



**NEWSLETTER**

**FEBRUARY 2024**

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR**

*Deirdre Watson is our Chair until February, in addition to her role as editor of the Newsletter.*

As we approach February, we hope that you and your gardens have not suffered from the recent flooding. In Minal, where my cottage is, Werg was flooded, but the water meadows did their job, and we were thankfully spared. I just hope that the wonderful bank of snowdrops by the river Kennet outside my window has survived,

**Farewell, hail and thanks.** As we come to the AGM, there are changes to the MGA Committee, with four members, Jan Lillywhite; Jane Tilbrook, Bev Luxford and myself, standing down (Bev has kindly agreed to continue manning the raffle). Jan and Jane have been members of the Committee for many years, with Jane latterly organising the day trips (along with Miranda), and Jan managing the programme of speakers. I have been on the Committee for five years, covering the newsletter. Many thanks for their contribution.

We are grateful for those stalwarts continuing on the Committee, Miranda Gilmour, Debs Schofield, Grace Hoskin and Myra Hay. We have two members standing for election, Jo Snape and Hilary Jeanes. It is great to have new blood, but there will still be a large gap, especially with the role of managing the speakers' programme, which Jan has done so brilliantly over many years. A hard act to follow, but we do need help! Roles such as Jan's can be shared, meaning that the time needed is not too onerous. Without people willing to give up their time, there is no Association. If anyone would like to support the MGA by joining the Committee, or providing other support, please get in touch.

**And thank you for all the people who help behind the scenes**

We also have many helpers behind the scenes, some of whom are also stepping down after many years supporting us. These include Heather Bridgeman, who has led with the plant sale, and Sue Jackson who has organised the tea and coffee roster for our meetings. Those continuing in their roles include Lesley Andrews and Anna Marsden for running Garden Link; Bruce Hayllar for managing the website; Dick Drinkrow for looking after the database for us; Dorothy Aitcheson for helping with the plant sale and delivering newsletters, Amelia Trevethick and Jacqui Taylor for supporting the plant sale, and many others, such as those making our teas and coffees, who give their time to help us.

All the members, I am sure, would like to thank all of these people, past, continuing and new, for their contributions. Without them we would not have such a strong and vibrant organisation.

**Membership for 2024/25**

It is time to renew your membership. Just to remind you of the benefits of membership. MGA is holding its subscriptions at £10 for yet another year. Membership includes 10 meetings, with a speaker and free refreshments; a regular online e mailed Newsletter; access to the website with useful information and contacts; access to Garden Link for sharing your garden knowledge and problems, and a TH White discount card, plus the opportunity to join trips, the weekend away and any other activities.

We hope you will renew your membership, and look forward to welcoming both current and new members. If you know of anyone who would enjoy the company and the content

that the Association offers, then please do encourage them to join. It would be a great help if you could pay by BACS before the meeting; this makes the admin easier. More details are given later in the newsletter.

Current membership expires on 29 February. Please note that non members are welcome to attend meetings, but will be asked to pay £3 per meeting. This will be subtracted from the membership fee if they choose to join.

### **Next meeting and AGM**

What better way to spend Valentine's evening than to hear about wildlife on tropical islands? As noted above, our February meeting will be preceded by the AGM (for more details, see below). We look forward to seeing you then. We don't have a display table this time, as we hope you will be too busy lining up at the membership table!

We are conscious that some members may not like driving at night when it is dark, especially in poor weather. If anyone is willing to offer a lift, then please let us know.  
Deirdre Watson

### **THE NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY**

***We open the doors at 6.45pm, to allow members to mingle and chat with a free cuppa, renew their membership, and buy some raffle tickets, before the speaker starts at 7.30pm.***

The Speaker for Wednesday February 14th is JOHN HUGHES, from Shipton Bellinger, and the subject is "WILDLIFE on TROPICAL ISLANDS"

John has had a lifetime interest in Birds, and having spent 32 years in the Forces, was able to study them on Ascension Island and other Overseas Territories. His map making job also took him to many exotic places including the deserts of Oman and the jungles of Indonesia.

Jan Lillywhite

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30pm, immediately before our speaker. As we are a membership organisation, we have to hold an AGM every year. This gives members the opportunity to elect the Committee members and agree the annual report and accounts. The documents for the AGM, comprising the Agenda; Minutes of the AGM in 2023; Chair Report; and Accounts, are included with the newsletter e mail (and also on the Website under "Newsletters". If you want to have hard copies for the AGM, please print them and bring them with you.

Deirdre Watson

### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2024**

Our annual membership runs from March 2024 to February 2025.

#### Making Payments

We ask members to pay their £10 (or £20 for joint membership) by bacs or cheque as far as possible as this provides a clear audit trail.

1. Internet banking: Please transfer your payment to Marlborough Gardening Association, sort code 30-91-99 Account no. 68746860. PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME IN THE REFERENCE BOX so that we can identify your payment.

