

NATIONAL  
SWEET PEA SOCIETY  
ANNUAL  
2022



# The Early National Show

Will be held at

**RHS WISLEY GARDENS  
WISLEY, SURREY GU23 6QB**

**29 & 30 JUNE 2022**

The Show will be open

**Wednesday 10.30am - 5.00pm**

**Thursday 10.00am - 4.00pm**

Presentation of awards at 2.00pm on Wednesday

**Show Managers:** Roger Parsons & Phil Johnson

**Entries to:**

Roger Parsons  
Primrose Cottage  
Clayton Lane, Bracklesham Bay  
Chichester, PO20 8JQ

**Tel:** 01243 673770

**Email:** [roger@sweetpeas.com](mailto:roger@sweetpeas.com)

**Staging:**

Tuesday 28 June 6.00pm to  
8.30am Wednesday 29 June

**Judging:**

8.45am Wednesday 29 June

**YOU ARE REMINDED THAT OASIS IS NOT PERMITTED AT THIS SHOW!**

**FREE PARKING • REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE WITHIN GARDENS**



N A T I O N A L  
SWEET PEA SOCIETY  
A N N U A L  
2 0 2 2

*Gardens are not made by singing  
'Oh, how beautiful,' and sitting in the shade.*

Rudyard Kipling

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**THANKS**

The editor would like to thank Ray Guzenda of GD Associates ([www.gdassociates.net](http://www.gdassociates.net)) and Janet Bulstrode for all their help in producing this Annual. Without them it would not have been possible.

The opinions expressed by contributors to this publication are their own and may not necessarily coincide with the opinions of the Society or the Editor.

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**'Just Janet'.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

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Trustees, and Executive Committee, in whom all property and funds of the Society are vested and who make decisions regarding the recipients of special awards, prizes, medals or trophies which may be granted from time to time by the Society are:

President	Chairman of Committee	Deputy Chairman of Committee
Honorary Treasurer	Honorary Secretary	

Three representatives from the general committee to be elected on 27 April 2022

The 2021-22 elected representatives were Julia Beardmore, Janet Bulstrode, and Roger Parsons.

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# AGM

## AGM 2021

*By Caroline Ball*

*The following report of last year's AGM was omitted from the 2021 Annual in error.*

In the light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic your Committee took the decision that the 2021 AGM could not go ahead as planned at the Chase Hotel in Nuneaton. Instead, following the lead set by the Royal Horticultural Society and in accordance with Charity Commission rules, the one hundred and sixteenth AGM was held on 6 March 2021 virtually, with the attendees being the Trustees and General Committee of the Society.

The AGM agenda was therefore reduced to strictly necessary business as follows:

- Any representations and questions received on the Chairman's report and Secretary's report, published in this Spring Bulletin;
- To receive the Society's accounts for the period ended 31 October 2020, published on the NSPS website in advance of the AGM, and to deal with any matters arising including any questions or representations received.
- Confirmation of office bearers and members of the General Committee;
- Appointment of an Independent Examiner;
- Any other business of which members have given notice

The meeting commenced shortly after 4pm on Zoom and the Chairman welcomed the participants. No representations or questions had been received on the previously published reports of the Chairman and the Secretary.

The Treasurer introduced the accounts, which had been published alongside her report on the Society's website. There were no matters arising nor questions or representations received from members. The accounts were voted on and duly adopted.

The following officers were elected:

**President:** John Carrier

**Chairman:** Phil Johnson

**Deputy Chairman:** Graeme Hollingdale

**Secretary:** Carole Tate

**Treasurer:** Caroline Ball

There were three vacancies on the committee for which three nominations had been received;

Andrew Beane, Nicky Edwards and Darren Everest. The three were elected en masse. BSN Associates Ltd of Oldbury, West Midlands were re-elected as the Independent Examiner of the Society's accounts.

No any other business had been received from members not present.

The Chairman and his wife had conducted the 100 Club draw and the winners were

**1st £100** – 143 Mrs A Salter from Ashby-de-la-Zouche

**2nd £25** – 139 Weena Westmead from Hartland, Devon

**3rd £10** – 22 Patricia Burrell from Shepperton

It was noted that awards normally presented at the AGM would be presented at appropriate future events.

Plans to hold the 2021 shows at Millets, Abingdon and Harlow Carr Gardens, Harrogate are in place and the committee remains hopeful that these events will be able to go ahead using the existing 2020 schedule for classes. Members are reminded to consult the Society website for updates nearer to the show dates.



***Lathyrus Laevigatus.***  
Photo by Roger Parsons.

# AGM 2022

*By Caroline Ball*



**AGM 2022 style via zoom left  
Roger Parsons right Phil Johnson.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

The 117th AGM of the NSPS commenced at 10:30 am on Saturday 5 March. It was again held via zoom. Approximately 25 members joined including international member, Sanna Nasi from Finland. The chairman welcomed all attendees, particularly those attending for the first time.

The AGM took its normal format; firstly apologies were received and then chairman Phil Johnson read out a list of members who had sadly died since last

year's AGM. This list included to past Chairmen of the Society, John Land and John Carrier, who of course was our President. A minute's silence was held to remember them all.

The Secretary read out the minutes of the previous two AGMs which were adopted. The Chairman and Secretary's reports had been printed in the Spring Bulletin so were not repeated. The Treasurer presented her report together with a walk-through of the accounts. The AGM voted to adopt the accounts which were duly signed by the Chairman and Treasurer. The full Treasurer's report is produced elsewhere in this Annual so will not be repeated here, except to say that whilst the Society's balance sheet is robust the committee remains concerned about escalating expenses.

An analysis of the cost of servicing membership, largely the cost of publications and the postage thereof, had been discussed in committee. As a result of the shortfall across all categories of membership, it was with some reluctance that the committee brought to the meeting a proposal for a modest increase in membership subscriptions. Questions were taken from the membership on this proposal. Brian Thompson questioned why reserves were not being used to subsidise membership? The Treasurer provided a comprehensive response, including the longevity of the Society to date and the fact that if costs are not being covered by income the Society would not last for very many years. Barrie Eckford commented that he supported the increase and noted the exceptional quality of the publications which are value for money. Julia Beardmore reported that she received very many positive comments on the high standard of the Society's publications which were noted as envied by other societies. Jim McDonald noted that significant sponsorship of show prizes had been secured historically and

suggested that the committee looked at this again. It was noted that the Trials were being sponsored in 2022 by Westlands. The proposed increases in membership rates were adopted and will take effect for the 2023 membership year.

	Member	Affiliated Society	Overseas Europe	Overseas R.O.W.
<b>Current Rate</b>	£15	£22.50 (£15 no medal)	£23	£27
<b>Proposed Rate</b>	£18	£24 (£18 no medal)	£25	£31

At this point the 100 Club was drawn by Roger Parsons.

**First prize:** £100 Peter Matthewman from Blackburn

**Second prize:** £25 Roger Parsons from Bracklesham Bay

**Third prize:** £10 Roger Parsons from Bracklesham Bay



**New President of the NSPS  
with chairman Phil Johnson.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

The next item on the agenda was the election of officers and committee. With the sad loss of President John Carrier, this role was vacant. One nomination had been received and Roger Parsons was elected unanimously. Roger was presented with his chain of office by Phil Johnson, which he wore with pride for the rest of the meeting. Roger said that he was honoured and humbled to be elected President. There have only been six Presidents since 1945 so it is a very rare honour. Although the role is largely ceremonial, Roger noted that it was for him to ensure that the views of all

members are taken into account in our decision making. Philip Johnson, was standing down as Chairman and was presented with a thank you gift for his time in the role. One nomination had been received and Professor Alison Shreeve was unanimously elected. The roles of Deputy Chairman, General Secretary and Treasurer saw the incumbent re-elected in Graeme Hollingdale, Carole Tate and Caroline Ball respectively.

Karen Bell and Martin Holmes had stepped down from the committee. This meant there were three vacancies in total and three members of the committee were retiring under the three year rule. These three members, Julia Beardmore, Janet Bulstrode and Gill Hazell, were all willing to re-stand. The following nominations had been received for the three vacancies, Roz Warley, Jenny Morgan and Lewis Morgan. It was agreed that these six members would be elected en bloc.

The Treasurer reported that the existing Independent Examiners, BSN, was willing to continue but there had been a substantial increase in their fees. Therefore the Treasurer had explored other options and proposed the election of Lucy DeQuincy Adams of Quincy Financial. She further suggested that the committee were given the power to appoint a different suitably qualified Independent Examiner should the level of fees be unacceptable. Both proposals were passed.

Jim McDonald provided a report on the Trials. After two years of no Trials as a result of the pandemic, the Trials at both Askham Bryan and Sparsholt were going ahead in 2022 are progressing well. In addition, the RHS will hold their own Trial of Sweet Peas at Wisley this year with follow up next year. This is a one off. The full Trial's report is reproduced in this Annual.

Phil Johnson then veered off the agenda to provide a citation for a very special award of the Henry Eckford medal, periodically awarded for an exceptional contribution to the Sweet Pea and the Society. This went to a very surprised Caroline Ball, the full citation being reproduced elsewhere in this Annual. A stunned Caroline thanked the Society for the award.

The formal business of the meeting closed at 11.52. Thereafter there was discussion about the ban on the use of Oasis at NSPS shows in 2022. Phil Johnson opened the debate by reminding people of the environmental implications of the use of Oasis not least the microparticles it leaves behind. Alison Shreeve summarised her experiments with alternatives for staging vases. She had found damp sand to work the best and allowed for topping up. The use of apple or potato were more difficult she found and she needed a skewer to make holes in these materials. She had not tried courgettes which others had suggested as possible. Alison noted that clearing up sand could be very messy at the end of the shows. Caroline Ball outlined possible options for use in decorative arrangements such as chicken wire, pin holders, water retaining gel and a framework of foliage or tape.

Mary McDonald noted that the use of pin holders and chicken wire were effective, that we needed to re-educate ourselves on different methods of staging and will need to be adaptable moving forward. Roz Warley agreed with Mary's comments and suggested on top of the damp sand apple could be used for vases but it had been suggested to her that lysine generated by the apple could adversely affect the flowers. She also introduced Neil Hatch, who presented an idea he had been experimenting with whereby



a 3-D printed plastic insert was used. Behind him there were examples of daffodils and stems staged in fans in bikini vases. Roger Parsons suggested that the ideas are circulated as widely as possible including on the Society's Facebook page and website.

Brian Thompson acknowledged Julia Beardmore's research on reeds and noted that when he started showing Sweet Peas this was the only staging material used for vases. He noted that there were a lot of reeds growing in his area and he reminded people of the need to seek permission before harvesting any, but reiterated Julia's comment that most farmers would be only too pleased for people to help contain something many see as weeds.

Darren Everest noted that wet sand looked promising. He also noted that many of the alternatives being suggested, including chicken wire, would leave a residue to be cleared up after the show. Alison Shreeve said this was an important consideration, that as much as possible should be recycled and that many volunteers would be welcome to help in the clear up process post show.

Jenny Morgan noted that people would need to be careful about the type of sand used. Many have additives added including weed killers.

Jenny and Lewis Morgan had posed two questions ahead of the debate. The first concerned whether it was possible to use non-biodegradable staging materials like polystyrene. Roger Parsons answered saying that polystyrene would have the same biodegrading issue as Oasis and said that we should be looking to ensure we are all using sustainable staging materials. Roger also noted that he had large quantities of chicken wire purchased to help protect his plants against pigeons some years ago and would be happy to provide to members.

The second question was about the points awarded to presentation. Caroline Ball read out what is already included in the Judges' rules. This states that no points are allocated to staging presentation but that presentation should be assessed prior to judging and would be used as a deciding factor all other things being equal. Therefore, it was considered unlikely that a lack of Oasis would affect the outcome of judged classes at our shows.

Graeme Hollingdale noted that if any queries arose during judging at one of our shows the judge should refer the matter to the show manager for a decision. This is true of any matter requiring clarification at our shows.

Brian Thompson made reference to the 2022 Schedule and pointed out that classes had been included which specify no staging material at all is to be used. The Schedule committee intended this to be a trial to see how this might look. Brian also questioned the materials used to cover the show benches and suggested it was not recyclable, although it was reused in some instances. Would the RHS instead cover the benches for us? This matter will be taken forward by the show managers.

Julia Beardmore had attended a recent RHS Plant Society workshop where it was indicated that plastic bags may also be banned. Someone in attendance at the workshop pointed out that Oasis itself is carcinogenic. This was presented as fact although the source of this information is unknown. (note some subsequent research into this suggests that the dust particles contain phenol and formaldehyde which can harm the respiratory system. Both chemicals are understood to be present in low concentrations in this product and not considered to be particularly toxic to humans 'under normal conditions of use'. Phenol and formaldehyde are also said to be carcinogens but it is believed that no research has been undertaken into any adverse effects of this product. So all in all, the commentary on the dangers of Oasis to humans is a little contradictory). Julia noted that Agrawool was used to stage the gold award-winning display at RHS Tatton. This was an extremely difficult material to work with and was not recommended for use with Sweet Peas. The North West regional show display had been constructed largely without Oasis, instead using chicken wire and water retaining gel and a gold medal had been achieved for this.

Jim McDonald asked if Oasis were producing an alternative themselves. Caroline Ball had been in touch with them and they reported that they do have an alternative in production which has now been released in the USA but at the time of writing they did not have a release date for this product in the UK.

## Chairman's Report

*By Phil Johnson*

2021 was in many ways a year like any other for lovers of Sweet Peas – the highs and lows, winning a prize at a show; moaning about the weather. However, has living with Covid become the norm? It was a joy to be able to attend both the Early and Late National shows; to enter and see all the wonderful exhibits; to meet up with friends old and new. But, were there fewer exhibitors than normal? Was this just the effect of the weather and exhibitors deciding not to enter or was there another cause? I had a niggling feeling that there was a reluctance on the part of many to leave home, get out and meet people due to Covid. This may well be an issue that we should consider and its impact on our face-to-face meetings.

Last year's AGM was a short affair, restricted to committee members, just to keep the Society functioning. We had hoped and planned to hold the 2022 AGM at The Chase, Nuneaton, but concerns recently expressed, suggested that we should hold another Zoom AGM. However, this time around we hope to open it to many more members. Details of the event and how to join are published elsewhere.

I must mention the passing of our President, Reverend F. J. Carrier, known to all as John, on 29 October. There will be a full obituary in this year's Annual. Your Society was represented at a service of thanksgiving by Caroline Ball and Roger Parsons, who jointly spoke of John's love of Sweet Peas. Brian Thompson and I also attended and we were pleased to be able to send a few Sweet Pea blooms to Marjorie for John's funeral. I cannot overstate how much we will miss John, his ready smile and sage guidance over so many years.

As you know, the National Sweet Pea Society usually makes its award presentations at the AGM, but this was impossible in 2021. Again, I am sure there will be further details in the Annual, but John Carrier was delighted to award a John Bishop Memorial Medal to Graeme Hollingdale at the Early National and later in the day, that rare occurrence, the award of a Henry Eckford Memorial Medal to Mary and Jim McDonald. At the Late National, Tom Atherton read a citation for the Jack Davis award to Julia Beardmore and I presented a further John Bishop Medal to Jane Atherton. All of these acknowledgements by our Society are so richly deserved and warm congratulations to all.

I am pleased to highlight that NSPS Trials will again be grown at Askham Bryan and Sparsholt colleges in 2022. Darren Everest will be taking a lead role with assistance from Jim McDonald. The two-year Trial at RHS Wisley has its first year of assessment and we plan to link this to our Early National show. Well worth a visit and also to see the new Hilltop building.

A few keen exhibitors have expressed serious concerns about the need to use alternative staging materials at our shows at RHS gardens in 2022. An article is published elsewhere and a discussion will be held at the Zoom AGM.

In the commercial world of Sweet Peas, a poor year for seed production, climate change, continued reduction in growers willing to produce a crop and much higher demand following lockdowns have all led to a shortage of seeds. So, make sure you order early for next season!

At this point, I must tell you that I have reluctantly made the decision to stand down as Chairman. I had hoped to continue in the role for several more years, but pressures at work mean that something has to give. I hope to continue in a prominent role with the Society if you will have me, but I cannot devote the time necessary to be an effective chairman. My tenure of just two years has been very eventful, the effects of the Covid pandemic being the most challenging aspect. I am very pleased to say that a volunteer has come forward to take on the position and they will have my full support.

Finally, I would like again to record my thanks to all members, who continue to support the National Sweet Pea Society in so many ways and especially your committee for their hard work and commitment during another trying year. I look forward to an even better year for the Sweet Pea in 2022.

# General Secretary's Report

*By Carol Tate*

I am pleased that 2021 saw both National shows and various regional ones, including the North West taking place, along with many other local events, in spite of the various Covid regulations. It has been a challenge deciding, first of all, whether we run the show, then the indecision around will we be okay or will we be locked down again.

I decided I would plant my seeds as if everything would happen and hope for good weather and a bit of luck on my timings to ensure I had blooms for each show. I was glad I did and was rewarded with a few places, a couple of perpetual trophies and some beautiful crystal glassware.

There is always the nervous anticipation of will we have enough entries to make a good display. A big thank you to all who persevered and exhibited or assisted at the shows. Without you there is no show, so I thank you all.

I also had the opportunity of meeting friends new and old at the shows, and seeing the exhibits presented by other competitors. It is useful to see which cultivars are on display, collecting and passing on hints and tips and taking away ideas for home and garden decoration.

The shows were well attended and lots of interest shown in the Sweet Pea flower, including the species and decorative exhibits. We signed up a few new members and spread the word about our beautiful flower. The sight and glorious perfume of the Sweet Pea brings back many happy memories of times, places and people from our past.

2022 will be another challenging year and we are considering a Zoom AGM so that more members can attend safely. The National Shows are scheduled to go ahead and I have started to prepare my beds ready for planting out. Being from up t' North (Lancashire) I find it better to sow in January with underneath heat as the ground will not be warm enough 'til April.

It is not just the physical exercise I enjoy when gardening, but the mental health benefits of preparing and nurturing the seedlings, the daily pottering to check on nature's progress and the excitement of soaking up the perfume whilst picking the blooms ready to display or pop in a jam-jar.

If you want more information about Sweet Peas, please join our Facebook page "For the love of Sweet Peas incl The National Sweet Pea Society", check our website [www.sweetpeas.org.uk](http://www.sweetpeas.org.uk) or contact your District Representative to see what is going on in your area. Details can be found in the Annual.

Wishing you all a successful season ahead. May you find much happiness growing the glorious, Sweet Pea.

# Treasurer's Report

*By Caroline Ball*

Last year I started off saying 2020 was a year we will always remember, but most would choose to forget. 2021 was unfortunately similar, heavily affected by the Covid pandemic, but a little less so for the Society's finances and activities fortunately.

Starting with some cautious good news, the 2021 overall results of the Society show a profit of £9,449 compared with a small loss of £497 in 2020. The profit for the year is thanks to an unrealised gain on the value of investments of £12,613, without it the Society incurred a loss on its normal activities of £3,164, whereas there was a small profit of £70 in 2020. We aim to break even on normal activities, so this is a disappointing result on which your committee have agreed to take steps. We have already seen significant cost inflation on publications to date in 2022 and, with the world economies in their current state, there is likely to be more issues with cost control on all items of spend in the rest of the year. Both National shows in 2022 will be held at RHS venues, taking advantage of facilities made available to us free of charge. We are delighted to announce that Westlands have agreed to sponsor the cost of the 2022 Trials, you will recall none were held in 2020 or 2021. Your committee have also taken the reluctant step to propose modest increases in subscription rates for 2023 which will be proposed later in this AGM.

Income from subscriptions, donations and legacies was £15,448 up from 2020 (£7,667), which was a 10 month accounting period, but still short of the pre-pandemic period (2019 £23,580) reflecting in particular a drop in membership levels and reduced levels of income from prize awards from displays, due to the reduced number of shows the Society was able to attend in 2021. Income from charitable activities and investment income were broadly in line with the prior year totalling £4,164 (2020: £4,555)

Expenditure was £22,776 (2020: £12,692 and 2019: £29,982). The main items of expenditure contributing to a higher cost base than in 2020 were exhibition expenses and prizes which totalled £7,031 (2020: £300, reflecting no shows held in 2020, costs related to storage of show equipment), publications £8,049 (2020 £7,079) the increased cost reflecting the cost of the 2020 Autumn Bulletin falling into the current period and general price rises, which are of ongoing concern in all areas of NSPS expenditure; support costs £4,846 (2020: £3,622) and the cost of medals and awards £970 (2020: £166)

The Society's balance sheet remains robust with a net worth of £131,471 (2020: £122,022). The breakdown of the net worth is detailed fully in the balance sheet but it is worth noting that the cushion this provides would not last many years should there be sustained material changes in income and/or expenditure levels. There is £101,906

(2020: £89,293) invested with the Charities Investment Fund in a mixture of short term and long term investments to balance risk whilst maximising returns, with returns being positive during 2021 as noted above. It is worth noting again that a long-term view should always be taken on investments, short term they can often be volatile, particularly at the moment.

£16,713 (2020: £19,218) of various stock items are held; this includes stamps purchased before the cost of second class/large seconds stamps went up of £5,605 (2020 £7,054), this balance of pre-purchased stamps will save the Society just over £650 going forward at current prices. Medals and award cards were held amounting to £8,806 (2020: £9,777) at cost with the balance being show equipment, prizes and stationery, membership related stationery, publications and merchandise. £11,920 (2020: £13,113) was held in the HSBC bank accounts at year end. We are currently in the process of switching bank accounts from HSBC who, from 1 November 2021, have started levying bank charges on the bank accounts of charities. If you pay subscriptions by standing order or directly into our bank account please note the new details:

Account name: The National Sweet Pea Society

Sort code: 23-05-80

Account number: 43256199

Bank: MetroBank

The small debtor and creditor balances reflect gift aid claims due to be repaid by HMRC, prize money due from the RHS, received post year end, and the Independent Examiner's fees.

In conclusion, despite matters outside the control of the Society, the financial result is reasonable, although we need to continue to be proactive in both raising revenue and controlling costs.

*“A flower does not use words to  
announce its arrival to the world;  
it just blooms.”*

Matshona Dhliwayo

## Trustees Annual Report

### Year ended 31 October 2021

The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 October 2021.

#### **Structure, governance and management**

The Society was registered as a charity on 11 March 1964 under registration number 226802. The Society is governed by rules revised and adopted on 12 March 2016.

The general management of the Society is conducted by a general committee of up to sixteen persons from the Society's members to be elected for a period of three years at the Society's annual general meeting. The general committee has power to:

- Appoint an Executive Committee from the Society's members for the preparation and conduct of any business.
- Fill vacancies of officers and members of the committee occurring during the year and co-opt as deemed necessary.
- Appoint Society's representatives to the Sweet Pea Trials Committee.
- Appoint show managers, editors, advertising secretary, sub-committees, honorary members and president emeritus.

The Executive Committee are the Trustees of the Society. The Trustees comprise the officers of the Society and not fewer than three members of the Society appointed by the general committee. The trustees, in whom all property and funds of the Society shall be vested in trust for the Society, and as to real property upon trust for sale with power to postpone sale, The trustees shall not sell any land and the funds shall not be vested or realised without the authority of the general committee. The Trustees make decisions regarding the recipients of special awards which may be granted from time to time by the Society.

#### **Objectives and activities**

The Society consists of, Members and Affiliated Societies paying an annual or life subscription to the Society. The object of the Society is to disseminate knowledge of Sweet Peas and other *Lathyrus* species for the public benefit, to encourage, improve and extend the cultivation of these species by means of scientific trials and the holding of exhibitions and displays, by publications and such other lawful activities as the Trustees shall deem necessary.

## Public benefit

The Trustees consider they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

## Achievements and performance

2021 has been another challenging year for charities, including the National Sweet Pea Society, with the ongoing restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID pandemic, with the knock-on effect to the economy and incomes of many donors.

The first Society event of 2021 to succumb to the ongoing restrictions was the AGM on 6 March 2021 which was instead held online with committee members in attendance dealing with the legally required business only.

There was much debate within the Society about whether holding the planned National shows would be feasible, however we were delighted to be able to hold the two planned shows; the early at Millets Farm near Abingdon, and the late at RHS Harlow Carr, Harrogate. The prevailing government restrictions together with the natural caution of members and the public meant that both exhibitor numbers and attendees were down on normal years despite the extensive and necessary precautions taken. The shows were however greatly enjoyed by both members involved and visiting and the general public and were both considered to be a success.

The logistics and forward planning required to hold the Sweet Pea Trials at Sparsholt and Askham Bryan Horticultural Colleges meant that the decision had to be taken to cancel both very early on in the year. However, the same easing of restrictions in the summer that allowed the National shows to happen meant that the Society was able to stage a limited number of displays, most notable of which was the gold medal winning display at the RHS Tatton show in July which was also awarded best exhibit in the plant hub.

The NSPS went back to producing its normal five publications during 2021, two Bulletins and the Annual which were all well received and supported alongside the classification list of varieties and the National Shows Schedule. The booklet 'Enjoy Sweet Peas' was provided to all new members and is also available to purchase by a wider public. Work is underway to revise this publication in readiness for its next print run.

Social media is of increasing importance for the Society and is a proactive way of engaging with both members and non-members and sharing information about Sweet Peas and other *Lathyrus* species. The Society Facebook pages ('For the Love of Sweet Peas') now interacts with over 1700 group members. A number of enquiries came in to the Society via Twitter which continues to be regularly updated along with the Society website. The Society is actively working on an update of its website and hopes this will allow the provision of an "online" category of membership, providing electronic publications, in order to make the Society more accessible to a wider number of people.

## **Financial review**

Incoming resources of £19,612 arose during the financial year whilst outgoings were £22,776. The revaluation of our investments has given the Society an unrealised gain of £12,613. The overall result for the year is a net gain of £9,449. The Society's unrestricted funds as at 31 October 2021 amounted to £131,471 which includes Designated Funds of £30,583. The income received from the Designated Funds is used towards the cost of annual trophies given in memory of past members and also contributes to the expense of publications to Life Members.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Society's reserves consist of accumulated income and designated funds. The designated funds are identified with past members from donations received and held by the Society so as to provide income towards the cost of annual trophies given in memory of the past members. The funds are invested in COIF Charities Deposit Fund and COIF Charities Investment Fund income units. Reserves held as accumulated income are at a level determined by the Trustees and Management Committee to provide assurance that the Society will be financially viable for the future and able to build on the Society's one hundred and eighteen years of history. The Trustees and Committee are mindful of the difficulty of securing volunteers to support its activities and suitable show venues at affordable prices and the ever increasing costs of arranging and staging shows, particularly in relation to transport and postage. The financial review reports the level of reserves held at the financial year end.

## **Risk Management**

The Trustees have reviewed the risks to which the Society is exposed and consider there are no major risks facing the Society providing the Society has sufficient financial resources and volunteers to carry on its charitable activities.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 5 March 2022 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Mr P Johnson, Trustee.

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Members of the National Sweet Pea Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The National Sweet Pea Society ('the charity') for the year ended 31 October 2021.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Philippa Hawkes BA CA, Independent Examiner,  
3B Swallowfield Courtyard, Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 2JG  
5 March 2022

## Income and Expenditure Account

### Year ended 31 October 2021

	Notes	Year to 31 Oct 21		Period from 1 Jan 20 to 31 Oct 20
		Unrestricted Funds		Total
		General	2021	2020
		£	£	£
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>				
Subscriptions, donations, legacies and sponsorship	4	15,448	15,448	7,667
Charitable activities	5	2,053	2,053	2,774
Investment income	6	2,111	2,111	2,321
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>19,612</b>	<b>19,612</b>	12,762
<b>EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS:</b>				
Charitable activities	7,8	22,776	22,776	12,692
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>22,776</b>	<b>22,776</b>	12,692
<b>NET GAINS/(LOSSES) ON INVESTMENTS</b>	10	12,613	12,613	(567)
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b> (net movement in funds)		<b>9,449</b>	<b>9,449</b>	(497)
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
Total funds brought forward		122,022	122,022	122,519
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>131,471</b>	<b>131,471</b>	122,022

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Close up of *Lathyrus vernus* 'Albroseus' .

Photo by Andrew Fletcher.



## Balance Sheet

### 31 October 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
<b>Investments</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>101,906</b>	89,293
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Stock	<b>15</b>	<b>16,713</b>	19,218
Debtors	<b>16</b>	<b>2,012</b>	1,298
Cash at bank and in hand:		<b>11,920</b>	13,113
		<b>30,645</b>	33,629
<b>CREDITORS</b>			
Amounts due within one year	<b>17</b>	<b>1,080</b>	900
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>29,565</b>	32,729
Total assets less current liabilities		<b>131,471</b>	122,022
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>131,471</b>	122,022
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>			
Unrestricted funds		<b>131,471</b>	122,022
<b>TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>131,471</b>	122,022

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 5 March 2022, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Mr P Johnson, Trustee  
Ms C Ball, Trustee

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## Year ended 31 October 2021

### 1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a registered charity in England and Wales and is unincorporated. The address of the principal office is Challow Mead, Silver Lane, West Challow, Oxfordshire, OX12 9TN.

### 2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Charities Act 2011.

### 3. Accounting policies

#### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

The entity constitutes as a public benefit entity as defined in FRS102.

#### Going concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

#### Disclosure exemptions

The entity satisfied the criteria of being a small charity as defined in Charities Act 2011 and the Charities SORP (FRS102) and has taken advantage of the disclosure exemptions available to it.

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## **Accounting period**

In the comparative period, the financial year was shortened to end on 31 October 2020. Therefore, all comparative figures are for a 10 month period.

## **Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

No significant estimates or judgements have been made by management when preparing the financial statements. The policies followed are shown below.

## **Income tax**

The Society is exempt from taxation on its income and gains on investments.

## **Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for a particular future project or commitment.

## **Incoming resources**

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Income from subscriptions and donations is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably. Investment income is recognised when receivable and is shown gross to include income tax recovered and recoverable. Investment income comprises the returns on investments for the year and interest on cash balances.

## **Resources expended**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

### **Tangible assets**

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

### **Depreciation**

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Show Stands & Equipment – 33% straight line

### **Investments**

Investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in profit or loss.

### **Impairment of fixed assets**

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

### **Stocks**

Stocks are measured at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell. Cost includes all costs of purchase, costs of conversion and other costs incurred in bringing the stock to its present location and condition.

#### 4. Subscriptions, donations and legacies

<b>FUNDS</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
<b>DONATIONS</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Donations	4,179	<b>4,179</b>	664	<b>664</b>
<b>SUBSCRIPTIONS</b>				
Members and Vice-presidents	8,634	<b>8,634</b>	4,833	<b>4,833</b>
Affiliated societies	1,148	<b>1,148</b>	945	<b>945</b>
Gift aid	1,487	<b>1,487</b>	1,225	<b>1,225</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,448</b>	<b>15,448</b>	<b>7,667</b>	<b>7,667</b>

The Trustees contributed amounts totalling £964 to the Charity in the year (2020: £593).

#### 5. Charitable activities

<b>FUNDS</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Sale of goods	303	<b>303</b>	599	<b>599</b>
Exhibitions - entry fees	124	<b>124</b>	-	-
Publications	24	<b>24</b>	49	<b>49</b>
Advertising in publications	662	<b>662</b>	778	<b>778</b>
AGM - auction (net)	-	-	33	<b>33</b>
AGM - raffle (net)	-	-	164	<b>164</b>
AGM - lunches	-	-	216	<b>216</b>
100 club lottery (net)	940	<b>940</b>	935	<b>935</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,053</b>	<b>2,053</b>	<b>2,774</b>	<b>2,774</b>

#### 6. Investment income

<b>FUNDS</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest on bank deposits	5	<b>5</b>	275	<b>275</b>
Bank Compensation	90	<b>90</b>	550	<b>550</b>
Charities Investment Fund dividends (COIF)	2,016	<b>2,016</b>	1,496	<b>1,496</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,111</b>	<b>2,111</b>	<b>2,321</b>	<b>2,321</b>

## 7. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

The breakdown of expenditure on charitable activities is shown below:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Cost of merchandise	165	(33)
Trials	–	497
Award cards	361	36
Society medals	609	130
Printing Annual & other Publications	8,049	7,079
Exhibitions - prizes	2,175	–
Exhibitions - expenses	4,856	5,058
Sundry costs	635	161
Support costs	4,846	3,622
Governance costs	1,080	900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,776</b>	<b>12,692</b>

Governance costs relate solely to the Independent Examiners Remuneration of £1,080 (2020: £900)

## 8. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

ACTIVITIES	Undertaken	Support	Total funds	Total funds
	directly	costs	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities	16,850	4,846	21,696	11,792
Governance costs	–	1,080	1,080	900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,850</b>	<b>5,926</b>	<b>22,776</b>	<b>12,692</b>

## 9. Analysis of support costs

The breakdown of support costs is shown in the table below:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other printing & stationery	1,151	228
Postage & telephone	3,215	2,312
Hire of hall & expense of meetings	240	833
Sundry expenses	240	294
Independent examination fees	1,080	800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,926</b>	<b>4,422</b>

## 10. Net gains/losses on investments

	Unrestricted	Total 2021	Unrestricted	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£
Gains/(losses) on other investment assets - COIF Charity Investment Fund	12,613	12,613	(567)	(567)

## 11. Independent examination fees

	2021	2020
<b>Fees payable to the independent examiner for:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Independent examination of the financial statements	<b>1,080</b>	900

## 12. Trustee remuneration and expenses

Trustees and committee members were not remunerated for their work within the Society during the year(2020:nil)

The average number of employees during the year was Nil (2020: Nil).

No Trustee or any other person connected to the Society had any personal interest in contact or transaction entered into by the Society during the year.

4 Trustees were reimbursed a total of £1,021 for travel and IT costs incurred on Society business (2020: £321 to Trustees).

## 13. Tangible fixed assets

The tangible assets of the Society are fully depreciated but remain in use.



