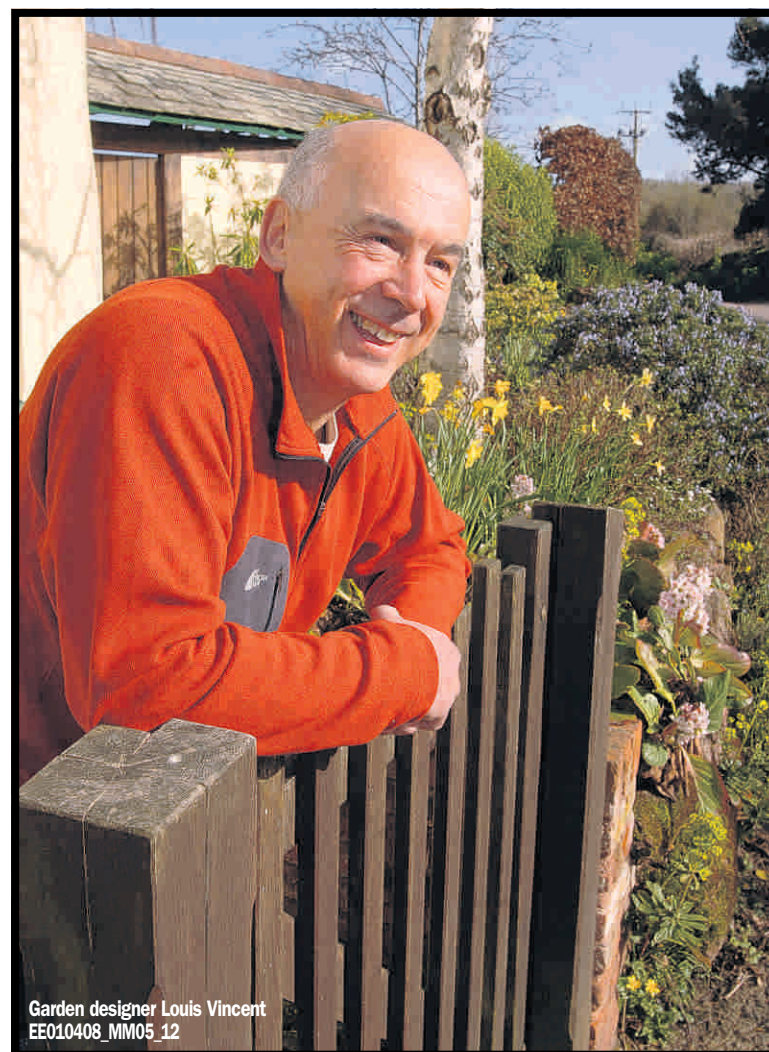


*This is Devon -
come and be part of it!*

Flowers & gardens



Garden designer Louis Vincent
EE010408, MM05_12

THOSE who love Gardener's Question Time on BBC radio 4 will be thrilled at the prospect of a gardening road show. Hosted by Martin Fish and Geoff Stebbing, along with local horticultural professionals Celia Steven and Sarah Chesters, the panel will help to solve all of your gardening dilemmas.

Martin is a fellow at the Institute of Horticulture and president of North of England Horticultural Society, while Geoff is editor of Garden Answers.

"We have never been down as far as Devon so it will be nice to come down to Exeter, we are very excited" said Martin. "We will start at 11am each day and run continuously with question-and-answer sessions, practical demonstrations and talks. We also have goody bags for people who ask questions!"

Special guest Sarah Chesters is principal education officer of RHS Rosemoor, in Torrington, and Celia Steven, campaigns for British apples and is endearingly known as the Apple Lady.

Sarah, who teaches over 3,000 children each year at Rosemoor, is a garden expert on Radio Devon and originally trained at Kew Gardens, in London.

"It's the first time I've worked with Martin and Geoff and the first time I've done anything like this on stage!" she said. "As well as answering questions I will be doing demos on Thursday and Saturday on things like how to take cuttings."

Think Green, Waste Not and Nature's Sculpture are just three of 11 exciting classes at this year's flower arranging exhibition, inspired by the theme Glorious Devon.

Organised by the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies of Devon and Cornwall, the section is headed up by senior steward Ann Pinfold.

"We usually have very imaginative displays and lots of creativity. People come from all over Devon and Cornwall to take part," she said. "Show Time is always a popular class. The competitors are given the same materials

and have two hours to create a display.

