

LILY GROUP Newsletter

AUTUMN 2021

Photo © Madeleine Tinson

Summer 2021
Lily Group visits
see page 3

AGM Report
and update
see page 5

Dig deep for the 2021 Bulb Auction
Find out how to get involved SEE PAGES 4-5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

AUTUMN 2021

Chairman's letter	2	Lily Group 2021 AGM report	5	Lily Group contact details	7
Summer Events, 2021	3	Lyttel Cup 2021	6	The Lily Group on Facebook	8
2021 Online Bulb Auction	4/5	Website malware update	7		

Chairman's letter

Jamie Compton

Lockdown woes have continued apace since I last wrote to the membership, although in recent weeks there seems to have been some easing of restrictions to the degree that we were able to have our first Lily Group visit to The Savill Garden near Windsor.

Duncan Coombs will tell you all about that, but I should perhaps mention that the RHS Lily Group is in the process of negotiating an arrangement with The Savill Garden in a joint collaboration to grow woodland lilies for trial and conservation. North of the border in Scotland our new Committee member Madeleine Tinson also opened her garden for a visit and again she will tell you how that went, so I will move on to other matters. Our long-standing Committee member Colin Pope has decided it is time for him to stand down, a former Treasurer and stalwart on all matters financial, Colin has recently been instrumental in helping Irene Hopton-Scott sort out some problems she has had with the Membership PayPal account. We will miss his many contributions to our meetings.

As to the lilies themselves, well it has been a topsy turvy year here in Wiltshire. Many had

a real check from the incessant frosts during all of April. I found constantly loading layers of leaf mould onto the emerging shoots helped to protect them from the hardest frosts. Then followed a constant deluge during May just to encourage any fungal rotting to take hold and more recently a summer blast of heat to bring everything into flowering remarkably fast. *Lilium martagon*, *L. bansonii*, *L. leichtlinii* subsp. *maximowiczii* and *L. regale* were all over in a few days. *Lilium superbum* and some of the oriental hybrids are now themselves looking superb. We look forward to more opening up and to remaining healthy for the rest of this season with the AGM and Bulb Auction full of promise for the future.



Photograph © Duncan Coombs



LILY GROUP EVENTS

SUMMER 2021

Madeleine Tinson, Duncan Coombs & Chris Clennett

Parkhead, Perth, Scotland

(Madeleine Tinson's Garden)

Open weeks: June 2021

The last time the Group visited my garden was in 2015 when travel was not restricted. This visit was instigated by a suggestion that 'Events' should be offered to those of us who live 'up North', so I was delighted to welcome many back and to see some new faces.

Following a delay to normal flowering times (due to the cold weather), I suggested those who could, postpone their visit by a couple of weeks. By then most of the North Hybrids were flowering on mass in my greenhouses, along with *Cardiocrinum*, martagons, *Lilium monadelphum* and *Nomocharis*, flowering in the borders.

The Savill Garden, Windsor: 17 July

A small group of members were welcomed to The Savill Garden by the Keeper of the Gardens, John Anderson who led us on a tour pointing out where their current *Lilium* collection grew and several other areas suitable for growing

lilies, where he would like to see many more planted. Amongst the lilies we saw were *Lilium martagon*, *L. lankongense*, *L. duchartreii*, *L. regale* and *L. 'Bellingham Hybrid'*. Chairman Dr James Compton thanked our host for giving us a more personalised (and extended) tour and hoped that in the future the Lily Group would be able to help The Savill Garden extend its range and number of *Lilium* species.

Dorothy Clive Garden, Shropshire: 12 August

A select group of members travelled to south Shropshire to visit the Dorothy Clive Garden. Despite a noticeable lack of lilies, this garden, built around an old stone quarry, was still a wonderful place to gain inspiration. They could certainly grow lilies in the dappled shade of mature oak and beech trees.

The group were treated to a guided tour by two volunteer guides and later had a chance to exchange stories and information over our informal lunch. Considering our recent weather, we were fortunate that the sun shone through most of the day.

Digging Deep

2021 Online Bulb Auction

George Battle

Contributing Bulbs

Many of you gave generously to ensure our 2020 bulb auction was a real success. Lilies, other bulbs and corms are all very welcome.

Please send your bulbs to:

George Battle, Oaklands, Gorst Hill,
Rock, Kidderminster, DY14 9YR
Between 11–23 OCTOBER 2021

To find out what's for sale

A full list of lots for sale will be posted on our website: rhslilygroup.org on the morning of Monday 25 October.

- Click on the 'Members' tab
- Select 'Bulb Auction 2021'

The page is password-protected and for Lily Group members only. Enter the 'Group-wide' password (not your personal password).