## 14. Investments

	Cash or cash equivalents £	Other investments £	Total £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>			
At 1 November 2020	24,683	64,610	89,293
Additions	–	–	–
Fair value movements	–	12,613	12,613
<b>At 31 October 2021</b>	<b>24,683</b>	<b>77,223</b>	<b>101,906</b>
<b>Impairment</b>			
<b>At 1 November 2020 &amp; 31 October 2021</b>		–	–
<b>Carrying amount</b>			
<b>At 31 October 2021</b>	<b>24,683</b>	<b>77,223</b>	<b>101,906</b>
At 31 October 2020	24,683	64,610	89,293

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

### Listed investments

All investments shown above are held at valuation and relate to the designated funds invested in Charities Investment Funds (COIF).

## 15. Stocks

	2021 £	2020 £
Finished goods and goods for resale	16,713	19,218

## 16. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Prepayments and accrued income	525	73
Other debtors	1,487	1,225
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,012</b>	<b>1,297</b>

**17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2021 £	2020 £
Accruals and deferred income	1,080	900

**18. Analysis of charitable funds**

	At 1/11/20 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains and losses £	At 31/10/21
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds	91,439	19,612	(22,776)	12,613	100,888
Designated fund	30,583	–	–	–	30,583
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>122,022</b>	<b>19,612</b>	<b>(22,776)</b>	<b>12,613</b>	<b>131,471</b>

	At 1/1/2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains and losses £	At 31/10/20
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds	91,936	12,762	(12,692)	(567)	91,439
Designated fund	30,583	–	–	–	30,583
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>122,519</b>	<b>12,762</b>	<b>(12,692)</b>	<b>(567)</b>	<b>122,022</b>

## 19. Analysis of net assets between funds

Designated Funds are analysed as follows:

	At 1 November 2020 £	Income during the year £	Transfers (to) from income and expenditure account £	At 31 October 2021 £
<b>Movements in the year:</b>				
Life Membership Fund	21,810	–	–	21,810
Colledge Prize Fund	300	–	–	300
Charles Hanmer Memorial Fund	510	–	–	510
J C P M Davis Memorial Fund	300	–	–	300
E R Janes Vase Account	100	–	–	100
Frances Williams Memorial Fund	234	–	–	234
Bolton Cup Proceeds Fund	2,068	–	–	2,068
Tom Baines Memorial Fund	100	–	–	100
B R Jones Memorial Fund	1,761	–	–	1,761
Burfoot Trophy Class	2,000	–	–	2,000
Whittemore Fund	400	–	–	400
Tom Cordy Award	500	–	–	500
	<b>30,583</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>30,583</b>

## 20. Related Parties

The Trustees receive no preferential services or rates from the Society. Where applicable they pay for subscriptions, 100 Club entries, show entries and advertising on the same basis as other members. In 2021 2 Trustees purchased advertising (2020 1 Trustee).

# Citation

*By Phil Johnson*

For many years and particularly since I was presented with the Jack Davis Award in 2014 – a lovely and often used whisky decanter - I have looked forward to the opportunity to present an award nomination at our AGM. Last year, I was honoured to be able to present Jane Atherton with a richly deserved John Bishop Memorial Medal at the Late Show at Harlow Carr. Now, in 2022, I am delighted to be able to present a citation for another award on behalf of NSPS.

As many of you will know, it is traditional to try to keep the name of the nominee a secret until the end of NSPS presentations. However, in a change from tradition, I am going to leave the name of the AWARD until the end!

I am delighted to be able to honour my very good friend, Caroline Ball, on behalf of you all as members of NSPS. Unwittingly, (or perhaps not!) she wrote much of this detail herself in an article in the 2017 Annual.

I first met Caroline at the Regency Hotel, Shirley, West Midlands on a chilly Saturday in March 1995. Now, before anyone jumps to conclusions, we were not there for a secret liaison, but both happened to be attending the NSPS AGM! I remember that we were bidding against each other in the auction for some Dobbies seed catalogues from the 1930's. We both continue to enjoy researching the history of our Society and collecting memorabilia.

She had won her first prize at a National at Wisley in 1992, a very large show with over 1,000 vases entered; the three vase novice class and the JB Mackay award. The following year saw an increase to 200 cordons and wins at both Newbury and Chatsworth – the bug had firmly bitten! She considers her best ever National win to be her best vase of 'Jilly' at Windsor in 1997 out of more than 200 vases in her division alone, which narrowly missed winning the Clay Cup, a rare thing for a vase to even be sent up from the lower divisions. She started stewarding at her first show in 1992 and soon progressed to judging.

Caroline joined the committee in 1998 and soon took on the daunting task of editing the Centenary Celebration Book. Just remember how much detailed research went into that! A well-deserved Jack Davis award followed at the 2001 AGM.

As dear Ben Bulstrode stepped down as editor of the Annual, Caroline was the obvious choice to take up the reins (no pun intended) in 2003. A post that she continues to hold, the 2022 edition being her twentieth! She brings not only vast experience, but great dedication, enthusiasm and a constant desire for improvements to publications that are the envy of other societies. Caroline has also been asked to write about Sweet

Peas in a number of other horticultural publications including a regular column in Garden News and organised the production of an update of the current version of Enjoy Sweet Peas. Caroline was one of the founder members of the Chiltern Sweet Pea Society formed over 20 years ago where she is a committee member and Treasurer.

She has served the NSPS committee in a number of other roles including Schedule, Website and Centenary sub committees, Show Manager, Deputy Chair and now Treasurer where she has instigated an expenses policy review and brought the Society's finance record keeping up to date and led the Governance review with the many recent changes. Again, huge commitment and a desire to do things properly and thoroughly. We value and respect her long experience within NSPS as an authority on the workings, traditions and procedures of the Society. Whilst researching other facts, I noticed many other occasions, when Caroline was heavily involved – Sprouston, Daily Mail event in 2011, displays at William Willson's, Lapworth in the 1990's, displays at Wisley, Malvern, Loseley Park, Tatton and the Centenary show at Unwins amongst many others. I am also aware that at one National held at Harrogate she deputised for the show manager overnight and somehow managed to persuade each exhibitor with spares to enter one of the bowl classes to boost the number of entries. It became the largest class in the show and she arranged every one of the bowls for the growers!

Over time, Caroline has focussed on entering the decorative classes at our shows and for me, is always the one to beat! She is undoubtedly, one of our leading authorities on floral art with Sweet Peas and a force to be reckoned with! In early July 2011, I was privileged to help decorate the lovely, little church at West Challow, on the occasion of Caroline and Phil's wedding. Of course, Sweet Peas predominated! Caroline was kind enough to ask my young daughter Lily, then two years old, to be a bridesmaid and I was very pleased that Caroline agreed to become Lily's godmother soon afterwards.

Caroline Ball is completely immersed in the love of our flower for all these reasons and many, many more that I have failed to mention.

During my discussions about awards with our late President, John Carrier, last year, he spoke to me of his sincere and earnest wish to nominate Caroline Ball for recognition in 2022. Sadly, as John cannot now fulfil his wish, I have had the honour to nominate Caroline, not only on his behalf but my own as well. This proposal was unanimously backed by the Executive Committee, the awarding body and I therefore have the great pleasure of inviting our new President, Roger Parsons, to present Caroline with the Henry Eckford Memorial Medal.

## Henry Eckford Memorial Medal

This award was inaugurated in 1921 for distinguished services in connection with Sweet Peas and is the highest and most prestigious award the Society has in its gift. At the time of its inception, it was agreed that the award 'will not necessarily be made to exhibitors of Sweet Peas of superior culture, but may be awarded from time to time for achievements in hybridising, for literary or research work, for investigation of diseases or pests, or for any form of meritorious work helpful to the development and popularity of the Sweet Pea or the National Sweet Pea Society.' Since its inception there have now been just 43 Eckford Medals awarded, with 7 living medallists including recent winners Caroline and Jim & Mary McDonald.

Year	Winner
1921	Robert Bolton
1922	S B Dicks
1923	Charles H Curtis
1924	Thomas Jones
1925	Andrew Ireland
1926	Wm Cuthbertson
1927	Alfred Watkins
1928	E W King
1929	Hugh Dickson
1930	J Stevenson
1931	George Burt
1932	William Unwin
1933	J S Brunton
1934	Thos Stevenson
1935	A G Stark
1936	E R Janes
1937	Harold Beale
1938	A W Gower
1948	R G E Willison
1952	Tom Bolton
1952	Jack Davis
1952	Chas Unwin

Year	Winner
1954	John Ness
1959	Bernard Jones
1962	Fred Burfoot
1964	David Burpee
1964	Frank Cuthbertson
1966	Philip Simons
1969	Reg Huntley
1971	William Zvolanek
1985	Lady Christine Fairbairn
1986	Robert B Bolton
1988	Lawrence Williams
1988	Jim Tandy
1989	John Pratt
1994	Jeff Brande
1997	Dr Keith Hammett
1998	John Bishop
2007	John Carrier
2012	Roger Parsons
2016	Sydney Harrod
2021	Jim & Mary McDonald
2022	Caroline Ball

# NSPS Shows

## The Early Show – Frost's Garden Centre, Abingdon

### 26 & 27 June 2021

CLASS	SPECIAL CLASSES	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
A	THE DUO CLASS 1st J & M McDonald 2nd G Hollingdale 3rd J&L Morgan	(3)
B	E W KING CLASS 1st P Johnson 2nd R Parsons 3rd –	(2)
C	W E ALSEN NOVELTY CUP 1st R Montgomery 2nd R James 3rd R NAS	(3)
D	UNWIN CLASS 1st R Parsons 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
E	FRANCES WILLIAMS MEMORIAL CLASS 1st R Parsons 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

#### DIVISION I

1	ROGER PARSONS CHALLENGE PRIZE 1st B Bartlett 2nd K Gray 3rd – 4th –	(2)
2	SUTTON CLASS 1st R Read 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
3	TOM JONES CUP 1st R Parsons 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
4	BURPEE CUP 1st R Read 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
5	HAMMETT CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
6	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM (No Entries)	(0)

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED</b>
7	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED 1st K Gray 2nd – 3rd – (1)
8	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st B Bartlett 2nd – 3rd – (1)
9	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries) (0)
10	ONE VASE, PINK OR PICOTEE 1st K Gray 2nd – 3rd – (1)
11	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st R Read 2nd K Gray 3rd J & L Morgan (4)
<b>DIVISION II</b>	
12	ONE VASE SPENCER 1st P Johnson 2nd – 3rd – (1)
12a	ONE VASE NON-SPENCER 1st P Johnson 2nd – 3rd – (1)
<b>DIVISION III</b>	
14	9 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries) (0)
15	6 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries) (0)
16	3 VASES DISTINCT 1st D Chapple 2nd – 3rd – (1)
17	MIXED BOWL 1st P Johnson 2nd – 3rd – (1)
18	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st NAS 2nd – 3rd – (1)
19	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries) (0)
20	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE (No Entries) (0)
21	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st R Montgomery 2nd – 3rd – (1)

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED</b>
22 ONE VASE, PINK 1st D Chapple 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
23 ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st R Montgomery 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
24 ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st D Chapple 2nd R Montgomery 3rd –	(2)

**DIVISION IV**

25 LEVINGTON CUP 6 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries)	(0)
26 THE BEN BULSTRODE MEMORIAL PRIZE 3 VASES DISTINCT 1st J&L Morgan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
27 MIXED BOWL 1st J&L Morgan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
28 ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st M Holmes 2nd R James 3rd –	(2)
29 ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED 1st – 2nd R James 3rd –	(1)
30 ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st – 2nd – 3rd R James	(1)
31 ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries)	(0)
32 ONE VASE, PINK 1st – 2nd – 3rd R James	(1)
33 ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st – 2nd – 3rd R James	(1)
34 ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st J&L Morgan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

**DIVISION V**

35	<b>EVAN HINCE CUP 3 VASES DISTINCT</b> 1st G Johnson 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
36	<b>MIXED BOWL</b> 1st A Shreeve 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
37	<b>ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM</b> 1st G Johnson 2nd M Holmes 3rd P Freeman	(4)
38	<b>ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED</b> 1st M Holmes 2nd P Freeman 3rd –	(2)
39	<b>ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE</b> 1st J Findlay & P Champion 2nd L Burrell 3rd P Freeman	(3)
40	<b>ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE</b> 1st P Freeman 2nd G Johnson 3rd L Burrell	(4)
41	<b>ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE</b> 1st G Johnson 2nd J Findlay/P Champion 3rd L Burrell	(3)
42	<b>ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY</b> 1st G Johnson 2nd L Burrell 3rd J Findlay & P Champion	(4)
43	<b>ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS</b> 1st P Freeman 2nd G Johnson 3rd J Beardmore	(4)

**DIVISION VI**

50	<b>HENRY ECKFORD BOWL</b> 1st P Johnson 2nd A Shreeve 3rd J&L Morgan	(5)
51	<b>WHITTEMORE CLASS</b> 1st P Johnson 2nd R Parsons 3rd G Hollingdale	(4)
52	<b>OLD FASHIONED CLASS</b> 1st P Johnson 2nd R Parsons 3rd G Hollingdale	(4)
53	<b>SEMI-GRANDIFLORA CLASS</b> 1st P Johnson 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
54	<b>GRANDIFLORA CLASS</b> 1st P Johnson 2nd J&M McDonald 3rd R Parsons	(4)
55	<b>THE CHRISSIE CLASS</b> 1st P Johnson 2nd R Parsons 3rd G Hollingdale	(4)

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED</b>
56	AMY ANDREWS PERPETUAL TROPHY 1st C Tate 2nd J Beardmore 3rd – (2)
57	BOWL OF LATHYRUS SPECIES PERENNIAL 1st C Ball 2nd – 3rd – (1)
58	ANY LATHYRUS GROWN IN POT 1st J & L Morgan 2nd R James 3rd – (2)

**DECORATIVE**

60	THE JOHN BISHOP MEMORIAL CLASS (No Entries) (0)
61	UNWIN BASKET 1st P Johnson 2nd R Parsons 3rd – (2)
62	TOM BAINES CLASS 1st J Beardmore 2nd C Tate 3rd – (2)
63	E R JANES VASE 1st J&L Morgan 2nd R James 3rd – (2)
64	THE CORNISH BOWL (No Entries) (0)
65	THE DRIFTWOOD CLASS 1st C Ball 2nd C Tate 3rd J Beardmore (3)
66	THE SYDENHAM CLASS 1st C Tate 2nd J Beardmore 3rd – (2)
67	LES HARVEY PEDESTAL CLASS 1st P Johnson & C Ball 2nd – 3rd – (1)

**SPECIAL AWARDS****THE JACK HARRISS MEMORIAL TROPHY (Best Exhibit)**

Brian Bartlett (class 1)

**THE LEWESTON PRIZE (Best Vase)**

R Read ('Jilly' class 2)

**THE COLLEDGE PRIZE (Best Lavender)**

R Read ('Honeymoon' class 2)

**THE TERRY SEWELL PRIZE (Best Anniversary)**

B Bartlett (class 1)

**THE GOWER SEEDLING PRIZE (Best Seedling)**

P Johnson (class 12)

**THE CYNTHIA DAVIES CUP (Best Vase Div III)**

R Montgomery ('Ballerina Blue' class 21)

**THE WARWICK CUP (Best Vase Div IV)**

M Holmes ('White Frills' class 28)

**THE DIVISION V PRIZE (Best Vase)**

G Johnson ('Sir Jimmy Shand' class 35)

**KEITH BREWER PRIZE (Best Vase Div VI)**

G Johnson (class 35)

**THE HENRY ECKFORD CUP (Best Exhibit)**

Phil Johnson (class 50)

**BEST BOWL PRIZE**

P Johnson (class 17)

**BEST DECORATIVE PRIZE**

C Ball ('Driftwood' class 65)

**THE TOM SHILLING PRIZE (Best Vase by Newcomer)**

P Champion & J Findlay ('Gwendoline' class 39)

# Audit of the Early National Show – Frost's Garden Centre, Abingdon

## 26 & 27 June 2021

*By Carole Tate & Chris Gray*

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class
1	Gwendoline	4	2	1	0	7	Magenta (Pale)	4a
2	Anniversary	3	1	2	1	7	Picotée (White Ground)	15
	White Frills	3	1	2	1	7	White	1
4	Jilly	4	0	0	0	4	Cream	2
	Sir Jimmy Shand	3	1	0	0	4	Fancy (Striped)	16
	Windsor	3	1	0	0	4	Maroon	5
	Mrs Bernard Jones	2	1	1	0	4	Rose Pink (White Ground)	10b
	Karen Louise	2	1	0	0	3	Lavender	8
	Bristol	2	0	0	0	2	Blue (Pale)	9b
	Evie Jones	2	0	0	0	2	Magenta	4
	Leominster Boy	2	0	0	0	2	Orange Pink	13
	Mary Priestley	2	0	0	0	2	White	1
	Pink Pearl	2	0	0	0	2	Pale Pink (White Ground)	10
	Queen of Hearts	2	0	0	0	2	Fancy (Striped)	16
15	Eclipse	1	1	0	0	2	Mauve	7
	Millennium	1	1	0	0	2	Red (Crimson)	3b
	Naomi Nazareth	1	1	0	0	2	Blue (Pale)	9b
	White Supreme	1	1	0	0	2	White	1
	Fields of Fire	0	2	0	0	2	Red (Scarlet)	3a
	Gilly Norah	0	2	0	0	2	Salmon Pink (Cream Ground)	11a
	Ballerina Blue	1	0	0	0	1	Blue (Mid)	9a
	Bill's Choice	1	0	0	0	1	Magenta (Pale)	4a
	Charlotte Emma	1	0	0	0	1	Rose Pink (White Ground)	10b
	Grandma Butt	1	0	0	0	1	Magenta	4
	Happy Birthday	1	0	0	0	1	Orange (Red)	14
	Harrogate Gem	1	0	0	0	1	Red (Scarlet)	3a
	Honeymoon	1	0	0	0	1	Lavender (Flush)	8a
	John William	1	0	0	0	1	Rose Pink (White Ground)	10b
	Judith Wilkinson	1	0	0	0	1	Magenta	4
	Lady Nicholson	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy (Striped)	16
	Memorial Flight	1	0	0	0	1	White	1
	Mr P	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy (Flaked or Marbled)	16b

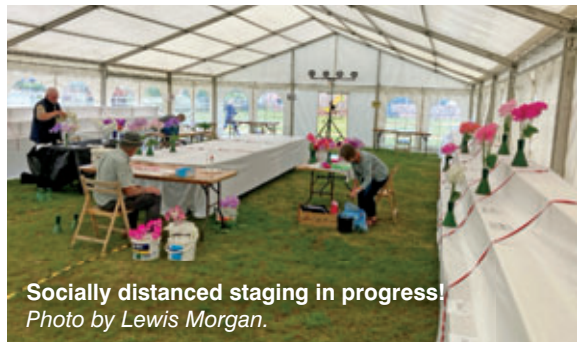
No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class
	Oban Bay	1	0	0	0	1	Blue (Pale)	9b
	Solitude	1	0	0	0	1	Lavender	8
	Southbourne	1	0	0	0	1	Pale Pink (White Ground)	10
36	Alan Titchmarsh	0	1	0	0	1	Rose Pink (White Ground)	11b
	Gwawr Cymru	0	1	0	0	1	Picotée (Cream Ground)	15a
	Joejess	0	1	0	0	1	Orange	12
	Laila K	0	1	0	0	1	Cerise Pink	10c
	Mollie Rilstone	0	1	0	0	1	Picotée (Cream Ground)	15a
	Our Harry	0	1	0	0	1	Blue (Mid)	9a
	Sally Maitland	0	1	0	0	1	Magenta	4
	Somerset Lady	0	1	0	0	1	Magenta	4
	Tutti Frutti	0	1	0	0	1	Fancy (Striped)	16
	Winston Churchill	0	1	0	0	1	Red (Crimson)	3b
46	Just Julia	0	0	1	0	1	Blue (Mid)	9a
	Patricia Marilyn	0	0	1	0	1	Pale Pink (White Ground)	10
	Precious	0	0	1	0	1	Rose Pink (White Ground)	10b
	Wild Swan	0	0	1	0	1	White	1
	Olivia Grace	0	0	0	1	1	Blue (Dark)	9
	<b>Seedlings</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>97</b>		
<b>Non Spencers</b>								
1	Prince Edward of York	2	1	0	0	3	Red/Pink	OF
2	America	0	1	1	0	2	Red Flake	OF
	Black Knight	0	0	1	1	2	Dark Maroon	OF
	Mrs Collier	0	0	1	1	2	Cream	OF
	Chrissie	1	0	0	1	2	Lavender	SG
	King Size Navy Blue	0	2	0	0	2	Navy Blue	SG
7	Dorothy Eckford	1	0	0	0	1	White	OF
	Henry Eckford	1	0	0	0	1	Orange/Scarlet	OF
	Countess Cadogen	0	1	0	0	1	Violet/Light Blue	OF
	Senator	0	1	0	0	1	Maroon/Violet	OF
	Miss Willmott	0	0	1	0	1	Orange Pink	OF
	Scarlett	0	0	1	0	1	Red	Gr
	Cream Eggs	0	0	0	1	1	Cream	Gr
	Cupani	0	0	0	1	1	Maroon/Violet	OF
	Sicilian Pink	0	0	0	1	1	Pink	OF
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>		
<b>Mixed vases</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>		
<b>Total Vases</b>		<b>70</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>141</b>		
<b>Decorative &amp; Bowls</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>83</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>166</b>		

# Report of the Early Show – Frosts at Millets Farm Centre 2021

*By Jen and Lewis Morgan*

The Committee had put their collective fingers in the air to see which way the wind was blowing; they decreed The Show was on and then kept everything crossed! The weather was set fair with only the odd Covid cloud to cast a shadow, but a gentle breeze kept that away. For us all the traffic was heading into Wales or turning left down to Cornwall, staycations still the order of the day. We seemed to be the only ones going the other way which made for an easy trip down, and back on the Sunday when all the weekenders were going back home!

Caroline Ball was once again undertaking the role of Show Manager ably assisted by other members too numerous to mention. Along with ourselves other exhibitors started to arrive most of whom we hadn't seen for two years, and after conversations on how everyone had survived the lockdown, it was down to business staging vases, bowls, arrangements and the like.



**Socially distanced staging in progress.**  
*Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

We headed off at 9.00pm all exhibits staged, the hotel and pub calling. Others were still arriving for the nocturnal shift! On our return the next morning we were greeted by plenty of colour with some exhibitors putting last minute touches to their entries. Judging duties were handed out and we were relieved that Brian Thompson's

shock tactics of the last show when he handed us all the Division 1 single vase classes were not repeated. Over the next hour socially distanced judging groups glided around the Marquee making their deliberations. Diversionary tactics were then employed to keep Graeme Hollingdale on site and allow John Carrier to arrive and present Graeme with the John Bishop Award for his significant contribution to the Society.

With the judging completed, prizes awarded, the Show was opened to the public and a steady flow of visitors were welcomed in and everyone acted responsibly.

Onto the Awards and in Division 1 Brian Bartlett won the Roger Parsons Challenge Prize with his 12 vase exhibit comprising 'Sir Jimmy Shand', 'Gwendoline', 'Anniversary', 'Evie Jones', 'Naomi Nazareth', 'Millennium', 'Windsor', 'Queen of Hearts', 'Jilly', 'Judith



**Early show Jenny Morgan staging.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**Setting up the show; Derek Chapple under the table and Chris Gray working on the covering for the tiered staging.** *Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**Show benches.** *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

Wilkinson', 'White Frills' and 'Mrs Bernard Jones' along with a 1st and 3rd in the single vase classes. Brian's vases also won him the Jack Harriss Memorial Trophy for Best Exhibit, along with the Terry Sewell Prize for best Vase of 'Anniversary'. Kathy Gray stepped up to the Roger Parsons Challenge Prize Class for the first time and came away a worthy runner up, also picking up 2 1sts and a 2nd in the single vase classes. Robert Read captured the Sutton Class for nine vases with 'Windsor', 'Honeymoon', 'John William', 'Queen of Hearts', 'Jilly', 'Gwendoline', Sir Jimmy Shand', 'Pink Pearl' and 'Oban Bay, the 3 vase Burpee Cup, and a single vase class, together with the

Leweston Prize for the best vase in show with 'Jilly', and Colledge Prize for the best vase of Lavender with 'Honeymoon'. Roger Parsons himself collected the Tom Jones Cup for six vases and in the special Classes the Frances Williams Memorial Class.

Phil Johnson reigned supreme in Division 2 with his Vases of Spencer and non-Spencer seedlings and the Gower Seedling Prize, dipped into Division 3 with the mixed bowl and Best Bowl Special award, onto 6 classes in Division 6 – non-cordon, the 3 vase Old fashioned class also netting him the E W King Class, and the Henry Eckford Cup for best exhibit in the division. Phil rounded off with the Unwin Basket and Les Harvey pedestal Class in the decorative division, the latter a joint exhibit with Caroline Ball. Good job he brought his van, he needed the space to take his trophies home!!



**Brian Bartlett winner of the Jack Harriss Award.** *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*



**Phil Johnson receiving the Henry Eckford cup from John Carrier.** *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

In Division 3 Derek Chapple secured the 3 Vase Class along with the vase of pink Spencers and the Mixed Vase. Rupert Montgomery collected the award for the best vase of mauve, lavender or purple with 'Ballerina Blue', which was also voted best vase in Division and won the Cynthia Davis Cup for that, also winning the vase of orange, picotee or fancy, and the W.E. Alsen Novelty Cup.

Division 4 saw Jen and Lewis Morgan collect the Ben Bulstrode Memorial Prize for their 3-vase entry which was comprised of 'Bristol', 'Valerie Harrod' and 'Karen Louise', along with the mixed vase, and mixed bowl classes. They also had success in the ER Janes Vase public vote class, Unwin's Class, and Class 58 for any *Lathyrus* grown in a pot. Elsewhere, Martin Holmes stepped up a division with his vase of White was placed first in that class and also best vase in the division to receive the Warwick Cup, and also the vase of red or orange-red in Division 5.



**Show overview.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**Phil Champion with the Tom Shilling Prize for best vase by a newcomer.**  
*Photo by Lewis Morgan.*



**Spencer vases.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**Les Harvey pedestal.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*



Graham Johnson had a successful visit to the Show winning the Evan Hince Cup for his 3 vases distinct in Division 5 along with the classes for vase of white, vase of pink, and vase of orange, picotee, or fancy, the best vase in the Division, and Keith Brewer prize for best exhibit in Division. Alison Shreeve, P Freeman, and Phil Champion & Jane Findlay shared the remaining classes in Division 5. Phil Champion & Jane Findlay also won the Tom Shilling Prize for best vase by a newcomer with their vase of 'Gwendoline'

How Caroline Ball found the time to exhibit, but Caroline did, and she collected the award for the bowl of *Lathyrus* species (perennial) in Division 6, and followed this up with the Driftwood Class which also won best decorative exhibit in show. Carole Tate was the recipient of the Amy Andrews Perpetual Trophy for her bowl of annual *Lathyrus* species, and the Sydenham Class for an arrangement with foliage and 7 stems of Sweet Peas. Julia Beardmore won the Tom Baines Class for her table arrangement and last but not least Jim and Mary McDonald were successful in the Duo Class.



*Lathyrus vernus.*  
Photo by Caroline Ball.

## John Bishop Silver Memorial Award

*By John Carrier*



**Graeme Hollingdale (left) looking at his John Bishop medal presented by John Carrier (right).**  
*Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

When our Society makes awards to recognise service given by members to the Society, the awards are normally presented at the Annual General meeting. However, in the current circumstances, we have not been able to do this and so the Committee decided that, rather than delaying it until we could hold an AGM, the Awards should be given

to the recipients as part of the Prize Giving at the National Show. Unfortunately the recipient of one of the Awards this year has to leave early, and so we are interrupting proceedings to make that award now.

This Award goes to someone who has shown a real enthusiasm for the Sweet Pea and is always keen to promote our flower whenever possible. He is an officer of his local Sweet Pea Society and when the vacancy occurred for a new Secretary of the National Sweet Pea Society he willingly took over the reins. He is a Sweet Pea judge and his expertise has been recognised at many shows throughout the country including the Royal Welsh.

He has been Editor of the Society's Bulletin which has been the journal for keeping our Society together during the pandemic.

More recently, when we could not hold our National Shows and decided on a Virtual Show, he stepped in to organise it. It was totally new territory for him and for our Society, but he accomplished the task with great distinction, as many of the pictures in the 2021 Annual testify.

You will recognise, by now, that I am talking about Graeme Hollingdale. In order to recognise his many achievements within the Society, the Awards Committee has agreed to present him with the inaugural John Bishop Silver Memorial Medal.

I am delighted to present it to him now.

## The Henry Eckford Gold Medal Award

*By John Carrier*

*This citation was given at the prize giving ceremony of the Early National Show in 2021.*

There is only one other award I have to make today. It is not very often I make this award – in fact I have only done it twice since I have been President. Today's award is very unusual because it is being presented to a team. It is a husband and wife team. This team has been instrumental in so many things relating to our society. You can mention one member of the team and then you realise that the other member was so much involved and vice versa. As a result the Awards Committee decided to make this a joint award. The first time this has been done in the Society's history.

The male member started growing Sweet Peas in 1966 but it was a talk at the local gardening club about Sweet Peas by Ben Bulstrode that inspired him to join the NSPS. After a few years exhibiting at local shows he went to his first National at Maidstone in 1983 and won the George Herbert class.



**Mary and Jim McDonald with President John Carrier at the presentation of their Henry Eckford medal. Photo by Lewis Morgan.**

I can't keep the suspense any longer because this team, which has done so much for the Sweet Pea Society, is as you may have guessed, Jim and Mary McDonald.

Jim was a committee member for eleven years. They show managed seven shows and assisted at many others. They have taken the Society international with a display, jointly with John and Gwen Bishop at Le Touquet in France. He has served on the Classification Committee for many years: both served on the Schedule Committee for fourteen years and Jim was Chairman of the Trials Committee at Wisley, taking over from Jeff Brande in 2004. Since the RHS suspended the Sweet Pea Trials at Wisley he has organised Sweet Pea Trials at the horticultural colleges of Sparsholt and Askham Bryan and Mary was also on the Trials Committee at Wisley and Sparsholt, and so the list goes on.

Jim headed up a sub-committee to organise celebrations for the tercentenary of the Sweet Peas coming to this country and the 100th birthday celebrations with a dinner and by marketing a commemorative plate.

Whilst on a holiday in Australia Jim and Mary visited Brad McDougall, a hybridiser who had been crossing the Gawler strain of Sweet Pea with the Spencer varieties. He gave Jim some seed of a white Sweet Pea and out of this a very cream, highly scented and frilly variety emerged. Jim grew it on and sent it for trial at Wisley where it gained an Award of Garden Merit and a First Class Certificate at the Scottish Trials. It was named 'Mary Mac' and has become very popular.

Jim took over as District Representative for Hampshire from Tom Shilling in 2004.

Supporting Jim in all his work has been Mary. She served the Society as General Secretary for six years and was on the General Committee for nine years. She has been an exhibitor and judge both at shows and at the Trials. Her magnificent floral displays have enhanced many of our shows. They won the Jack Davis award three times.

They are still doing Sweet Pea talks across the south of England, promoting the Sweet Pea and the National Sweet Pea Society.

The Awards Committee wanted to recognise the achievements of these two members – The McDonald team. So I am delighted to present to them jointly The Henry Eckford Gold medal which is awarded for exceptional contribution to the Sweet Pea and its Society, an award well deserved by this great Sweet Pea loving team.

