of 2021, we have to say goodbye to our President, Ernie Sayers, who died at home on December 13th 2020.

Ernie had been a member of the N.D.F.S since it's conception in 1967; his knowledge and enthusiasm for growing the Fuchsia plant remained with him to the end.

I can remember him saying to me some time ago, "as long as I have breath in my body there will be a Fuchsia Society". Let us hope that the Fuchsia Society will continue in his memory and we can take with us his legacy of growing the Fuchsia to the best of our ability.

His love, energy, enthusiasm and continued support of the society, which he proudly represented to the end of his life, will continue in his name.

Goodbye Ernie, our dear friend.

Judy Campbell

ERNIE SAYERS 1926 – 2020

We are so sorry to hear of Ernie passing. What a lovely man he was and how he enjoyed his fuchsias. Rest in Peace.

Val and Dave Lovett



Ernie presenting the trophies at our Fuchsia Show in 2005 with Barry Cooke and Michael Conroy

Dear Members,

As your retired Editor I want to express my sorrow at the death of our President, Mr Ernie Sayers.

I was your Editor for 10 years to the date of my retirement. In that time - like many other members - who helped collect the equipment from Young's as directed by Ernie, transport the said to Wyevale to the marquee, set up the tables and sleep on the Saturday night. Then take it down and take it back to Young's, where it was stacked away ready for the next show the following year.

Then when we had to move from Young's it was a case of loading the equipment and moving to our new home, a metal shed on Roy's farm, where it was stacked away again. When we had to move from Wootton Wyevale to Harlestone Heath Wyevale (this was because Waitrose took over and wanted the car park) we went to a site where the ground was covered with AstroTurf. The marquee was erected and the punters had something safe to walk on. Some of the years when working in the marquee the temperature was, let's say a bit warm, no, hot is the correct word.

Then Wyevale kicked us off that site. We now have an air-conditioned hall. The show is a lot smaller now, but still well attended. This year our meetings and show were cancelled, but don't you worry, **we will be back.**

All the above does not really come across as to all the fantastic memories I have of the Northampton and District Fuchsia Society and being involved with our late President.

Keep safe and stay well.

Dave Jupp

ERNIE SAYERS 1926 – 2020

When we joined NDFS we did not know what to expect.

We joined to learn like so many of us how to grow Fuchsias.

From day one Ernie encouraged us both.

With his sense of humour, he jokingly told us I want you to put your plants on the show bench at our show!! We had only just joined the society!!

Ernie gave talks and demonstrations on how to grow fuchsias he answered our questions, however trivial in the beginning.

When we did put plants into the show Ernie was there to offer advice and encouragement.

He always made us laugh when he said, “the cuttings the society gave members were free, but you had to pay for the society cutting to enter in the class at the show”.

He encouraged Clive to become a BFS steward and to give talks at the Society, and he knew Clive qualified as an BFS associate judge.

Northampton Fuchsia Society will be poorer for his passing; he was the backbone and driving force for many a year.

RIP Ernie.

Clive & Tracey Gould.



Fuchsia Show 2013. Ernie with Show Secretary, Bob Malin, and the Manager of Harlestone Heath Wyevale

ROLLING CALENDAR 2021 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

All meetings are cancelled until further notice.

All meetings are held at the Conservative Club, 42 Billing Road, Northampton NN1 5DA commencing at 7.30pm

January 19th 2021

Care & Culture: Looking after your plants in Winter

February 2nd 2021

Meeting: speaker tba

March 2nd 2021

Meeting: speaker tba

March 16th 2021

Care & Culture: Bringing plants out of dormancy; collect your Society plants

See notice on page 7 about alternative arrangements for collection of Society Plants

April 6th 2021

Meeting: speaker tba

April 20th 2021

Care & Culture: Two tables meeting

May 4th 2021

Meeting: speaker tba

May 18th 2021

Care & Culture: Plant sale

June 1st 2021

Meeting: speaker tba

June 15th 2021

Care & Culture: Feeding, Watering and Growing On

July 6th 2021

Meeting: speaker tba

July 20th 2021

Care & Culture: Preparing your plants for the show; dressing; the dreaded paperwork

September 7th 2021

Welcome New Members; Open Evening; Cut Bloom & Photography Competitions

October 5th 2021

Meeting: Sports Night & Buffet

November 2nd 2021

Annual General Meeting

December 7th 2021

Christmas Party!

