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CHAIRMAN'S WINTER MESSAGE

Dear Members

I hope everyone is keeping well with this cold spell that we are now experiencing. I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who renewed their membership and for attending our Christmas Demonstration in November. We really had a great wreath workshop last weekend – please do see our photos on the website and on Facebook. There are also some on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter. I look forward to seeing you at our Christmas miscellany where we will be making a Christmas Cracker and enjoying our festive buffet. Last but not least have a lovely Christmas and New Year.

Diane

Joyce's Musings

THE JOY OF FLOWERS



I was fortunate to attend the 2023 Interflora World Cup competition held in Manchester in September. It was a spectacle of talent, innovative designs and techniques. Floristry is the world of the professional who works with flowers as a creative trade.

Over the years the worlds of the flower arranger and of the florist have moved closer together and, picking up on the techniques used in floristry, we have seen many flower arrangers turn into “floral artists”. Style frequently arises from a crossover of ideas and techniques and throughout history flower arrangers have borrowed ideas and made them their own. Social media have made it much easier to share design ideas and innovations and YouTube videos have become online workshops. What strikes me, no matter what the level of expertise involved, is the amount of joy to be held in the simple art of combining flowers and plant material. Children love to make a posy for Mum and we all love to receive a gift of flowers. Whilst we cannot all attain the level of expertise of the international competitors, no matter what your ability, if you find joy in the finished result, you are a winner.



Poinsettias are native to Mexico. The ancient Aztecs used poinsettias to make red dye, and they turned to poinsettia sap to control fevers. Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias are not poisonous. While some humans and pets are sensitive to the plant's milky white sap, which contains latex, it is not toxic. It can, however, cause irritation to the skin, eyes, mucus membranes or digestive system (if consumed).

Poinsettias aren't always red. The plant is grown in more than 100 varieties including shades of white, cream, pink, purple, orange and yellow. There are also marbled and bicolor varieties. The showy, colourful part of the poinsettia isn't a flower – it's a modified leaf. The poinsettia's modified leaves (called bracts) are often mistaken for the flower. Actually, the small yellow flowers (called cyathium) can be found clustered in the centre of the bracts.

Poinsettias need both sunshine and dark nights to bloom. The shorter days and longer nights of late autumn and early winter are what cause poinsettias to bloom this time of year. In countries where they can be planted outdoors near artificial light such as a streetlamp, it disrupts their blooming cycle. In their native tropical environment in Mexico and Central America, poinsettias are a perennial woody shrub that grows as high as 10 to 15 feet tall – more like a small tree than a houseplant.

In Britain keep your poinsettia in a draught free spot with bright but indirect light and a temperature of around 13 to 15°C (55 - 59°F). Water sparingly, typically when the surface of the compost has started to dry out. Mist the leaves regularly to increase humidity and to keep the colourful bracts looking their best for longer.





Members, family and friends supported the Club at a wreath making workshop in Newsome. Some happy, smiling faces show the results with the youngest participant possibly a future Club member. You're never too young to start flower arranging!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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|---------------------------|--|
| 13 December 2023 | In House Christmas Workshop and Festive Buffet |
| 17 January 2024 | Demonstration by Judy Watker of Leeds – A Bit of This and That |
| 21 February 2024 | In House Workshop – Spring Wreath Making |
| 16 March 2024 | North East Education Workshop – New Earswick Folk Hall, York |
| 18 – 21 April 2024 | RHS Urban Show – Manchester |
| 25 – 28 April 2024 | Harrogate Spring Flower Show |