# The Late Show - RHS Harlow Carr

## 10 & 11 July 2021

CLASS	SPECIAL CLASSES	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
A	THE DUO CLASS 1st C Tate 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
B	E. W. KING CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
C	NOVELTY CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
D	UNWIN CLASS 1st – 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(1)
E	FRANCES WILLIAMS MEMORIAL CLASS 1st D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

### DIVISION I

1	DAILY MAIL CUP (No Entries)	(0)
2	EASTBOURNE PRIZE (No Entries)	(0)
3	CHARLES HANMER MEMORIAL CLASS 1st D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
4	THE MATTHEWMAN CLASS 1st D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
5	HAMMETT CUP 1st D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
6	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM (No Entries)	(0)
7	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries)	(0)
8	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st J Mabbett 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED</b>
9	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries) (0)
10	ONE VASE, PINK, PICOTEE 1st – 2nd J Mabbett 3rd – (1)
11	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st I D Myers 2nd J Mabbett 3rd – (2)
<b>DIVISION II</b>	
12	ONE VASE SPENCER 1st T Atherton 2nd – 3rd – (1)
12a	ONE VASE NON-SPENCER (No Entries) (0)
<b>DIVISION III</b>	
	CLASSES 14 -24 (No Entries) (0)
<b>DIVISION IV</b>	
25	M.K. FRANKS CUP – SIX VASES DISTINCT 1st M Hargreaves 2nd – 3rd – (1)
26	MONRO TROPHY – THREE VASES DISTINCT 1st M Hargreaves 2nd T Atherton 3rd – (2)
27	MIXED BOWL CLASS 1st M Hargreaves 2nd – 3rd – (1)
28	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st M Holmes 2nd – 3rd – (1)
29	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries) (0)
30	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st M Hargreaves 2nd – 3rd – (1)
31	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries) (0)

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED</b>
32 ONE VASE, PINK (No Entries)	(0)
33 ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY (No Entries)	(0)
34 ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st M Hargreaves 2nd T Atherton 3rd –	(2)

**DIVISION V**

35 GEORGE HERBERT CUP – 3 VASES DISTINCT 1st R Rishworth 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
36 MIXED BOWL 1st P Hargreaves 2nd A Fletcher 3rd C Tate	(3)
37 ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st R Rishworth 2nd M Holmes 3rd C Tate	(3)
38 ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED 1st M Holmes 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
39 ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st R Rishworth 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
40 ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st R Rishworth 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
41 ONE VASE, PINK 1st A Fletcher 2nd J Beardmore 3rd –	(2)
42 ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st A Fletcher 2nd R Rishworth 3rd –	(2)
43 ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st A Fletcher 2nd P Hargreaves 3rd R Rishworth	(6)

**DIVISION VI**

50	<b>HENRY ECKFORD BOWL</b> 1st P Hargreaves 2nd J Beardmore 3rd T Atherton	(5)
51	<b>WHITTEMORE CLASS</b> 1st C Tate 2nd I D Myers 3rd P Hargreaves	(3)
52	<b>OLD FASHIONED CLASS</b> 1st I D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
53	<b>SEMI-GRANDIFLORA CLASS</b> (No Entries)	(0)
54	<b>GRANDIFLORA CLASS</b> (No Entries)	(0)
55	<b>THE CHRISSIE CLASS</b> 1st P Hargreaves 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
56	<b>DAVID ARCHER PERPETUAL TROPHY</b> 1st C Tate 2nd T Atherton 3rd J Beardmore	(3)
57	<b>BOWL OF LATHYRUS SPECIES PERENNIAL</b> (No Entries)	(0)
58	<b>ANY LATHYRUS GROWN IN POT</b> (No Entries)	(0)

**DECORATIVE DIVISION VII**

60	<b>THE HARROGATE CLASS</b> (No Entries)	(0)
61	<b>BURFOOT CLASS</b> (No Entries)	(0)
62	<b>TOM BAINES CLASS</b> 1st J Beardmore 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
63	<b>E R JANES VASE</b> 1st R Rishworth 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
64	<b>THE YORKSHIRE BOWL</b> (No Entries)	(0)
65	<b>THE DRIFTWOOD CLASS</b> 1st C Tate 2nd J Beardmore 3rd –	(2)
66	<b>THE SYDENHAM CLASS</b> 1st J Beardmore 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
67	<b>LES HARVEY PEDESTAL CLASS</b> 1st R Rishworth 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

## **SPECIAL AWARDS**

### **THE TOM CORDY PRIZE – BEST EXHIBIT**

I D Myers (Class 3)

### **THE CLAY CUP – BEST VASE**

I D Myers ('Gwendoline' Class 3)

### **THE COLLEDGE PRIZE (BEST LAVENDER)**

M Hargreaves ('Karen Louise' Class 26)

### **THE TERRY SEWELL PRIZE (BEST 'ANNIVERSARY')**

(No Entries)

### **THE A W GOWER SEEDLING CUP**

I D Myers (Class 3)

### **THE HINCHCLIFFE PRIZE (BEST IN DIVISION DIV III)**

(No Entries)

### **THE K E ANDREWS PRIZE (BEST IN DIVISION DIV IV)**

M Hargreaves ('Kippen Cream' Class 25 )

### **THE RANDALL CUP (BEST VASE DIV V)**

R Rishworth ('White Frills' Class 37)

### **THE HENRY ECKFORD PRIZE (BEST IN DIVISION VI)**

C Tate (Bowl of Species Class 56)

### **BEST BOWL PRIZE**

C Tate (Bowl of Species Class 56)

### **DECORATIVE PRIZE (BEST DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT)**

C Tate ('Driftwood' Class 65)

### **THE TOM SHILLING PRIZE (BEST VASE BY NEWCOMER FOR 2018)**

(No Entries)

# Audit of the Late National Show - Harlow Carr

## 10 & 11 July 2021

*By Carole Tate*

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class	
1	White Frills	5	3	1	0	9	White	1	
2	Gwendoline	6	1	0	0	7	Magenta (Pale)	4a	
3	Pink Pearl	3	1	0	0	4	Pale Pink (White Ground)	10	
4	Karen Louise	2	0	0	0	2	Lavender	8	
	Queen of Hearts	2	0	0	0	2	Fancy (Striped)	16	
	Betty Maiden	1	1	0	0	2	Fancy (Striped)	16	
7	Happy Birthday	1	0	0	0	1	Orange Red	14	
	John William	1	0	0	0	1	Rose Pink (White Ground)	10b	
	Kippen Cream	1	0	0	0	1	Cream	2	
	Marjorie Carrier	1	0	0	0	1	Orange Pink	13	
	Mary Priestley	1	0	0	0	1	White	1	
	Naomi Nazareth	1	0	0	0	1	Blue (Pale)	9b	
	Parsifal	1	0	0	0	1	Blue (Flush)	9c	
	Patricia Marilyn	1	0	0	0	1	Pale Pink (White Ground)	10	
	Promise	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy (Bicolour)	16a	
	Sir Jimmy Shand	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy (Striped)	16	
	Windsor	1	0	0	0	1	Maroon	5	
18	Heaven Scent	0	1	0	0	1	Pale Pink (Cream Ground)	11	
	Mumsie	0	1	0	0	1	Red (Crimson)	3b	
	<b>Seedlings</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>			
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>			
	<b>Non Spencers</b>								
1	Mrs Collier	1	0	0	0	2	Cream	OF	
2	America	1	0	0	0	1	Red Flake	OF	
	Cupani	1	0	0	0	1	Maroon/Violet	OF	
	Miss Willmott	1	0	0	0	1	Orange Pink	OF	
	Romeo	1	0	0	0	1	White/Blue Edge	Gr	
6	High Scent	0	0	1	0	1	Cream/Lilac Edge	SG	
	Wretham Pink	0	0	1	0	1	Pale Pink	OF	
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>			
	<b>Mixed vases</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>			
	<b>Total Vases</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>61</b>			
	<b>Decorative &amp; Bowls</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>81</b>			

## Report of the Late Show - Harlow Carr

*By Pat Hargreaves*

What a blessing it was to have the return of the late National Show. A further blessing was to be able to use Harlow Carr's new show facility – light, airy, spacious, good illumination and easily accessible. In addition, and very welcome, we had Martin Holmes and his team as show managers, supported by the Chorley Society secretaries. The big downside, of course, was the small number of entrants, only 10, but understandable given the circumstances. On top of this was the difficult season; a sunny, dry April with cold nights followed by a dull and very wet May. Sixty one vases was about a third of what we would have in normal times. Although there was a lack of competition those given first places were certainly of a good enough standard. Martin Holmes used his carpentry skills to improve the staging so that all the vase entries had a black background.

Darren Myers staged 13 very impressive vases and would have had more if the dreaded bud drop had not arrived at the wrong time. 'White Frills' was the top cultivar staged, pushing 'Gwendoline' into second place.

For the Charles Hanmer Memorial Class Darren staged 'Mary Priestley', 'John William', 'Queen of Hearts', 'Pink Pearl', 'Gwendoline' and a pale blue seedling. For the 3 vase Matthewman Class Darren had 'Queen of Hearts', 'Pink Pearl' and the blue seedling. In Division IV for the M K Franks Cup Mike Hargreaves staged 'Gwendoline', 'Mary Priestley', 'Kippen Cream', 'Naomi Nazareth', 'Parsifal' and 'Marjorie Carrier'. For the



**Prize winner Mike Hargreaves.**

*Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*



**Clay Cup winner Darren Myers.**  
*Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*



**Bob Rishworth.**  
*Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*



**Les Harvey Pedestal  
by Bob Rishworth.**  
*Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*

Monro Trophy he staged 'Pink Pearl', 'Windsor' and 'Karen Louise'. Tom Atherton staged 'Gwendoline', 'White Frills' and 'Mumsie'.

Darren Myers won the Clay Cup for best vase in show with his superb entry of 'Gwendoline'.

Darren won the Gower Seedling Cup with his pale blue entry. Best vase in Div IV went to 'Kippen Cream'.

The Decorative Classes were well supported; this class seems to be generating an increase in interest and was one that the visitors found particularly attractive.

The Harlow Carr staff were very helpful and were glad to have us there.



**'Promise'.** Photo by Darren Myers.



**NSPS Late show 2021 arrangement.** Photo by Andrew Fletcher.



**NSPS Late show 2021.**  
 Photo by Darren Myers.



**NSPS Late show 2021.**  
 Photo by Andrew Fletcher.

## John Bishop Memorial Medal

*By Roger Parsons and Phil Johnson*

At the 2020 AGM, Tom Atherton became the first recipient of the John Bishop Memorial Medal. I would like now to honour another member of this Society who has worked very hard to benefit and promote our Society.

This member first joined the General Committee in 2014 and it is hard to believe that she achieved so much in such a short period. It is going to be impossible to keep the identity of this person secret while telling you some of the highlights of her achievements. When John Pratt retired as our Treasurer after more than 40 years in that

role, there was general concern that we would not be able to find someone as hard-working and conscientious as John had been. We need not have been concerned. Jane Atherton volunteered to take on this role, bringing with her all her experience of running a successful landscape business. Other committee members were very quickly re-assured that our money was in safe hands. Only someone who has taken on this job can fully know just how much work is involved, especially in claiming Gift Aid and dealing with the end of year accounts. It took about 18 months of persistence simply to get the change in authorised signatories approved. Everything was done to the highest standards.

In addition to running a business and carrying out this important role for the Society, Jane was a constant support to Tom in his work, running up and down the country to put on displays and encourage new members. Whenever a job needed doing, you could rely on Tom to volunteer to do it leaving Jane speechless because everything he achieved relied on her support. Yet when a vacancy arose for someone to manage the Society's merchandise sales, it was Jane who volunteered to take on this role. As with everything else she has done, it was carried out very professionally.

So, the Athertons have had a wonderful impact on the Society's activities and this is an appropriate time to recognise Jane's achievements in her own right and to say thank you for your friendship and for your dedication. Jane, would you please step forward to receive the John Bishop Memorial Medal with our grateful thanks.



**Jane Atherton being presented with the John Bishop Memorial Medal by Chairman Phil Johnson. Photo by Andrew Fletcher.**

# Trials

## National Sweet Pea Trials 2020 & 2021

*By Jim McDonald & Andrew Beane*

Due to Covid 19 the Trials for 2020 were aborted and in 2021 the second pandemic did not allow the Trials to get started. We seem to be coming into the clear from the third pandemic and both colleges are ready to complete the Trials for 2022. Invitations were sent out to the hybridisers in September 2021 and we have received sixteen entries of Spencer types to be trialled. The seeds were sent to the colleges by mid October, 2021.

Progress to date – Askham Bryan – seeds sown first week in November. Very good germination. Plants now moved to polytunnel. They have been pinched out and are looking very healthy. No slugs or mice.

Sparsholt – I visited the college today 26 January, 2022. Seeds planted in Rootainers in November. Good germination and healthy plants. Planting on next week into large pots ready for planting out in late March/early April.

We are looking forward to the summer to see the new varieties.

This is my last year as Trials Co-ordinator and I would like to thank the colleges for all the work done on the Trials and for their help and support over the last six years. I would also like to thank Andrew Beane and his team of judges for carrying out the supervision and work at Askham Bryan and my team at Sparsholt for all their help. It has made my job very enjoyable and easy to manage. I will be handing over to Darren Everest from the Isle of Wight at the end of this year's Trials.

*“Flowers whisper ‘Beauty!’ to the world, even as they fade, wilt, fall.”*

Dr. SunWolf

# Articles

## *Lathyrus* Collection Report

*By Roger Parsons*

### **National Plant Collection: *Lathyrus***

Collection holder: Roger Parsons

Period Covered by report: 2021

Database system used: Persephone and Excel

### **Plant list additions**

'Winter Sunshine Pink Bicolour' and 'Spring Sunshine Burgundy' from Moles

'Lunar Blue' from Whispering Prairie Flowers, Canada

'Ullswater', 'Winter Sunshine Light Blue', 'Winter Sunshine Mauve' from Owls Acre

'Farmer Reg' and "Heartbeat" from Kerton

'Newby Blue' from Matthewman

'Rebecca' from Eagle

'Alec Cave' and 4 accessions from Ukraine from McDonald

'Arley Hall' from Rosemary Butler

Six seedlings from Andrew Beane

Two accessions of *L. fulvus* and 23 of *L. oleraceus* from John Innes centre

### **Plant List losses**

*L. saxatilis* has been renamed *Vicia saxatilis*. It has been retained but is now outside the scope of the collection.

### **Desired plants:**

*Vavilovia formosa* has been renamed as *L. formosus*. The accessions received from John Innes seek to provide a wide range of flower colour within the Garden Pea. This needs to be explored further along with other ornamental characters such as pod colour. .

**Developments to the collection:**

Publication by the RHS of "*Lathyrus*: The Complete Guide" is a milestone in itself but it has also brought the Garden Pea within the scope of the collection. It is not our intention to conserve all cultivars of Garden Pea any more than we attempt to conserve the thousands of cultivars of fodder species, such as *L. sativus*. There is an opportunity to explore further the ornamental characteristics of Garden Peas and bring them to the attention of a wider public.

Seed sales overall remain buoyant and we were obliged to register for VAT in February 2021. Shelly Stote joined the office team in April 2021.

A programme of weekly spraying of plants was introduced using a range of biostimulants and micronutrients. This proved successful in both stimulating growth and resisting Powdery Mildew.

**Set backs:**

Seed production in New Zealand of some popular varieties failed during the winter of 2020-21 leading to a shortage of seeds for sale. Some plants in the polytunnel were affected by a water leak and by excess rainfall flooding in but no taxa were lost.

Seed sales to Europe have become difficult following Brexit and to some countries they have become impossible. This is because of the prohibitive cost of the phytosanitary certificates now expected to accompany seeds. Overseas sales in 2020 were 39% of the total but were 37% in 2021. This small fall is because sales to Ireland, for example, have fallen dramatically but there has been a large increase in sales to the USA.

We were unable to support Plant Heritage with their Chelsea flower show display because of the postponement from May to September.

**Contacts / visits:**

The collection was included in an RHS podcast on 29 April 2021. Roger delivered two webinars for other people: Garden Masterclass and a group of cut flower growers. A talk on the collection was presented to a meeting of the Chiltern Sweet Pea Society in October 2021.

The weather was perfect for four open days held in June, attracting 120 visitors. Numbers were limited to 30 per event because of prevailing Covid restrictions. Gary Firth inspected on 7 June for Plant Heritage and Clare Hogan on 11 June for APHA. A meeting of the NSPS classification sub-committee was hosted on 15 June. Three professional photographers visited the collection: Mimi Connolly, Charlie Hopkinson and Dianna Jazwinski.

Roger attended two online webinars:

17 Nov. 2021 - Pulse Crop Genetic Improvement Network meeting 2021

15 Dec. 2021 - Disease Control webinar organised by Fargo

Frequent contact with other *Lathyrus* enthusiasts around the world was maintained by email and by social media.

### **Research, shows and publicity:**

The only show attended in 2021 with blooms from the collection was the Early National Sweet Pea show at Abingdon. Apart from the research and publicity already mentioned, 2021 saw the free publication online of our Register of *Lathyrus* Epithets, which now has over 7200 entries. See: <https://www.rpsweetpeas.com/epithets/> for details. This work complements the RHS monograph but was too large for inclusion in the printed work. Online publication also allows frequent updating when novelties are introduced or old references come to light.

Our You Tube channel remains popular and now has 466 subscribers. Subscription is free and enables people to get notified each time we post a new video: <https://www.youtube.com/c/RogerParsonsSweetPeas>

### **Has the succession plan changed?**

No.

## **Introducing 'Chrissie'**

*By Graeme Hollingdale*

Most of you NSPS members will remember my late wife Chrissie, whom we lost in 2013. We were in attendance as a team, at most specialist Sweet Pea Shows in the South, Midlands, Wem, almost all the Early Nationals and even a few Lates for many years.

Obviously like many bereaved gardeners it is an ambition to have a flower named after your loved one. Initially, Roger Parsons (<https://www.rpsweetpeas.com>) very kindly mentioned that when a suitable seedling came along, that he would offer me one to consider. Obviously going through the whole hybridising process is a lengthy one, with commercial and business interests running concurrently and being rather stubborn I thought few of those that I was kindly offered to consider, would be 'quite right' (I think that I am probably not alone in having the thought in the back of my mind, that wouldn't it be great to have a 'Pea of the quality and longevity of a Spencer such as 'Gwendoline') well, perhaps.



'Chrissie'.  
*Photo by Graeme Hollingdale.*



'Chrissie'

Photo by Graeme Hollingdale

Then Phil Johnson, who has for many years been exploring the hybridising potential of the Modern Grandiflora type (which quite correctly, has huge potential not only for the general gardener but for those who perhaps only want to grow a few during the Summer, which provide plentiful supplies of cut blooms for the house, look great whilst growing and of course have a wonderfully strong perfume) mentioned a few years ago that he might have something for me to consider sooner rather later.

Now, those of you who have visited (particularly) the Early Nationals over the last decade or so, couldn't have failed to notice that Phil was staging some beautiful examples of both the Old Fashioned and Grandiflora types. In his work, he has been reselecting and cleaning

up many existing cultivars in order to not only sell under his own company name (Johnson's Sweet Peas <https://www.johnsonssweetpeas.co.uk>) but by many other specialist and general seed companies.

So, when during the beautiful weather of 2020 (which in all other respects was a horrid year of course) I was invited to visit one of Phil's sites in Essex where he was growing, for seed and re-selection, many cultivars, some as yet un-named, I really did not know quite what to expect. Massive glasshouses with rows of colour being meticulously checked and rogued by just a couple of trusted workers was the answer – a glorious sight and smell to behold!

In a separate glasshouse, there were smaller clumps all very carefully trained and labelled with some already containing early pods of crop. It was fascinating being guided around the rows to see some well-known, others less so; a few very old names interspersed with as yet un-named cultivars. Obviously, all the clumps were suitably separated so that there was no chance of any being mixed up when later, collecting seed.

After I had been shown around, I was then left to my own devices and was given the

option of a few to choose from. Two stood out but there was only one which really caught the eye for me. A lovely lavender but with clearly defined marbled veining. When you visit Phil's website and search for 'Chrissie' (click on What's New) you will notice not only a lovely photo but the description of a colour breakthrough in this category (Semi-Grandiflora). Obviously, time will tell whether this particular cultivar does in fact achieve popularity and longevity, however the examples that I grew (both Phil and I showed vases at the Early in 2021, with his, being covered, vastly superior) looked superb being grown naturally up netting, with many perfectly placed 4's (not a prerequisite for this type of course, however they do resemble smaller Spencers when in a vase or bowl) in evidence.

I have heard several members mention that they are trialling 'Chrissie' this year, good luck and I hope we some great examples on the benches this year. Remember, you can show 'Chrissie' in the Chrissie class! Thank you Phil.

## Time to change compost – for peat's sake!

*By Thorold Cox*

Times are changing with the realisation that peat bogs, although occupying 3% of the world's surface, hold as much carbon as all other vegetation on the planet. When they are disturbed by extraction operations, the surface begins to oxidise releasing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which directly is causing global warming. It has been estimated that in UK alone, degraded peatlands release 22 million tonnes of carbon each year.

In an attempt to reduce carbon release, Governments in the northern hemisphere are introducing dramatic restrictions on peat extraction and, subject to consultation, in UK a complete ban will be placed on peat usage for amateurs use in 2024, and by 2030 this will include commercial use.

Due to much research into peat-free composts, manufacturers are now producing their own types which are usually based on wood fibre and coir, the fibrous husk of coconuts. Other type are also available, including an innovative one based on sheep's wool.

Back in 2016, we in Nailsworth Rotary in Gloucestershire made contact with a local Company called Melcourt, whom we heard were producing a peat-free compost called Sylvagrow. This product was first released to professional growers in 2001 and to the amateur market in 2014. Realising that peat was not sustainable, we thought we should try going peat free with our floral troughs in the town. Melcourt kindly provided a sample of Sylvagrow to test, and it is pleasing to record that each year since we have had great success with both our Summer and Winter plant displays, and our initial scepticism has subsided by the use of this peat replacement.

Sylvagrow has been a commercial success and is now endorsed by the RHS, who now only sell plants grown in a peat-free compost. The product now holds a Royal warrant due to its use at Highgrove.

With the case for using for planting out proven, would peat-free composts be suitable for seed sowing? Encouraged by the success of 'Which' gardening (Feb 2021) who achieved good results with some peat-free composts when they sowed the small seeds of Petunia and Basil it occurred to me that larger seeds such as Sweet Peas may well be successful if I switched from my usual peat mix. I decided therefore to carry out a small, 2-replicate trial to gain experience to share with fellow members of NSPS.

The seed used was from a single batch of Spencer mix of which 30 seeds were sown in each two Rootainers on 14 October 2021. The growing media selected for the trial were as follows

- 1 EVERGREEN MULTI- PURPOSE COMPOST (100% sphagnum moss peat)
- 2 SYLVAGROW MULTI-PURPOSE (100% peat free)
- 3 SYLVAGROW GROWING MEDIUM WITH ADDED JOHN INNES (100% peat-free)
- 4 DALEFOOT WOOL COMPOST FOR SEEDS (wool , bracken & Comfrey)
- 5 NEW HORIZON ALL PLANT COMPOST (100% peat-free) NB Manufacturer states 'Not suitable for seed sowing'

Rootainers were placed on a bench in an open small open-ended polytunnel, as there was insufficient space in the cold frame due to my main sowings.

### **Results of initial germination 18.01.22-plants at 4-6 leaf stage -30 seeds /rootainer(repl)**

<b>Growing Medium</b>	<b>Replicate 1</b>	<b>Replicate 2</b>
<b>EVERGREEN</b>	25	26
<b>SYLVAGROW</b>	28	26
<b>SYLVAGROW + JI</b>	27	28
<b>DALEFOOT</b>	18	22
<b>NEW HORIZON</b>	20	14

Plants became leggy due to higher than normal temperatures so were pinched out- not my normal practice!

## Situation at 31.12.21



### Interim conclusions

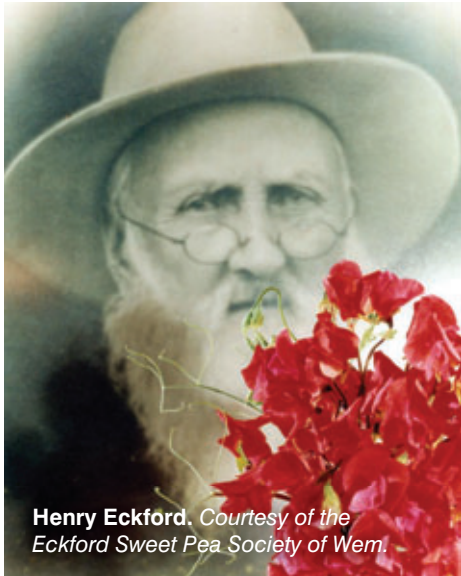
Due to the fact that this was only a look-see test and not scientifically laid out, it is not possible to read much into the above figures, except to note that the SYLVAGROW has performed as well as peat. It will be interesting to compare root growth between the composts when the Rootrainers are inspected prior to planting out in March. A final report will be produced for members later in the year. Meanwhile please help to publicise the need to go peat-free.

I am very interested to hear other members' experiences with Sweet Peas in peat free compost, if differences have been observed in different parts of the country (and world) from here in Nailsworth Gloucestershire, what products work well etc. Please do contact me with any observations you have Email: [thoroldcox41@btinternet.com](mailto:thoroldcox41@btinternet.com)



# A Review of Henry Eckford and Wem

*By Phillippa Cooper*



**Henry Eckford.** *Courtesy of the Eckford Sweet Pea Society of Wem.*



**Henry Eckford novelties.**

First of all I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who helped me with information for the Centenary Celebration. Many thanks to Caroline Ball who sent me numerous articles from NSPS Annuals dating as far back as 1920. Without them I would have found it very difficult to put together the display panels. I would also like to thank all of you who took the time to send me photographs of the specific Old Fashioned varieties that I requested in the Spring Bulletin last year. I can assure you that they were all fully acknowledged in the Wem display.

I think that it is extremely unlikely that any plans have gone ahead without severe curtailment in the past two years and that is certainly true of what I had intended for this celebration.

I attended my first (zoom) committee meeting in the Summer of 2020. As I have had an interest in growing Old Fashioned varieties since my first visit to the Eckford Sweet Pea Show at the turn of the century (the 21st century I hasten to add) and was asked if I would like to prepare something to celebrate the work of Henry Eckford.

The original plan was to start by having a floral centrepiece of 'Henry Eckford' blooms in the shape of the numerals 100 at the Malvern Spring Festival in May. John and I visited Derek Heathcote who gave us lots of advice and explained how he managed to



**Janet Hankey, Karen Good and Val Good.**

*Photo by John Cooper.*

get his blooms ready for Chelsea each year. We began sowing seeds, in limited numbers, in the second half of September. However we really don't have the facility to grow large numbers of plants under cover. Phil Johnson very kindly came to the rescue and it looked as if we would be able to start the Henry Eckford display at Malvern. Sadly the coronavirus pandemic meant that the show was cancelled.

Soon after my initial zoom NSPS committee meeting I had also outlined a possible plan to our friends in the Eckford Sweet Pea Society who were all very supportive. The Town Hall was suggested as a suitable venue. I contacted the staff at Wem Town Hall to see if they would be interested in hosting a floral and historical display during July 2021. The response was extremely positive. Unfortunately it was not possible to visit the Town Hall in person (due to the pandemic) but the measurements of the downstairs gallery area were emailed across to me. Sadly I don't have the ability to visualise the actual size of something unless I can visit in person. We did have to wait quite a while until the Town Hall was open, on a very restricted basis. At the first "site visit" I took along the mock up versions of my display only to find that they were dwarfed by the size of the area! Fortunately Rose Horner and her team at the Town Hall offered to enlarge the panels and alter to a Victorian style which was more in keeping with the text. I am delighted to say that the Eckford Society was happy to cover all of the costs involved.

The plants that had been sown in September (never again I hasten to say) germinated very well except for 'Miss Willmott'. The weather during the Spring of 2021 was so unpredictable, the variation in temperature and rainfall during just a few weeks was truly amazing. Even my undercover plants would not have been ready for Malvern even if it had gone ahead.

'Henry Eckford' proved to be slow growing and stubborn compared to all of the other varieties. This tends to happen every year but I can't imagine that it is due to our heavy clay soil. By the second half of June the blooms were at their peak and we were lucky not to suffer from any aphid attack prior to the dates of the display.

I finally decided on 10 varieties to use in the traditional china vases that are familiar to all of you who have exhibited at Wem in the past. The varieties were:

'America', 'Cupani', 'Dorothy Eckford', 'Flora Norton', 'Lord Nelson', 'Mrs Collier', 'Painted Lady', 'Prima Donna', 'Queen Alexandra' and 'Senator'.



**Creating the display at Wem.**  
Photos by Phillippa Cooper.



**Display at Wem.**

I wanted to represent the varieties described in the historical panels along with some of the most striking varieties hybridised by Henry Eckford himself.

Arranging the flowers on the 9 July caused great interest in the town and we had lots of visitors asking about the display. The weather was extremely hot that weekend and



Display at Wem.

so we decided to move everything away from direct sunlight. The Mayor of Wem, Councillor Peter Broomhall officially opened the display on the 10 July and I was delighted that many members of the Eckford Sweet Pea Committee, including Val Good MBE were able to join us. Barrie Eckford very kindly brought along a large selection of the medals awarded to Henry Eckford to supplement the display.

The third weekend in July has always been the traditional date of the show in Wem so John and I travelled back to replace all of the blooms. The Eckford committee then took over the replenishment of the flowers for us. I am pleased to say that the text panels and photographs remained on show throughout July and August and

we received many complimentary comments. When we were assisting Julia Beardmore and her team at Tatton on an extremely hot day in July we had quite a number of enquiries about the Eckford Sweet Pea Society Show in Wem and whether it would be taking place again in the future.

Throughout the process of producing the display we had hoped that it would, once again, raise the profile of the Eckford Sweet Pea Show with the residents of Wem.

### Looking forward to 2022

I am delighted to say that in November 2021 an inaugural joint committee meeting was held in Wem Town Hall to start planning the Wem Sweet Pea Festival 2022. It is really exciting that Rose Horner and other Town Hall staff have committed to hosting the show. Fortunately we have a good number of the Eckford Committee who are able to advise on financial and planning aspects, however, none of us have ever held the role of show manager! The date of the show will be the weekend of 25 - 26 June. This is earlier than the usual Eckford Show but we sincerely hope that all of you who have supported us

in the past will come along to make this event a success. This year we will be keeping the schedule to the same format as in previous years as we felt it was too much of a job to change everything for our first attempt at organising such an event. The Town Hall will be open overnight on Friday 24 June and we hope to see as many familiar faces as possible. We will be using both floors of the Town Hall with Floral Art on the first floor.

Packing away everything at the end of the 2019 show was quite emotional, an end of an era. All of us on the joint committee hope that this is the start of a new and exciting phase of keeping the memory of Henry Eckford and his work alive in the town that he made famous. In Wem Baptist Church there is a plaque under the stained glass window that reads:

Henry Eckford, born 1823 died 1905

*"His love of Sweet Peas  
His intuition and his skills  
Brought flowers of great beauty  
To Wem and the World"*



**Spencers on the benches at Wem.** Photo by Phillippa Cooper.



Memories of Wem shows past. *Photos by Phillippa Cooper.*





**'Promise'**. Photo by Darren Myers.

# Sweet Pea History

*By Alison Shreeve*



Having seen the email correspondence arising from a query about an NSPS medal in the Bulletin last year I contacted my partner's sister regarding their grandfather, Sidney Horton, who had died before any of his grandchildren were born. After The Great War he was in business with his brother, Laurie, running a nursery specialising in roses and Sweet Peas near Wolverhampton. After some kind of family falling out in the 1920s Sidney left and set up on his own.

Between November 1926 and 1951 he was head gardener to Mrs N M Richards at Cerrig Llwydion Hall in Denbighshire, where he had a team of seven gardeners.

With Rogers Parson's expertise and access to the NSPS archives we have found out more about Sidney's exploits. He was a member of the NSPS until 1947, with a short gap. The grandchildren have several medals and some photographs which indicate that he was a very successful grower and exhibitor. In 1930 he won a silver medal for Class 2 at the NSPS show in Bakewell. Records unfortunately don't tell us what the class consisted of, but there was one NSPS show in London and two smaller shows that year, Bakewell and Southsea.

In July 1938 he entered the NSPS show in London on behalf of his employer and won the Sutton Gold Cup. The Early National Show still has a Sutton Class which requires 9 vases of 15 stems. It may have been a similar large class in 1938. The photograph shows him



Medal 1939.



Silver Medal.



outside Cerrig Llwydion Hall with the cup. Where the cup is now, we don't know as these were abandoned about 30 years ago and replaced with Crystal prizes. He won other prizes; the three sectioned silver-plated vase is thought by the family to be one of these.

On 20 July 1939 he won a gold medal which must have been one of the last Sweet Pea shows before the outbreak of war.



**Sidney with Cup.**



**Sidney with Sweet Pea Cordons**



**Silver Plated Vase.**

He was reputed to have been a breeder of Sweet Peas as well and the family tradition has it that there are three named firstly for his employer, 'Mrs Richards', one called 'Bobby' and one called 'Dilys' for his daughter. Roger has not found any trace of these in the records though, but they may only have been grown locally by friends and family.

The photographs show him in the garden possibly layering his Sweet Peas, one with his son Dennis, as a very young addition to the team of gardeners at the hall. Dennis was also briefly a member of NSPS and has been a keen grower too.

## A budding Sweet Pea grower?

*By Julia Beardmore*

Last summer my granddaughter Ave commandeered my 2021 Annual, At 16 months she flicks through to find 'Grandma's photo', then next she searches for the 'Doggy', Caroline's dog Poppy. Amazingly the book is still in decent condition, but well thumbed through. Let's hope I can keep her interested.



**Ave looking for Grandma.**  
*Photos by Julia Beardmore.*



# Promoting Peas to the Public

*By Jim Hill*

The world, and everyone in it, has been changed by Covid. Only time will tell the long term effects to us all, our activities, and general society.

One change that I found myself thrown into was the role of the Garden Centre. When “normal” lifestyle was locked down, or dangerous, the Garden Centre became an outlet, an escape, for many for the first time. The word BUSY is not a big enough word to explain it. Starting a job at a small privately owned one in March 2021 was a shock, challenge, and delight. To such an extent I am still trying to take it in nine months later. Having done an apprenticeship in the retail trade years ago I thought I was well placed to sell Peas to the Public, among thousands of other plants of course. How wrong I was. I had done a few NSPS stands at Malvern, events at local garden clubs, and horticultural society shows. So I looked at my new job as an opportunity to continue to promote, which it was. However, the public was not the same.

Of course many customers are Sweet Pea growers, with years of experience. Introducing newcomers, who had no gardening knowledge at all, or had tried and failed, was a real challenge, made worse by the way Sweet Peas are marketed. Overcrowded in small pots, sold much too late in the season. I found myself torn by selling plants I would never buy myself. My defence is that people were keen to buy and try and I was able to give advice to happy customers. As I prepare for another season in my job I am hoping to get feedback from last year’s customers. Wishing to see beginners return to Sweet Peas, and develop into them more, with all the benefits that brings with it.

Time will tell if last year’s surge of new customers across the country will create a surge of new Sweet Pea growers, which in time will create a surge of new “serious “ Sweet Pea growers. That would be a positive change, started by the Covid lockdown.

Meanwhile I prepare to ‘Promote Peas to the Public’ again, in all their glorious variety (that is both Peas and Public!).

# Scented Ironies

*By Keith Hammett*

It is probably safe to say that of the senses, sight is the primary means by which humans experience the world. It is hard for us with adequate sight to imagine how the world appears to a blind person who relies on sound and touch. It is even more difficult for us to imagine how a dog, whose sense of smell is many orders of magnitude greater than ours, perceives the world.

Both the common name Sweet Pea and its Latin name *Lathyrus odoratus*, refer to the scent it produces. I have long thought it ironic that strength of scent has never been a criterion in the judging guidelines for competitive shows for Sweet Peas, although I appreciate the logistic difficulties that this would entail. (Irony number 1).

A quick survey of Sweet Pea books published over the last 120 years reveals scant consideration of scent. Graham Rice has been the only author to devote a chapter to fragrance. If mentioned at all in earlier books, discussion centred on intensity or whether or not modern Sweet Peas were losing their scent.

