



# Northampton & District Fuchsia Society NEWSLETTER



JANUARY / FEBRUARY / MARCH / APRIL 2018

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to your new format Newsletter from your new Editor returning for a second term.

Sadly, in this issue we have to record the passing of Betty Sayers and we extend our condolences to Ernie and his family. Also that of Keith Ledger and again we offer our condolences to Pat and her family.

Many thanks are due to Dave Jupp who has filled the role as Editor for the last eleven years but is now taking a well-earned retirement.

It has been decided that a format that is capable of being emailed is more fitting for the current day although printed copies will still be available to all who prefer that format. It is the intention to introduce more colour and more photographs as the printing costs will be much reduced. We shall be retaining the four-monthly cycle of publication.

The Winter/Spring Edition will be issued in January complete with the show schedule and backwards calendar.

The Summer Edition will be issued in May with details of the photographic competition in September so you have plenty of time to take some superb photos for you to enter.

The Autumn Edition will be issued in September to coincide with the beginning of the new season of meetings. This issue will include the results of our Fuchsia Show and other shows that our members have entered. Also included will be the AGM papers.

There will be all the usual advice on growing your fuchsias and reports of the meetings and visits.

This is very much your newsletter and any contributions in the form of articles, snippets of news, items for sale, etc., that you care to give will be gratefully received.

Many thanks are due to Hampton Design & Print of Northampton who have produced a very high quality of newsletter over many years and have put up with the varying demands of a succession of Editors.

The Editor

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> Class) for list of plants or see

[www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/Nursery-Plant-List?id=600&name=Jackson%27s%20Nurseries](http://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 Juncton 11 M42

## 2018 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

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

January 16th 2018

Care & Culture: Looking after your plants in Winter

February 6th 2018

Meeting: Ron Kilsby Film Night

March 6th 2018

Meeting: Nigel Spencer - Wildlife Photography

March 20th 2018

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

April 3rd 2018

Meeting: speaker tba

April 17th 2018

Care & Culture: Two tables meeting

May 1st 2018

Meeting: speaker tba

May 15th 2018

Care & Culture: Plant sale

June 5th 2018

Meeting: Chris Edwards - Wildlife

June 19th 2018

Care & Culture: Feeding, Watering and Growing On

July 3rd 2018

Meeting: David Garrett - Composting

July 17th 2018

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

September 4th 2018

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

October 2nd 2018

Meeting: speaker tba

November 6th 2018

Annual General Meeting

December 4th 2018

Christmas Party!

## SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2018

Sunday March 4th 2018

Trip to Jacksons and Hawgrip Nursery

Sunday May 13th 2018

Malvern Spring Show

SATURDAY 4TH AUGUST 2018

FUCHSIA SHOW

ST CRISPIN SOCIAL CLUB NN5 4XD

Friday August 10th 2018

BBQ

Conservative Club

Tuesday November 6th 2018

Annual General Meeting

Conservative Club

Saturday December 1st 2018

Christmas Fayre

Conservative Club

Tuesday December 4th 2018

Christmas Party

Conservative Club

### NENE VALLEY ORGAN & KEYBOARD CLUB

For over 35 years NVOKC have been producing electronic organ and keyboard shows to the public on the 3rd Monday of the month.

Top international artistes are presented, performing a wide range of music on state of the art instruments.

A NVOKC show is a superb evening for all in the comfortable surroundings of the Plough Hotel, Northampton NN1 1PF

Come along and join us one Monday.

Doors open at 7.15pm. Start 8.00pm. Finish 10.30pm.

For any further information call Matthew Bason 01933 420130

## OBITUARY – BETTY SAYERS

**3<sup>rd</sup> September 1926 – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

It is with great sadness that we learned that Betty Sayers died peacefully at home on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2018, aged 91.

Through Ernie, Betty has been involved with our Fuchsia Society since it started in 1967. She with Ernie held many open gardens in aid of the N&DFS. Many of us in the society will have fond memories of Betty, in her younger days, taking the entrance money at our annual shows.

