



The Village GARDEN CLUB

of Sevenhampton & District

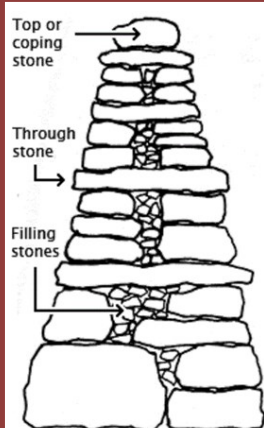


JAN / FEB 2018

NEXT MEETINGS

Friday 26th January — Social Evening incorporating “Gardener’s Question Time”

Thursday 22nd February — Roger Turner “Capability Brown”



Our home is surrounded on 3 sides by dry stone walls, so typical of land boundaries in the Cotswolds. When we moved here the walls were in varying stages of collapse; not unusual as these ancient styles of walls typically last for about 100 years before needing rebuild or repair.

In an effort to tidy up our collapsing walls I sought to learn the skill of dry stone walling. Courses are provided locally by [Cotswold Rural Skills](#) & the [Dry Stone Walling Association](#) (DSWA). Whilst it can be laborious and definitely hard work it is equally rewarding to build something so enduring.

Equipment is minimal—an ‘A’ frame and string to guide the shape of the wall; gloves, preferably leather; comfortable & protective footwear (I use old but still sturdy walking boots); a small hammer to ‘dress’ the stone, although this is not essential; and, of course, stone. Old stone, stripped from the wall to be renewed, can often be re-used. The only thing now missing is determination as walling is slow, especially for me, with even professional wallers building little more than a metre per day.

Amateurs, like me, can “easily” build strong walls as long as the following is adhered to.

Footings/foundations. Traditionally built directly off the soil, the foundation stones need to be firmly placed. These stones are usually the largest in the wall.

Keep them flat. Stones should be kept as near to horizontal as possible. Stones also need to be stable and once placed, can be wedged behind with smaller stones to achieve this.

Face stones. When placing a stone in the wall the narrow edge of the stone should be placed outermost.

Joins. Vertical joins, where two stones meet, must be staggered, like brickwork.

Fill. It is essential to fill gaps in the centre of the wall with stones. DO NOT use earth, gravel or concrete as fill.

Throughstones. For walls over 3 ft tall single stones should be used to tie the front & back walls together, aiding stability.

Toppings. Similar to throughstones the toppings will reach across both faces of the wall, applying weight to both sides which helps to keep the structure strong and intact.

Concrete. Never be tempted to use concrete. Water will be retained in the wall instead of it being able to percolate through and the stone will consequently be susceptible to splitting and being frosted.

Once complete a dry stone wall not only looks good but offers protection & support to plants as well as providing important habitats. Dry stone walling, I have found, is rather like doing a jigsaw with stone and, as some of our garden walls still need attention, I know what my New Year resolution will be — to do another jigsaw!



CYCLAMEN FACTFILE: Tuberous plants of the Primulaceae family; common names *Sowbread*, *Neapolitan cyclamen*, *ivy-leaved cyclamen*. There are over 20 species within the *Cyclamen* genus, most of which flower in late autumn and winter. Tender species, such as *C. persicum*, are popular as houseplants but many (eg. *C. coum*, *C. hederifolium* & *C. cilicium*) can withstand our harsh winters outdoors. They are Mediterranean plants and, although they are happy in semi-shade, thrive in full sun. They enjoy free draining soil and outdoor varieties would benefit from a mulch of leaf mould or compost in the early spring as the foliage starts to die back. Outdoor varieties grow 5 -15 cms tall and readily reseed. As the up-swept petals of the flowers fade, their stems spiral down to the surrounding ground. The round, fertilised seed head then splits, distributing the seeds. The seeds’ coating attracts ants and other organisms which distribute them further afield. Membership of **The Cyclamen Society** is currently £10.50 per annum (see www.cyclamen.org) and their Winter Show is at Birmingham Botanical Gardens on Sunday 4th February.