It has long been recognised by the scent, food and wine industries that certain individuals have an enhanced ability to detect and quantify different flavour or aroma notes. Major Turral, who did much to preserve ancestral Sweet Pea cultivars, must have been one such. For example in his 1965 RHS article, he describes the scent of 'Mrs Collier' as being similar to the vanilla-scent of *Clematis montana*.

I am unaware of whether anyone has ever previously, specifically set out to breed to enhance or intensify scent in Sweet Peas, whilst not worrying about other criteria. Certainly not in the last half-century when the majority of breeding has been focussed on the show bench in the UK.

Personally, I have for all intents and purposes lost my sense of smell. Notwithstanding, following the success of 'High Scent', I started a breeding programme to enhance scent. (Irony number 2).

In doing this I recognised that I would need assistance in making selections. Initially I envisaged simply asking visitors for an opinion. Serendipitously I discovered that wine expert Joshua Hall has a fine and trained nose, plus long experience. He is able to identify different scent notes that give individual cultivars their own scent profile.

Joshua is acutely aware of the factors complicating our ability to identify scents and their intensity, as outlined by Phil Johnson in his article in the 2020 Sweet Pea Annual. Consequently, Joshua is able to determine the optimum times and conditions when to undertake his sniffings.

It is one thing to be able to detect aroma notes, but another to link those notes with specific chemicals. Early work was carried out at the University of Stirling and the first results published in 1999. Just three cultivars were analysed and 48 volatile compounds were identified. Subsequent work indicated that scent was produced by the standard and wing petals, but not the keel petals.

Technology advances very rapidly, especially in the field of molecular genetics. The rapid development of vaccines to combat Covid-19 is testament to this.

In 2020 Professor Quentin Cronk and his team of international colleagues (Bao et al) published a major work that looked at 7 cultivars of Sweet Pea and identified 43 quantifiable floral terpene compounds, 6 of which were present in all 7 cultivars. Roger Parsons and Quentin summarised this work most eloquently and succinctly in the 2021 Sweet Pea Annual.

The study did not include scent detection (sensory evaluation) by a trained sniffer, so no correlation could be made between the perceived scent of each cultivar and the chemical compounds that made up that scent. However the scent of many of the individual components is well known. For instance, Linalool is recorded as smelling like coriander, while Ocimene is said to smell of basil.



Semidwarf Sweet Pea 'Carmel' from the Jetset series. Photo by Roger Parsons.

Intensity of scent perception is another question. Is it the total concentration of chemical components in each cultivar or the specific balance between components?

The third irony lies in the observation that "the highest levels of fragrance were found in fully open flowers, rather than at more juvenile stages of opening". Because humans find the scent of Sweet Peas to be pleasant there is a tendency to assume that scent has evolved to attract insect pollinators. For a plant where self-pollination occurs two days before a flower is open, this makes no sense.

One explanation might be that as the Sweet Pea evolved to become self pollinating, scent became vestigial, like outer human ears\*. However, when one discovers that Linalool, a major component of Sweet Pea scent, is registered in the USA as an insecticide, we might conclude that rather than being attractive, it might be repellent to predatory insects? Junker et al 2010, support this hypothesis.

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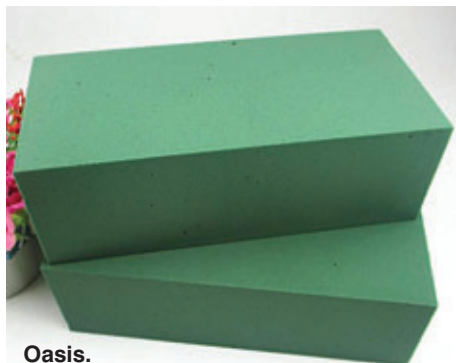
\* I doubt that outer human ears evolved to support spectacles or face masks.

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# Alternatives to Oasis

*By Caroline Ball*



**Oasis.**

A lot has already been printed about the decision, I might say somewhat forced on the Society, by the RHS to lose Oasis as a staging material in our shows. In reality it is a medium that we have only taken to using copiously at Society shows for just over 20 years. Whilst it is convenient and flexible the downsides are the impact on the environment, leaving behind microparticles and taking some time to decompose. Despite a lot of lobbying the RHS would not be shifted in their ban for the NSPS

2022 shows so it is something we all have to live with, if we are going to show, however much we dislike it, and yes there are a lot of us who do dislike it.

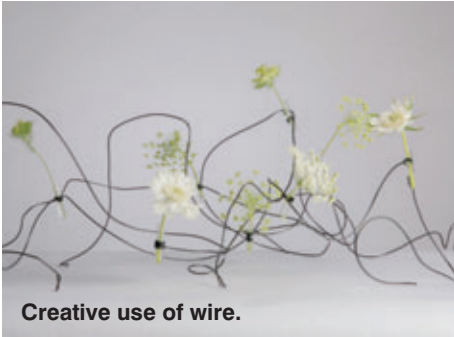
However, we are an inventive and adaptable bunch so many have already started to think about alternatives to the use of Oasis. This article is not going to cover the ground already well covered in the Bulletins about alternatives for staging vases, save to say when I started showing Sweet Peas in the early 1990s no one used Oasis, everyone used reeds/rushes and there was discontent when moving away from this staging material was necessary. Sounds familiar? Instead the focus of this article is some thoughts on how to stage decorative exhibits of Sweet Peas sustainably ie without Oasis.

Good floral artists are highly creative and took Oasis to their hearts because of its huge adaptability enabling imaginations to fly. However arranging flowers creatively dates back to way before the invention of Oasis in 1954!

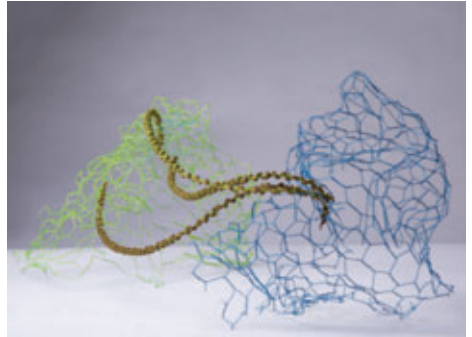
Wire of all types is a massively flexible medium for replacing Oasis. Indeed scrunched up chicken wire was the first thing I tried. It will nicely hold many



**Use of a container with wire.**



**Creative use of wire.**



traditional types of arrangements and is perfect for any of the 'bowl' decorative classes in the NSPS schedule. Think about the way you would use Oasis in such a class. Most of us would not fill the entire bowl with Oasis and therefore you might find using a container within a container, the smaller containing your chicken wire, works very well indeed and will effectively hold your flowers and foliage in way that is very similar to Oasis. Wire can of course be incorporated into the arrangement itself to stunning effect.



**Pin holder.**

When I attended my first flower arranging classes the first task of that first lesson was to make a simple arrangement with five irises using a pin holder. Pin holders are a weighted mechanic with sharp upright metal pins that support the stems. They are inexpensive to buy, come in different sizes and are easy to use.

Pin holders would be eminently suitable for classes like the Sydenham class for 7 stems. Other media that could be used effectively with Sweet Peas include moss (collected from sustainable sources only), stems to act as a support network and even tape (see images).

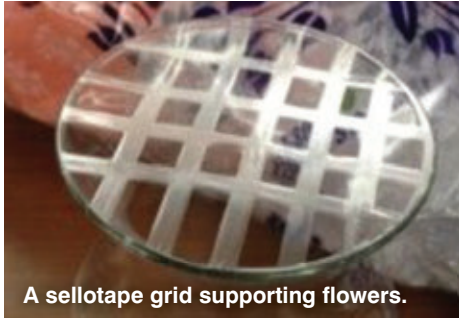
We have already completed a number of displays, pre and post covid times, without Oasis; The Royal Welsh, Kent Garden show, the RHS plant Societies show in 2019 and of course the RHS Tatton stand in 2021.



**Using a pin holder.**



**Moss.**



**A sellotape grid supporting flowers.**



**Self supporting flowers and tape.**

A number of different mechanics were used for these displays including water retaining crystals, gypsophila and foliage to act as support and agrawool.

The inspiration for the Kent and RHS Specialist Plant Societies displays in small glass vases were from the early part of the 20th century by seed merchants such as Carters.

As can be seen from this very brief review there are many ways to create stunning decorative arrangements without the use of Oasis and I've not even mentioned sand, gravel, pebbles, fruit, twigs, flower frogs..... Why not spend some enjoyable time experimenting when your garden starts to bloom and bring your wonderful creative ideas to the Society shows in 2022?



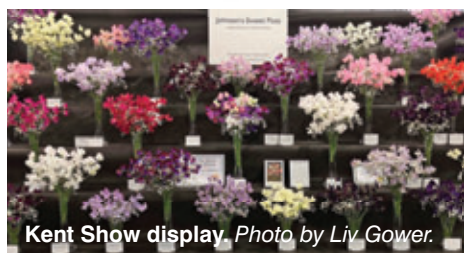
**Early 20th Century display.**



**Kent display by Johnson's Sweet Peas.**



**Royal Welsh display.**  
*Photo by Lewis Morgan.*



**Kent Show display.** *Photo by Liv Gower.*



**RHS Specialist Plant Society display.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

## Oasis

*By Dave Rollinson*

It's never been easy staging 15 stems in a standard Sweet Pea vase, although I'm not growing them anymore. I think an ideal substitute would be heavy, fine clay. Vases could be made up in advance of the show then the heavy, fine clay would add weight and retain moisture.

# Open Days

*By Fran Armitage*



**Roger Parsons Sweet Pea Open Day.**  
*Photo by Fran Armitage.*

At the start of 2021, in tandem with our commercial seed sales, we turned our thinking to June and the prospect of our four Open Days. At this point all four dates were nearly sold out with a boom in sales just before Christmas as tickets were procured as presents.

Covid was still very much with us and we had plenty of deliberating to do. A lot of hard work goes into behind the scenes and it is very disheartening to have to

cancel, as we did in 2020. So, with customer safety at the forefront of our minds we pushed forward with organisation, with our fingers firmly crossed!

Weather leading up to the event was mixed and we wondered if the Peas would be at their best. Thankfully, we got a break in both COVID lock down restrictions and the weather and things worked out well. The Peas were looking good and we had stunning weather on the day for our 120 guests. Numbers were limited to 30 per event because of prevailing Covid restrictions but this also meant that everyone in the polytunnel could



**'Leamington'.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**'Apricot Queen'.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**'Clotted Cream'.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

**Some of the varieties on display at the Open Day.**

hear Roger perfectly when he did his tour. There was plenty of time before and after the tour for a more informal stroll around the Peas, chat to Roger and refreshments.

Post event, we enjoyed a lot of very positive feedback and I feel privileged to have been able to share our wonderful Peas with some of you. Sadly, we are not planning any events during 2022 due to Roger's new commitments in the judging of Trials at Wisley and show managership for the Early National show.



**Roger Parsons Sweet Pea Open Day.**  
*Photo by Fran Armitage.*



**'Earl Grey'.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**'Gypsy Queen'.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

## Marbled or Veined Sweet Peas

*By Roger Parsons*



**'Audrey Kirkman'.**  
*Photo by Roger Parsons.*

Our system of classification includes marbled Sweet Peas in category 16b Fancy (Flaked or Marbled). Almost all those listed are flaked. The only one currently listed which is marbled is 'Audrey Kirkman'. This variety is almost identical to 'Sonia' but has longer stems and more flowers per stem. 'Sonia' often only produces three flowers per stem but 'Audrey Kirkman' consistently produces fours. The latter arose from a cross between 'Sonia' and 'Roy Lacey'.

In 2021, the classification sub-committee had an opportunity to inspect flowers of 'Audrey Kirkman' growing alongside other cultivars with prominent veining, including 'Marion', 'Kings Ransom' and the soon to be introduced 'Ian Myers'. This led us to review whether the current categorisation of marbled cultivars is correct.

My understanding of the distinctions between striped, flaked and marbled Sweet Peas arose from an article by Keith Hammett in the 1988 Annual. He said:

"Marbled and veined types are.... well understood genetically. The terms "marbled" and "veined" appears to mean the same thing. Here the pigment occurs in veins which give the flower a "marbled" appearance. They are easily distinguished as.... the underside of the wings and the keel remain unpigmented in marbled cultivars."

In 1925, the geneticist R C Punnett described the marbled character as arising from a recessive gene. He said:

".... The colour is broken up by finely divided white "marbling"..... Another peculiar feature of the marbled is that the keel and the under surface of wings are white. In darker varieties at any rate this serves to distinguish it from flaked forms such as 'Senator'."

In his research, the marbled cultivar used by Punnett was 'Helen Pierce'. A black and white photograph of this appears in Walter Wright's 1909 book and a colour painting in Carters' 1907 seed catalogue. These clearly show the underside of the wings and keel

**CARTERS' LARGE-FLOWERED SWEET PEAS.**  
(See Coloured Photograph opposite.)

1914	<b>Hon. Mrs. E. Kingston</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 1) - Colour deep green, but lower approach to yellow just beneath	26. 10, 26. 2
1914	<b>Helen Pierce</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 4) - Colour light blue washed on pure white. It runs down and towards the standard on the inside, all of which has one leg. The veins are unusually long and the standard of good size	26. 10, 26. 3
1914	<b>Duchess of Westminster</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 2) - Standard washed with very pink, on very long wings, sometimes being so much so as hardly to touch when well grown	26. 10, 26. 4
1914	<b>Mrs. Geo. Wigglesworth, Junr.</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 3) - Standard almost a pure pale blue	26. 10, 26. 5
1914	<b>King Edward</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 5) - Bright yellow, with a few green veins	26. 10, 26. 6
1914	<b>Mrs. Fitzgerald</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 6) - Delicate cream, washed all over a fine light brown, generally about 1/2 inch	26. 10, 26. 7
1914	<b> Evelyn Spald</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 7) - The delicate standard bears the jet blackness. It may be raised a self-pigeon, having rich orange standard, with wings still a little tinged, giving a rich deep orange or deep cream colour to the whole flower	26. 10, 26. 8
1914	<b>Othello</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 8) - Dark cream, the standard hardly slightly to the wings on white, with half of a light shade	26. 10, 26. 9
1914	<b> Gladys Urquhart</b> (see Coloured Photograph opposite), 26. 9) - Blue a very large flower, but with striking upright standard washed with broad wings, taking pure rose pink about 2/3 of the long lower wings on with four lines	26. 10, 26. 10
1914	<b>Dorothy Eckford</b> - The finest white variety, with no markings whatever on wings or keel, but with striking upright standard washed with broad wings, taking pure rose pink about 2/3 of the long lower wings on with four lines	26. 10, 26. 11
1914	<b>Agnes Johnson</b> - Blue pink standard, wings cream, washed over pink	26. 10, 26. 12
1914	<b>Baldy</b> - Cheering white flower, with pink edge	26. 10, 26. 13
1914	<b>Flora Norton</b> - A very pure light self blue split standard	26. 10, 26. 14
1914	<b>Mrs. H. G. Fritschke</b> - A lovely shade of deep cream, with a show of pale blue. The standard shows no trace of long veins, all about the halve, being a long percentage of blue and best genetically disposed	26. 10, 26. 15
1914	<b>Udaque</b> - A perfectly distinct variety in the subject as blue variety. The blue being a pale blue with a white ground. Lightly recommended by the R.F.P.C.	26. 10, 26. 16
1914	<b>White Wonder</b> - An American variety, with blue and fine lines on long wings, and moderate double flower	26. 10, 26. 17
1914	<b>The above varieties, in mixtures, give pure pink, 26. 10, 26. 18, 26. 19, 26. 20, 26. 21, 26. 22, 26. 23, 26. 24, 26. 25, 26. 26, 26. 27, 26. 28, 26. 29, 26. 30, 26. 31, 26. 32, 26. 33, 26. 34, 26. 35, 26. 36, 26. 37, 26. 38, 26. 39, 26. 40, 26. 41, 26. 42, 26. 43, 26. 44, 26. 45, 26. 46, 26. 47, 26. 48, 26. 49, 26. 50, 26. 51, 26. 52, 26. 53, 26. 54, 26. 55, 26. 56, 26. 57, 26. 58, 26. 59, 26. 60, 26. 61, 26. 62, 26. 63, 26. 64, 26. 65, 26. 66, 26. 67, 26. 68, 26. 69, 26. 70, 26. 71, 26. 72, 26. 73, 26. 74, 26. 75, 26. 76, 26. 77, 26. 78, 26. 79, 26. 80, 26. 81, 26. 82, 26. 83, 26. 84, 26. 85, 26. 86, 26. 87, 26. 88, 26. 89, 26. 90, 26. 91, 26. 92, 26. 93, 26. 94, 26. 95, 26. 96, 26. 97, 26. 98, 26. 99, 26. 100</b>	

**NOVELTIES FOR 1906-7.**

1915	<b>Helen Lewis</b> (large standard) - Large broad wing, orange standard and pink wings and the standard more rounded than in the Queen Alexandra	26. 11, 26. 1
1915	<b>Queen Alexandra</b> - Standard self washed	26. 11, 26. 2
1915	<b>Emchardness</b> - Standard and wings beautifully filled, light rose pink	26. 11, 26. 3
1915	<b>Wara Urquhart</b> - Blue half very standard to single double, a pure white	26. 11, 26. 4
1915	<b>Mrs. Alfred Wiggins</b> - Deep standard, colour much like the old variety, pure pink	26. 11, 26. 5
1915	<b>Frank Dobby</b> - Pale blue, some shade to Lady Cecil Standard, but very much longer	26. 11, 26. 6
1915	<b>E. J. Castle</b> - Very rich standard, a striking effect, especially in selfed form	26. 11, 26. 7

The above varieties are not set out packed in general or selfed packets.



Carters 1907 catalogue.

are white. The other aspect which strikes me is that the colour pattern of 'Helen Pierce' is not the same as the veining we see in 'Audrey Kirkman'. 'Helen Pierce' has fine veining on a white ground rather like the colour pattern we see in striped cultivars. 'Audrey Kirkman' has prominent darker veins in the petals with no white showing apart

from the underside of the wings and keel. 'Marion' and others classified with the selfs have similar prominent veining to 'Audrey Kirkman' but lack the white pigment on the underside of wings and keel.

I have yet to identify the origin of the term "veined". 'Helen Pierce' was introduced in 1905 and appears in early classification lists as the only cultivar listed in the "marbled" category. In the 1912 Annual, it was joined by a second cultivar 'May Campbell' and the name of the category changed to "marbled and watered". It remained under this name until its last appearance in the 1928 Annual when the two cultivars listed in this category were 'May Campbell' and 'Birdbrook'. The colour of 'Birdbrook' was described as "chocolate marbled on a grey ground, deeper on the back of the standard".



HELEN PIERCE.  
Veined blue, one of the most distinct and valuable of Sweet Peas for the garden.



Following a period with no classification list, a new classification list published in 1971 and compiled by Keith Hammett included marbled, veined, flushed and tricoloured cultivars in a “Fancy” category. Recent discussion with Keith Hammett suggests “veined” had simply arisen as a new term to describe marbled cultivars. The 1971 list is unhelpful because the Fancy category includes flushes and all the Unwins Stripes while a separate “Striped” category includes ‘Orange Flash’, which is flaked.

So where does all this leave us in terms of classifying existing varieties? It seems to me that while 'Sonia' and 'Audrey Kirkman' have a white keel and underside of wings, this is the only thing which distinguishes them from quite a few cultivars which have darker veining in the petals. I am concerned that the colour pattern of these two cultivars is not the same as the marbled character studied by Punnett because they do not have white marbling. All cultivars have veins in the petals; the issue is if and by how much these are deeper in colour than the ground colour. If we wish to retain the current category of marbled, how deep in colour do the veins need to be to qualify for this category? My instinct is to delete the marbled category and re-classify 'Sonia' and 'Audrey Kirkman' in another colour category. What do others think?

Those wishing to explore further the genetics of stripes, flaked and marbled colour patterns should consider Keith Hammett's 2017 article in which he introduces a fourth type named "motley".

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# A Rogue Breeder

*By Phil Johnson*

Like quite a number of members, I have dabbled in Sweet Pea breeding. I was first encouraged some years ago by Andrew Beane, becoming infected by his enthusiasm. As I am sure Andrew will agree, breeding programmes can soon get out of hand and growing the progeny each year can easily take up more and more space. When I took over at Seedlynx, John Macefield told me that breeding programmes were akin to "organised rubbish disposal". You certainly have to be ruthless and a broad knowledge of existing cultivars certainly helps when it comes to the selection process.

In 2014, I made five different crosses with a number of purposes in mind, most of them still to be fulfilled! I am still working with many of these lines, patience is a virtue! On the one hand, something new and unexpected can arise and on the other, your original goal sometimes fails to materialise. But waiting for those first blooms still gives such a thrill.



**'Platinum Jubilee'.**  
*Photos by Phil Johnson.*

In our seed crops, I always take a close look at any rogues that appear each year. If they look too similar or identical to existing cultivars, they are simply removed so as not to contaminate the seed crop. Any promising, distinctly different, types are labelled and hopefully a few pods harvested at the end of the season. If I have the space, some of these are grown out the following year. But I nearly always take the view that if they “come true” in that first year, they are merely rogue seeds of existing cultivars and are removed at this stage. This is very important as duplication of cultivars is unnecessary and confusing for all growers.

However, sometimes a rogue seed in a previously true stock appears and when grown on the following year

behaves as a segregating population and splits into many different variants. Breeders such as John Macefield, Roger Parsons and Keith Hammett would be better able to explain the technicalities than I.

As an example, this happened to me in 2015 in a stock of 'Naomi Nazareth'. I had grown this line for a number of years and this was the first time that a rogue had appeared – purple striped Spencer type. I saved seed from this plant and from the progeny in 2016, I individually saved, two different purple stripes and two pale blue stripes. 2017 and three of these lines were discarded leaving just the progeny of one of the pale blue stripes. This time – two pale blue, maroon, dark blue, mauve and pale mauve – all stripes. I had selected this line for the profusion of flowers rather than increased size or vigour. Many of my Sweet Pea breeding goals are based around types that easily produce a profusion of flowers for the average gardener to grow. In



2018, most of these lines were still segregating but one of the pale blue stripes appeared to be fixed. In subsequent years, this has continued to be stable.

At our trials, it was spotted by Marshalls / Unwins and has been launched by them as "Platinum Jubilee" to mark her Majesty's seventy years on the throne.

I am very pleased to say that there is renewed interest in Sweet Pea breeding from a number of the well-known packet seed companies. Last year, we identified five new cultivars which will be bulked up for introduction in the near future. This year, we already have a similar number coming along. It takes many years to bring a new cultivar to market, but the thrill of seeing your "baby" launched to fellow gardeners is quite something!

## The Challenge of Growing Sweet Peas in Alberta

*By Diana Calder*

We are struggling through Canadian global warming the best we can. It has been -40°, now we are getting tropical spell of -18°, ha ha, the snow is blowing hard, visibility is under 20 feet. The snowdrifts are turning to concrete. They are already about 15 feet high.

2021 was a brutally difficult year for the Sweet Peas. It began quite well, good germination, good early growth, and it looked promising. We had occasional spells of cold but with the help of bubble wrap and a heater in the greenhouse for occasional off days, it did look quite promising.

Then in May, the trail of bluebird nest boxes remained quite empty. Only rare glimpses of the precious little birds were being reported. No one's nest boxes were occupied, did they know something we didn't? Then in the last bit of the month it got unbearably hot, but I have recorded -24 for May 20, but no rainfall at all.



**Bowl of 'Pink Cupid'.**  
Photo by Diana Calder.

It remained extremely dry, and most of June was over 40° above, and that was outside the greenhouses. The pastures became crunchy. So much for June, our wettest soggiest month. All the Sweet Pea pots were hidden out of the wind and in any shade that



**'Spanish Dancer'.**  
Photo by Diana Calder.

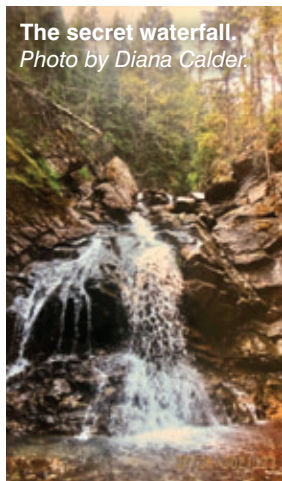
could be found, but they were not happy. There was barely any hay crop to cut at all, and now in January farmers are getting desperate.

Sweet Peas sales were quite good, all considering. Having saved some seed myself last year, some had not grown up to be what was expected though. I had been as careful as possible, but have lots more respect for seed producers and the job they

do now. I blame the bees rather than my lack of expertise.

It had to happen, I got accosted by the virulent 'anti masker brigade'. They were quite affronted when they were told they could get off the property, right quick. I put up a new sign saying 'I don't care what your excuse is. Go Away!' It seemed to do the trick; I suppose you just can't legislate for pure stupidity.

Blasting unrelenting heat continued. The tomatoes and cucumbers came much earlier than usual, and I actually got to enjoy some good meals of sweetcorn, quite unheard of this close to the mountains. It may never happen again.



**The secret waterfall.**  
Photo by Diana Calder.



**Smokey mountains, dry river bed to secret waterfall.**  
Photo by Diana Calder.

There were over 200 fires in British Columbia across the mountains to our west, and by mid July a thick billowing choking smoke was upon us. All the garden and the Sweet Peas went quite dormant. We couldn't breathe either. The town of Lytton in BC, at that point the hottest spot in North America, burned completely to the ground when a train sparked a grass fire along the tracks.

Watering was done in the evening, or in the very early morning, and the rest of the day was spent hiding from the oppressive heat. Watering was the total focus of existence of every day, the Sweet Peas in shade did much better than the ones in the sun, even though it was continually obliterated by smoke.

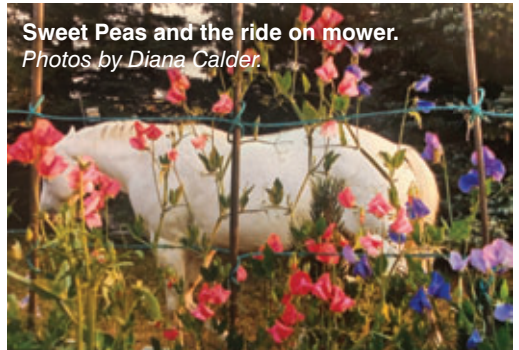
The end of July I got to escape for a ride into the mountains, when it cooled down to 33°. We followed a totally dry river bed valley to the most lovely waterfall, for lunch, where I think every bird in the area had gathered. Down below us the water disappeared underground. We could not see any of the mountains, and all the Fall flowers were blooming early in desperation.



**2021 Sweet Pea Challenge.**  
*Photos by Diana Calder.*



We tried to do another Sweet Peas Challenge, our little Sweet Peas Show, and everyone salvaged every bloom they could find, but we only got a third of the entries compared to last year. Still, we did what we could, and still got lots of interest. As no two years are ever alike, we hope that more people will continue to grow Sweet Peas, despite everything.



There are some advantages of course, I only had to mow the lawn once the whole year, and after that the equine mower excelled, and only once crept off and went down the neighbour's driveway to better pickings.

By July, many people on wells started to have problems. When I filled up the bath tub



**Fall colour at writing on Stone Park,  
Southern Alberta. Photos by Diana Calder.**

and found pondweed and crud, I had no choice but to stop watering, and had to bring in tanks of water for the horses and hens, and gallon jugs of water for the house. Anything not essential had to be abandoned. The big pots of Sweet Peas by the house struggled on with whatever water could be spared. Just when people started to get out on travel a bit and wanted to come and see the Sweet

Peas, they were sorely disappointed and so was I. Customers who live in the city who were not even on water restrictions, and did not understand that rural people had to rely on wells that were going dry, or water tankers if there was somewhere to put it.

After all this desperation, we got a hard frost in mid August, which was the final death blow. The large cracks that appeared in the ground during summer are still there now in January. All we can hope for is that as things thaw in the spring, and the usual dumps of wet snow we get then, will resolve the situation.

Over Christmas I got a diagnosis of colon cancer, and was lucky to get it removed mid January. As I write this I feel like I was run over by a snowplough, but feeling a bit better by the day. Thank goodness this happened before planting season, which will be somewhat delayed. I have had to cut down, and tried to restrict myself in what I wanted to do. We'll see how this plan goes, but Spring is almost in the air.

Thank goodness it would be most unusual to get two years alike weatherwise in this part of the world reminds me of the saying 'Some of us are weatherwise, and some of us are otherwise.' Happy seasons and lots of Sweet Peas to all.

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into the RHS venues at Wisley and Harlow Carr during the  
NSPS shows, whether you are showing or not.

# All Our Yesterdays

## 115 YEARS AGO:

### **From 1907 Sweet Pea Annual Picking and Packing Sweet Peas for Exhibition**

*By Chas W Breadmore*

The picking and packing of the Sweet Peas usually brings the actual growers work to a close, so far as those flowers are concerned; henceforward matters rest largely with those that have to arrange the blooms.

It has always been my practice to have the blooms as dry as possible when gathered. I usually pick sprays with two well-developed flowers and one bud. The stems are then put in water in a dry, cool shed for six or seven hours, and during that time they absorb enough moisture to last them during their journey to the show.

The flowers are packed in large, well-ventilated boxes, in which are two trays, thus allowing for three layers; they are packed closely to prevent movement during transit, this is the last work before railing. The ends of the sprays are tied in very soft tissue paper, as this prevents evaporation; it will be found that the Sweet Peas have absorbed enough moisture during their stay in water to carry them well through any reasonable journey.

The flowers that I took to Ulverston in July last were out of water 14 hours and travelled by rail over 300 miles, and yet they came out to greet the judges in a very winning mood 48 hours after they were picked in far away Sutton Scotney.

I should say that if there is the prospect of a storm it is far better to pick the flowers dry and early than risk the chance of being wet, and heating in transit. In the latter case, on opening the box one finds the flowers looking as though someone had very carefully ironed them. I had that experience at a National exhibition in 1905. We had showery weather for three or four days before the Show, and I was compelled to pick the flowers when I should have preferred not; they were put to dry as carefully as possible, but on arrival in London they were as flat as the proverbial ditch water, so my hopes of many months were cruelly dashed aside, and there were no records broken that year by me.

When taken out of the box and bunched up I like the flowers to give out to dry crisp sound when handled, and then I know they are firm enough to go through the exhibition ordeal safely.

**100 YEARS AGO:****From 1922 NSPS Annual  
Present and Future***By Chas Unwin*

Do you think Sweet Peas are losing their popularity? Many of us have heard queries to this effect during the last year or two, and perhaps some, who are not fairly well informed, have wondered. I am sure that our flower still ranges as high, or higher, in public favour than ever, and will try and give convincing proof of my opinion for the benefit of any who may have been doubtful.

In the first place, there is no flower to rival it in the essential qualities and none to completely fill its place. Its comparative cheapness, ease of culture, the diversity of its colouring, lengthy blooming period, profuseness of flowering, extraordinary response to good cultivation and its usefulness for both indoor and outdoor decoration, have made it the flower of the million. During War time, all flowers were displaced, to a certain extent, to make room for more material crops. I readily grant, too, that the 'fever interest', which followed the advent of the Spencer type of Sweet Pea, has waned somewhat, but this is, perhaps, more of a blessing than otherwise.

I have no actual figures, but I'm sure there is, at the present time, a much larger acreage of Sweet Peas grown for seed purposes than in, say, 1914, which indicates, of course, a large demand; indeed, in one country, which quite recently did not produce enough seed for its own requirements, Sweet Pea seed is now grown for export on an increasingly large scale.

Some of the countries with climate similar to our own, are waking up to the value of the Sweet Pea, and I believe the time will come when our Society will have to consider the question of renaming itself the 'International' Sweet Peas Society. Not the least point in favour of the Sweet Pea, when compared with most other popular flowers, is that its comparative cheapness commends it in times when economy is a necessity in most parts of the world.

One of the strongest points in favour of my contention is the present demand for first-class novelties, which equals and perhaps surpasses, that of any period since Sweet Peas became general favourites. Even in our own country there is still a vast number of enthusiastic amateur and professional gardeners who do not know the Sweet Pea, that is, the modern flower. Most gardeners have at sometime or other, grown Sweet Peas of a sort, but many villages have never had a good selection of Sweet Peas grown in them. I know this to be a fact from the letters sometime received from customers.

'Caused quite a sensation in this district' is the gist of frequent correspondence. What an opening for propaganda work on part of the NSPS if funds would allow!

Another fairly common belief is that the Sweet Pea is getting 'played out' as regards distinct novelties. As a raiser, I am sure this is not so, for there is still ample scope. Just consider the number of new varieties being introduced this season. They are of course, untried as yet, but several give promise of real advances. Also, as an enthusiastic hybridist (not only amongst Sweet Peas), I firmly believe we cannot even guess at the possibilities of the future in this direction. As an instance of drastic changes wrought in a flower, mainly by hybridisation, take the present day dahlias with their greatly varying forms, heights, colours, etc, all descended in comparatively recent times from a plant bearing single red flowers, very tall, and, I understand, a native of Mexico.

We have no reason to suppose that the perfect form of flower has been reached in any variety, or even in the habitat of the plant, certainly it has not been reached in colour. Very probably by the time the 1923 Annual is published, we shall have a classification list of the best varieties containing 25 per cent new names. While real advances have lately been made in the cerise-scarlet, cream pink, crimson, flushed, orange-scarlet, and pink classes, improvements come slowly in the blue, white, lavender, mauve, orange, picotee-edged, salmon and scarlet sections. The fancies, stripes and flakes (perhaps not generally popular as a class), rarely have a newcomer, although some combinations of colouring one might suggest would be delightful. The old grandiflora variety, 'Helen Pearce', always appealed to me, yet I have never really liked it in a waved form. It may be of interest to relate that almost about eight years ago we had the peculiar markings of this variety in many shades on both white and cream grounds, but found them such shy seeders and such terrors to fix, that practically all were discarded.

As better varieties are introduced, progress may become slower of necessity but I have always had the idea that, sooner or later, quite a new breakaway will crop up.