Together Betty and Ernie enjoyed the company of Fuchsia folk both here and on various trips and holidays.

Betty and Ernie shared the same birthday, including even the year. They also shared many years together – last year they celebrated their 67<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

We wish to extend our condolences to Ernie and his family.

Bob and Chris Malin.

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## DATA PROTECTION ACT 2017

### Tell us how you want to hear from us

When shopping by post or online you may be familiar with the little tick boxes at the bottom of the form with descriptions that you have to read very carefully to see whether or not you should tick them to opt-in or out of receiving post, emails, etc.

Data Protection law is changing on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Under the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) it is necessary for all these boxes to be explicitly opt-in thus no tick equals no contact.

Also under the provisions of the GDPR it is necessary for all organisations like our Society to show that their members have explicitly opted-in to receive communications.

Co-incidentally at the AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 the following resolution was passed.

*'If an existing member fails to make contact with the Society for one whole year they will no longer be regarded as a member of the Society. Contact should be made through the Society Chairman, Secretary or Membership Secretary.*

*The Society year runs from September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>.*

At the back of this newsletter you will find a form to complete and return to the Society.

Post – tick this box to receive your newsletter, show schedule, AGM papers, etc., by post (if not collected at a meeting).

Email - tick this box to receive notifications by email - in practice for most members this would only be to advise you, for example, of a last minute cancellation of a meeting due to inclement weather - be sure to enter your email address.

Newsletter - tick this box to receive your newsletter and the attendant show schedule, AGM papers, etc., by email – this would be in preference to receiving them by post and save printing and postage costs for the Society - be sure to enter your email address.

Telephone – tick this box to receive telephone calls from the Society – in practice for most members this would only be to advise you, for example, of a last minute cancellation of a meeting due to inclement weather – be sure to enter your telephone number, land line or mobile.

SMS – tick this box to receive text messages from the Society – again, in practice for most members this would only be to advise you, for example, of a last minute cancellation of a meeting due to inclement weather – be sure to add your mobile telephone number.

Please be sure to complete the form and return it to the Society or send your responses by email. Details are on the form.

### 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](http://www.cramdennursery.co.uk)

### THE CHRISTMAS FAYRE

All of the events organised by our society on this our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year have been a great success and this year's Christmas Fayre was no exception.

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December our society held its annual Christmas Fayre at the Conservative Club. There was a wonderful selection of seasonal produce on sale including homemade cakes, preserves and pickles, flowers and plants. We also had tombola and a stall selling refreshments.

The Fayre opened at 9.00am and for the first hour business was quite slow, but then the room started to come alive with a good influx of members, relatives and friends. By the time the event closed at mid-day almost everything had sold out and a great time was had by everyone.

On behalf of the society, I would like to thank those who helped to make this year's Christmas Fayre a success.

Bob Malin

### THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December twenty-eight members gathered at the Conservative Club for the Christmas Party.

Our brains were tested first by a quiz set by Phil Hunt with cryptic questions on key ingredients in food, towns and cities in the UK and children's books, TV and film titles. Judy Campbell and Dot Leeke were top scorers with 34/50 and won a bottle of wine.

An excellent buffet was assembled in the usual 'bring and share' way.

We were then entertained by card-sharp Peter Pettit and his moll, Marilyn Daniels in a game of Play Your Cards Right.

Finally, there was the draw with 28 prizes.

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### GROWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

#### January/February/March/April

It is **January** and the shortest day is well behind us and we will soon be noticing the change in light conditions. We are at the beginning of another 'fuchsia' year. January is not the most active month of the year for the fuchsia grower but there are some important tasks to be carried out.

We must regularly check our over-wintering plants as they are always prone to attacks of *botrytis* (grey mould) so it is vital to keep air circulating around the plants by opening the vents in the greenhouse and by use of a fan. Check also for correct moisture levels; a moisture meter is handy for this job if you have one. Water if necessary but do this early in the day so as to give any excess water a chance to dry off before putting them away again in the evening.