In case you missed it — Google's 'Home Page' on 29th Nov. focused on

Gertrude Jekyll.

Gertrude Jekyll was born in London on this date in 1843. She spent most of her life living in Surrey, England - firstly on her family's estate, Munstead House, and later in her own house, [Munstead Wood](#), where she planted one of her renowned gardens.

Ms Jekyll is credited with designing hundreds of gardens in Britain, as well as others in France and the USA. She was influenced by prominent English painters of her time, with the artist JMW Turner cited as a particularly strong influence. She also worked in collaboration with the architect Edwin Lutyens (who designed Munstead House) and they combined their skills to enhance many English homes and gardens. Her work has come to be seen as embodying the "Arts and Crafts" style. It wasn't just a matter of garden design though; she also practised horticulture, cultivating, selecting and breeding plants. As a prolific writer, Ms Jekyll was able to spread her influence and enthusiasm through numerous books and articles. The fashionable magazine *Country Life*, for example, printed much of her work. She also enjoyed painting and photography.

Among some of the plants named after Ms Jekyll are the English lavender *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Munstead' and the shrub roses *Rosa* 'Munstead Wood' and *Rosa* 'Gertrude Jekyll'. She was awarded the RHS Victoria Medal of Honour in 1897.

GARDENING PUBLICATIONS

If you had book tokens for a Christmas present and were wondering what to use them for, the following new publications may tempt you.....

- **Plant Love** (How to Care for your houseplants) - Alys Fowler
ISBN: 9780857833815
- **Beginner's Guide to Botanical Flower Painting** - Michael Lakin
ISBN: 9781782213109
- **Genealogy for Gardeners: Plant families explained & explored** - Simon Maughan & Ross Bayton (RHS)
ISBN: 9781784723804
- **The Secret Gardeners**—Victoria Summerly
ISBN: 9780711237636
- **Joseph Banks: FLORILEGIUM**
(Botanical Treasures from Cook's first voyage 1768-1771)
ISBN: 9780500519363

National Garden Week: 30 April—6 May 2018.

RHS are wanting to stimulate gardeners to do something special during National Garden Week. Put in a pond / plant a scented garden/ plant a tree etc. Many other suggestions at www.nationalgardeningweek.org.uk and www.rhs.org.uk
Any thoughts?

MEMBERS NEEDED

Please encourage friends and family to join our Garden Club. An exciting programme is being arranged for the forthcoming year and remains extremely good value for money at £20 annual membership. New members can have free introductory meetings in Jan, Feb & Mar, their £5 visitor fees being refunded upon joining in April.

Christmas tree recycling

Between 3rd-14th January trees can be taken to the following garden centres:

Batsford Arboretum, Moreton-in-the-Marsh
Dawn Nurseries, Shurdington
Dundry Nurseries, Staverton
Greenway Nurseries, Shurdington
Gotherington Nurseries
Toddington Garden Centre
Wyevale Garden Centres, at Brockworth and Bishops Cleeve

JANUARY SOCIAL EVENING

The social evening (26th January) will be offering festive drinks and food as per usual. Guests are welcome, but they will need to pay £5 towards costs. **Please can you contact Annie or Pippa (details below) confirming your attendance so that they know how many to cater for.**

The incorporated *Gardener's Question Time* is an opportunity for anyone to ask for advice on any plant problem, no matter how large or small. With the wealth of knowledge that our members have, a solution is almost bound to be forthcoming—and if not, well a problem shared is a problem halved! **Do come along with your questions, problem plants or even pictures of them.** The evening will be chaired by our member, Victoria who, since 2003, has run [Whitehall Farmhouse Plants](#) which specialises in herbaceous perennials.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Benson (Chair) 01242 820960
Di Cook 01242 821018
Gordon Day 01242 820620
Victoria Logue 01242 820772

Joanna Rolfe 01451 850566
Annie van Rossem 01242 820718
Pippa Shouler 01242 821419

* Have you anything of interest that can be included in the next newsletter? If so please contact Di Cook (editor) at *
* ditex.cook@btinternet.com or Tel: 01242 821018 *