In an article in the 1920 Annual, I mentioned a theory I have that some colour, size and vigour factors we would like to impart to different varieties, seems to lie dormant for a certain period, very probably a fixed one. They do and will appear, and are not hastened appreciably by hybridisation. To make this clear, we would, for instance, like to impart the factor of vigorous growth (such as that of 'RF Felton') to the orange, salmon or chocolate colour sections; assuredly these will come when the 'dormant' period is over, but in my opinion, they are much more likely to crop up in the form of 'rogues' or 'sports' than as the result of direct crosses. Space will not allow me to give facts that prove this assumption, but I might say, in passing, that I have had another convincing instance this season.

We may never reach the limits of beauty attainable in the Sweet Pea in our lifetime, but of this be assured, that so long as enthusiastic hybrid tests devote their time to perfecting the form and colouring of their favourite flower we may expect to be given, from year to year, new varieties that will sustain and increase our interest in the Queen of Annuals.

**50 YEARS AGO:****From 1972 NSPS Annual****The flower arrangement classes; My perfect arrangement***By Judy Ward*

In my view, no arrangement I do is ever perfect, it is in the struggle for perfection that our standard rises, and our work improves. Should we be foolish enough to imagine that we have achieved perfection our path can only go one way, and that is backward, and downward. This does not mean that your work is not perfect in the eyes of others, but always be wary of praise to the point of perfection; it can lead to a slackening of effort on your part. Standards are rising throughout the flower arrangement movement and this is especially so in the specialist societies.

Let us consider making a start on the perfect arrangement. First see that the blooms are the best you can grow, beg borrow or 'steal'. However good your design, nothing can make up for faded or tired flowers. I grow 200 cordons, and a good bush of spares, this will be sufficient for the 10 classes at the National Show. Pick young in the morning or evening, and soak well in a shaded room. Most Sweet Pea arrangements are best in containers which lift the blooms and will allow them to flow downwards e.g. candlesticks, dolphins etc. Monochromatic colours look best, take a basic colour 'Leamington' (dark lavender) shade down to 'Mauve Leamington' and up to 'John Ness' (light lavender). Make an outline with your palest colours and work to dark in the centre, recessing with some really dark shades: a few begonia rex leaves over the rim of the container give weight and stability. Beware of using too much foliage as this makes for a heavy arrangement and Sweet Peas do need to be kept light and airy.

If you consider a drape to be necessary keep to soft and gentle shades, try several and if in doubt leave out; this goes equally for accessories, these are mostly going out of fashion along with drapes. If you are doing an interpretive design remember this important tip, if you can make your meaning clear without accessories (and this is possible), you will gain points over someone who has employed them.

Finally, the most important advice I can give to anyone is: 'to thine own self be true', do not go out just to please the judges, but do what is most satisfying to you. In pleasing yourself you will do better and more original work. Flower ranging must go forward and what better than for the Sweet Pea to lead the way.

# Cupani Revisited

By Roger Parsons



Locandina Convegno Cupani.

Most of us are familiar with the story that the Sweet Pea was introduced into England in 1699 when a Sicilian monk named Franciscus Cupani sent seeds to Robert Uvedale, the master of what is now Enfield Grammar School. I decided to check the evidence behind this story. What were the circumstances which led a monk in Sicily to send seeds to a school master in England? Who were the people in this story? Is it true?

The decision to celebrate the bicentenary of the introduction of the Sweet Pea arose at a meeting in July 1899 between William Cuthbertson, of Dobbie and Co, and Richard Dean, who became the secretary of the celebration committee (Dean 1900). How did they know that 1899 was the

bicentenary of the introduction of the Sweet Pea? S B Dicks tells us, in Dean 1900, that the evidence comes from book XVII John Ray's "Historia Plantarum". In fact, Ray simply refers to three earlier publications: Cupani's "Hortus Catholicus", Commelin's "Horti Medici Amstelodamensis" and Plukenet's "Mantissa" (Ray 1704).

The best evidence comes from Caspar Commelin 1701. In describing the Sweet Pea, he specifically says that he received seeds from Fr. Cupani in January 1699, sowed these and was able to harvest seeds later that year (Commelin 1701). So, we can be certain that the Sweet Pea was introduced into the Netherlands in 1699 but what about England?

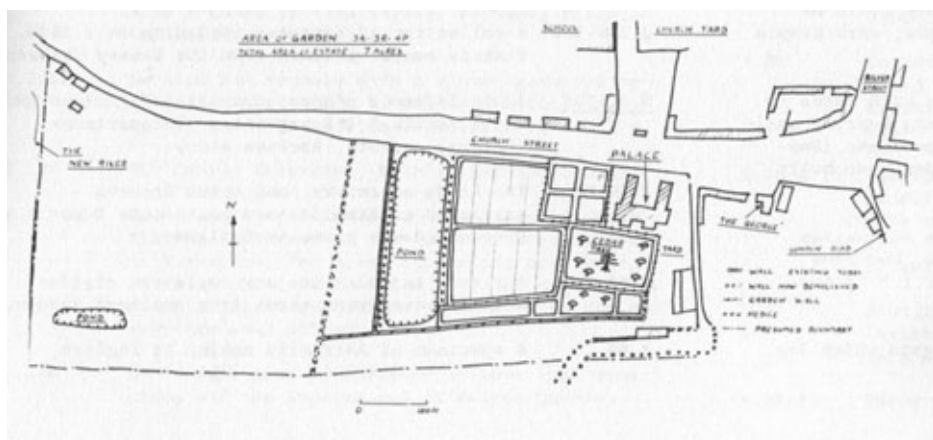
Leonard Plukenet (1641-1706) was superintendant of the royal gardens at Hampton Court. He describes the Sweet Pea in 1700 and cites two references: "Hortus Uvedalensis" and Cupani's "Hortus Catholicus". A problem for historians is that Robert Uvedale did not produce a publication named Hortus Uvedalensis. This reference should instead be translated as "in Uvedale's garden" (Plukenet 1700). In fact, Ray often refers to Uvedale as a reference for all manner of species using terms such as: "Uvedale cultam vidit" (Uvedale saw cultivated); "Enfieldiae cultam vidit" (seen grown at Enfield); "Uvedale habuit" (Uvedale had) (Ray 1704). Plukenet's "Mantissa" is a large volume of work so the Sweet Pea must have been grown by Uvedale prior to 1700 for it to be included in that book. Supporting evidence comes from James Petiver who said: "This elegant sweet-flowered plant I first observed with Dr. Plukenet in Dr. Uvedale's most curious garden at Enfield, and since at Chelsea and elsewhere" (Petiver 1713).

**Robert Uvedale** (sometimes spelt Udall or Udale)

It may seem odd that a school master in Enfield should be the first recipient in England of such seeds. Robert Uvedale (1642-1722) was an interesting character who first came to attention in November 1658 as a 16-year-old when he stole an escutcheon from the bier at Oliver Cromwell's funeral. He and Leonard Plukenet were scholars together at Westminster School. In 1659, Uvedale went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where John Ray was a tutor and may have initiated Uvedale's interest in botany. Uvedale graduated in 1663 and was appointed in 1664 as master of the Free School in Enfield. He resigned from this in 1676 following a dispute and established his own school in the old manor

house (known as the Palace), where he attracted sons of the gentry and aristocracy. He ordained as a minister but had little interest in the church. Botany was his passion.

A visitor in 1691 tells us: "Dr. Uvedale of Enfield is a great lover of plants and having an extra-ordinary art in managing them is become master of the greatest and choicest collection of exotic greens that is perhaps anywhere in this land" (Burnby & Robinson 1976). Uvedale was receiving plant specimens from most of the famous botanists of the day and was also sending out specimens by exchange. From his letters we know that Uvedale obtained valuable seeds and specimens from Paul Herrmann, Caspar Commelin and other leading European botanists, as well as from North America and India (Burnby & Robinson 1976). There is no reason to think that Uvedale received his



**Uvedale's Garden. (The plan is scanned from Burnby & Robinson 1976).**

seeds indirectly from Commelin, rather than directly from Cupani. We know that Uvedale received seeds of other plants directly from Cupani so why should the Sweet Pea be any different. Commelin did not receive his seeds until January 1699 which left little time for him to send some on to Uvedale in time to grow in 1699.

The reason for a great surge of interest in plants at this time was for medicinal purposes. In January 1699, Uvedale had a batch of 215 drugs, as plants or their derivatives, collected from local herbalists in Siam which he sent to Sir Hans Sloane and James Petiver. As well as the Sweet Pea, other “firsts” attributed to Uvedale include *Wachendorfia paniculata* from the Cape of Good Hope but a claim that he introduced the Cedar of Lebanon appears incorrect. The great and the good in the world of botany were frequent visitors to Uvedale’s plant collection (Burnby & Robinson 1976).

### **Franciscus (Francesco) Cupani**

While there were good links between England and the Netherlands at that time, they shared the same king in William III, Sicily did not form part of that Anglo-Dutch sphere of influence. Franciscus Cupani (1657-1710) is often described as a monk but this is not a fair reflection of his career. He was a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis so could equally live out in the world rather than in a monastery (Whittemore 1994). He was born in Mirto, a small village in the province of Messina, Sicily. After initially studying medicine, he joined the Franciscans in 1681 and studied theology. He spent a few years teaching in Verona but was able to return to Sicily where he continued studying botany and the medicinal uses of plants. In 1692, he founded a botanic garden at Misilmeri, about 8 miles from Palermo, sponsored by Giuseppe del Bosco, who was Prince of Cattolica and Duke of Misilmeri. Cupani had extensive exchanges of correspondence and plant materials with illustrious European botanists, particularly from 1696 to 1708 (Pulvirenti et al 2015).

First mention of the Sweet Pea appears in Cupani’s 1695 work “*Syllabus plantarum Siciliae nuper detectorum*” which translates as a list of plants newly discovered in Sicily. He also includes it in his “*Hortus Catholicus*” of 1696. This latter appears to be a catalogue of plants growing in his botanic garden which raises the possibility that the seeds sent to Uvedale and Commelin for growing in 1699 may have been produced in the botanic garden rather than collected from the wild.

### **Sicily in the 1690s**

There has been occasional speculation about why it took until the 1690s for the Sweet Pea to be introduced into cultivation. Could it not have been found and distributed by earlier occupiers of the island? This overlooks the wild condition of Sicily at that time and the limited distribution of the wild species. Remember, *Lathyrus belinensis* was only discovered in 1987 despite Turkey being well-traversed through earlier centuries.



**'Cupani'**. Photos by Roger Parsons.

It is worth taking time to consider the context within which Cupani was working. The following summary is based on Norwich's 2015 book.

In the 12th century, Sicily was a thriving, cosmopolitan, independent kingdom at the centre of Mediterranean trade routes. It then fell under Spanish rule and for centuries was simply used by Spanish kings as a source for men and resources to fight interminable wars. Introduction of the Spanish Inquisition removed the significant Jewish and Arab communities who contributed so much to the island's economy. Discovery of the Americas and trade routes around Africa to the Indies meant that by the 17th century Sicily had become an economic backwater. Spanish kings never visited the island but ruled via a succession of viceroys who used it for their own personal gain. If they had wanted to impose order, an example of how impenetrable the island was is shown by a report from the 1740s that the island's roads were worse than they had been in Roman times. Just outside of Palermo were a few miles of paved thoroughfare but elsewhere travel was by the occasional mule track. Internal trade was severely inhibited. Coastal communities on the island were frequent prey to Barbary pirates and there was a succession of civil wars and natural disasters. The degree of general lawlessness encouraged communities to look to their own defence and prosperity, the origins of

what eventually became the Mafia. Looking specifically at the second half of the 17th century, there were chronic food shortages, constant tax demands from Spain and the continued refusal of the nobility to pay its share. There was long-standing hostility between the cities of Palermo and Messina.

Palermo was the administrative capital but Messina the main economic centre and the Messinesi thought their city should be the capital. Messina controlled the lucrative silk trade but faced increasing competition from France. By 1670, the city's economy was declining and its population was falling. In 1669 was one of the most violent eruptions of nearby Mount Etna in its history, the river of lava reaching the city of Catania, 15 miles away. Then came the first of a long succession of disastrous harvests. The imposition of food rationing did not prevent deaths from starvation. In 1674, revolution broke out in Messina and the city rather surprisingly turned to France for assistance. After 3 years of warfare against Spain and the rest of Sicily, Messina and France both wanted an end to the dispute and France withdrew. The war had cost Spain a mint and retribution against Messina was very severe. By the 1690's, the population of Messina had more than halved. Such a dramatic effect on its largest commercial city inevitably damaged the whole island. Then in January 1693 the island suffered a dreadful earthquake, the most powerful in Italian history. At least 70 towns and cities in Sicily were destroyed and casualties were estimated at 60,000, about 5% of the island's population (Norwich 2015).

## Conclusions

We can only marvel at the persistence and fortitude that enabled Cupani to seek out and distribute newly described plants, including our beloved Sweet Pea. Once we start to investigate the condition of Sicily in the 17th century, it becomes clearer why there is no record that the Sweet Pea was introduced any earlier. The date of introduction into the Netherlands is emphatically 1699. Although we do not have such explicit evidence of introduction into England, it was clearly grown by Uvedale before 1700 and there is no evidence that Uvedale received it earlier than Commelin. This is as close to confirming 1699 as the year of introduction as we are likely to get. Given the slow and primitive nature of international postal services at that time and the fact that Uvedale received other plants directly from Cupani, it is unlikely that Uvedale received his seeds indirectly via Commelin. My hunch, for what it is worth, is that following publication of his "Hortus Catholicus" in 1696, Cupani received requests for seeds of the Sweet Pea from other botanists. He grew the Sweet Pea in his botanical garden from seed originally collected in the wild. Seeds from his plants were harvested in 1698 and sent out from Palermo, arriving with Commelin a few months later in January 1699. There is every likelihood that they were sent to other people at the same time, including Robert Uvedale.

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## In Praise of *Lathyrus Latifolius*

By *Caroline Ball*

*Lathyrus latifolius*, also known as the Everlasting Pea, is a perennial climbing species that comes in three flavours; the magenta form sometimes called 'Red Pearl' and oft seen adorning railway lines or motorway banks; the gorgeous 'White Pearl'; and a delicate pink sometimes called 'Pink Pearl' and 'Apple Blossom', I'm not sure if these are distinctly different colours since the pale pink appears to be particularly elusive, at least to me. The white and pale pink versions are considerably less vigorous than the magenta. All three are under represented in our gardens, indeed Gertrude Jekyll named *latifolius* as a favourite, praise indeed. It takes little effort to grow and the flowering season can extend from May to September with masses of delicious flowers throughout this time. Happy to climb or scramble, mine do both, have a regular deadheading and occasional watering and that's it. They may have no scent, their only minor flaw to my mind, but the profusion of flowers more than compensates for this.



*Lathyrus latifolius* 'White Pearl'.  
Photo by Caroline Ball.



*Latifolius* 'Red Pearl'.  
Photo by Caroline Ball.

When I bought my garden (with house attached) I was delighted to first discover a well-established 'Red Pearl' and later a much more delicate bush of 'White Pearl'. Try as I might I have struggled and struggled to introduce the pale pink to complete the set. I've lost count of the number of plants I have bought purporting to be it, but alas were not. John Carrier gave me some seed from his but that was unsuccessful too. Several good friends have also tried to



grow me a pale pink plantlet or given me seed from theirs, but nothing. However, in 2021 when one friend was also hopeful of her efforts, there was another breakthrough. Next to a drainpipe I watched and watched closely a plant that had appeared from nowhere that looked slightly different. As the flower buds started to appear they looked pale, but not the same as the buds on 'White Pearl' (also known affectionately in my garden as 'West Challow White'). Could this be it? Well delighted does not adequately describe the feeling when the first spike opened, yes it was indeed pale pink, after at least 10 years of trying it appeared all by itself! When Roger Parsons came for the Early National, I got him to take a look at it. His initial thought was that this was a sport out of a white/magenta cross that had occurred naturally. I collected pale pink seed and both Roger and I plan to grow it on to see if it comes true or not. Whatever happens with the seed I'm hoping the original plant reappears this year to adorn the best dressed drainpipe in West Challow!

## In Praise of the Old Fashioned

*By Professor David Young*

Am I alone in questioning the emphasis of Sweet-Pea enthusiasts on the Spencer varieties? These big beasts of the show world were apparently cultivated and developed by Silas Cole for the Spencer family and exhibited in 1901, since when they seem to have dominated the show benches, with their large, frilly flowers. Their chief rivals, the grandifloras, semi grandifloras and modern grandifloras appear to be holding their own, at least outside the show marquee, chiefly because, unlike the Spencers, they have a significant scent. But can any of these compete with the old-fashioned varieties, with their gently understated form, modest, unassuming flowers (typically two or three per stem) yet heavenly scent? Yes, modest they may be, but the range of colours is beyond lovely and the very sight and smell lifts the heart.

Like most enthusiasts, I do two sowings, the first in mid-October, and the second in mid-February, using root trainers which can be endlessly re-used. No soaking or shaving of the seeds for me: just straight into the potting compost, one seed per module, watering and then into the cold greenhouse for overwintering. Once the shoots have developed two or three leaves, I nip the tops in the standard way to ensure bushy growth and strong, healthy roots, the surest guarantee of profuse blossom.



**Left to Right: 'Cupani' and 'Edward VII' with 'Painted Lady'.** *Photos by Professor David Young.*

One of the many impressive features of the old-fashioned *lathyrus odoratus* is that, despite its fragile appearance, it is remarkably robust. No need for special protection in the greenhouse, as fortnightly watering will see them through the winter. By mid-March they should be ready for planting out: mild frosts should hold no fear for these horticultural wrens, for they

are much tougher than they look. Given well prepared, rich soil, a suitable climbing frame (preferably eight-feet tall), regular watering and weekly feeds when in flower, success is guaranteed. Regular cutting of the flowers will not only fill the house with the heavenly odoratus of the lathyrus, but will ensure flowering for at least four months, from late May until late September.

Each year I try a few new varieties, whilst repeating the indispensable favourites, especially 'Cupani'. Received wisdom is that this is the original form of the cultivated



Sweet Pea, first distributed by the Sicilian monk Franciscus Cupani at the end of the seventeenth century, but the historical evidence for this can no doubt be adjudicated on by readers better qualified than I am.

Other old favourites are 'Black Knight' (dark maroon), 'Painted Lady' (pink and white) and – here stretching a point since the National Sweet Pea Society classifies this as a semi grandiflora – 'High Scent' (cream with lilac edge). A variety sown by me for the first time this year is 'King Edward VII', and the lovely red flowers and subtle but sweet scent have brought endless delight.

In short, each phase of the Sweet Pea process brings its own pleasure: sowing in October and February, first appearance of shoots two to four weeks later, planting out in March, eagerly anticipated appearance of the first flowers in May, and filling of the household with incomparable beauty for the rest of the Summer.

# New Sweet Pea Plants for Nothing

*Submitted by Maria Melvin*

**From 'Home Gardening January 20, 1934'**

Sweet Pea seedlings from an Autumn sowing will now be up sufficiently high to enable you to take cuttings from them – a very simple and satisfactory method of increasing the supply of Sweet Pea plants.

The cuttings are made from the actual tops of the seedlings, the operation having no harmful effect upon the seedlings. On the contrary, the removal of the tops is a form of 'stopping' which causes the seedlings to sprout at the base of their stems and so provide the useful secondary growths from which the best flowers are obtained.

The tops can be made into cuttings when the seedlings are at the stage of having made three or more pairs of leaves. Do not nip off the tops, this would bruise the stem. Use a sharp knife or razor blade and make the cut just above the lowest pair of leaves. The cutting is left with a short length of stem to its lowest leaves. The stem should be cut through just below those leaves, so that the cut will actually be below a joint from which roots can spring. If you cut to this part in the first place you would, of course, leave an unwanted bit of stem on the seedling itself.

Having taken the cuttings, gently nip off the lowest pair of leaves, close to the stem – but not so close that you 'skin' the stem in the attempt. They are then ready for planting.

Plant the cuttings in small pots, one third filled with crocks. For soil use a mixture of equal parts of good sifted leaf-mould and silver sand.

Use a pencil as a dibber and insert the cuttings to one-third their length round the sides of the pot. Make them firm and give the soil a watering with tepid water through a fine-rosed can to further settle them in. Stand the pots in a propagator case, or glass-topped box, until they show signs of growth, when gradually admit air.

When the cuttings start to produce more top growth, thus indicating they have rooted, they can be potted up singly in small pots. After that they should be treated in the same way as the other young plants.

# Getting Started – Sowing to Planting

*By Darren Myers*

Like many growers, I have my own ways of growing which is largely driven by the facilities that I have at my disposal. How I grow, may not be text book (but what is?), some may even consider parts of my growing to be akin to Heath Robinson. From sowing to planting out, I don't have any fancy facilities, in fact, they are probably as basic as one can have, but rather than buying the best possible facilities, I make the best of what I have, and I think, by and large, the results speak for themselves.

Many growers have different methods, so the content of this article shouldn't be taken as gospel. However, there are some key points in here, which every grower should try and do and avoid the common mistakes that are regularly seen across social media, in particular.

When I first started getting involved in Sweet Pea growing, there was a large number of well known, respected growers, and some of the basics that I do now came from the tips that these growers passed on to me. Certainly, for exhibition purposes, getting these basic fundamentals right will pay dividends further down the line.

Between the end of one season and the start of the next, I plan on the varieties I am going to grow and what my aims are.

The need to source good seed is the very first step to take on the path to your very first show. I have for many years, produced my own seed. This, in part, has been driven by cost but also I can produce seed in small batches and as such I am able to manage the quality and trueness of each variety. On the odd occasion, I may buy a small amount of seed in, but in most instances I will grow these on the bush first, which is to ensure I obtain trueness and the quality I want, from which I will then collect the seed.

If you don't have the luxury of being able to produce your own seed, then I strongly recommend purchasing your seed from a Sweet Pea specialist. Details of these suppliers can be found in the 2022 Classification List produced by the Society. If you are new to exhibiting, don't fall into the trap of growing an 'exhibition collection' from what I like to call the multi-disciplined seed merchants. Most, if not all the varieties that are offered in these collections, may at some stage in their life been an exhibition variety, but most have sadly passed their sell by date and are no longer exhibition varieties. Instead, I would always recommend having a look at the audits of the shows in the NSPS Annuals. You will then get a good idea what is popular and which the good exhibition varieties are. This will then give you a good platform to get started.

One of the basics is to know how many plants of each variety you are going to grow.

Ultimately, this is driven by how many stems you are going to want in each vase. The rule of thumb has always been you need to be planting out a ratio of just over 3 plants to every stem of flowers required per vase.

So this equates as follows:

7 stems = 25 plants per variety

9 Stems = 28 plants per variety

12 stems = 40 plants per variety

15 stems = 50 plants per variety.

This allows you to lose a few plants, whether it's a mishap with a hoe or you lose some to virus. Come show time, you should still have enough plants producing enough flowers to give you a good selection, from which you are able to select your best. In the restricted divisions, you'll also be able to grow sufficient varieties for the biggest class in the division whilst allowing for a spare variety.

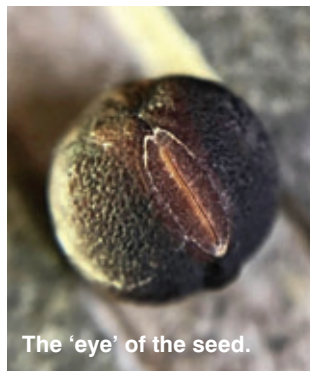
Now, when it comes to sowing, again the rule of thumb is to sow double the number of seed to the plants required. This allows, for less than 100% germination and any other losses between sowing and planting out, to ensure that you still have a good number of plants to select from in order to be able to plant out the best.

I take this a step further. I grow in the open division, so look to plant out 50 of each variety. On the above rule, I should be sowing 100 plants per variety. However, and because I have the luxury of having my own seed and so cost isn't that big of an issue, I sow 120 of each variety. This allows me to select the best 100, when I prick out, to grow on.

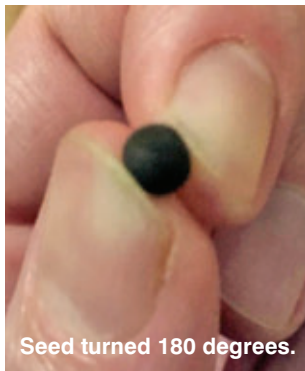
There seems to be an eternal debate as to whether to soak seed or not. I confess that for a good number of years, I was firmly for soaking. My rationale being that seed must take up water regardless. I also found that those that germinated would all germinate within a day or so of each other. However, I always struggled to get a consistent germination. One year, for example, I may achieve 70% germination, the following year 90%, yet the seed was from the same batch. So, one year I decided to try not soaking the seed, and have since achieved a much better, more consistent higher rate of germination, as a result. Putting my two penn'orth into the age old debate, I am firmly, drum banging and yelling from the loudest speaker, 'DO NOT SOAK YOUR SEED!!'

One technique that you may have to master, is the fiddly art of chipping seed. It's not a practice that I carry out often, as I find that there is very rarely the need. But if you need to chip, you'll normally find that it is the extremely dark shelled seed from the darker coloured varieties, but there are some exceptions. Hard, darker coated seed can be difficult for the water to penetrate. So, by taking a small piece of the seed coating away, it allows moisture to enter that then allows the germination process to start. The way to chip the seed, is firstly identify the 'eye' of the seed. This is where the seed was attached

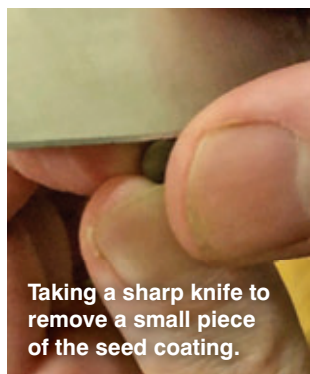
to the mother pod, from where the new shoot and root will emerge. Holding the seed between your thumb and forefinger of your non-dominant hand, turn the seed 180 degrees, so that the eye is facing down. Then taking a sharp knife with your dominant hand, carefully cut away a small piece of the seed coating to reveal the yellow flesh of the seed beneath. It does take practice, and even after all these years, I can still end up with the odd seed flying from my fingers, and hunting for it on hands and knees.



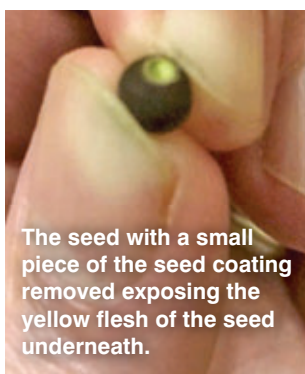
The 'eye' of the seed.



Seed turned 180 degrees.



Taking a sharp knife to remove a small piece of the seed coating.



The seed with a small piece of the seed coating removed exposing the yellow flesh of the seed underneath.

My method of sowing is different to many, and this is probably where I am a bit Heath Robinson. If you buy a packet of 10 seeds and 9 germinate, many would be happy with that result. But for me, and the quantity that I sow, that would equate to a large amount of seed that has failed. For example last year, I sowed 2,500 seeds, so on the above example, I would have had 250 seeds that failed to germinate, which would be quite a large amount of seed to lose in anyone's book. So, over the last few years, I have developed a method of sowing that works for me and produces a much higher rate of germination.

Many growers will sow into either a seed or multipurpose compost. My preferred method is sowing into a 50-50 mix of multipurpose compost and vermiculite. I find that the vermiculite helps to keep the compost open, and as such more air can circulate around the seed helping to prevent the seed from rotting. I purchase my compost from a local allotment association, where it is stored indoors. This results in the compost being on the dry side when I open a bag, and with the added vermiculite, it requires watering before I sow.

As a space saving need, I don't use full sized seed trays. In fact, I recycle containers that were once home to mushrooms that we buy as part of our weekly shop. I find that

they are slightly deeper than a standard seed tray, and their size allows me to sow more at the same time. I simply give the containers a good wash and put several drainage holes into the bottom of each container.

I will then fill the containers with my compost mix to within 1cm of the top of the tray. They will then be generously watered and left to drain, at room temperature, for around 12-24 hours prior to sowing. The reason why I do this, is that it allows any excess moisture to have drained away. I also don't like to sow seed into cold compost. I have found that I achieve a better germination rate if I sow directly into a compost that has been allowed to warm up. It's worth pointing out at this stage that I do not firm the compost down. The weight of the water is more than sufficient.

After 12-24 hours, I can start to sow the seed. I do not use a regimental approach, by sowing in neat rows. I have found that life is too short. Instead, I scatter the seed over the compost mix ensuring that no 2 seed are touching. It is at this stage that I lightly press the seed into the compost mix. This is to ensure that it has good contact with the moist compost. I finish off by covering the seed with dry vermiculite, not forgetting to label correctly. The process is shown in the following sequence of pictures.



One of the things I have started seeing regularly on social media, is growers covering the trays with propagator lids. This will create a humid atmosphere, providing conditions that would encourage the seed to rot, so avoid this at all costs.

In an ideal world, these would go onto a propagating bench in the greenhouse. Sadly, I do not have any propagators, propagating benches, or heating mats. Instead, I place my freshly sown seed on top of my kitchen cabinets, much to my wife's frustration. I have found that the minimum temperature required to get the seed going is a constant 10°C. Likewise, I have also found that a maximum constant temperature is 20°C. Anything outside of these parameters and I will experience a higher instance of seed rotting.



The cooler the temperatures, the slower germination will be. With my method, I will start seeing signs of life after 4 days, as shown .

It is at this stage, that I will keep a very close eye on the plants, and as soon as I think they are either all through or I am concerned that they will become a tad leggy, they go straight out into a cold greenhouse. This is usually after day 6 or 7 at the very latest. If there are still a few seed that is yet to germinate, I will have a dig around find that seed and resow it. I would much prefer to do this rather than allowing those that have germinated to become leggy.

I use this method whether I Autumn sow or January sow. I normally sow my plants for exhibition on the first weekend in January, but have had success sowing at any time throughout January. I am based in Yorkshire, so all of my shows are in July, hence why I January sow. If the shows you are aiming for are in June, such as the Early National, consider sowing in the Autumn instead. Ideally end of October throughout November will be more than ok.

It is important that they go straight into the cold, as shown. This slows down the top growth dramatically. All too often I see people either too scared to put them out into the cold and either keep them in the warmth for far too long, or think they need acclimatising and will keep them outside during the day and bring them inside into the warmth of the house on a night. Both of which will produce leggy thin spindly plants.



Once outside in the cold, I like to keep the windows and/or doors open where possible. I appreciate it may not be an ideal scenario for some, especially if your greenhouse is on an allotment for example. Keeping the windows and/or doors open will stop any heat build-up during those odd sunny days we can sometimes get, but also the air circulation will help prevent any plants damping off.

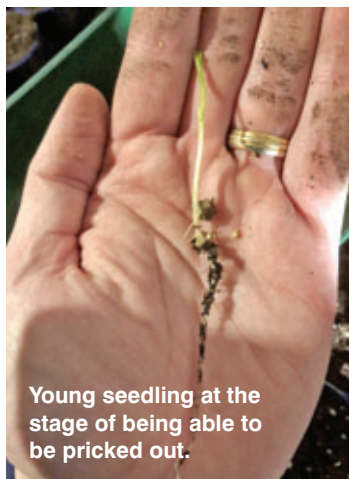
Around 3 weeks after sowing, the plants should be big enough to handle which means that they are an ideal stage to prick out. Firstly, it's important that the container is big enough so that the plants don't become pot bound before they are ready to plant. A lot of growers use root trainers, and I know a lot of people like using them. I am of a

different opinion, and it may be a little controversial, but I am not a fan, not least because of the exorbitant cost. They are most certainly deep enough, no question. But, my own opinion is that the volume of each cell isn't big enough to accommodate the roots that a Sweet Pea can develop by the time they are ready to plant.

I have, for a good number of years, chosen to use 9oz water cooler cups. They are of a similar depth to the root trainers, but are significantly larger in volume. In addition, at present I can buy a case of 2,000 for around £32. A similar amount of cells for root trainers would set me back somewhere in the region of £150. The cups themselves are clear, so I can see the root development quite clearly, without disturbing the roots. With them being clear plastic, they are recyclable, which is a big plus if you are environmentally conscious. Also, like root trainers, they are reusable. All I do is heat up an old screwdriver, and melt 5 drainage holes into the cups. This is a process that I carry out in the quieter times of the season.

Next is the compost to put the young plants into. I will say at this point that whilst I support the move towards peat free compost, there is yet to be a product that has come on to the market that is as comparable in both quality and price of peat-based composts. In addition, I have also been contacted by a number of growers, especially over this winter, whose plants have simply failed to grow. When questioned, all of those growers have used peat free compost. As such, until a peat free product comes on to the market that is of equal merit and is comparable on price, I will always suggest the use of a peat based compost.

As I have mentioned above, I use a local allotment association, who have a trading shop, where I purchase my composts. As such I have to take what is on offer, but generally, it is of good quality. In the past I have predominantly used either Humax or Bloom and Gro multi-purpose composts. I've found both to be of good quality. This year, neither were an option so instead I opted for Clover multi-purpose, and have seen very little difference in the quality of my plants to date.



**Young seedling at the stage of being able to be pricked out.**

Some growers will prick out just using this multipurpose compost. Again, and this is where I differ. The plants are in this medium for around 3 months, and besides peat composts having sufficient nutrient for around 6-8 weeks, it can dry out quickly, especially as the pots fill with root and the weather warms up. So instead, I use a mix of 4 parts multipurpose compost, 2 parts John Innes No. 2 and 1 part perlite.