Group-wide password reminder

If you don't have the password, please email: georgerhslilygroup@gmail.com

Online Bulb Auction 2021 is open to all UK members

**we regret that for phytosanitary reasons we are unable to send bulbs outside of the UK*

How to bid

Making a bid is easy. Send us an email and include the book(s) / bulb lot, the lot number and the amount of your bid to Mel Herbert: lindmelve@yahoo.co.uk

Remember to include **Auction Bid** in the subject line of your email and clearly state your 'primary' and 'secondary' bids. See also, 'Limits on bidding' below.

Limits on bidding

Each member may bid on a **maximum of five lots**. These are your 'primary' bids. You can submit up to five 'secondary' bids. Secondary bids will be activated if there are no primary bids on any given lot. Please refrain from 'proxy' bidding on behalf of other members.

Updating your bids

The auction web page will be regularly updated with the highest bid for each lot. We can't provide Ebay-style 'live' bidding but will try to update frequently. If on the website you

2021 Lily Group Bulb Auction

Bidding opens

09:00 MONDAY 25 OCTOBER 2021

Bidding closes

18:00 SATURDAY 30 OCTOBER 2021

see that your initial bid has been topped, you can submit a new bid. On the last day of the

AUTUMN 2021

auction, if yours is one of the top three bids for any lot, you will be emailed so that you may raise your bid before 18:00 if you wish to.

Payment & shipping

Successful bidders will be sent an invoice via email (including the cost of postage and packing). Bulbs will be sent Royal Mail 2nd Class Signed For after receipt of payment.

2021 Lily Group AGM



Online via Zoom | Saturday 16 October | 2pm BST

Our AGM has a silver lining – Covid may prevent us meeting in person but many more of us can participate via Zoom, in the UK, Europe and beyond.

Zoom allows The Lily Group to offer a highly topical presentation to gardeners in this period of climate change. It is also an opportunity for members and the committee to meet and get to know each other better.

Firstly, however, you need to know that your committee has agreed an updated Constitution to reflect our independent status from the RHS. We will be circulating this to all our members and you will be able to vote on it at the AGM.

Two new members have joined our committee during the past twelve months: Chris Clennett who now edits our biannual Newsletter; and Madeleine Tinson who is taking a lead on lily conservation and collections. You will be able to meet Chris and Madeleine at the AGM.

Our presentation is by Jim Marshall who will look at '*Suitable Alternatives to Peat*'. Jim is Vice Chairman of the RHS Herbaceous Committee and a Gardens Adviser to the

National Trust. With an impending ban on the sale of peat in the UK as a result of its importance in storage of CO₂, Jim will tell us about the trial he led into 'Peat Free Growing Media' and the encouraging results obtained. Then followed by your chance to ask questions.

This year's recipient of the Lyttel Lily Cup is Martin Toon (see page 6). Martin is an outstanding grower of species lilies who gardens in South Island, New Zealand. We will be showing you something of Martin's achievements as a lily grower.

Naturally, our Chairman Jamie Compton and our Finance Officer, Irene Hopton-Scott, will be reporting to you on the year past and how the future looks for The Lily Group. You will also be able to vote on whether to renew the term of those members of committee whose period in office is expiring. We're always looking for new people to step forward and lend a hand in helping to run things for all of us in the Lily Group.

Lyttel Cup 2021

Melvyn Herbert

It is with much pleasure that the committee of the RHS Lily Group have unanimously decided to award this year's Lyttel Cup to Martin Toon of Christchurch, New Zealand.



Martin, who joined the Group in 2011, is an extremely successful grower of a very wide range of *Lilium* species (well over 100 species, subspecies, varieties and forms) who takes full advantage of the temperate climate of his South Island home.

A quick search of recent Lily Group seed lists reveals just how good a grower Martin Toon is and also how incredibly generous he has been in sharing his success with other members. His contributions over the last few years have included the very beautiful but tricky to grow *L. parryi* and *L. humboldtii* subsp. *ocellatum*; the scarce and sought-after *L. grayi*, *L. maritimum*, *L. occidentale* and *L. kelleyanum*; not to mention the extremely rare and precious *L. fargesii*, *L. matangense*, *L. papilliferum* and the plant currently in cultivation as



Lilium majoense. Martin has also distributed seed of a very interesting lily, grown by him from a 2016 Lily Group seed lot, which may possibly be a 'new' and as yet undescribed species. In addition, Martin has been a regular contributor to both the New Zealand Lily Society and the North American Lily Society seed exchanges.

Researchers in the United States and here in the United Kingdom are currently employing a DNA-based study to investigate relationships within *Lilium*. The Lily Group have been helping with this and material Martin has been able to provide from his extensive collection has helped enormously.

