

**MANCHESTER BRANCH BCSS
NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 1997**

We welcome David Rushforth to deliver his acclaimed package "Where grow the potatoes?" this evening. Good to see you and well may your offerings of plant, slide and speech be accepted. No further information about David is needed today if you read last months newsletter. If you didn't receive one, one or two copies are still available.

FORTHCOMING SPEAKER

Looking forward to October we are agog for the visit for the first time of our Society Secretary, Eddy Harris, as he participates in a mini tour of zone 19 and Sheffield branches. We have embarked on this method of engaging speakers from a long distance with a view of keeping costs to a minimum. We are grateful to Eddy and to the others in recent times who are prepared to leave hearth and home for several days to impart their knowledge to us mortals who crave information.

Now for a resume about our speaker. At the present moment in time Eddy is performing the task of Society Secretary with quiet effectiveness. It is a demanding position, especially from the time point of view. I doubt there are many postal delivery days that do not bring him some missive of society business. But even more than that is the amount of time spent on meetings concerned with society business.. One wonders how much spare time he has to deal with his plants the answer to that is undoubtedly "Not enough".

Eddy's interest in succulent plants dates back to 1965. He discovered the Society, then the National C & S S, and joined in 1967, becoming a member of Havering branch. They quickly discovered him to be enthusiastic and capable because he was enlisted to be their Secretary the following year and he still holds that post 29 years later.

For a year prior to being elected into his present Society post he was Vice-Chairman of the BCSS. For four years previous to that he was Zone representative for zone 15. He also serves on the MSG committee.

He is Editor, jointly with his wife, of the Essex Succulent Review. This is a publication which started out 31 years ago as a Newsletter with no lesser person than Len Newton as its Editor. This publication appears 4 times a year and makes good reading.

Somewhere in between all this frenzied activity both Eddy and his wife grow their own collections. He is particularly interested in the Mesembs, especially Lithops, and his love of them will show in the talk he is giving us next month. She also enjoys the succulent (as opposed to cacti) plants with a special leaning towards Haworthias, Gasterias and Echeverias.

A final word of note is to say that Eddy is the power house behind the Havering Cactus Mart that is regularly advertised in the Journal.

**NOV. 8: Ralph Tomlinson.
"To Peru with Brian."**

BRANCH VISITS....some more information

As I stated at the close of the last letter I will relate some more about the collection of Colin Norton. He has two greenhouses built to his own design. The first one is built onto the rear of a shed and houses his smaller plants which are in good condition. But it is the larger house at the end of his compact garden that takes your breath away. It is almost square, 20 feet by 20 feet approx, and much higher than your average greenhouse. In a centre bed many cereoid plants are growing closely together. So great is their annual growth that they have to be pruned every so often before they push the roof off the house. A number of globular plants keep them company.

He has a keen interest in the *Echinocactus* group of plants and many of his specimens are LARGE and in excellent condition. One to enthuse about is an unblemished double headed *grusonii* which is featured in the June journal p 98. All round the edge of the house is a wide bench bursting to the seams with mature specimens, including many *Ferocacti*, *Mammillarias*, *Thelocacti*, *Lophophoras* and others. A splendid plant of *Copiapoa haseltoniana* is also resident there, again a picture of it occurs on p 100 of the same journal.

Then you raise your eyes upwards and at a height of about 8 feet there is another bench also crammed to overflowing. Out with the ladders and up you go. What *Ariocarpus* specimens, huge fluffy *Lophophoras*,

Echinocerei, more *Mammillarias* and what heat as the sun pours down. There are no opening windows but a large fan provides an ample air flow. The whole greenhouse is double glazed.

Many large plants adorn the garden also. Another example of a real enthusiast and a pleasure to have been invited to see the collection.

SEPTEMBER 20

STEVE HAMMER...all the way from America for your benefit. A veritable fount of knowledge, author of the recent book on *Conophytums*, intrepid traveller of the southern African continent, a witty and informative speaker.

GORDON ROWLEY...president of the BCSS, what he DOES NOT know about succulent plants could be written on the reverse of a postage stamp, an excellent speaker who will keep you enthralled, you are highly unlikely to hear him speak publicly again as he dislikes travelling great distances.

ROGER FERRYMAN...you already know his qualities, can you afford to turn down the chance to hear him again.

AT THE ICI SITE just outside Alderley. Easily accessible. Support your branch and Zone from 10am to about 6pm.

OUR FIRST SYMPOSIUM and with your help not our last.
No ticket? See Geoff Bailey!!!!