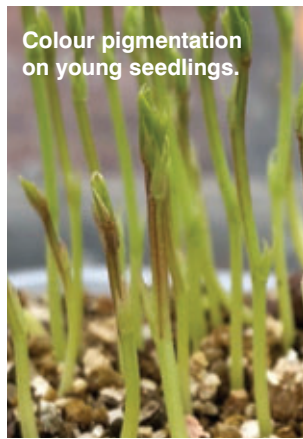
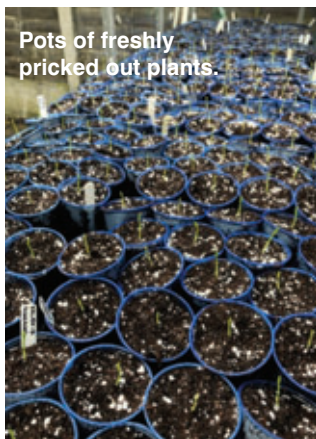
The addition of John Innes No.2 gives some added nutrient and retention, allowing the plants to be fed

for longer, and with the John Innes being a soil-based compost, it helps to stop the pots drying out quicker. The addition of perlite stopped the compost becoming too compacted and creates air pockets which is required to help with root production. I fill each cup up, lightly firming the compost in each one as I go. I use seed trays to hold the cups, where I can get comfortably 15 pots per tray. At a push, I can fit 20 cups per tray. Using a dibber, or my finger, I make a hole in the centre of each filled cup which will become home to the transplanted seedlings. To remove each seedling, I use an old fork, and gently tease the young plants out from their mushroom trays. Any pulling on the plants at this stage, is likely to cause a crack in the stem, even one so small that you may not either see or feel it. But, eventually, fungus and bacteria will work its way into that crack and the plant will fail.

The young plants are transferred to the cups, 1 plant per cup, and planted to a depth so that the lowest embryonic side shoot sits just above surface of the compost. Once you have pricked them all out, give them a watering. The plants don't need to be saturated, so I would say keep them on the dry side of moist, until they become more established.

The plants can go back into the greenhouse and left to grow on, continuing to keep them cold.

The way to tell if a plant is being grown cold, is if you see some colouration on the stems and/or leaves of the plant. If you see this pigmentation, don't worry, it's a good sign. This is the plants way of reacting to cold temperatures.



At this point I want to talk about sub-zero temperatures, because it is important to understand the need to care for your plants in the event that they get frozen. Firstly, remember that by growing them cold, the plants become hardy, very quickly. They can withstand several degrees of frost, and in fact I have had them down to  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  and frozen for days with little to no effect. Although I wouldn't want to go through that every Winter!

I only really start to give them some protection if the temperatures are due to drop below  $-3^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and at that stage I'll just cover them with some horticultural fleece. If we start getting down to  $-7^{\circ}\text{C}$  then, I may look at giving them some heat. My preferred method for heat are candles underneath up turned terracotta pots. These are placed at intervals around the greenhouse. At these temperatures the greenhouse windows and doors are closed.

Whilst the cold doesn't concern me, the thaw does. If Sweet Peas get frozen, they need to thaw out slowly. In order to do that, I'll open the greenhouses up as much as I can and let the cold in, I may also cover them with some fleece to protect from any sun.

My day job means that I am sometimes up and travelling on trains at very early hours of the morning, and so it is not always practical for me to open up the greenhouses on cold mornings. Hence, why I use the candles. They give off sufficient heat to keep the worst of the cold out, but not warm enough to promote growth. 8 -12 hour tealights are ideal, as they burn themselves out rather than having to go extinguish them on the days that I am travelling.

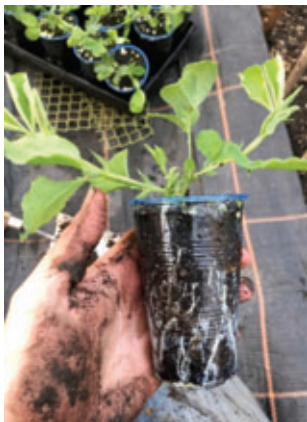
As we move through February, the day light gets longer, and normally warmer. By the 3rd week of February my plants are usually coming up to the 2 leaf stage. It is at this point that I will look closely at the weather, and if no adverse weather is forecast within the next 5-10 days, I will take my plants out of the greenhouse and place them off the ground in a sheltered spot. For this I use plastic saw horses with lats of 2" x1" upon which the plants will sit.

They will stay there until ready to plant out, with just some fleece for protection. The fleece only goes on, if cold weather is forecast or if there are any winds coming from an easterly direction. I have found that the plants don't like these cold winds, and the leaves will turn an awful shade of green.

Growing your Sweet Peas cold is essential to producing good plants. The cold keeps the top growth stocky throughout, whilst encouraging a good strong root system to develop.

Now, pinching out has become quite a bone of contention in my world. I am quite active on social media, trying to promote better Sweet Pea growing, and have found myself becoming increasingly frustrated at the amount of people who rush to nip the tops out of their Sweet Peas as soon as they reach the 2 leaf stage. My general rule is this – taking the tops out of the plants, is essentially giving the greenlight to the side shoots to get a shift on and start growing. Depending on temperatures, the plants can be anywhere between 3-5 weeks from the moment you take the tops out to planting. By keeping the tops in, you can dictate when the plants are ready to plant out, rather than rushing to take the tops out and letting the plants dictate to you.





If you Autumn sow, there is no need to pinch out. The side shoots will naturally develop slowly and come mid March they will be about ready to plant. My personal preference, is to take the tops out, and taking them back to 2 pairs of leaves around the 3rd week in February. The reason for this is because

they can become quite tangled and can reduce the amount of light that gets to the side shoots. I pinch the tops out of these when I know that I can get my land ready, working on the assumption that they will be ready to plant out in around 3 weeks from taking the tops out. So, if the weather is looking a bit adverse, and may delay your land preparation, then delay taking the tops out by a few days.

The January sown plants are slightly different. I aim to plant out in the 2nd week of April, and so I count back 4 weeks. Which means I pinch the tops out of my plants around the 2nd week in March, at which stage my plants have 3 pairs of leaves open. The following pictures visualise the plant progress from



being ready for the tops pinching out to being ready to plant.

The side shoots are then left to develop, and their rate of growth will be on average about 1 inch per week, and so by the time I plant out I am looking at side shoots measuring around 4 inch in length.

As I set out at the start, this is my method, and is no way meant to be text book. But it's a method that has worked well for me, and hopefully, if you are a beginner, you will find the pointers beneficial to get you started.

## Deciding What to Grow

*By Roger Parsons*

A common mistake when people start to grow cordon Sweet Peas is having too many varieties with too few plants of each. With such a wonderful array of different colours to choose from, the new grower is tempted to want to grow as many varieties as possible. Someone growing 100 cordon plants might typically buy 12 varieties, 10 seeds of each, in order to have enough plants. If your purpose in growing cordon plants is to sell mixed bunches of cut flowers, or to have quality blooms to decorate your own home, then a wide range of varieties might have its attractions. I would argue that even in those circumstances, having fewer varieties of carefully chosen colours which blend well together can be more attractive than a very broad mixture.

There is a benefit to starting with a wide range of varieties in that it gives an opportunity to try them and see which do best in your soil and in your location. After all, it is not just about colour but comparing which flower more prolifically, which resist bud-drop and other weather damage, which start earlier or have a longer flowering period, for example. If, however, your purpose in growing cordon plants is to be able to show them, whether locally or nationally, then having such a wide range of colours is only ever going to be able to let you enter a mixed vase or decorative classes. You will not have enough blooms of a single variety to be able to enter single colour classes.

There is a tradition that the number of plants you need to grow of a variety is at least 2.5 times the number of stems required in a vase. So, if you are growing for Division 5 of a national show then each vase requires up to 7 stems. Multiplying 7 x 2.5 tells us you want a minimum of 17 or 18 plants per variety. Or if you are growing for a local show that requires 5 stems per vase then 5 x 2.5 tells us you want a minimum of 12 or 13 plants per variety. Nine stems per vase require a minimum of 22 or 23 plants per variety, and so on. These numbers are only a guide but are based on experience of what is required to give you a good chance of being able to enter your target show(s).

The next consideration is to decide how many cordon plants you have space and time for. There is a balance to be had between giving each plant as much light as possible while fitting in as many plants as you can manage. We all do things differently but growers generally find an optimum distance is 20cm (8 inches) between plants in a row. Personally, I find 30cm (1 foot) is the minimum distance between rows but some people prefer wider spacing. Time is an important factor. However much you might want to pack in as many plants as you have space for, you also need to have time to look after them properly.

Let us suppose that you have decided you have time and space for 80 cordons and that the most demanding show you hope to enter requires up to 7 stems per vase. In such circumstances, I would be growing 4 varieties, 20 plants of each. This may be disappointing to a newcomer who wants to try lots of different varieties but better to focus on those most likely to give you success. Choose four colours which give you a chance to enter as many classes as possible. For example, there is no point in choosing two pink varieties, however much you like them, when you can only enter one of them in a class for pink varieties. Single vase classes at national shows are divided into six colour categories so choose one variety from four of these six categories. Division 5 allows you to grow up to 120 cordons so growing that many would enable one variety from each of the six categories.

Deciding which varieties to grow can be difficult when you have no experience of them. Traditional advice has been to look at the most popular and successful varieties in the show audits and choose from these. If they are successful for other people, they may be successful for you. This can sometimes be confusing when the numbers of vases at shows are relatively low, as occurred in 2021. 'Pink Pearl' is shown as the leading pink variety at the Late National show. 'Mrs Bernard Jones' is the leading pink at the Early National show but was not exhibited at all at the Late National. So, which to choose? There are however a few varieties which consistently appear towards the top of audit lists and these are the ones to go for if you only have to choose four varieties.

'Gwendoline' is everyone's banker and would be one of my four. Here the novice needs to be wary because such a popular variety sold by many seedsmen can be quite variable in quality. Mass production can introduce issues such as colour variation or faults in flower form which would penalise a competitive vase at a show. Buy seeds from a Sweet Pea specialist rather than one of the mass market general seed companies. Specialists place the emphasis on producing quality seeds rather than quantity, by maintaining the quality of their stocks of varieties.

Looking at things from the perspective of the colour divisions at out shows, these are my thoughts on each. Everyone has a different view so ask lots of exhibitors:



*'Doreen'. Photo by Darren Myers.*



*'Sheila Murray'.  
Photo by Roger Parsons.*

### **White or Cream:**

'White Frills' tops the audits but is not the easiest to germinate on account of a soft seed coat. A good stock of 'White Supreme' is easier to grow. There are other good whites. 'Snowlight' has been superb but became mixed during production in New Zealand. I think I have it correct again but is a risk. 'Mary Priestley' needed reselecting when it first came to me but I think I have it correct now. 'Memorial Flight' has large flowers. It had a reputation for "pinking" when first introduced but I have not found this to be a problem.

'Jilly' remains the best of the creams providing a good stock of it is grown. I have re-selected 'Doreen' and think I now have a good stock of it. 'Pip's Cornish Cream' is good but no better than 'Jilly'.

### **Red or Orange-red:**

If you can only find space for, say, four of the six categories, this might be one to drop. 'Millennium' remains the most popular ruby red with exhibitors. I find 'Sheila Murray' to be very similar but better. 'Happy Birthday' is the most popular of the orange reds. 'Mumsie' is large-flowered and distinct. Scarlets are best avoided by the novice unless you have space for many varieties.



**'Judith Wilkinson'.**  
Photo by Roger Parsons.



**'Mrs Bernard Jones'.**  
Photo by Roger Parsons.

### **Magenta, Maroon, Purple:**

We have already referred to 'Gwendoline'. To my mind, pale magentas should be included with the pinks for competitive purposes. Darker colours such as maroon and purple are better avoided by the novice exhibitor. Such colours are more prone to weather damage. The domination of this category by 'Gwendoline' means that some really superb magenta varieties get overlooked. 'Evie Jones', 'Grandma Butt', 'Sally Maitland', 'Judith Wilkinson', 'Somerset Lady' and the new 'Josie' are all excellent but less frequently seen in competition with 'Gwendoline'.



**'Solitude'.**  
Photo by Roger Parsons.



**'Gwendoline'.** Photo by Caroline Ball.

### Mauve, Lavender, Blue:

'Karen Louise' is the most popular of the lavenders and is reliable for novice growers. 'Solitude' may replace it when better known. There are many good lavenders. The novice exhibitor may prefer a paler colour such as lavender or pale blue rather than deeper-coloured mauve or a mid blue. None of the pale blues are quite as reliable as lavenders. 'Naomi Nazareth' is the best pale blue to my mind but 'Charles Angel' and 'Bristol' remain popular.

If a stronger colour is preferred despite the risk of weather damage, mid blue would be the colour to go for. There are several easy and reliable varieties of which 'Just Julia' is the most popular. Avoid dark blues for exhibition.

### Pink:

So many to choose from! Some have white ground and some have cream ground. If growing a white, choose a white-ground pink. If growing a cream, choose a cream-ground pink. They look better in a mixed bunch or alongside each other on the show bench. In white-ground pinks, I have already referred to 'Mrs Bernard Jones' and 'Pink Pearl'. 'Patricia Marilyn' may be one to look for in the future. There is no stand-out cream-ground pink but many good ones. 'Yvette Ann' has had good success. Orange pinks are popular including 'Marjorie Carrier', 'Valerie Harrod' and 'Leominster Boy'.



*'Patricia Marilyn'.  
Photo by Caroline Ball.*

### Orange, Picotee, Fancy:

If only growing one from this category, this is the hardest to choose from. The white-ground picotee 'Anniversary' is very popular but close in colour to white and to 'Gwendoline'. It can also be variable unless a good stock is grown. So, I would suggest to the novice that a striped variety is safer. 'Sir Jimmy Shand' is supremely popular. I could make a good case for many other striped varieties but 'Jimmy' is the one to start with. Orange is better avoided by the novice grower.

My final tip for the novice is to try varieties and see what does well with you. Drop the weakest each year and try something different from the same colour group. There is no point in dropping your other successful varieties, in order to try something new, when you already have something reliable. Novel varieties introduced each year are tempting but the novice might prefer to leave these for others to try first. Whatever you grow, I hope you have a very enjoyable season ahead.



**'Sir Jimmy Shand'.**  
*Photo by Roger Parsons.*

# Showing Tips for Beginners

*By Caroline Ball*

In the 2021 Annual at page 108 Darren Myers wrote a very helpful article to assist beginners, and as a memory jog for those more experienced, in how to prepare for a show. If you have not read this and you are thinking about showing for the first time in 2022 you are encouraged to do so! If you have just joined the Society and do not have the 2021 Annual, do email me for a copy of the document.

I am not planning to rewrite Darren's excellent article here, merely just add a few of my own observations to encourage those who might be teetering on the edge of showing to take the plunge. The National Sweet Pea Society is an extremely friendly Society and anyone new to showing should let the respective show managers know if they would like any help or guidance. All experienced 'show-ers' found their first National very daunting, it really won't be though. There are always lots of people around only too willing to give you a hand. Phil Johnson and Roger Parsons are joint show managers at the Early National which will be held this year at RHS gardens, Wisley. Both are lovely approachable people and they will be only too happy to point you in the direction of someone who can assist you. The same is true of Carole Tate who will be leading the team running the Late at RHS gardens Harlow Carr. So please do ask for help if you have any query at all.

My second big tip is plan ahead, write a list of all the things you need to take to the show and tick them off when they are packed in your car ready to go (for her horse shows my dear friend Alison Parsons has a laminated list, such a brilliant idea). Don't forget your NSPS membership cards, these will give you free entry into both RHS venues during the show this year, whether you are showing or not. Your forward planning should also include practising; practice, practice, practice staging your vases or decorative arrangement. It really will give you confidence that you will know where to start when you arrive. Of course with no Oasis permitted at the RHS venues, experimenting with alternatives is a must that I would suggest you start doing as soon as you have blooms.

Darren mentioned the importance of reading the schedule, do this ahead of show day as part of your forward planning and make sure, for the sake of the show managers, that you get your entries in nice and early. My mentor told me to enter everything I might possibly want to have a go at, you can always cancel classes you can't do. It is much easier for the show manager to take out entries rather than to squeeze them in (and at some shows squeezing them in won't be at all possible, so take the risk of rejection out of the equation). Don't forget to take your schedule and classification list with you to the show. When a novice I used to mark up in my classification list the varieties I rather liked (always more than I could possibly grow!) when I wandered around the show and

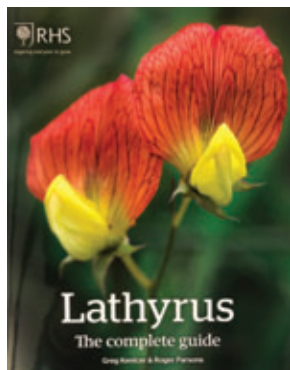
wanted to consider for growing the following year. Of course anyone who might judge or steward at the show should also remember to take their classification list for checking varieties are entered into the correct classes. I remember asking, as a novice, what was meant by 'distinct' colours (as in 6 vases distinct). The official answer is recognisably different colours though my mentor told me when selecting my varieties I really should be selecting my 7 (which was the number I grew when aiming for a 6 vase class) to go for varieties in 7 different colour classifications. It is actually really quite a good rule of thumb especially if you are not terribly familiar with colours of varieties. Remember it is not a perfect method however – consider the fancys groupings, 16, 16a and 16b, all used to be in one group and a stripe is very different to a flake which is different again to a bicouleur. But even with this welcome refinement, looking at the fancy (stripe) grouping, the ever popular lilac stripe 'Sir Jimmy Shand' is very different indeed the chocolate stripe 'Wilshire Ripple' which could happily sit side by side in a multi-vase class and not contravene the 'distinct' requirement in anyone's eyes. I'd hate to discourage anyone from growing more than one of some of these under represented, in my view, varieties indeed it would be lovely to see a multi-vase class that was comprised entirely of fancys.

It is also worth taking time ahead of the show (start now!) to study the Judges' and Stewards' guide that all new members are sent. This summarises what is a good and bad Pea and points out what the Judges are seeking. Familiarisation with this helps to ensure you are selecting your best stems for your exhibits. It is worthwhile contacting your local district representative if there is anything in here that you are unsure of. He or she will be delighted to help. One of the pearls of wisdom that came from my mentor was not to bother to take any blooms with faults to the show, because, if they are no good at home they will not miraculously improve at the show! It's a good piece of advice and true of course but not least because you do run the risk of including something substandard in the depths of the night if you take those stems with faults with you.

Do take the plunge and have a go at showing your Sweet Peas in 2022 and if you do GOOD LUCK!

## New Books

### **Lathyrus the Complete Guide by Greg Kenicer and Roger Parsons**



This gorgeous book is another in the RHS monograph series, covering the species and cultivars of *Lathyrus*, produced by our own Roger Parsons, who requires little or no introduction (holder of the National Collection, author of 'Sweet Peas an Essential Guide', breeder, seedsman, former chairman of the NSPS), with Greg Kenicer who is a specialist in wild *Lathyrus* diversity, has studied the biogeography, evolution and taxonomy of *Lathyrus* who is based at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh.

An authoritative work, running to over 500 pages, it is richly illustrated with stunning photographs of our favourite flowers and is certainly destined to be an invaluable reference work for anyone interested in Sweet Peas and *Lathyrus* species, indeed in his foreword to the work Dr Keith Hammett, himself a word expert on Sweet Peas, refers to it as a 'monumental work that will be quoted for decades to come'. The book also covers the history of the Sweet Pea and provides advice on cultivation.

*Copies £40 from the RHS Garden bookshop at Wisley or online at [rhs.org.uk/shop](https://rhs.org.uk/shop)*

### **Poetry & Painting in a Pandemic by Lorna Minton**



Lorna is an award-winning painter, being the recipient of a number of RHS Gold Medals for her botanical works and is a lover of Sweet Peas. The book features about 40 of Lorna's botanical paintings, with several featuring Sweet Peas, alongside a similar number of rhyming

poems documenting the pandemic, but in a generally light-hearted way. These Lorna has been writing since the beginning in March 2020 and some of the paintings were produced during the last two years as well. The book has proved to be very popular and the initial print run has already sold out so a second edition is being produced.

*Copies are £17.50 + £2.50 P&P and they can be ordered through [www.lornaminton.com](http://www.lornaminton.com) or write to [lornaminton53@gmail.com](mailto:lornaminton53@gmail.com)*

## Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society Activities 2022

*By Darren Myers*

For the past couple of years, like many societies and organisations, many of the YSPS's activities didn't go ahead. However, it was a relief to get back to some sort of normality when we held our Social Day in October 2021. We had decided not to publicise the event, in order to keep numbers to a comfortable level for those who attended.

This year, we are back to being at full capacity, and first up will be our annual show on Sat. 2 July 2022. The venue is conveniently located, being just 2 minutes from Junction 41 of the M1. There are classes to suit all growers, no matter what your level. For the first time this year we have introduced a Society class. It is hoped by doing so, that we will provide an environment where growers who want to show, but feel that they would be out of their depth, can compete collectively with members of their society to dip their toe in and experience it for themselves. We have decided that Sweet Pea specialist societies will be not be allowed to enter. We have so far had a number of societies express an interest, and we sincerely hope that those materialise into entries, and we can encourage others into taking up exhibiting.

The society has also taken the decision to allow the continued use of floral foam as a staging material.

Should anyone wish to come and exhibit and want a schedule, please drop me an email ([darrenmyers77@outlook.com](mailto:darrenmyers77@outlook.com)) and we'll get a copy posted out to you.

Just to remind our regular exhibitors, that the schedule that we sent out for the cancelled 2021 show remains valid for this year.

Finally, our Annual Social Day will be held on Sunday 9 October 2022 and will be held at the normal venue, being the West Yorkshire Sports and Social Club, Sandal Hall Close, Sandal, Wakefield, WF2 6ER. The day starts at 10am, where teas and coffees are served, before formally starting at 10.30am. The day is packed with guest speakers, quiz, raffle along with an excellent buffet lunch. The day wraps up at 5pm. If you are wanting to attend can you please let me have confirmation of your attendance by Sunday 2 October 2022, as we need to confirm numbers to the caterer on that day.

On behalf of the committee and members of the YSPS, we'd like to wish everyone a happy and healthy 2022 and hope to see you at our events during 2022.

# Audit Cards

*By Caroline Ball*



The audits of varieties are an important part of the NSPS Shows, providing a comprehensive list of the varieties shown and their placings, thereby indicating the most popular show varieties. Over the years the most popular variety of course changes, but study the audits and you will see long lasting favourites listed year in year out. When I started showing in the 1990s one of the top varieties then was 'Anniversary' which is still the case now (and it remains one of my personal favourites, grown every year). 'Gwendoline' (top in the Early, second in the Late) and 'Mrs Bernard Jones' have also passed the test of time.

When entering the National Shows you will receive an audit card for completion for each of your multi-vasc entries, which will be attached to the relevant class card. You are requested to complete the audit card for several reasons. Firstly, to assist those completing the audit, making the task quicker to complete at the show. Another important reason is to provide a definitive record of the varieties shown, providing a useful reference for those completing show reports and our Editors. Those completing the audits are requested to pass the audit cards back to the Show Manager or to the Annual Editor once they have finished with them.

*“One of the most attractive things  
about flowers is their beautiful reserve.”*

Henry David Thoreau

## NSPS Early Show, RHS Wisley, Woking 29 & 30 June 2022

*By Roger Parsons & Phil Johnson*

A few words to help those attending our Early Show this year, whether as exhibitors or as spectators.

The show is to be held in the Hilltop Exhibition Centre which is a magnificent new facility that attracts a great many visitors, much better than the old hilltop hall. The main hall is 15m x 20m and has very good lighting together with blinds for shading, if needed. Toilets and a small café are adjacent as part of the same complex.

Spectators can gain free access to the Gardens via the main entrance on production of their NSPS membership card.

Exhibitors will need to use the blue gate entrance to gain access for vehicles into the garden. Access times are limited to between 6.00 pm and 8.30 am overnight on 28 & 29 June. If you arrive before 6.00pm, you will not be allowed into the garden but please do not block the entrance as this is required for service vehicles. Once you enter through the blue gate you will be given instructions on the route up to Hilltop. Please ensure you stick to the displayed speed limit and turn on your hazard lights while your vehicle is moving.

Parking space immediately adjacent to the hall is limited so once unloaded, it is important that you return your vehicle back through the blue gate and use the main car park, which is free.

We are negotiating for some form of breakfast to be available from 8.30 am on Wednesday 29 June. Judging is at 8.45 am and it is always a struggle to find enough judges and stewards to help with this so please volunteer if at all possible.

*“A flower’s appeal is in its contradictions — so delicate in form yet strong in fragrance, so small in size yet big in beauty, so short in life yet long on effect.”*

Terri Guillemets

## Directions to the Blue Gate Entrance

### FROM THE M25

- From the M25 take J10 A3 South (signed Portsmouth/Guildford).
- Merge onto the A3 and stay in the inside lane.
- Take the first main exit (signed Ockham/Ripley/Send)
- At the roundabout take the 3<sup>rd</sup> exit as if you're going back round onto the A3
- Merge briefly back onto the A3
- Take the immediate next slip road signposted to Wisley
- Take the first left hand turn into Wisley gardens through wooden gates  
GO TO MAP 1 BELOW

### FROM THE A3 GOING SOUTH

- After the M25 take the first main exit (signed Ockham/Ripley/Send)
- At the roundabout take the 3<sup>rd</sup> exit as if you're going back round onto the A3
- Merge briefly back onto the A3
- Take the immediate next slip road signposted to Wisley
- Take the first left hand turn into Wisley gardens through wooden gates  
GO TO MAP 1 BELOW

### FROM THE A3 GOING NORTH

- You will see the signs for Wisley just before the M25
- Take the slip road signposted to Wisley
- Take the first left hand turn into Wisley gardens through wooden gates  
GO TO MAP 1 BELOW

### Map 1 – route from main road to Blue Gate Entrance

From the main Wisley entrance go through car park one to the far top left hand corner by the barn building. A little up from here you will see the Blue security gate. Map 2 shows detailed plan of this area:



Map 2



# NSPS Late Show, RHS Harlow Carr Harrogate – 9 & 10 July 2022

*By Carole Tate*

I am very honoured to have been asked to manage the 2022 late show at Harlow Carr. We will be holding this event in the Show Marquee again this year.

The Marquee is 21m x 15m with a large display area which will not be affected too much by the sunshine as it has tall trees on the sunny side to shade it and with double doors at each end, it will be possible to have air movement through the Marquee. The large open area means all entries will be in one room and on one level. There will be room for trade stands (please contact me for details).

Access to the Marquee for staging is gained by staying on the road passed the Main Entrance, turning left immediately before the Coach Park, sign-posted "Harrogate Arms". Access to the Marquee is on the left-hand side of this road and you can back up to the Marquee doors to unload before parking your car in the Harrogate Arms Car Park, the Harrogate Arms is owned by RHS Harlow Carr and no longer used as a Hotel.

I would appreciate if entries could be sent by email to [caroletate10@gmail.com](mailto:caroletate10@gmail.com) and I will confirm receipt of your entry. If you send your entry by post, I will ring or email to confirm receipt. If you are late entering please ring your entries, as a last resort and email if possible.

Harlow Carr, along with other RHS venues this year have a "no Oasis" policy. I plan on having a supply of rushes available, locally sourced, for use in our NSPS vases. If a suitable Oasis alternative can be sourced we will offer it for sale on the day.

If you have any suggestions to make our show better for 2022 or you want further details, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am looking forward to lots of entries, I know this is always weather dependant but if you can't manage to enter Class 1, don't worry, just bring what you've got. One vase is better than nothing. Don't forget staging this year is up to 9.15am on Saturday 11 July, this gives members with not many entries time to stage on Saturday morning. We will be presenting the awards at 1pm on Saturday.

As always, we need helpers and volunteers to ensure a well organised show. Please consider being a Judge or Steward and let me know if you can assist in other ways on the day. We plan on holding a Members Stand and Information Bureau for visitors where we can exchange hints and tips on growing Sweet Peas and lathyrus species.

This is an excellent venue and am sure it will be a sight not to be missed. We have good lighting for staging and catering facilities. You can also access the gardens and visit

Betty's Tearoom to sample the excellent food available, particularly the homemade cakes and ice creams.

Good Luck growing your sweet peas this season. I look forward to seeing you in July 2022 if not as a competitor as a visitor.

**We all hope that our late show will go ahead this year but there maybe rules and limits placed on the show by the Government or RHS. As you know things can change at short notice. Please check on the web page or ring me for any updates on 07961 477 137.**



Sweet Peas in Flowers from the Farm  
exhibit at Chelsea Flower Show.  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

# Shows and Displays

## RHS Chatsworth Show Medal Winners 2019

*By Carole Tate*

In the 2020 Annual we were pleased to announce that our stand at Chatsworth 2019 had won the prestigious gold Holford medal for the best stand staged by an amateur group. We were due to collect it in April that year but unfortunately the event was cancelled due to Covid.

I am delighted to report that in September 2021 the event was rearranged and Tom and I arranged a visit to the RHS Headquarters, Lindley Hall in Westminster for the Awards Ceremony and afternoon tea. Presided by RHS President Keith Weed various cups, trophies and medals were awarded along with the Master of Horticulture RHS degree awards. I felt honoured to be in the company of horticultural experts and represent the National Sweet Pea Society.

We also took the opportunity to visit Kew Gardens. The weather was kind to us and we enjoyed the Palm house, Princess of Wales Conservatory and Marianne North Gallery in particular. The visit formed the basis for a presentation at our North West social where we discussed the history and origins of various plants and trees from around the world.

Thanks to all the members who helped us to make this special stand.



**Peter Gregory, Monica Wright, Nicola Walker, Tom Atherton, Carole Tate, Mavis and Alan Duxbury, Barrie and Sheila Hakner - just a few of the Chatsworth volunteers.** *Photo by Jane Atherton.*



**Carole Tate receiving the Holford Medal on behalf of the NSPS.** *Photo by Jane Atherton.*

## Garstang Show

*By Nicky Edwards*



**Information Bureau and stand at Garstang Show 2021.**

*Photo by Nicky Edwards.*

Despite the very wet weather, this one-day agricultural show was well supported with a great turnout of public and exhibitors alike. We set up a stand selling seeds and merchandise and offering advice to a steady trickle of interested visitors. A fairly large display of flowers in small vases helped us to showcase the different varieties on sale. We signed a new member or two and all in all this was a very successful and enjoyable event. We were all impressed by the range

and number of entries in the horticultural section of this show. There is a section for Sweet Peas which it would be nice to see even more entries in next year and members are encouraged to put this date in their diary for next year.

## RHS Tatton Flower Show

*By Julia Beardmore*

After being locked down for the majority of 15 months and almost all shows being cancelled, it was good news when the RHS made the decision to go ahead with RHS Tatton in July. As the weeks leading up got closer it was getting quite scary for me as I was taking over the reins from the Master, Tom Atherton, to manage the show. This could not have been done without the great team work of volunteers and of course Tom was there to help and advise.



**Tatton Show stand 2021.**

*Photo by Carole Tate.*

We had some challenges, the first one being the new type of floral foam AgraWool, which is the only medium the RHS are now allowing for floral decorations. We had a number of practice sessions down in Tom's polytunnel beforehand with the floral arrangers and I'm sure we're all in agreement that using this medium is difficult and

time consuming for Sweet Peas. The RHS had a new Portal for registering Volunteers' admission to the show. This had to be done to manage COVID 19 regulations but had many flaws. And then the weather, we experienced the hottest few days of the year, not ideal for our delicate Sweet Peas.



**Information Boards and stand at Tatton Show 2021.** *Photos by Nicky Edwards.*

Despite the challenges we were awarded a Gold Medal for the stand plus a further award for the Best stand in the Marquee. The public were wowed with the stand and it was photographed constantly. We had a really good footfall and with the amount of seed sales North West gardens are going to have some fabulous displays of Sweet Peas next year. We certainly shared our knowledge with many.

My thanks go to the supply of quality flowers from Kevin Preston from Carnforth and John Rowlands from North Wales, Matt Lloyd from Blackburn and Catherine Bromley whose *Latifolius* took centre of the Display stand and all who brought flowers and foliage from their gardens.

Special thanks go to 'The Team': Tom and Jane Atherton, Peter and Rachel Matthewman, Carole Tate, Sarah Haisley, Mavis Duxbury, Monica Wright, Catherine Bromley, Dedrah Moss, Lisa Tedesco, Philippa and John Cooper, Nicky Edwards, Karen Whittam and Larysa Hathaway.

Ed: after writing this report the RHS advised that this display at RHS Tatton had won the Holford medal for the best Society display at all of the RHS shows in 2021. This is the third time the NSPS has achieved this accolade, a credit to all involved and the Society.

# Holford Medal

*By Carole Tate*

I am delighted to announce that our stand at RHS Tatton 2021 has been awarded the Holford Medal. This is the third time that the Society has been awarded this prestigious medal by the RHS. It will be presented on 7 March at the RHS headquarters in Westminster but as this publication will be in print before that date I can only give this brief report.

The Holford Medal is awarded to the best stand by a group of amateurs at all the RHS shows. I would like to thank Julia Beardmore and all the members who gave flowers and assistance at the stand at 2021 RHS Tatton.



**Sweet Peas at RHS Hyde Hall.**  
*Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*

# North West Show - Chorley

*By Jen & Lewis Morgan*

After the virtual show last year, the proper show returned being once again one of the highlights of the annual award-winning Chorley Flower Show. The Show Organisers not content with just being able to stage the Show took the bold step to add another day to the Show.

The weather in the run up to the Show had been poor to say the least, and on the first day of the Show rain was the order of the day. Even Tom couldn't get the sun to come out!

The North West Region put on an excellent and informative display stand along with a well-organized Show. The weather affected the multi vase classes, but exhibitors salvaged what they could and the single vase and special classes were well supported with ample exhibits for the visiting public to admire.

Within Covid guidelines some international judges and new entrants were welcomed (Wales actually!) and the Show was staged.

In Division 1 Kevin Preston must have been in a weather bubble or had a large umbrella and swept the board entering all 11 classes, with excellent condition blooms. Divisions 2 and 3 only saw 2 entries, however, Divisions 4 to 7 and the Special Classes were well supported.

Chris Nightingale had success in Division 4, and H. Dolan equally in Division 5 and 6. The Special Classes saw awards shared amongst a number of entrants reflecting the number and quality of entries.