Plants that are being over-wintered in sheds, garages or cold frames should also be looked at, taking the opportunity on a good day (bright, dry and reasonably warm) to bring your plants out into the open air. Check them over for any problems but make sure they go

back into their winter quarters before the evening chill sets in.

**Late February**, depending on weather conditions can be the time for the *wake up* process to begin. Spray the woody stems of your plants with very warm water; this will soften the wood and encourage the new buds to appear. Do this spraying frequently but again always allow enough time for surplus water to dry off before evening time. Cuttings material may now be available from plants that have had that extra little bit of heat; always take the best cuttings available and give a little bottom heat if possible; your cuttings should root in 3-4 weeks.

This is a good time to plan and prepare for a hardy fuchsia bed; dig the selected area well and incorporate some good garden compost or peat, or even farmyard manure if available; a well-prepared fuchsia bed should last for many years.

Many of the specialist fuchsia nurseries open their doors for business on 1<sup>st</sup> February so why not order a few catalogues and be prepared to visit one or two and obtain a few different cultivars; give the species a try!

By **Early March**, depending on how your plants have been over-wintered, you may now be seeing new pink buds or shoots appearing from the woody stems. Those with a heated greenhouse may possibly have shoots big enough for cuttings but if you have a cold greenhouse, or your plants have been over-wintered in a shed or garage, then your plants may be in the pink bud stage.

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 fairly 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. Excess

moisture can cause botrytis to set in.

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

Prepare your cuttings compost beforehand; a mixture of 75% peat and 25% sand with perhaps some added Perlite or Vermiculite is ideal. The sand should be washed river sand, not the very fine builders' type. Your cuttings need only be what we call 'tip cuttings' which are just the growing tip plus one pair of leaves. A 3-inch pot of compost is plenty big enough to accept 6 or 7 cuttings; they need only to be pushed lightly into the compost then given a light overhead spray to settle the compost and to just moisten the leaves. They must then be covered to conserve the moisture level until rooting takes place. The small sandwich bags are ideal for the job. If they can then be placed in a propagator with some bottom heat then all the better but the kitchen window sill will suffice (given the permission to do so!); rooting will take longer, of course, but it should still happen.

In **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 that you can then fit the remaining root ball into a pot some two sizes smaller, e.g., from a 7" to a 5" or 5" to a 3". 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.

Do not forget to visit our local nurseries. They all have good quality plants for sale. Give the Triphyllas or Species a try this year. Wishing you **good growing** in the New Year!



## OBITUARY – KEITH LEDGER

**17<sup>th</sup> August 1940 - 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017**

Keith joined the Northampton and District Fuchsia Society in 1989, the same year as me, and was a very active member who soon joined the committee before becoming the society's Treasurer for some years. Keith's passion for fuchsias was very evident in the wonderful plants he entered in our shows. He was an excellent grower.



*Keith Ledger receiving the Starmer/York Trophy from the manager of Wyvale in 2010*

In my early days of showing I visited Keith in his garden at Moulton and he was very willing to share his vast knowledge of growing and showing fuchsias. I remember he said to me "I tend to grow large potted plants because they are easier to regulate the watering in hot weather". He certainly grew some wonderful plants.

In his later years Keith's health deteriorated but he still managed to visit our annual show without fail and kept a keen interest in the society, always willing to offer advice.

Our deepest condolences go to his wife Pat and his family.

Bob Malin

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## WINTER CARE FOR GARDEN HARDIES

Flowering in the border will continue until the first frosts start or the arrival of bad light. Your plants will begin to lose their leaves, usually from the bottom of the plant first. You can now start the winter protection programme.

First look around the plant for possible cuttings material; soft green growth without buds is ideal. Pot these cuttings up into your potting mixture, whether it be your own mixture or bought compost. If possible place them in a propagator, or the old favourite, on the kitchen window sill but get permission first!

Then tidy up your plants by removing all but 450mm (18") of the growth made during the growing season. Do not cut back further because this amount of stem gives good protection from frost to the crown of the plant. Clear all debris including weeds from around the base of the plants, taking care as fuchsias are shallow rooting and you could damage the fine roots that are just under the soil surface.