The NZLS is fortunate to benefit from the very generous way Martin gives his time and energy to promote and support all of their activities, something his father did before him. The Lily Group and the wider world of 'lilyophiles' are greatly indebted to him for doing so much to maintain *Lilium* species stocks in cultivation and to encourage the growing of all kinds of lilies in New Zealand and across the world.

GETTING HACKED & GETTING CLEAN

George Battle

Many Lily Group members find lilies addictive. If you have 'Googled' our website recently, search results included adverts for tramadol and other pain killers.

We'd been hacked! A message in Russian confirmed this, apparently advertising a site on the 'dark net'. How could this happen? Well, I now understand that hackers use an automated software algorithm to 'guess' the password of a website administrator (by entering thousands of options per minute).

The Lily Group website has two administrators so one of us had our password rumbled. The first signs were of strange drug-related messages appearing on random pages. After initially removing these intrusions the hackers posted more and more messages – and then infected our Google search results to promote pain killers. As a result, and after seeking professional help, we moved the website to a

more secure server – reminding us all to be far more security conscious.

The process of ensuring that the website and our computers/devices are free from malware involves taking several steps which are worth sharing here:



ANTIVIRUS CHECKLIST KEEP YOUR DEVICE(S) FREE FROM VIRUSES

- ▲ To check whether your device is free from viruses visit: <https://www.malwarebytes.com>
Compatible with Android, iOS, Windows or Mac OS. Infected files are 'quarantined' and can be deleted.
- ▲ Scan your device(s) regularly. Install the 'Premium' version of malwarebytes to automate the process.
- ▲ Remove stored cookies and 'cached' files with CCleaner from: <https://www.ccleaner.com/>. Free and 'premium' versions are available.
- ▲ Always have up-to-date antivirus software installed. There is a wide range of choice including Avast, AVG, Kaspersky and McAfee.

RHS Lily Group

Jamie Compton, Chairman

George Battle, Vice Chairman, Seed List Compiler and Website Editor

Dr Nuala Sterling CBE, Vice Chairman and member of the Bulb Committee

Tony Dixon, Secretary & Pollen coordinator

Irene Hopton-Scott, Membership Secretary and Treasurer

Melvyn Herbert, Editor *Lilies & Related Plants*

Honorary Officers and Committee 2021–22

Chris Clennett, Newsletter Editor

Duncan Coombs, Programme coordinator

Pat Huff, Seed List Distribution Manager

EMERITUS

Chris Brickell CBE VMH,
Harris Howland (Past Chairman), Rose Voelcker

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

Keith Baldie, Walter Erhardt, Axel Hintze,
Jürgen Koch, Alan Mitchell

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alisdair Aird, Caroline Boisset, Colin Pope,
Madeleine Tinson

RHS Lily Group

Finding us on Facebook

Alan Mitchell

Bjørnar Olsen has written articles for *Lilies and Related Plants* and is very knowledgeable about *Lilium* species in Yunnan and Szechuan. In 2015 he set up the Species *Lilium* and *Nomocharis* Enthusiasts Group on Facebook. Currently, it has 1,600 members. If I were asked to name one source that convinced me of the benefits of using social media to encourage and share information about *Lilium*, it would be the Group set up by Bjørnar. One of the problems with reference books about *Lilium* is that once the information is committed to paper it cannot evolve. Using social media introduces a flexibility that can refer to, extend and update the information contained in reference books.

When I was editor of *Lilies and Related Plants* the subject of the Lily Group using social media was regularly discussed at Lily Group meetings. It was felt that using social media would enable



Lilium henrici

editor and emailed me to ask me to set up a page on Facebook for the Lily Group. I did this in July 2020. Aware that some people are apprehensive about sharing their personal details on social media, I made the Group a private group, where only members can see who is in the Group and what they Post. There are over 400 members of the RHS Lily Group Facebook page and membership continues to grow.

Members of the Lily Group, reading this piece, might be asking, 'How can I contribute to the RHS Lily Group Facebook page and encourage people to join the Lily Group?' The answer to that question is straightforward. The first thing to do, if you are not already a member, is to join Facebook. Then ask to join the RHS Lily Group Facebook page. As an Administrator of the Group I will accept your request and you will then become a member. As a member, you will be able to post information and photographs of *Lilium* and, subtly, extol the virtues of being a member of the Lily Group and thereby encourage people to join.



Lilium primulinum var. *burmanicum* (seed from N Vietnam)

the Lily Group to make its purpose and *Lilium* related activities better known and attract new members. I, of course, fully endorsed the use of social media, citing the example of Bjørnar Olsen's Facebook page. Then time passed, I stepped down as editor of *Lilies and Related Plants* after 10 years. Mel Herbert became the



CONNECT WITH THE LILY GROUP

www.facebook.com/groups/2617608858556096