**Show Preparations ongoing.**  
*Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

*“I must have flowers, always and always.”*

Claude Monet



**Class H – Lady's Corsage.**  
Photo by Lewis Morgan.



**North West Region Exhibition Display.**  
Photo by Lewis Morgan.

### Audit of North West Region Show – Chorley – 30 July -1 August 2021

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class
1	White Frills	6	0	1	2	9	White	1
2	Karen Louise	3	0	0	0	3	Lavender	8
	Gwendoline	1	2	0	0	3	Pale Magenta	4a
4	Jilly	2	0	0	0	2	Cream	2
	Keira Madeline	2	0	0	0	2	Picotee	15a
	Valerie Harrod	2	0	0	0	2	Orange Pink	13
	Lady Nicholson	1	0	0	1	2	Fancy	16
	Doreen	1	0	0	0	1	Cream	2
	Happy Birthday	1	0	0	0	1	Orange Red	14
	Henry Thomas	1	0	0	0	1	Red	3b
	Sir Jimmy Shand	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy	16
	Just Julia	1	0	0	0	1	Mid Blue	9a
	North Shore	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy	16a
	Queen of Hearts	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy	16
	Windsor	1	0	0	0	1	Maroon	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>		
<b>Non Spencers</b>								
1	Cupani	1	1	1	0	3	Maroon/Violet	
	Fire & Ice	1	0	0	0	1	Crimson Flake/Blue	
	Mrs Collier	0	1	0	0	1	Light Pink	
	<b>Total Non Spencers</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>		
	<b>Mixed Vases</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>		
	<b>Total Vases</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>41</b>		
	<b>Bowls and Pots</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>		
	<b>Decorative Classes</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>88</b>		

**DIVISION I – 15 STEMS**

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>SPECIAL CLASSES</b>	<b>No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED</b>
1	6 VASES DISTINCT 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
2	3 VASES DISTINCT 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
3	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
4	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
5	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
6	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
7	ONE VASE, PINK 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
8	ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
9	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
10	MIXED BOWL 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
11	TWO VASES 15 STEMS 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

**DIVISION III – 9 STEMS**

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>SPECIAL CLASSES</b>	<b>No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED</b>
22	3 VASES DISTINCT 1st – 2nd – 3rd –	(0)
23	MIXED BOWL 1st Carol Tate 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
24	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st M Holmes 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

**DIVISION IV – 7 STEMS****CLASS SPECIAL CLASSES No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED**

31	<b>3 VASES DISTINCT</b> 1st C Nightingale 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
32	<b>MIXED BOWL</b> 1st C Nightingale 2nd C Nightingale 3rd –	(2)
33	<b>ONE VASE OF ANY CULTIVAR</b> 1st M Holmes 2nd C Nightingale 3rd –	(2)
34	<b>ONE VASE MIXED</b> 1st C Nightingale 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

**DIVISION V – 5 STEMS**

35	<b>2 VASES DISTINCT</b> 1st H Dolan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
36	<b>ONE VASE OF ANY CULTIVAR</b> 1st H Dolan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
37	<b>ONE VASE MIXED</b> 1st H Dolan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

**DIVISION VI**

38	<b>MIXED BOWL</b> 1st H Dolan 2nd C Tate 3rd J Beardmore	(3)
39	<b>ONE VASE OF 12 STEMS OLD FASHIONED</b> 1st H Dolan 2nd H Dolan 3rd C Tate	(3)
40	<b>ONE VASE 12 STEMS GRANDIFLORA</b> 1st H Dolan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
41	<b>BOWL OF SHIFTERS</b> 1st – 2nd – 3rd –	(0)
42	<b>BOWL OF LATHYRUS SPECIES</b> 1st C Tate 2nd J Beardmore 3rd N Edwards	(3)
43	<b>BOWL OF PERENNIAL</b> 1st C Bromley 2nd H Dolan 3rd –	(2)
44	<b>ANY LATHYRUS GROWN IN POT</b> 1st – 2nd – 3rd –	(0)

**Special Classes**

A	<b>TEA FOR TWO</b> 1st N Edwards 2nd C Tate 3rd C Tate	(4)
B	<b>BASKET</b> 1st – 2nd – 3rd –	(0)
C	<b>DINNER TABLE</b> 1st J Atherton 2nd J Atherton 3rd J Beardmore	(4)
D	<b>DRIFTWOOD</b> 1st J Beardmore 2nd C Tate 3rd C Tate	(3)
E	<b>7 STEMS</b> 1st C Tate 2nd J Beardmore 3rd C Nightingale	(3)
F	<b>PETITE</b> 1st N Edwards 2nd J Beardmore 3rd C Tate	(4)
G	<b>GENTLEMAN'S BUTTONHOLE</b> 1st J Morgan 2nd C Nightingale 3rd J Morgan	(7)
H	<b>LADY'S CORSAGE</b> 1st S Haisley 2nd J Morgan 3rd J Beardmore	(10)
I	<b>ONE SINGLE BLOOM</b> 1st J Morgan 2nd J Morgan 3rd C Tate 4th H Dolan 5th C Tate	(7)

**SPECIAL AWARDS****BEST IN DIVISION I**

K Preston Class 2 Karen Louise

**BEST IN DIVISION III**

M Holmes Class 24 White Frills

**BEST IN DIVISION IV**

M Holmes Class 33 White Frills

**BEST IN DIVISION V**

Helen Dolan Class 36 Doreen

**BEST IN DIVISION VI**

Carole Tate Class 42 Bowl of Species

**BEST DECORATIVE**

N Edwards Class A Tea for Two

**BEST JUNIOR**

Bryn Edwards Class G Gents buttonhole



*'Sally Maitland'. Photo by Roger Parsons.*

# Competitions

## 100 Club

*By Caroline Ball*

Prize winners since those listed in the 2021 Sweet Pea Annual were as follows:

Draw Date	£100	£25	£10
28.4.21	S Floyd Truro Cornwall	G Hollingdale Princes Risborough	F Towers Preston
1.9.21	A Haskins Northwich	R Bradbury Wolverhampton	G W Putman Kenley nr Croydon
10.11.21	S Twist Hartlepool	J Kent Isle of Man	J Cooper Wolverhampton
9.2.22	F Towers Preston	G Hollingdale Macclesfield	G W Putman Kenley nr Croydon
5.3.22	P Matthewman Blackburn	R Parsons Bracklesham Bay	R Parsons Bracklesham Bay

Very many thanks to all who participated and congratulations to the winners.

# District Representatives

The role of the District Representative is to give help and advice to members and affiliated societies in their area, to assist at National Shows where possible and to provide an area report for the Annual. They will be pleased to assist with your Sweet Pea queries so do contact yours. We still have vacancies, if you could help please call Carole Tate on 07961 477137 or email [caroletate10@gmail.com](mailto:caroletate10@gmail.com)

## SE England

Bedfordshire	VACANCY
Berkshire	Robert Read, 4 Tubbs Farm Close, Lambourn, Berkshire RG17 8PE ☎ 07990 078938 Email: <a href="mailto:rread94@outlook.com">rread94@outlook.com</a>
Buckinghamshire	Graeme Hollingdale; 16 Wellington Avenue, Princes Risborough, Bucks, HP27 9HY Email: <a href="mailto:graeme@graemehollingdale.com">graeme@graemehollingdale.com</a> can also be contacted on Facebook and/or messenger ☎ (for emergency or texts only) 07929 047235
Hampshire	Jim McDonald; St Anne's, The Hollow, Broughton, Stockbridge, Hants, SO20 8BB ☎ 01794 301490 Email: <a href="mailto:j.d.mcdonald@btinternet.com">j.d.mcdonald@btinternet.com</a>
Hertfordshire	VACANCY
Isle of Wight	Keith Brewer; Ivy Bank, Marlborough Road, Ventnor, IOW. PO38 1TE ☎ 01983 856482 Email: <a href="mailto:keithbrewer123@aol.com">keithbrewer123@aol.com</a>
Kent	VACANCY
London (Greater)	Alan Gillingwater; 91 Beresford Road, Chingford, London, E4 6EF ☎ 0208 5292910 Email: <a href="mailto:gillingwater05@aol.com">gillingwater05@aol.com</a>
Middlesex	Roger Dix; 85 Nursery Gardens, Staines, Middx, TW18 1EL ☎ 01784 455057 Email: <a href="mailto:rogerdix@sky.com">rogerdix@sky.com</a>
Surrey	VACANCY
East Sussex	Dave Fitton; 2 Magnolia Close, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8YF. ☎ 01435 661158 or 07763 333817 Email: <a href="mailto:dfitton2@sky.com">dfitton2@sky.com</a>
West Sussex	Roger Parsons; Primrose Cottage, Clayton Lane, Bracklesham Bay, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 8JQ ☎ 01243 673770 Email: <a href="mailto:roger@rpsweetpeas.com">roger@rpsweetpeas.com</a>

## SW England

Avon	VACANCY
Cornwall	VACANCY
North Devon	VACANCY
South Devon	VACANCY
Dorset	Dave Manston; 24 Elms Close, Sandleheath, Fordingbridge, Hampshire, SP6 1PH ☎ 01425 654034 Email: davidmanston128@btinternet.com
Gloucestershire	VACANCY
Somerset	Peter King, 17 King George Road, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5JD ☎ 07834275940 Email: peter@somersetsweetpeas.com
Wiltshire	Brian Thompson; Beech House, 10 Alexander Fields, Upavon, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 6NB ☎ 01980 630699 Email: askhamlad80@gmail.com

## Eastern Counties

Cambridgeshire	VACANCY
Essex	Brian Harwood; 34 Crow Lane, Romford, Essex, RM7 0EL ☎ 07985 600355 Email: harwoodbrian477@yahoo.com
Norfolk & Suffolk	Chris Dale; 52 Elmcroft Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 6NB ☎ 01473 484507 or 07747 774577 Email: cj-dale@hotmail.co.uk

## Midland Counties

Cheshire	Barrie Eckford; 28 Tunshill Road, Manchester, M23 9QB ☎ 01619 450442 or 07553 182626 Email: barrieckford@btinternet.com
Derbyshire	Andy Hubbuck; 311 Walton Back Lane, Somersall, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S42 7AB ☎ 01246 569281 Email: andy.beryl311@gmail.com

**Midland Counties** *continued*

Hereford & Worcestershire	Megan Clay; 1 Home Farm Cottages, Ribbesford, Bewdley, Worcestershire, DY12 2TQ ☎ 01299 400669 Email: meg.bewdley@gmail.com Jim Hill; 9 Geraldine Court, Geraldine Road, Malvern WR14 3PG Email: jimsherbshill@aol.co.uk
Leicestershire	VACANCY
Northamptonshire	VACANCY
Nottinghamshire	Victor Kelly; 165 Hallcroft Road, Retford, Notts, DN22 7QZ ☎ 01777 704330 Email: victorkelly29@outlook.com
Oxfordshire	Bob Ford; 111 Barns Road, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 3RA ☎ 01865 775271 Email: lindaford1950@hotmail.co.uk
Shropshire	Graham Johnson; 5 Greenways, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY3 8NJ. ☎ 01743 247480 Email: grahamtjohnson1955@outlook.com
Staffordshire	VACANCY
Warwickshire	VACANCY
West Midlands	Phillippa Cooper; 101 Brenton Road, Penn, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV4 5NS ☎ 01902 344867 Email: pjcooper1953@gmail.com

**North of England**

Cumbria	Carole Tate, 22 Lime Grove, Chorley, Lancs, PR7 3JA ☎ 07961 477137 Email: caroletate10@gmail.com
Durham	VACANCY
Humberstone & Lincolnshire	Roz Warley; 64 Lamorna Avenue, Hull, E Yorks, HU8 8HS ☎ 07307 867512 Email: rwarley5@gmail.com
Lancashire	Nicky Edwards, 4 Gerrards Fold, Abbey Village, Chorley, PR6 8DL ☎ 07906 343236 Email: nickysweetpea@btinternet.com
Merseyside	VACANCY
Northumberland	VACANCY

**North of England** *continued*

N Yorks & E Yorks Barry Hakner; Town Farm Nurseries, Main Rd, Burton Agnes, Driffield, E Yorks YO25 4NG ☎ 01262 490402 or 07905 064578 Email: townfarmnurseries@gmail.com

South Yorks Dave Matthewman; 19 Winton Road, North Allerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1QQ Email: paulinepeas@gmail.com or david.matthewman1@btinternet.com

W Yorks Bob Rishworth; 103 Newsome Road, Newsome, Huddersfield, W Yorks HD4 6ND. ☎ 07583 194516 Email: robertrishworth@yahoo.co.uk

Mid Wales VACANCY

South Wales Jenny Morgan; 53 North Street, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP7 7EB ☎ 01873 850937 or 07956 903082 Email: jlmorgan178@gmail.com

North Wales Allan Evans, 41 Victoria Drive, Llandudno Junction, LL31 9PF. ☎ 07712 047421 Email: allanevans10@yahoo.co.uk

**Scotland**

Scotland VACANCY

**Ireland**

Ireland Tony Boston; 1 Beechlawn Green, Coolock, Dublin 5, Ireland ☎ 00353 1 8474585

**Regional Co-ordinators**

Eastern Region Geoffrey Freeman; 2 Watermeadow Close, Ormsby Saint Margaret, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 3NF ☎ 07764 945753 Email: geofffreeman96@btinternet.com

North West Region Carole Tate, 22 Lime Grove, Chorley, Lancs, PR7 3JA ☎ 07961 477137 Email: caroletate10@gmail.com

Welsh Region John Rowlands; Maes y Wern, Llandyrnog, Denbigh, Wales, LL16 4EU ☎ 07879 813940 Email: johnmelr@btinternet.com

# District Representatives Reports

## Buckinghamshire

*By Graeme Hollingdale*

Sadly, in our area during 2021, very few shows took place. Despite the restrictions being relaxed from the Summer and to an extent at least, everyone being actively encouraged to go back to a semblance on normal life, whilst being sensible from June onwards, committees and memberships on the whole were taking a very cautious approach to restarting. Some realised that financially, with potentially less exhibitors and visitors attending the events (which in reality hardly ever make a profit, even in 'normal' years) it would not be possible (this is something I heard repeatedly throughout the year and not just confined to horticultural societies either) to go ahead.



**Chiltern show judging in progress.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

I may be wrong (and haven't had show reports submitted to me to the contrary) but apart from the Chiltern Sweet Pea Society and our kind of on the doorstep Early National, the only other large or specialist show to take place was at Stoke Poges, where I was once again privileged to be judging (all flower classes as one of a pair). This took place on a damp Saturday (24 July) and rather emphasised the contrasting summer weather from 2020, which was so pleasant and conducive for growing flowers and

vegetables, to the season of 2021 which was largely the opposite. There were a few Sweet Peas and roses on the show bench but none, in all honesty, that you could refer to as good quality. The late summer/autumn flowers such as dahlias were also struggling to produce quality for what is always a challengingly early date (always the last Saturday in July) Vegetables were similarly mixed in numbers and quality on display. However, the pot-grown exhibits stole the show in more ways than one. Those who have the facilities to grow largely undercover, all manner of flowering and foliage species, produced some fantastic specimens and were a pleasure to judge.



**I'm in charge - Caroline marshalling the troops for prize giving. Photo by Chris Gray.**

Specifically, from the Sweet Pea perspective, it was noticeable that fewer specialist growers were exhibiting, however there was more evidence that general gardeners, novices and juniors had entered, with Old Fashioned and Modern Grandiflora types in vases and bowls outnumbering the Spencers. Sadly, there also was a lack of exhibiting technique on display (also plenty of virus

around). Interestingly, with all the discussion around the use of Oasis taking place following the RHS announcements, I had to struggle to see any used for any of the flower classes; the most common alternative was wire mesh over the top of a vase, which worked extremely well with larger specimens and those with wider and/or longer stems than 'Peas have.

Then there was a quite small village show to the north of the county, which also took place. Another of my regular judging visits each year took me to Long Marston. Entries were well down in both flower and vegetable sections (which these days only require one judge to cover both sections, whereas when I first took on this commitment, it required two) however what brightened my visit was the sight of some excellent late



**First prize vase from Chiltern show. Photo by Caroline Ball.**



**Second prize vase from Chiltern show. Photo by Caroline Ball.**

season (for this part of England anyway) Sweet Peas, which without hesitation I gave best in show to (am I biased?). After judging was completed, I could see to whom they belonged; great credit went to Kathy Gray from nearby Aylesbury.

You saw the headline statistics in the 2021 Autumn Bulletin about the CSPS show which took place on Thursday 1 July, however I would like to add that I am sure I was not the only one to experience a most uplifting and joyful day. Yes, there were a few exhibitors missing but to enjoy a great show display from those who did attend, there were many visitors during the afternoon. Some were growers but many were simply fellow gardeners, friends and relatives of the Society. In fabulous weather, where everyone acted with common sense and mutual respect for everyone's space and health concerns (some wore masks, others merely kept their distance) everyone was enjoying some 'normality' if our slightly eccentric hobby can ever be referred to as such) once again.

Just to remind you that the award winners for 2021 were: Kathy Gray for her Best Vase (Gwendoline) and Chiltern Challenge Trophy mixed vase; Derek Chapple for the Best Exhibit, which was from the Red Kite class for three vases distinct, Jenny Morgan for the best vase (Karen Louise) in small growers (Wessex Trophy) sections and I achieved the most points award in single vase classes, of the Flay Trophy.



The Chiltern Society also held its Autumn Meeting on Sunday 17 October, as is now traditional in the Millennium Hall, Lacey Green, with Roger Parsons as our guest speaker. Again, this was with a reduced number of visitors, however it was extremely

successful and enjoyable for all those who attended. Not only did we enjoy the excellent presentation from Roger but also a practical demonstration from committee members Alison and Caroline on staging vases and decoratives without using Oasis, in conjunction with plenty of questions and comments. A terrific 'in house' lunch was the icing on the cake!

The aforementioned ladies will be in charge of the NSPS display and bureau, that the CSPS are planning to provide for the 115th Royal Windsor Show (one of our Affiliated Societies) on Saturday 11 June. We need flowers, and helpers from near and far to do our flower and Society justice; is that you? If so please make contact asap.

CSPS will be holding their 22nd Annual Show on Sunday (yes, back to a weekend date) 10 July at their usual venue in Loosley Row. The provisional date for the Autumn meeting and AGM is also on a Sunday, the 16 October. If you have any questions about anything you have read in this article or if you are interested in discussing anything at all concerning this area, the CSPS, its shows or AGM then please contact me, Caroline or Alison (contact details elsewhere) or show manager Chris Gray (on 01296 488160)

## Derbyshire

*By Andy Hubbuck*

Not a lot to report in regards to local shows, as all these events were once again cancelled. I grew my usual amount of plants and enjoyed looking after them very much, in fact we think it kept Beryl and I busy and took our mind off Covid. In many cases local shows were governed by local Councils etc who closed village halls until further notice. Let's hope all venues are open for 2022 and all enjoy growing and showing again.

With no shows in my area I concentrated on my seedlings and I am pleased the Trials will take place again this season. It does give a great buzz to see the results of 4/5 years work to get a 'Pea good enough to send to Trials. Not all 'Peas do well at the Trials, this is as true for individuals as it is for the Trade, and they may not make the grade required to put them into commerce. But when one does you feel great pride in being able to name the variety and seeing it on the show benches. Having said all this, don't expect to become a millionaire by producing new varieties. As with most things in life, the producer does the work for the Trade.

Due to catching Covid 19 I had to miss the annual October meeting of the Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society. As with all regional activities, it is a time to meet friends old and new before winter. The day prior to the meeting the Myers family held a celebration of Ian's life and I understand it was a huge success. Lets hope we have a good season in 2022 with show benches heaving with our beautiful Sweet Peas.

## Essex

*By Brian Harwood*

Hello everyone

Due to the pandemic no shows took place in 2020 and 2021. We are hoping for a good showing season this year. My local show is Elm Park, Hornchurch which is to be held on 18 June where there are 6 Sweet Pea classes ranging from vases of 3 stems to a vase of twelve stems. To show, you have to be a member which is £2 per household which covers you for 4 shows, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, along with the Summer show. We provide cream teas which are served by the committee and volunteers. So for those who are interested please contact me and I will arrange a schedule to be sent to you. My details are included in this Annual (see list of District representatives at the beginning of this section). The next show will be Chingford which will be held on 25 June, followed by Buckhurst Hill on 9 July and we are hoping that the Rayleigh show will go ahead but I have no confirmation as yet. To the best of my knowledge that will be all the shows in Essex in 2022 as sadly we have lost Colchester show for various reasons after 125 years. It was a good show which attracted many people.

I sowed my plants on 16 October 2021 and at the time of writing all plants are doing well and looking healthy. I am looking forward to a good show of blooms.

Here's wishing you all a successful year with your Sweet Peas and I look forward to meeting some of you at the Essex shows.

## Hampshire

*By Jim McDonald*

As I start to write a few notes from Hampshire for the Annual the news is that many restrictions are to be lifted in the next few days. Hoorah!! It is pleasing that local show committees have tentatively started to make arrangements for shows this year. They can now go full steam ahead! All we need now is good growing conditions to get the benches full of Sweet Peas. Our other concern is omitting Oasis from the vases but we still have time to try out some of the suggestions mentioned in the Autumn Bulletin. I am sure Oasis will soon have a suitable alternative which will meet all standards. In 2021 many of the local shows for Sweet Peas were cancelled. Top marks to the team who organised the National at Abingdon. It was great to see some excellent exhibits. We did manage to enter a few classes to help fill some blank spaces on the benches. At home we had variable weather up to the end of July with many frosts, hot periods,

two days of continual rain followed by lots of rain which meant plants and flowers were struggling to flower and produce seed pods. This left many of the seed clumps without any seed pods. This problem was felt by many others.

This year seed sowing has required some research into suitable compost now that peat has been reduced. I have used a peat reduced compost mixed with a peat free compost. At the moment plants do not look as good as in previous years, or is it due to adverse weather? Let's hope they come good with some foliar feed ready for planting out at the end of March/early April.

As there were no shows, there were no winners in 2021.

### **Shows for 2022**

Downton 11 June. Contact Tony Ashford ashfordtony2@gmail.com

The New Forest Sweet Pea Society 18 June at Breamore Village Hall. Contact Mary and Jim McDonald 01794 301490

Best wishes, stay safe and have a good Sweet Pea year.

## **Hereford and Worcester**

*By Megan Clay and Jim Hill*

A warm welcome to our new members who have joined in the past year. We hope that we will be able to meet at an event during the growing year. Last year brought mixed results again in our region, not helped by a very cold April and a very warm and dry May. Many local shows were cancelled again in 2021 due to Covid restrictions and sadly, we have also heard of one or two gardening societies which have not re-opened. So, let's hope that we can return to 'normal' in 2022. If you have never thought of exhibiting your Sweet Peas before, then why not support your local shows and have a go this year? You will find plenty of tips and advice on the Society website and in the Bulletins.

Phillippa Cooper, the West Midlands NSPS Representative, has agreed to give a talk on growing Sweet Peas to Bewdley Horticultural Society in the Spring. Hopefully, it will enthuse a few more to try growing our favourite flower and indeed to have a go at showing. The Malvern Spring Show is planned to go ahead, so we may see some of you there.

I was fortunate to be given a few plants of 'Blanche Ferry' last winter by one of our members. It is a very old variety, rose pink bicolour and highly scented. I grew them under cover and was rewarded with plentiful blooms from which I was able to save seed. I shall certainly be growing them again this year.

Wishing you all a successful year of growing and exhibiting.

# Humberside and Lincolnshire

*By Roz Warley*

Although there is little to report from our neck of the woods due to the ever changing situation with Covid there are a few titbits to share. Firstly my telephone number has changed to 07307 867512 my email address remains the same rwarley5@gmail.com. Please feel free to contact me if there is anything I can assist you with as District Rep, or if any other District Reps would like to join forces with us maybe with planned events etc – again please get in touch.

It is probably now a good time for us to consider pulling together to get things back to normal so if you good Humbersiders and Lincolnshire members have any suggestions to share for potential input over here please let me know.

Recently emails were sent out to all members in this region asking for your ideas or any subjects you may fancy a chat about if you haven't received yours please check your spam folder or let me know and I will resend. My thanks to Charles Pinchbeck for his very kind offer and assistance in facilitating us to take a table to the Heckington Show in July. This show comes with great recommendations as a cracking day out with plenty to keep us all entertained including a competitive horticultural section and firework display. So please support the show if you haven't already by entering some Sweet Peas, schedules will be available on line just google Heckington Show and look for the schedule download button or email me and I will send you over a link to it. If you are able to attend do drop by our table for a chat, it would be great to see you.

To this end I've sown some Old Fashioned Mixed and some Species Sweet Peas in the hope of selling some bunches on behalf of the NSPS, so if anyone has any spare blooms they could donate please either bring them along or we are happy to meet you somewhere on the way.

Unfortunately we have lost our 2 allotments due to planning being approved for an access road, therefore my 2 tunnels have been sold so I'm very limited for growing space this year hence my request for spare blooms.

Nevertheless, as District Rep I'm keen to get the 'information highway' in full flow again, so please keep in touch for a chat about varieties sown, methods, even the hot topic of Oasis replacements or if anyone has any seeds they would like to swap let me know I will send an email circular round. Let's get in touch with each other as a group, we are lucky to have Regional Co-ordinators in place too – this network is great for connecting areas and sharing ideas. We are such a warm and friendly Society everything is in place to secure its future, particularly with the vast experiences our seasoned exhibitors are happy to share so please do take advantage of that if you have any questions.

This weekend I'm intending to trial a couple of staging materials which are only a basic idea at the moment having drawn inspiration from the ideas shown in the Autumn Bulletin, so if anything turns out to be potentially useful I will report that in the next Bulletin.



Finally from me - here is a photo taken on 1st Jan this year of one of last year's plants which has overwintered (thus far) outside. Should it continue to survive I will report back having never tried this before I wonder - has anyone else? Let me know if you have and what the results were please.

We are really looking forward to getting back to normal where possible whilst still remaining vigilant and careful. Hopefully we shall be able to meet up with a good few fellow members at Heckington Show, and in the meanwhile enjoy swapping ideas about our great hobby.

Remember, everyone can play a part no matter how small in keeping our great Society safe and well for future generations.

## Kent

*By Phil Johnson*

With the various issues surrounding Covid over the last couple of years, there has been little opportunity for members to meet in person in Kent. Hopefully, times are changing again. I have been asked to judge the Kent Fed Show in 2022, to which I always look forward. However, this year it will be a one day show, 26 June at Ditton. Changes at the Kent County Show mean that our county horticultural show has had to find a new venue.

As many of you will know I have moved house (again) to near Maldon in Essex, so I am afraid I have taken the decision to step down as NSPS District Rep for Kent. Currently, no one has come forward to offer to take on the role. If you are interested, please contact me for an informal chat (details at the front of the Annual) or Carole Tate. Best wishes from Kent.

# Ireland

*By Niall Coveney*

The optimism that prevailed at the start of 2020 with the presentation from Roger Parsons in February of that year was not to be repeated in 2021. Many adverse factors prevailed to make the growing of Sweet Peas quite difficult for everyone.

The expansion of the pandemic following the Christmas relaxation of restrictions quickly got hold of communities with devastating effects. While the introduction of vaccines helped to reduce the fear factor, movement was very much restricted making life for those on allotments difficult. Many were not able to attend to their plots and weeds took over rapidly. These restrictions were retained for many months in the hopes of reducing the spread of the pandemic and were only gradually lifted.

Allied to this we had a very wet January and February on the east coast of the country and then the months of April and May were the driest in many years with just a total of 22 millimetres of rainfall in those two months. Planting is normally done at the end of March or early in April and with so little rainfall growth was definitely delayed. To add to all of this we had significantly higher temperatures than average in June and July which affected the development of the flowers.

To add to the woes of growers many of us were unable to buy seed from our normal suppliers in the UK due to the difficulties caused by Brexit. Some of us managed to get seed through but the customs position is unclear and unlikely to be streamlined for some time. This meant that our growers had to try to save whatever seed they could for next year. That posed a difficulty this year with the heat in June and July as many plants did not set seed. It remains to be seen if growers here have enough seed in reserves for the 2022 season and beyond. These restrictions are unlikely to be resolved in the near future.

Despite these difficulties Maria Melvin continued to grow seed for a group of novices encouraging them to plant and compete wherever possible. She has been very successful in encouraging new growers and hopefully this year they will grow their own.

During the year we lost two stalwart growers, John Warren in September, and Ken Laverick in late November. Both will be very sadly missed by all.

A Sweet Pea and vegetable show was planned for early August by Madaleine and John Harford in Swords but had to be cancelled on advice from the health authorities. It was held on the 11 - 12 September but with a rearranged schedule excluding Sweet Peas.

Chris McAleer, who is a top-class gardener, continues his work on cross breeding and during the year managed to send seed for trials in the UK. Mossie Butterley is also working on growing and selecting some new varieties which could prove very interesting. We await their results with anticipation.

Finally, Sydney Harrod announced the results of the photographic competition in March and his collection of photographs from around the world was stunning. Hopefully this will continue once we all get back to normality and can once more go to shows.

## North West Region

*By Nicky Edwards*

The start of 2020 saw us all locked down again and the programme of events began online. Things gradually picked up as the year went on and by April we were able to have some live events which was extremely exciting. It was such a joy to meet up with members of the Society and fellow gardeners, albeit outdoors and socially distanced, and to see people again. In the end we managed to participate in several successful events and shows (see show section of this Annual) and the year ended very positively with a highly enjoyable face-to-face social. We couldn't have had these events without you, the members, so thank you to everyone who attended, entered or helped out over the year. I'm sure we're all looking forward to meeting up again this year.

### **Workshops**

The programme of North West events usually begins in January with our series of five workshops which take you through all the stages of sowing, growing and planting out your own seedlings. This time they were a little bit different as they had to be done on Zoom by Tom Atherton and his trusty helper Jane from his conservatory. Zoom has been a learning curve for us all but a surprising number of people participated and learned a lot in the process. Later in the year it was possible to have face to face workshops involving flower arranging and staging, layering and judging.

### **North West Zoom Social Meeting held on Sunday 20 March 2021**

There was a great attendance on Zoom for our first NW social of the year. I think everyone found it informative and entertaining with presentations about the different *Lathyrus* species, how to take cuttings, *Lathyrus vernus* and the soon-to-be-released Sweet Pea 'Tom Atherton'. There was lots of information about the up-coming Chorley Flower Show and how to make entries for this. Well done to our junior member, Bryn

Edwards, who gave a presentation about shifter varieties and demonstrated power-point skills far in advance of mine! We also had the opportunity to hear from some of our members about their gardens and from Jenny and Lewis Morgan about their extensive garden in South Wales.

### **Information Stands at Chorley Market, Tuesday 13 April and Saturday 24 April 2021**



Tom Atherton's beautiful mature *Lathyrus vernus* plants were a great talking point at these events and encouraged sales of plants and seeds. We were able to get a feel for how the public felt about attending Chorley Flower Show and the response was really positive. Everyone seemed very ready for some diversion from the current situation. The "come and sow" children's event worked well and some of them came to tell us how their plants were doing at Chorley Flower Show.

### **Arley Hall Plant Finders Sale, Saturday 17 April 2021**

Wow – what an event this was! We were inundated with a public extremely keen to get out and about and buying plants again. By the end of the day we had virtually sold out of Sweet Peas, vernus and species plants. The mature *vernus* plants – including Eskimo Nell, the star of Gardener's World and Malvern a couple of years ago – were a big draw again. We sold seeds and increased the membership so all in all a fantastic day.

### **Vernus Party, Thursday 17 June 2021**

The last two years have seen cancellations of the early Flower Shows. Normally at these events we would raise revenue for the Society by selling *vernus* plants. The plants we sell are normally 2-3 years old and have to be potted into a larger sized pot each year. Tom Atherton suddenly found himself with over 1,000 plants that needed attention so we held a "Potting Party" to help pot all the *vernus* plants on. There are now 1,000 much happier *vernus* plants which are growing on to bigger things.

## North West Region Social Sunday 26 September 2021

This was held at Chorley Bowling Club on Windsor Drive and it was great to see so many members there. Darren Myers gave an extremely interesting talk about his growing methods which provided much food for thought. Julia Beardmore demonstrated how to make arrangements without using Oasis and Tom Atherton talked to us about using reeds to stage vases for shows. He had set up a vase with reeds which members could try out. With the usual competitions, quizzes, raffle and pie and pea lunch this was a fun and informative end to our season.

## Suffolk and Norfolk

*By Chris Dale*

Hello from Suffolk and Norfolk.

Nothing particularly of note to report from this neck of the woods: we have none of the large local Sweet Pea shows remaining in Suffolk, a sad reflection of the times for garden and horticultural societies. Fortunately, in 2022 Elm Park and a few others are hoping to run their shows in neighbouring Essex, which my friend and colleague Brian will have written about in his notes. At the time of writing my tribe are recovered from Covid, all bar my mum (85) who miraculously has avoided it completely despite being with us all at the turn of the year when we were unknowingly infectious and mingling as permitted. Baffling.

Almost as baffling is the cause of my 2021 plants disaster. I had still set out 120 from a frame full, grown just in case the bug might relax its grip on the country and the odd show might survive, but also just for the pleasure of sharing the flowers with socially distanced friends and neighbours. They might even have provided an opportunity and legitimate excuse to drive a short distance, just to test my eyesight (depth and colour perception, what else?). Of course, the good lady would have accompanied me as back-up should I be unwell. There's a nice castle at Colchester which would be a credible distance. And nobody would recognise us out and about. But I digress.

Lost 118 of them. Never seen anything like it in 40 years. They had started looking pale in the frames but went yellow almost as soon as they were put in the ground during a short clement spell in March. The roots had died and gone brown, the collars were weak or browning off. So I removed the lot to compost. Was it because lockdown meant I had to use different suppliers/brands and sources of compost and manure? Was the soil still too cold and wet when I planted out? Had the lack of light in February and March weakened the plants in the frames? Or that late, short but intense cold spell? Too many variables to decide.