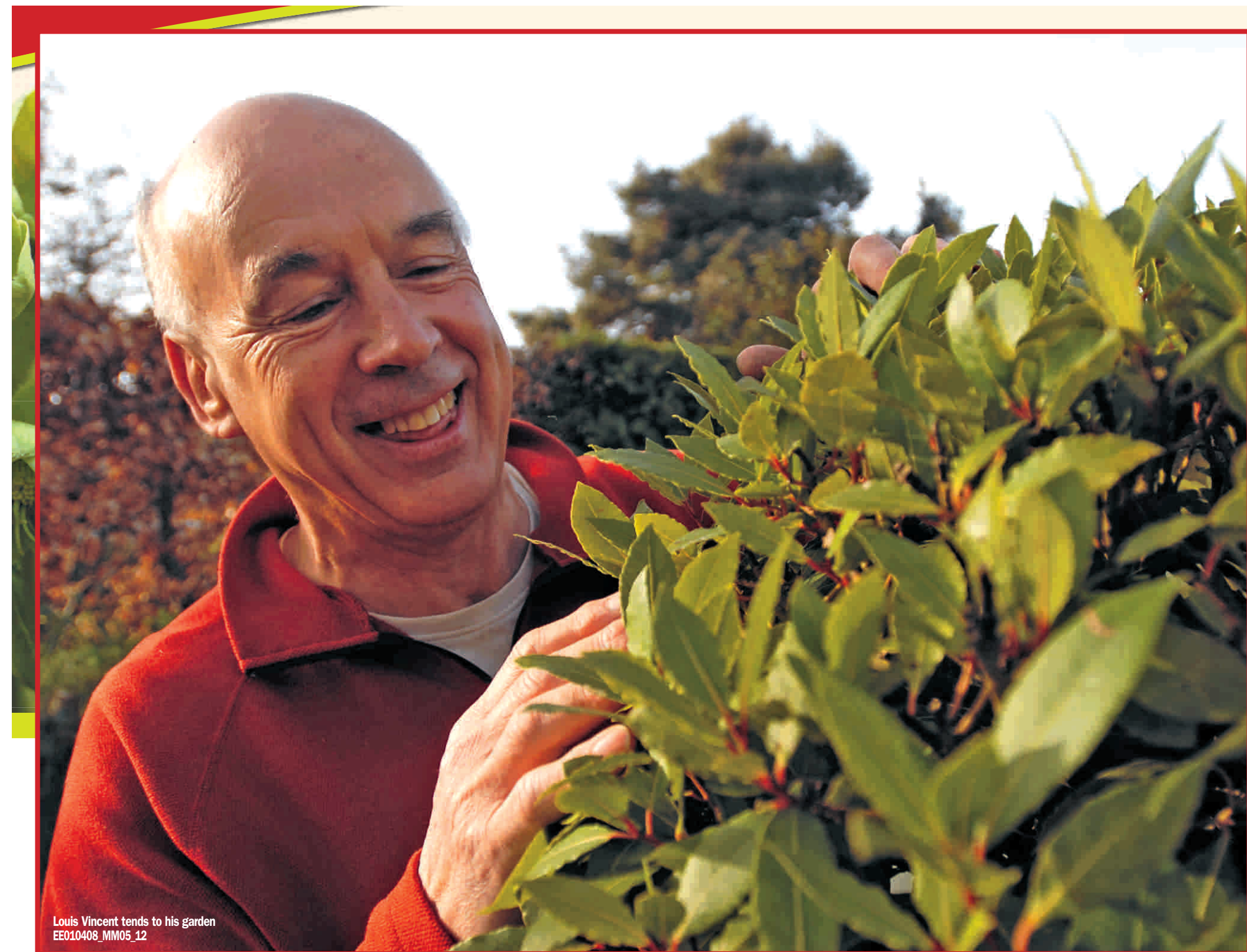
"We want to raise interest in flower arranging and get people involved so this year we are going to have demonstrations for people to watch and learn. Our stewards will also be on hand to tell people where their nearest flower arranging club is, how to get involved and answer their queries."

Garden designer Louis Vincent, who is based in Kenton, will once again be creating an eye-catching display garden. Louis has had a trade stand at the show for a number of years, and has recently taken on the challenge of building a showpiece in the centre of the marquee.

Pools of still black water often feature in his show designs and much work goes on behind the scenes to get the edges completely level.

"As well as giving a dramatic effect to the display, the pools of water are also very restful to the eye and have a calming effect in a busy marquee," said Louis.

"The show gardens we



Louis Vincent tends to his garden
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build at the Devon County Show are not intended to recreate an actual garden, instead, we take it as an opportunity to do something bold, dramatic and often unconventional while at the same time incorporating ideas that the public can relate to and possibly use in a modified form in their own garden."

Louis says the 6ft by 6ft feature this year will reflect his style of clean, simple lines and draw inspiration from Dutch gardens and canals.

Planting is always challenging at the Show, especially with the seasons getting earli-

er, so predicting what will look at its best is difficult for gardener designers like Louis, but he points out that competing with the growers is not what the garden design area is about.

"As designers we never try to compete with the professional growers but choose to use low maintenance shrubs and architectural plants and try and show how important design is to gardening as a whole," he said. "We try and show the public that by keeping the design clean and simple you can still create a stunning display."

Louis' work takes him

across the Westcountry, designing large expensive country gardens as well as small town plots. You apply the same design principles in all cases but you have to be versatile in your approach," he said. "All of my designs are hand-drawn rather than computer generated. This gives the client a bespoke sense of the artistry involved."

As well as exhibiting, Louis is a show steward, and always keeps a watchful eye on everything that is going on.

"The show organisers have been good to us over the years, so it is nice to be able to put something back," he said.



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