

GARDENING.

AS YOU READ THIS PIECE ask yourself "What have I missed?". There are some things that should have been done, especially sowing, but don't despair because there is still time.

During the past month the soil temperature has risen appreciably so any seeds that you sow now will germinate quickly. I am thinking of the annuals that you grow in the gaps in the border and for cut flowers. But please sow now and give nature a chance to catch up. In any case, zinnias, which are tender, need to wait until now. Also you are not too late for your vegetable plot where such crops as carrots, peas and salads can be sown all summer long.

Probably you will have sown your runners or may have the plants ready to go into the ground. If you have room try some climbing French beans which should be sown a bit later than runners. They crop very well and are excellent for freezing, so the ladies say.

Don't forget to prune your spring flowering shrubs. Cut out all wood that has carried bloom during the spring and allow new growth to develop during the summer.

It is this new growth that will bear the flowers for next year.

For those of you that prefer to buy summer bedding plants, the garden centres and nurseries have a wonderful selection. Some have a short flowering life but geraniums, begonias, impatiens (busy dizzies) and salvias, to name a few, will give you a superb show until the frost comes, which is usually well into October. They are not cheap but when one compares their prices with those of cut flowers they are excellent value considering that they will be with you for four months.

This time I have no complaints. As I write this in early May, the sun is shining and I am in summer clothes. And, importantly, the ground is drying out. There are slugs and snails, hares, rabbits and muntjacs and many others waiting to feed but I will deal with them as they come and look forward to another summer with the sun on my back.

May your flowers bloom wondrously.

A.V. Mitchell.

THANK YOU.

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

On behalf of Kevin and myself, we would like to thank you all for the lovely cards, flowers and offers of help in our bereavement. The money collected for the Wychwood Surgery was £138.88. Thank you all very much.

Margaret and Kevin (Hunt).