



## Malvern Spring...

... was possibly the wettest yet but despite the atrocious weather visitors turned out to experience another wonderful display of gardens and exhibits. [Read on](#) to find out how we fared there and at Gardening Scotland.

Having already devoted several issues to the glorious world of hostas we thought it was about time to introduce ourselves so if you haven't already met us then you will at least know what we look like!

**For more than 30 years** we have been collecting hostas and for the last 15 years we have been turning our collecting habit into a business. Meet the 'H' Team:

### 'The Hosta Man' a.k.a. Robin

A law unto himself but fiercely protective of his own and others' rights - rather like Batman's famous sidekick and namesake.

Robin loves nothing better than a good laugh and so can always be relied upon to start up conversations with some obscure throw-away remark.

At home Robin spends most of his time outdoors in the nursery or workshop cunningly fashioning another invention to help improve the running of the business from converting Yvonne's best hat into a fly-deterrent (with strategically placed corks dangling from the hat brim) to designing growing mix hoppers to feed the potting bench.

Loves: his family, hostas and finding lovely clumps of moss on holiday

Pet hates: bureaucratic nonsense and unforeseen disasters like hurricanes, deadly compost and lorry radiators blowing on the A1.

### 'The Hosta Lady' a.k.a. Yvonne

Don't let her serene looks deceive you, ask her for the millionth time about slugs and snails and watch her morph into something that would scare little children.

When Yvonne manages to emerge from the office she spends as much of her time as possible in the nursery. Yvonne is professionally competent and has a CPC to prove it but we wouldn't argue with her as she has a sharp memory and throws latin botanical names around with aplomb. She is also has activist tendencies and likes to debate the ills of society over a decent cup of tea or G&T.

Loves: her family (attending weddings without a hat), hostas and sudoku

Pet hates: bureaucratic nonsense, bad grammar and the inappropriate use of the word 'unique'.

### The 'New Girl' a.k.a. Melanie

Yes, it is me to blame for this website and tempting you into parting with your hard-earned cash for yet more delicious hostas.

Following a classic mid-life crisis riddled with angst and philosophical considerations about my place in the cosmos I decided to join the family business full time. This is a vertical learning curve which isn't helped when my parents are compulsive hosta-holics. Just when I think it is safe to consider the website 'up to date', they manage to get hold of more new varieties. When at home I split my time between the nursery and office-based work for the business. If I have any time left over I like nothing better than a long walk.

Loves: my family, working for the business, swimming, holidays, etc, etc

Hates: routine and gnomes (sorry but it has to be said!)



Robin (with moss!)



Yvonne



Mel

### The 'back-up squad'

Yes, back in Mickfield there is a squad of armed and moderately mercenary individuals ready to perform a multitude of tasks to assist with the business.

Roy heads up the engineering department and can always be relied upon to cunningly fashion bespoke creations - usually working from a 'rough idea' from Robin. Roy is always at the ready to make replica outfits and firearms for his nephew's history projects, which has earned him the title of 'Andrew's cool uncle' among a group of not so easily impressed youngsters.

David heads up the buildings, parks and gardens department and is often out thrashing around on the mower and strimming the reservoir banks. As a former lorry driver, David can be called upon as a stunt double for driving duties during the show season.

We always on the lookout for interesting items and potential display materials - it is surprising what you can find, even on holiday:



David contemplating the ancient sport of caber tossing and Roy looking perhaps less 'cool' on a rock!!

### Malvern continued...

Despite the weather we had our best Malvern ever and collected a 'silver gilt' award for our display in the marquee. Isn't it typical that after such a glorious spring that Malvern would be the turning point for the weather? We mustn't complain though as the rain was something the whole country desperately needed, especially the farmers. Fortunately, it wasn't too bad but we had to dismantle the outside stand paddling in about 7-8 inches of water! On return to the nursery we had to dry everything out from the pergolas to our boots - do you think this display might win a Turner prize?



Following on the heels of the Malvern Spring Show was the Gardening Scotland Show in Edinburgh. The week we spent in Scotland began in much the same vein as the Malvern Show ended but the weather did brighten up for the Show days and again we had the pleasure of catching up with our customers from north of the border.

**Next month:** We will be examining Eric Smith's contribution to the hosta genus.

The advice and opinions contained within this monthly newsletter have been formed over more than 30 years of experience with the Hosta genus. We are constantly learning and refining that knowledge and would welcome any suggestions that readers of this newsletter would like to make so please [contact us](#).

Finally, we have the youngest member of the team:



Andrew

Andrew has been out on the road at shows since he was very young and loves it. Unfortunately school has become too important to miss over recent years so he was really pleased to be able to come to Gardening Scotland with us last week.

### Coming up...

We will shortly be off to Birmingham for **Gardener's World Live 2007** and in July we will be attending three shows:

**The RHS Hampton Court Flower Show - 3-8 July**

**RHS Flower Show at Tatton Park - 18-22 July**

**Llangollen Gardening Show - 28-29 July**

If you would like us to bring plant orders up to any of these shows then you will need to let us know before **Friday 29th June** ([How to order](#))