ROLLING CALENDAR SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2021

All events are cancelled until further notice.

Sunday March 7th 2021

Visit to Jacksons and Hawgrip Nursery

Sunday May 9th 2021

Malvern Spring Show

SATURDAY 7TH AUGUST 2021

FUCHSIA SHOW

ST CRISPIN SOCIAL CLUB NN5 4XD

Tuesday November 2nd 2021

Annual General Meeting

Conservative Club

Saturday December 4th 2021

Christmas Fayre

Conservative Club

Tuesday December 7th 2021

Christmas Party

Conservative Club

JACKSONS NURSERIES

A good selection of young plants available from March to June.

Self-service greenhouse will be open from March 1st

Closed on Tuesdays

Send a large s.a.e. (2 x 1st Class) for list of plants or see

www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/Nursery-Plant-List?id=600&name=Jackson%27s%20Nurseries

Selection of our own compost available (replacement for Humber)

A range of other composts and Vitafeeds are also available

Clifton Campville, near Tamworth
Staffs B79 0AP
01827 373307

3 miles from Junction 11 M42

COLLECTION OF SOCIETY PLANTS

The care and culture meeting in March is when we normally collect our Society Plants for us to grow on and enter into the Show in August.

If this meeting does not take place, which at the moment seems most likely, then your plants may be collected during the day on Tuesday, March 16th from Bob Malin's garage at 68 North Western Avenue, Kingsthorpe, Northampton NN2 8HL. Please telephone Bob on 01604 459478 beforehand to arrange a collection time so we do not all arrive at the same time.

To maintain social distancing and minimise the numbers gathering, members may collect plants on behalf of other members.

Please make the effort to collect your plants, or arrange for someone else to do so; then we can expect a decent number to appear on the show bench.

CRAMDEN NURSERY

THE GERANIUM & PELARGONIUM SPECIALISTS

A family run business growing Pelargoniums and Geraniums for over 30 years.

Now also selling Lavenders, Agapanthus and Penstemons.

The Nursery is open from March to August
Monday to Saturday - 9am - 5pm
Sunday from May to August - 10am - 4pm

Open Evenings and Talks available.

CRAMDEN NURSERY
HARBOROUGH ROAD NORTH
NORTHAMPTON NN2 8LU
Telephone: 01604 842365
www.cramdennursery.co.uk



Fuchsia Show 2014. Ernie receiving the NDFS 25 Years Anniversary Trophy

GROWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

Early January. Beginning of a New Year and a new season for the fuchsia grower. Most plants are still in their winter quarters and will need regular checks on moisture levels and ventilation to prevent any build-up of botrytis (grey mould), so ventilate your greenhouse whenever possible.

If you spray your plants with warm water to encourage early growth, make sure it is done in time for any excess moisture to have dried off before evening time.

Continually check your garden hardies; make sure they are not suffering from wind rock or waterlogging which can be disastrous for fuchsias. If plants are loose in the ground, try to secure them with some form of support. Do not heel them in as this may compact the ground and make things worse. Some garden compost placed around the crown of the plant will not only help support but also be an added protection against frost.

This is a good time of year to plan and prepare for new hardy fuchsia beds. Choose a site that does not suffer from waterlogging and ideally will get half a day of sunshine – fuchsias do not like a full day of sun. Dig the ground thoroughly, incorporating some good garden compost or well-rotted farmyard manure if you can obtain it.

Look through the fuchsia catalogues and select your plants to give a variety of colour and height. A well-planned fuchsia bed can really look spectacular in late summer.