A protective layer of mulch, such as straw, peat or good garden compost can be placed around the base of the plants. Do not apply any fertiliser at this time as this will only encourage soft growth susceptible to frost.

Another check you should make is that any labels are in place and replace any that are becoming illegible.

If you are not certain about the hardiness of some of your plants they can be dug up and over-wintered indoors. Dig them up with as much root-ball as possible and place them in a suitable container. Prune the top growth to a manageable size – some root pruning may also be necessary. Move them into the garage or greenhouse so that they will be over-wintered in a frost-free place.

Fuchsias growing outside in pots must also be taken in for over-wintering whether they are classed as hardy or not as heavy frost can easily penetrate the sides of the pots and kill the delicate roots.

## SHADOWS OF TIME

Using sundials as garden ornaments dates from Roman times. They were mounted on stone pedestals to catch the shadow of the sun god, Sol, as he drove his chariot across the sky. Their history, however, is truly ancient, with the first simple use of an object casting a shadow dating back to 5000BC. Until mechanical clocks came into use in the 1300s, sundials were one of the most common ways of marking the passing of time, although the early mechanical clocks were not very accurate and people still used to check them against sundials!

Sundials, like any sort of timepiece, can vary significantly in their accuracy depending on their calibration, the precision of the marker and their size. Early sundials were not accurate, but with a growing understanding of latitude and longitude and how they affected the angle of the sun's rays, it became possible to build more elaborate dials which were accurate for their location. Calculating the angle of the gnomon (the technical name for the pointer whose shadow marks the hour) and then accurately engraving the lines marking the hours was the key. Bigger gnomons are more accurate than smaller ones since the change in shadow length over the course of the day is larger.

There are many types of sundial, some more complex than others. The simplest are pedestal (horizontal) dials and wall (vertical) dials but there is a whole range of other types of dial. There are armillary dials, polar dials, analemmatic dials (where the pointer is vertical) and even small, portable dials that are highly sought-after collectors' items. Also known are stained glass or etched-into-glass sundials which may be viewed from either side. There are even very rare moondials which are only of use when the moon is almost or completely full. Analemmatic dials can be laid out in a garden so that a human can stand and act as the gnomon.

Sundials often have mottos. Two examples are:

*All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today*

and

*Time is nature's way of making sure that everything does not happen at once*

*This is an extract from an article by Anita Chapman first published in the Hardy Plant Society's Correspondence Group Newsletter in June 2016.*

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## FACTS ABOUT LEONHART FUCHS

Fuchs is German for Fox.

Leonhart Fuchs (1501-1566) compiled the first significant glossary of botanical terms, which contributed to the development of modern botany. The plant genus Fuchsia was named after Fuchs in 1703 because he was the first to describe it.

Leonhard Fuchs was born in Wemding, Bavaria. He enrolled at the University of Erfurt at the age of 12 or 14. He was so intelligent he opened his own school at the age of 16. At 18 he attended Ingolstadt University in Ingolstadt, Bavaria to study classics, philosophy, and medicine. He became a physician in Munich in 1524 and later in 1526 returned to Ingolstadt as a professor.

He was trained as a physician and had a particular interest in natural history. He was especially interested in the medicinal properties of plants. He became well known among his contemporaries for his successful treatments during the Plague in 1529. In 1535 he became the Chair of Medicine at the University of Tübingen in Germany.

In 1542, Fuchs published a plant manual titled '*Concerning the Description of Plants*'. The book was an important milestone in the developing science of natural history.

**COMMITTEE MEETING 30/11/2017**

Your Committee met on 30<sup>th</sup> November to discuss various matters.

Among matters discussed were the new format of this newsletter, arrangements for the Christmas Fayre and the Christmas Party.

We were also given an update on the new venue for our Fuchsia Show at St Crispin Social

Club by Bob Malin in his position as Show Secretary.

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Have you visited your Fuchsia Society's website?

[www.ndfs.btck.co.uk](http://www.ndfs.btck.co.uk)

### THE NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT FUCHSIA SOCIETY

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