

## FROM THE EDITOR



he Spring issue of *Cornucopia* is an opportunity to showcase some of the best writing reflecting these precious early months of the year. For gardeners, spring is a time of wonder, not least that our plants have managed to survive yet another winter. I have a tendency to shout 'Gordon's Alive!' whenever I discover green shoots on a shrivelled no-hoper. I am very fond of Brian Blessed - if you need cheering up, his autobiography is an absolute hoot. Anyway, I digress.



It will be good to get out in the garden more regularly as the season progresses. Garden makeover programmes are no substitute, with their soaring budgets and incongruous planting combinations. 'Don't plant those hostas alongside the bearded irises', I hear myself grumping. 'Seven large shrubs in a 10 x 10ft border?', and 'there'll be nothing to see *there* in late summer'. The new 'virtual reality' makeover TV series has some fun visuals, however. Having trained in garden design in the days when plans were largely hand drawn, I find a 3-D animation which flamboyantly deconstructs the extant layout and replaces it with an all-singing, all-dancing garden is curiously satisfying to watch, however artificial.

This issue of *Cornucopia* features two of my favourite spring flowers. Erythroniums are one of the real treats of spring, their little lily-hats trembling in the breeze. In his article on page 3, John Sirkett advocates buying cheaper varieties, such as *E. 'Pagoda'*, by the hundred, which is a lovely idea and one I hadn't considered before now. Pasque flowers are also one of the jewels of the season, with downy-backed petals in rich Venetian colours. Their silken seed-heads become quite exquisite when embellished with raindrops. Sue Hough's article introduces some of the lesser-known garden-worthy species (p.34).

Just to let you know, subscriptions for *Cornucopia* are now available to non-HPS members as well as members, so if you know someone who would enjoy a good gardening read, go to [bit.ly/hps-cornucopia](https://bit.ly/hps-cornucopia) and click on 'website order form' in blue text. Non-member subscriptions cost £5.50 for two 40-page issues a year, including p&p.

*Marion Jay*