Cuttings can always be taken provided the right material is available; remember though they will ideally need a temperature of 60-65°F to get them to root in the first place and then they will require a constant heat of 40-45°F once rooted.

Late January/Early February. Although light conditions are beginning to improve you should always ensure that your greenhouse glass is clean. Fallen leaves and green algae

can be a problem; do not let them build up.

If you have a bubble-wrap lining in your greenhouse leave it there for a least another two months. Some leave the insulation in place permanently which is not a problem although it will de-nature and need replacement more often.

Other jobs at this time of year: pot up autumn cuttings; continue to spray old wood on suitably sunny days; have a sort out of your pots, throwing out any damaged ones and clean the rest!

End of February. This is the ideal time to pay a visit to a few fuchsia nurseries, if Covid-19 restrictions allow, to see what cultivars are available. Many more species types have now become very popular and are quite easy to grow – give them a try!

Early March. Now you could normally be expecting to see signs of life in your plants, i.e., pink buds appearing in various parts of the laterals or from the base of the plant.

Some cultivars are quicker to break into bud than others. It may still be a few weeks before you see any sign of new growth on some of your plants. Triphyllas like Thalia and Insulinde are very slow to break if they have been allowed to go into dormancy. These types are much better kept 'ticking over' in green leaf throughout the winter months if possible. Spraying the woody framework of your plants with warm water softens the stems and encourages the new growth to break but only do this on suitable days. It is best done about 10 o'clock in the morning so that any surplus moisture has dried off by evening time as excess moisture can cause botrytis to set in.

End of March.

Many of your plants may have shoots on them suitable to be taken as cuttings. Before taking cuttings make sure the plants from which they will be taken have been well watered, preferable 24 hours previously if possible, as the cuttings will then be in a turgid state (fully charged with water).

Prepare your cuttings compost beforehand – a mixture of 75% peat-free compost and 25% horticultural sand with some added Perlite or Vermiculite is ideal. Do not use the fine builders sand.

Your cuttings need only be what is called ‘tip cuttings’ which are just the growing tip and one pair of leaves. A 3-inch pot of compost is plenty big enough to accept 6 or 7 cuttings. They only need to be pushed lightly into the compost, then given a light overhead spray to settle the compost and just moisten the leaves. They must then be covered to conserve the moisture level until rooting takes place. If the cuttings can then be placed in a propagator with some bottom heat, then all the better but a kitchen window sill will suffice. Rooting will take longer but it should still occur.

April. Once you know that your plants have over-wintered successfully and new roots are beginning to show it is time to ‘pot back’. Not all growers do this but it can be beneficial to the plants and gives them a kick start to the season.

It involves removing as much of the dead root and old compost as possible; you will normally find you can then fit the remaining root ball into a pot two sizes smaller, e.g., from a 7” to a 5” pot or a 5” to a 3” pot. New compost is then added and lightly watered in. As the plant grows and forms new roots they are then potted on one size at a time.



Fuchsia 'Ernie'

STILL FEEDING OUR HEDGEHOGS!

We started feeding several hedgehogs in the Spring but found that a cat was eating most of the food. An extension to the entrance did not dissuade it and bricks were added to make a 90° turn. Still it made no difference so more bricks were added to make a 180° turn with a dogleg in the entrance.



We did worry that this would stop not only the cat but also the hedgehogs from feeding. The cat stuck its head in the entrance once and came back a couple of times in the night but gave up. The hedgehogs, in the meantime, were completely unfazed and marched in taking all the changes in direction without any hesitation.



We are still feeding them on 31st December and will continue to put food out each night until it is untouched for several nights and we are sure they have at last hibernated. At least, on these frosty nights, they can be assured of a quick feed, and a drink, and not have to stay out all night searching for sustenance.

How much warmer will our winters get so we need to feed them all year round?

Peter and Maggie Ryder

THE NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT FUCHSIA SOCIETY

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Leo Boullemier (Founder) and V. Evans Esq

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

Josie Lepper; George Dawson; Dave Watkins

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