2. In person at our February and March meetings. There will be a subs table from 6.45 – 7.30pm for taking cheque and cash payments and dispensing membership cards. Cheques are payable to Marlborough Gardening Association. If paying by cash please bring it in an unsealed envelope with your name and the amount written on it.
3. By post: you can post or deliver payment to Debs Schofield, 68 Five Stiles Road, Marlborough SN8 4BE. Please include a note with your name/s.

NB If you cannot pick up a programme at a meeting, you can view it on the website [www.marlbga.org.uk](http://www.marlbga.org.uk) or, to have one posted out, please send a SAE to the above address.

Membership forms – there is no need to complete a membership form unless your details (name, phone, email or address) have changed. Please make sure that we have your current e mail address. Membership forms are on the website [www.marlbga.org.uk](http://www.marlbga.org.uk) and at the subs table.

If you have any problems with payments, do let me know. Debs Schofield (Treasurer) [schofielddeborah1@gmail.com](mailto:schofielddeborah1@gmail.com)

Debs Schofield

## **WEEKEND AWAY TO DEVON - JUNE 28TH – 30TH**

A single room has become available for our weekend in Devon. If anyone would like to “snap it up” please contact me by email - [davisian51@btinternet.com](mailto:davisian51@btinternet.com) or telephone - 07734053147.

Carolyn Davis

## **VISIT TO PAINSWICK ROCOCO GARDENS AND CERNEY HOUSE GARDENS ON WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2024 (for insurance purposes this trip is ONLY open to MGA members)**

Painswick Rococo Garden is the country's sole surviving complete rococo garden. It was created by Benjamin Hyett, a wealthy Gloucester landowner in the 1740s as a fanciful pleasure garden in a hidden valley and by its very nature has steep paths and uneven surfaces. There are handrails on the steepest slopes and there are numerous benches dotted around the garden. Features of Rococo gardens include sweeping vistas, framed views and serpentine paths which allow the visitor to explore extravagant water features, statuary and follies. The café sells a range of refreshments including a lunch menu. Picnics are allowed in the garden.

At both gardens we look forward to a wonderful mixture of spring shrubs and flowers including tulips and an opportunity to admire garden design, both historical and more modern. Sadly, at neither property are mobility scooters available.

We will leave the Rococo Garden at about 1.30pm when we will travel to Cerney House Gardens. This is a romantic, secret garden set around a Victorian walled garden. The garden is organic and as a result is a haven for pollinators. It includes herbaceous borders, a working kitchen garden wild flower bank, woodland and new herb garden and later in the year roses and companion climbers. Here we will have tea and cake sometime during the afternoon.

There are plants, plant pots and more on sale at both gardens, so do come prepared

with bags to take anything home!

We will leave the Cerney House Gardens between 4-4.30pm, arriving back in Marlborough at approx. 5.00-5.15pm and Ogbourne St Andrew shortly afterwards.

The cost will be £42 (for non RHS members).

The cost is £32 for Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) members (please bring your 2024 membership card with you).

(The price covers travel, entrances, refreshments at Cerney House Gardens and driver's tip).

Travel times and places:

Pick up High Street, Marlborough (outside the Jubilee Centre) 8.45 am.

Pick up Ogbourne St Andrew at 8.50am outside the Silks on the Down (please indicate on the booking form if you wish to be picked up here).

Miranda Gilmour

**The deadline for copy for the March Newsletter is 23 February 2024. Please send contributions to [dwatsonweavers@gmail.com](mailto:dwatsonweavers@gmail.com)**

## BOOKING FORM

### VISIT TO PAINSWICK ROCOCO GARDENS AND CERNEY HOUSE GARDENS ON WEDNESDAY 24th APRIL 2024

(for insurance purposes this trip is **ONLY** open to MGA members)

**Pick up** High Street, Marlborough (outside the Jubilee Centre) at **8.45 am**

**Pick up** Ogbourne St Andrew at **8.50 am** outside the Silks on the Down

Approx return time.5.00 – 5.30pm

Name .....

Address .....

Email .....

Home Tel No:.....Mobile No:.....  
(please bring it with you)

Name of next of kin.....

Their contact telephone number(s).....

I confirm that I am a member of MGA and have paid my sub for 2024/2025

I confirm I hold 2024 membership of the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)

I would like to be picked up at Ogbourne St Andrew (please tick here)

I require a gluten free option at Cerney House Garden

**Please complete and return this form indicating how payment has been made to arrive no later than Tuesday 9 April 2024.**

*If possible, please pay by bank transfer and return this form (completing the declaration below) to Debs Schofield. This can be done via email [schofielddeborah1@gmail.com](mailto:schofielddeborah1@gmail.com) post, or handing in at a meeting.*

*I have used internet banking & transferred £..... to Marlborough Gardening Association, sort code 30-91-99 Account no. 68746860 **PLEASE ENSURE YOU PUT YOUR NAME AS THE REFERENCE** so that we know you have paid.*

**OR** *If paying by cheque please send to: Debs Schofield, 68 Five Stiles Road, Marlborough, SN8 4BE or at an MGA meeting, completing the declaration below. I enclose a cheque for £ ..... made payable to Marlborough Gardening Association.*

*Please retain a copy of the booking form and/or the newsletter in order that you know dates/meeting times and places*