

## GARDENING — AUTUMN 1993

**T**HE AUTUMN EQUINOX is upon us once more and menacingly winter rears its ugly head. There will be the long winter evenings when one can think on the mistakes made during the spring and summer, trying in vain to put the blame on the weather. However, despite the weather, get your digging done before Christmas and then it will be all downhill when the spring comes. If you don't, you will have to find more excuses.

One mistake I made this year was with my onion bed. It was too wet to dig when I wanted to plant out my onions, so being of a lazy nature, I spread some old mushroom compost over last year's onion bed, lightly forked it over and planted my onions. Well, at the time of writing, 9th September to be exact, I have an onion bed to be proud of, no mildew, no onion fly, some big onions, many three pounders. I never watered them and gave them only one dressing of Growmore. A good story which shows that laziness is sometimes rewarded!

Get your geraniums (zonal pelargoniums) up before the frost gets them. Put your cuttings in pots on the window sill of a cool room and keep them dry — the temperature in the living room, kitchen or bathroom is too high. Lift your dahlias, clean the tubers and pack them in dry peat in wooden boxes, which should be stored in a cool frost free place. Gather the seeds of such flowers as marigolds, lavatera, penstemons and other annuals; dry them on newspaper and

then package them securely — don't forget the labels — otherwise you will not know which is which when sowing time comes around again. Be sure to prune such things as apples, pears, currants and climbing roses before Christmas.

Climbing roses need different treatment from ramblers. Ramblers flower on young wood — this year's wood, next year's flowers. Climbers, which, generally, are hybrid teas, should be spur pruned. With regard to shrubs, if you removed the flowering wood as they went out of flower, no further pruning is necessary. However the few shrubs that flower in September and October should be left to March when they should be pruned hard.

November is a good month for planting or bedding out such things as wallflowers, myosotis, sweet williams and the carnation family. The last mentioned will do just as well from a March planting. Small plants such as aubretias, arabis and the like will divide, and should be planted in small pots and kept in the cold frame until February.

It is bulb planting time again. Those in pots which you want for the Christmas period should be plunged outdoors to a depth of five or six inches beneath the surface. They should be left until the pots are full of root and then brought inside. Make sure that the bulbs are well rooted before you bring them in or you will have a failure.

p.t.o.

Indoors, hibiscus will flower throughout the winter if fed and watered regularly and kept on a window sill above a radiator. Any offending green fly should be washed off under the cold water tap — it is as easy as that to keep them clean and healthy.

Since last writing, a well known gardener and cricketer has taken his leave. Jim Prew will be missed for many a day by Milton and its citizens. May he find peace and perpetual sunshine.

A.V. Mitchell.

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### MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD ALLOTMENTS AND GARDENS ASSOCIATION

Another show over, our sixth, and once again it was a great success. It even managed to stay fine! All the exhibits were of a very high standard and made a marvellous show.

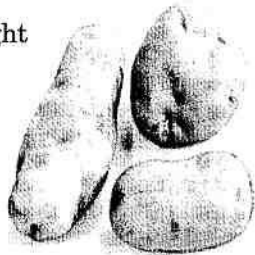


The trophies were well distributed this year. The President's Cup for vegetables was won by Mr M. Hawtin. The Association Cup for fruit was won by Mrs I. Glaister. The Wychwood Trophy for flowers went to Miss Jane Lewis and the Vicarage Field Cup for Flower Arranging to Mrs N. Newton. The Committee Cup for Homecraft was won by Mrs J. Mason and the Frogmore Trophy for Cooking went to Mrs D. Dore. The Miles-Brown Trophy for Roses went to Mrs J. Van De Poll.

The Dr. Scott Memorial Trophy for the best entry in the show went to Mr M. Hawtin for his magnificent onions. The Cambray Cup for children was again won by Amy Bradshaw for her Garden on a Plate, the Under 15 Cup went to her sister Hollie.

Finally the Potato Cup for the largest crop from eight seed potatoes was won by Mr M. Dore who managed to produce 88.5lb.

The Committee would like to thank all those who took part and also all the "Helpers" — your help was invaluable, again all my thanks to you all.



Next year the show will be on Saturday August 20th.

Jean Richardson.