So I sowed some old seed to try and get some late blooms. Restricted the seedlings severely and put them out in the same place from which I'd removed the failed crop (in May, 2 months later than usual in these parts). They thrived! I cut blooms from July until just into October. Only a short period of good 4s with really long stems, but for the first time I can remember, not one pollen beetle. Wonderful! And almost no virus. Maybe the late start of flowering missed the migration of beetles from the fields, as rape flowering would have ceased a few weeks prior?

So the soil has been prepared again, and the cold frame is full of healthy-looking plants, albeit they are a bit forward as it's been ridiculously mild. The greenhouse has a growbag and tub of early multifloras starting their upward movement, all alongside 3-year-old granddaughter Elsie's Peppa Pig greenhouse of herb pots and her from-a-pip-grown apple tree in a pot. We like Peppa Pigs' world.

I have a talk lined up at a local Society in June, when I hope to be able to take some decent flowers for their members. And maybe, just maybe, by then I'll be able to mention Sweet Pea viruses in passing rather than being concerned about the Covid variants. 2022 just must be better, so we can make time for a party or two? Or maybe a few more...in the garden...with wine and cake!

## South Wales

*By Jen and Lewis Morgan*

As we write this and give you an insight into our year, another 12 months with Covid has passed by where restrictions ebbed and flowed, and you had to remember which part of the country you were in to be sure of the correct local restrictions, which was particularly applicable to us as we live almost right on the border with regular cross border sorties for various reasons.

The year started as normal on the Sweet Pea front, Autumn sown plants potted on and minding their own business down the bottom greenhouse and cold frames. Spring sown Sweet Peas were slightly late getting planted out but proved a blessing as it meant they avoided being in the ground during the poor weather in April, a big contrast to the same time the previous year.

Forced on us by lockdown, our small toe in the water exercise with regard to seed production was rewarding with fellow members of local gardening clubs and allotment holders taking seed off us, and all reported good results and excellent germination, phew!! We continued with seed production in 2021 but to a lesser extent due to more cordon growing being undertaken. We think the poor early weather affected matters as the harvest didn't seem as productive as the previous year when the weather had been very kind early on and allowed plants to get well established.

We were optimistic that some shows may take place, we got our cordon rows organised, and crossed our fingers! Whilst the Gloucester Federation and Royal Welsh Shows were cancelled early on, we were relieved the National Society Committee, once the outlook was favourable, took the positive step in putting on the National Shows which was some encouragement that some sense of normality was returning. Some other Shows (more of which later) also threw their organising hats in the ring and things were definitely looking brighter.

In March the North West Region invited us to join in with their Spring Social Meeting being held on Zoom. We thought that was very nice of them, but there was a catch! Could we possibly do a short talk on who we were and what we get up to. So, we put a selection of slides together and Nicky Edwards did a sterling job on the day organising the meeting and getting everyone on line, along with running the slide show, well done Nicky. Tom ran a virtual plant competition and we won a few prizes with the *L.vernus* plants.

With the early season holiday break not happening we had a day out at Dyffryn Gardens again to see if they were going to have a re-run of their 2020 floral theme which was supposed to have been all things Sweet Peas. With the continuing uncertainty they scaled back their ambitions generally around the gardens to ensure they could successfully manage the various displays being aware the volunteer army may not be able to help out. However, as part of their displays in the south borders and elsewhere not only did they have numerous wigwams erected and were in the process of planting out a mixture of Old Fashioned and Spencer varieties, they actually had blooms as well. They did admit they had put their polytunnels to good use!



Early June saw our local open gardens day return raising funds for one of the cancer charities, the sun shone and there was an excellent turn out. Everyone did their bit with social distancing and it seemed we were just glad to be able to go somewhere and be in a safe environment.



**A Little private Enterprise-They all went!**  
*Photo by Lewis Morgan.*



**A prospective member in the future!**  
**On twirly duty.** *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

Later in the month we headed to the Early Show. Whilst entrant numbers were down for the obvious reason, we think unseasonal weather had caused a certain amount of havoc up through the English counties which we for once missed. We think it was important to put the Show on and maintain a presence. We were pleased with our entries, and enjoyed being able to meet up with our fellow exhibitors at long last. Visitors seemed to enjoy the displays and made everything worthwhile.

In the run up to the Early Show and with potentially other Shows we would normally attend being thin on the ground we investigated the Chiltern Society Annual Show with a bit of coercion from Kathy Grey and Graeme Hollingdale. Five days after the Early Show and just into July, a 5.30am start on a nice sunny day saw us heading back down the M4. Fortunately, both ways we seemed to be going the opposite direction to the commuting traffic so the trip was fine. We enjoyed the Show, had some success and hope to return in 2022, if they'll have us! (Editor – we will!)



**Chiltern Society Show exhibitors at work!** *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

A return trip to Dyffryn Gardens found the Sweet Peas and all the other planting blooming well, and the volunteers back in force and enjoying the good weather.



**Dyffryn Gardens staff and volunteers tending the Sweet Peas.** *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

At the end of July, the North West Region Show came calling and we did a bit of Judging for a change in amongst entering a few of the single stem and button hole classes. The weather gods must have put their phone on divert when Tom rang them, the weather was extremely wet on the Friday!

Early August dawned and a run over to Clutton Show just outside Bristol. Our Sweet Peas were on the slippery slope but we

managed the single vase classes along with entries in the other cut flower classes. Graham Nichol turned up with a boot full of blooms and was successful in the 6 Vase Class. We need to plan a late sowing to have a crack at this class! Lewis will think, more importantly, that he cleaned up in the Photographic Competition with two cups.

A local Show in early September with a class for one vase of Sweet Peas signalled the end of the season. Seed harvesting had long finished and it was time to clear out and put everything to bed for the winter. It wouldn't be long before the seed trays were required and 2022 was on the horizon. The Local Gardening Club we attend once a month recommenced after a year off with a speaker every month, and we were asked to give our first live talk as part of the programme. We'll let you know how we got on in next year's report.

October saw a well-earned holiday down in the Channel Islands, albeit 18 months late, something to do with a pandemic! The weather was excellent and to cap it all Lewis had a Weather Watcher photo shown on BBC Breakfast News with Carol Kirkwood, Matt Taylor used it the next day as well.



Well, that was our year, however, sadly last but not least we would like to take the opportunity to pay our small tribute to John Carrier. In the comparatively short time we came to know John, he welcomed us into the Sweet Pea family and always had a kind word, as he did for everyone.

All those whose life John touched will have a story to tell, and this is ours, that has actually nothing to do with Sweet Peas. So, there we were a few years ago on a Sunday morning standing in Jersey Airport waiting for our flight. Adjacent was a large screen TV on which there was a live current affairs programme hosted by Nicky Campbell with a studio audience to which we weren't paying a lot of attention, when suddenly this voice issued forth from the TV, and Lewis straightaway said that doesn't half sound like John Carrier.



**Jenny Morgan receiving her prize from John Carrier at the Early National. Photo by Lewis Morgan.**

On turning around to the screen, low and behold there he was offering considered words of wisdom on the topic being discussed no doubt gained from a life full of varied experiences in his "Day Job". Like everyone we'll miss you John.

## West Sussex

*By Roger Parsons*

Another year where there has been little interaction between local members during the Covid pandemic. I managed to host four open days in 2021, the first for about 5 years. Numbers were restricted to 30 per event so I apologise to the many people who wanted to visit but were unable. It was great to catch up with people at the Early National Show. My record of results looks quite good but the Spencers were mostly poor blooms that I would not normally have cut. Other chances to meet up with people were outside our county. I judged at the Chiltern Sweet Pea show in early July and gave a talk at the Autumn social meeting in October.

The weather in Spring was dry and cold with me. April was exceptionally dry while June and July were very wet. Although my plants are mostly under polythene, some round the edges were lost to excess ground water and outdoor plants simply died in the wet. July and August were generally cool and overcast which prolonged and delayed my seed harvest. One week of good weather happily coincided with the open days. Plants were at their optimum best in the week leading up to the open days.

Despite the strangeness of the season, I think I had my best plants ever and put this down to the introduction of a programme of regular foliar feeding with biostimulants and micronutrients. As well as having healthy plants, or because of, I saw few Aphids in 2021 and little Powdery Mildew. The three main products I used were SB Plant Invigorator, Micromax WS, and Omex Zynergy. These are professional products but SB is available in a formulation for amateurs. If you are looking for something similar, Micromax is a blend of trace elements and the Zynergy is basically copper sulphate. I sprayed once a week with SB and added the others once a fortnight. So, one week would be SB and Micromax, the next week would be SB and Zynergy, and so on.

One sad note was the death in June of Peter Mazillius, a member from Worthing.

The New Year sees October-sown plants looking quite forward during the mild winter but otherwise looking well. I am very much looking forward to the season ahead and hope that we will have some shows in West Sussex in 2022, where we can get together once again. I will be joint show manager for the Early National Show to be held just over the border at Wisley. It is a mid-week show so should not clash with local shows and it would be great to see lots of Sussex growers there. Another attraction is that Sweet Pea trials return to Wisley in 2022 and 2023 but involvement in these two events means I will not be holding any open days in 2022. I am always pleased to hear from local members so don't hesitate to get in touch with any queries or just if you fancy a chat. Wishing everyone a successful season ahead.

## West Yorkshire

*By Bob Rishworth*

Once again it is necessary to report about a season affected by the pandemic.

Although the Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society Show was due to take place just as we were coming out of lockdown it was realised that social distancing and a shortage of members that would be required to provide adequate control necessitated cancellation.

Fortunately a week later it was possible for us to take part in the Late National Show, held just over the border in North Yorkshire, where more spacious facilities were available. However the numbers of members attending were sadly down, considered due partly to some still considering that they should maintain a degree of isolation and with some growers having a shortage of blooms due to a late frost.

The Spencer vase classes were dominated by West Yorkshire members, Darren Myers in the 15 stem classes, Mike Hargreaves the 9 (or was it 12) stems and myself the 7 stem classes. Major contributors to the Decorative classes had made the moderate journey from Lancashire. All in all the "visiting public" enjoyed viewing the exhibits.

So far as the Autumn meetings of the Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society are concerned I was out of the country for both the October Social Meeting and the November Annual General Meeting, both of which are normally enjoyable events. For this year I will try to avoid the clash with my travel plans.

We will all be hoping that this year will give us greater opportunities to meet with one another.



# Obituaries

## John Carrier, President of the National Sweet Pea Society

*By Caroline Ball & Roger Parson*

Frederick John Carrier was born in October 1932 in Swindon, Wiltshire where he was brought up with sister Shirley. He attended church in Swindon and took an active role in the church, becoming a lay preacher in his teens and eventually training at the Congregational church, later to become the United Reformed Church. In his third year of college John met Marjorie often recounted as 'speaking at an Easter conference I saw an attractive girl in the front row, and Marjorie was sitting next to her'! They became engaged and were married in 1958

John and Marjorie moved to Leamington Spa where John worked at Lillington Free Church and Marjorie took on a full-time teaching role. They subsequently welcomed to the world two daughters, Heather in 1961 and Debbie in 1963. John's life was becoming increasingly busy, his church congregation outgrew its building so John oversaw, with the elders, the building of a new church which was dedicated in 1966. He took on teaching of RE at the comprehensive school in Warwick and additional work as chaplain at the Warwick hospital.



**Bernard Jones (left) and John Carrier (right).**

In this period John joined the National Sweet Pea Society, in 1960 to be precise, after becoming the Free Church Chaplain at Warwick Hospital, which brought him into contact with Bernard Jones, Fred Gowers and the many other excellent Sweet Pea growers in Warwickshire. Bernard Jones was the most knowledgeable and superb Sweet Pea grower. At one show he was scrutinising John's award-winning blooms and pronounced after a thorough inspection: "It must be so nice to have God on your side".

John first appears as a prizewinner at the 1961 National show in the division for people

who grow no more than 200 plants, where he won the F W Franks Cup for six vases. The Rev. Ken Colledge had recently left Leamington Spa, prompting the writer of a report on the show to say: "The livings at Leamington seem to be especially endowed with perfect Sweet Pea soil."

He again won the Franks Cup in 1963. On returning home, he said to Marjorie: "Do you realise that each time I have won the Franks Cup you have been pregnant?". Marjorie's response was quick and direct: "If you expect to win it a third time, don't expect any help from me". He entered again in 1964 but was not even placed and never did win it again.

In 1963 the Society held its first AGM outside of London, at Leamington Spa. John was already actively supporting the Society because he gave a vote of thanks at the end of the meeting.

At the 1965 National show, John's name first appears as a judge, having previously served time as a steward. His first article in the Sweet Pea Annual was the report on the 1965 show. The 1966 Sweet Pea Annual saw John as joint editor when Ken Colledge had to step down at short notice.

In 1968 Marjorie and John moved to Endon near Leek in Staffordshire. John took up a post as RE teacher at a comprehensive school in Leek and Marjorie taught at the village school in Endon where they lived. All these different experiences prepared John for his next ministry as Student Counsellor and Lecturer at Hereward College in Coventry for students with special needs. In 1970 the Carrier family moved back to Leamington and bought their own house there. John taught woodwork, metalwork and maths. His skills were also utilised at home, a sledge and rocking horse were notable creations enjoyed by his daughters and his grandchildren. Of course, John and Marjorie remained in active involvement in their local church. They became members of Spencer Street Church and he supported their union with Trinity Methodist Church to form Radford Road Church. Although having retired early at 58 in 1992, John was called as part time Minister of Radford Road Church and served there for another five years. He continued to lead worship at different churches in the town and people enjoyed his services with his funny stories and imaginative prayers and became Interim Minister when local churches went in to vacancy. John wrote a book of amusing anecdotes of his ministry which was published in 2011 entitled 'Church Chuckles', the proceeds from which went towards Radford Road Church.

It was not until 1990 that he first joined the NSPS General Committee. In that year, John Land became Chairman and remained in post until 2000. John Land and Roger Parsons used to travel together to committee meetings. John Land indicated that he would only step down from the role when he had found the right person to succeed him. John L and Roger decided John Carrier would be the best person for the job and were delighted when he agreed to take over in 2000. John needed all his diplomacy and tact

during his chairmanship to deal with some difficult personalities but a lifetime of pastoral work had given him the skills needed. His ability during this period led the then Society President John Bishop to remark in 2007 that John Carrier has been the best chairman the Society has ever had. We have had 3 chairmen since John retired including Roger Parsons and Roger himself says 'I think all would agree that John Carrier remains the best chairman the Society has ever had'. We can add quantity to quality. With 14 years as chairman, only one person has been chairman for longer. In 2015 John Bishop stood down as Society President. Marjorie tells us how proud and honoured John Carrier was to be elected President of the Society he loved but really, he was the obvious person for the job. He wore his chain of office proudly.



**John and Marjorie Carrier 2017.**

Like so many good men, John took the view that he could not have achieved half of what he did without the love and support of his wife. Marjorie operated very quietly in the background, for example providing lunches at sub-committee meetings held at their house. It amused John when someone remarked "I am only on this sub-committee because of Marjorie's lunches". Meetings were held

in the garden where we had to run the gauntlet of the tortoise. John approached Roger Parsons to see if he could get a new Sweet Pea named for Marjorie. It was fortunate timing because Roger had an un-named Pea which was of the good exhibition quality he was looking for. So Sweet Pea 'Marjorie Carrier' went on sale to the general public from August 2015.

In 2004, John was awarded the Jack Davis Award for services to the Society but his proudest moment came in 2007 when he was awarded the Henry Eckford Gold Memorial Medal. This is an honour which is rarely awarded and is for exceptional contribution to the Sweet Pea and its Society with only a handful of living recipients in the world at any one time.

As part of the citation former president John Bishop reminded us that John Carrier was born before the advent of the NHS so his birth had cost his mother one shilling and nine pence - less than 10p today - and concluded he was well worth the outlay.

John proved to be a forward thinking and innovative chairman. Whilst he loved staging vases of Spencer Sweet Peas he steered the Society to feature other types of Sweet Pea

at shows, more decorative classes which would appeal to a wider audience, and to make the 'novice' classes of the Society more inclusive. In 2000, when John became chairman, only 14% of the committee were women but this was more than at any time in the previous 100 years. Now, 56% are women.

Amongst many other achievements John guided the Society through a revision of its rules, the entrance into the digital age and spent time on succession planning making sure the Society was fit for the 21st century. Some of this sounds quite heavy indeed and so some of it was. However, John led Committee meetings with his trademark sense of humour. A couple of examples, we have a 100 Club, introduced by former Treasurer John Pratt who, being very frugal with Society funds, always reused the raffle tickets between draws and years. Despite coming from the same book it always made at least Caroline Ball smile when John called out the colour of the ticket before reading out the winning number.



Sweet Pea growers are always complaining about the weather. When people asked if John could use his connections to change the weather for the better, he used to say, stealing from his great friend the Rev Ken Colledge: "I am in sales, not management".

On occasions he has been less popular, however. Staging at National shows takes place overnight. As some of us get older, we try to snatch a couple of hours sleep in the car. On one particular occasion John slept in the car but every time he tossed and turned the car alarm went off. Other exhibitors, also sleeping in their cars, were not pleased!! There were many comments the next morning!!

John's contribution to horticulture extended beyond Sweet Peas. He was the chairman of Leamington in Bloom for ten years and under John's leadership the town won a silver in the Britain in Bloom final and a special award for best park for Jephson Gardens and went on to win many gold and parks awards. John was also heavily involved with his local allotments for 40 years, which is where he grew his Sweet Peas and we know it was one of the locations he used to recruit new converts to Sweet Pea growing.

John and Marjorie made the difficult decision to move from Leamington and their house of more than 50 years to Wyton, Huntingdon in 2021 to be closer to their daughters and extended family.

John's impact on the National Sweet Pea Society and horticulture in general is not just his many tangible achievements. His main contribution is his effect on the people he met. He had a genuine interest in people.

**This is reflected by comments from members on learning of John's death:**

"a real gentleman", "a lovely gentleman", "one of the kindest and loveliest of men you could ever wish to meet. Always a pleasure to be in his company".

One of our youngest members said: "John made me feel very welcome at the shows, even in 2017 at my first National show when I was just staging a couple of vases, he took the time to speak to me and give me a few tips and asked about my growing. I was lucky enough to steward for him while he was judging and learnt a huge amount".

**Another member said:**

"I had the honour of judging some of the top classes at National shows with John and it was always a pleasure, a lovely man and had a great sense of humour! He always had time for a chat no matter how busy he was".

But a favourite tribute goes back to John's time as Warwick Hospital Chaplain. He would often visit the local mental hospital. One patient said to him 'Rev Carrier, we do like you coming here to visit. You really are one of us you know'.

The National Sweet Pea Society has existed for 120 years and John was an influential member for half that time. For a quarter of it, he has had a leading role in steering the development of the Society. His influence on the culture and achievements of the Society cannot be over-stated and we will miss him dearly.

## Ann Chapple

*By Derek Chapple*

Without Ann's encouragement I would not be growing cordon Sweet Peas. Ann became interested in flower arranging in her twenties and was a founder member of Abingdon Flower Club. She became involved in church flowers, growing foliage and flowers for her arrangements. We married in 1984 and she mentioned that her father grew Sweet Peas with quite long stems so we tried growing cordon Sweet Peas.

The National Sweet Pea Society were holding their Provincial Show at the Newbury Show Ground. As it was only twenty miles away we decided to visit. The name Caroline Ball from Upton was in evidence. We were getting bud drop on our Sweet Peas, so we joined the NSPS but this did not stop the bud drop! This was in 1993. In 2002 I think we joined the newly formed Chiltern Sweet Pea Society ('CSPS'). By this time Ann was growing her own cordon plants, so that she could have some flowers for the house. She entered the 100 plant class at the CSPS several times, winning occasionally. When the National came to Millets, only five miles away, in 2014 we pooled our resources and entered the six vases of 12 stems. We carried on with our joint entries for the next couple of years but by this time Ann was in her eighties and found looking after Sweet Peas, plants in pots on the patio and other gardening tasks too much so she gave up growing Sweet Peas. This gave her more time to concentrate on her artistic talents. She retained her love of Sweet Peas coming with me to the CSPS Shows and the AGM/talks.

## Ron Cordery

*By Kevin Cordery*

Dad was born on 7 May 1933 to Elizabeth and George Cordery of Parsons Green, Fulham, London. The first few years of his life were spent with his family in Parsons Green. This changed with the onset of World War 2 and the start of the Blitz, when along with his two youngest siblings he was evacuated to Surrey. Firstly for a brief time at Burpham, then moving to Albury Park where he spent the remainder of World War 2. The Lady of the Estate, The Duchess of Northumberland, Lady Percy took a great interest in the family and took personal responsibility for reuniting his unmarried siblings together with his parents at Albury Park for the duration of the war. They were all housed in the "Bothy" on the Estate which was the accommodation formerly used for the apprentice gardeners.

Dad went to the local primary school where he passed his eleven plus and was offered a place at Guildford Grammar school, unfortunately lack of funds prevented him from attending and he was educated in the local secondary school. At 18 Dad was called up to serve his National Service, his basic training was followed by eighteen months in Hong Kong. He returned aged 20 to marry his teenage sweetheart, Betty. They set up home in Chilworth in 1954, firstly at the 'Old Factory' in an old worker's cottage for the gunpowder factory. They were joined there by me in 1958. In 1961 they moved to the other end of the village, next door to his brother George and about 100 yards from another friend, Jeff Brande and his wife Rose.

It was about this time that Dad commenced working as a Tinsmith at Vickers Weybridge later to become BAC then British Aerospace. In total he stayed there mainly on the night shift for forty years. Twenty years as shop manager then promoted again to Tinsmith department manager. The department had 250 Tinsmiths working under him in those days including his friend and neighbour Jeff Brande. It was an exciting time for them, learning new techniques to work Titanium, a newly developed alloy that had both the required strength and lightness required to build the new aircraft Concorde. During the process Dad spent many weeks in Toulouse the French Aerospace factory teaching them the skills the English Tinsmith had already acquired. As a reward for this Dad was awarded a flight on one of the aircrafts trial flights to Canada.

His brother George had stayed at Albury Park to work as a gardener after the family had left the estate and in the early 1960s grew some Sweet Peas in his garden at home. From across the garden fence Dad took great interest in these Sweet Peas, deciding to have a go himself the next season. He rather liked this idea and the "Peas" remained in the garden for almost the next 60 years. Initially the Peas shared the garden with Dahlias and Chrysanthemums both of which were successfully grown and shown with much silverware awarded. It took a bit of prompting from both George and Jeff to convince Dad to exhibit his Sweet Peas. Eventually he succumbed and showed at local shows in 1966 and his first National in 1967.

The show at his workplace was a hot bed for Sweet Pea growers. Fellow Vickers workers included John Swanton, Brian Herbert, Hank Howson, Jack Manning, Jeff and Dad. Awards were therefore hard-fought and much prized. The same was true of the local Shalford, Chilworth, and Peasmarsh Society of which Jeff Brande was president. Some years there could be up to 16 entries in the championship class with exhibitors including Bert Boucher, Harry Cole, Keith Brewer, John Land, Dave Steward, Tom Turvill, Brian Herbert, John Radcliffe, Tony Welch, Roy Francis, Jack Manning, John Swanton, Roger Parsons, Arthur Wheatley, Ted Andrews, Fred Mews, Arthur Liddiard, George Bicknell, Freddie Luck, Francis Butler, Jeff and Dad. Dad used to say that to get an award here was harder than anywhere else!

His exhibiting at National level began in 1967 in the under 250 plants classes going on to win the Franks Cup in 3 successive years 1970 to 1972 together with Warwick Cup in 1970. Late 1970 saw the family move to Clandon where we were joined in 1971 by his beloved daughter Mandy. A very large garden was a major factor in the move! Dad was then off to the under 400 section where the Davis Cup soon followed, whilst growing in this section in 1975 Dad had what he considered to be one of his most notable achievements, staging his first "Mail" entry whilst growing only 380 plants. It was then onward and upward to the open section, where over the next 30 years, with the exception of the Clay Cup despite being in the final two vases at least on five occasions, he went on to win every other exhibition class for Spencer Sweet Peas. I think these days it would be called a lifetime grand slam!! The lack of the Clay on his CV was however balanced by two Leweston Cups together with two Eastbourne's at Provincial shows.

At the 1986 National held in St Albans he came 4th in the Mail winning the 9 Vase Sutton class with his leftovers. Staging a total of 27 vases that night. In total Dad managed to exhibit in 8 Mail's, finally lifting the coveted trophy at the 1996 National held at Wisley.

Several awards also came his way from the new varieties he bred and sent out for trial, both at Wisley and Scotland. All the close family had their own seedling named after them. His journey to Mail glory wasn't all plain sailing. At the 1982 National held at Bath he was awarded second place in the "Mail". It would appear that only people at the show that day who thought he hadn't been successful in winning were the three judges. Dad was inconsolable for some weeks. Despite many letters, phone calls and personal visits from fellow members who were all bewildered at the result he simply could not be cheered up. That was it for Dad, no seeds ordered for the following season and plans made to turn half his garden to lawn. Then out of the blue one afternoon in early October a knock came on the front door, standing there was George Bicknell who had just returned from visiting their mutual friend Bert Boucher on the Isle of Wight the previous weekend. George handed Dad a carrier bag containing 16 envelopes, each envelope had 150 seeds in them, 16 distinct varieties. On the rear of the 'Batheaston' envelope Bert had written "Don't let the buggers get you down Ron". The seeds were sown with a rather heavy heart but with almost 100% germination we were up and running again. Thanks Bert!!

As previously mentioned Dad worked the night shift for many years and Sweet Pea growing was only possible as a team effort. Dad would return home from the night shift at 7.30am in the morning with a cup of tea awaiting him on the kitchen table which Mum would make for him after tending to, picking out and ringing up almost a thousand 'Peas. Mum would be up and started at 4.30 most summer mornings, she didn't find the work a chore, rather finding the solitude of the early mornings in the garden to be very attractive.

In 2008 they moved again to a bungalow on the other side of Guildford near to daughter Mandy. The new garden was too small for growing for the Mail anymore but success at local and National levels followed. He brought home the Tom Jones and Gower Cups

at National level from his new garden. Dad then had an enforced break from the garden for a couple of years while (along with Mandy) they tended to his terminally ill wife Betty who sadly passed away in 2018 after 65 years of marriage.

The Sweet Peas were back in 2019 where he returned to the local Shalford show to bring home the silverware once more, 50 years after first winning them.

On the eve of this year's National, an hour after taking his covid test to enable him to attend, he suffered a massive stroke from which he never regained consciousness. Dad was alive for a further month before sadly departing us on 25 July 2021.

He left behind two children, one daughter-in law, one son-in-law and five grandchildren, all of whom continue to worship the Gentleman we had the privilege of sharing our lives with. Mr Ron Cordery.

## Patrick Terence Davey (Terry)

*By Tom Atherton*



Terry Davey.

Terry was born in Hindley, Wigan in 1944 where he grew up. In his teenage years, he met and courted Pat whom he eventually married in 1966. In 1980, they moved with their two daughters (Amanda & Karen) to Warton near the north Lancashire coast. It was there that he developed an interest in his garden, particularly, growing vegetables. He became an exhibitor with his vegetables (especially his onions and carrots!) winning top prizes in the local shows including the larger more National events held at Holker and Garstang. Having seen the vast array of Sweet Peas exhibited at these shows, he started to grow exhibition Sweet Peas.

In 2002, he and Pat moved to Bolton-le-Sands. Terry had already joined the National Sweet Pea Society and he decided to grow Sweet Peas as a speciality subject. He soon won top prizes at both local and National level. Both he and Pat have been keen supporters of our Society's events both in the North West and at National level (they

could be guaranteed to extract the extra pound in raffle ticket sales for every member they came into contact with!). Terry was a very dedicated family man and was delighted to take his grandsons (Sam & Henry) on fishing trips, his other hobby that he was very keen on.

Our Society will always be indebted to him and he will be sadly missed by all of us. His interest in Sweet Peas was sustained up to the end of his life and he has produced a new variety that will be named after him (due to be launched by Roger Parsons in Autumn 2022). So, hopefully, we will still see the name 'Terry Davey' on the show bench.

## Dr John Warwick Prout

*By Roger Parsons*

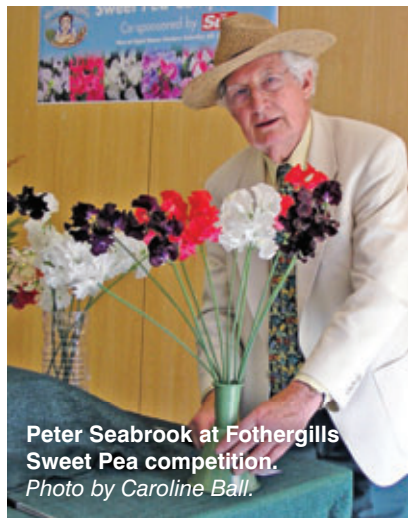
Most of our current members will not remember Dr John Prout of Sevenoaks, Kent, but he was our longest-standing member and has generously left £1,000 to the Society in his will. John was very active in the Society long before most of us were growing Sweet Peas. He was born on 4 January 1921 and died on 27 November 2020 so was in his 100th year. A report in the Annual of the 1998 AGM in Soham says that he was at the meeting celebrating 50 years as a member of our Society. That means he was a member for 73 years in total. The Society is 122 years old so his membership spanned more than half that time.

John's contribution to the Society is noteworthy. By 1953, he was working at Birkenhead General Hospital when the Provincial Shows started to be held at Liverpool. He became actively involved in setting up these shows through the 1950s. He had a good sense of humour. 1953 was also the year I was born at the nearby St. Catherine's hospital in Tranmere. John told me he used to do weekend maternity cover at St. Catherine's. I tried pressing him to see if he could remember whether he was on duty the weekend I was born since it was the F A Cup Final weekend. He looked at me with a smile and said: "What a pity you weren't strangled at birth".

His name first appears as a class winner at the 1956 Liverpool show, where he competed in the novice classes. By 1959, he had joined the list of judges and was also competing at the London show. He joined the General Committee in 1963, where he served for 3 years, and is perhaps best known for his photographic skills. Many of the pictures in Annuals of that era were taken by John. By this time his work had taken him to Sevenoaks. In 1988 he became district representative for Kent, a position he held until 2007 when Phil Johnson replaced him.

## Peter Seabrook

*By Caroline Ball*



**Peter Seabrook at Fothergills Sweet Pea competition.**  
*Photo by Caroline Ball.*

Peter Seabrook died in January 2021 at the age of 86. He was a prolific garden writer and presenter of gardening programmes for both radio and TV. Peter was the host of BBC Television's *Gardeners' World* in the 1970s, presented coverage of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show until 1989 and from 2017 hosted a podcast 'This Week in the Garden'. Peter appeared as a panellist on radio 4's *Gardeners' Question Time* from the late 70s. His garden writing included being the gardening columnist for *The Sun* newspaper, starting in 1977, and a regular contributor to *Amateur Gardening* magazine for over 35 years. He also wrote for professional gardeners and penned a number of general gardening books.

Peter was a member of the National Sweet Pea Society for many years and to my delight once wrote in his column that the NSPS Annual alone was worth the cost of membership of the Society! In 2013 he judged the Fothergills Sweet Pea competition held at Capel Manor college, which was sponsored by *The Sun*, alongside the NSPS judges, a competition that Peter promoted in his talk given to the National Sweet Pea Society AGM in March 2013 which also covered his own prowess in growing Sweet Peas, dating back to 1959.

## John Warren

*By Niall Coveney*

Our colleague and competitor John Warren died on the 10 September 2021 after a very short illness.

He was a leading light on the Sweet Pea and vegetable scene here in Ireland and the head and tail of the Malahide Horticultural Society in North County Dublin. John was heavily involved in growing everything that could be displayed at shows and he travelled the country displaying everything he grew on his various allotments.



John Warren.

He was very competitive on the Sweet Pea front, growing up to 1,000 plants yearly and it was difficult to outdo him at any competition that he attended. He came early to shows so he could get a head start on everyone else and he then had the time to help the novices which was greatly appreciated.

Aside from his duties with the Malahide Society, John took over from John Markham, in the 2014 season, the recording of varieties that were winners at the various shows throughout the country. This was no easy task especially with the large numbers of exhibits in many of the shows.

John was always extremely considerate of other people and how they might feel about certain actions involving schedules and classes. He rang around every society secretary to ensure there was no overlapping of shows. Every year

following John Markham's death in 2015 he would do a write up for local bulletins and a special report on the year for the Sweet Pea Annual.

We will all miss him, with his friendly smile and jokes as well as his helpful advice for all growers. Our sympathy goes out to his wife Rosemary and his two sons Niall and Patrick. May he rest in peace.

## William John Land

*By Roger Parsons*

The death has occurred in March 2022 of former NSPS chairman John Land at the age of 94. His wife Rita, who pre-deceased him some years ago, always called him Jack but he was known to most in the NSPS as John. A full obituary will appear in next year's Annual.

He was chairman of the Society from 1990 to 2000. Many will remember him for winning the Daily Mail Cup at Wisley in 1992 when there were 11 entries. John was show manager and was kept busy finding space for 990 vases and 80 bowls and baskets so had not actually see his finished exhibit, staged by Rita, until after judging.

John was a very popular chairman with a relaxed style, very supportive but allowing other officers to get on with their roles. He remained lucid and is donating his large collection of Sweet Pea Annuals back to the Society.

## Other Deaths

The Society has been advised of the deaths of the following members:

- W Gubberford
- Tony Harris of North Allerton, uncle of member Victoria Needham
- Peter Mazillius of Worthing, West Sussex

Our sympathies are extended to their families and friends.



*Tuberosus.*  
*Photo by Roger Parsons.*

# Affiliated Shows 2022

To advertise here costs Affiliated Societies £6. Contact the Editor or return the form included within the Autumn Bulletin.

## 11 June – Downton Horticultural Society

Show held at Downton Memorial Centre, SP5 3NB. Show open 2.00pm – 4.15pm. Show Secretary Tony Ashford, 51 Moot Gardens, Downton SP5 3LG. ☎ 01725510656. Email: ashfordtony2@gmail.com. 9 open Sweet Peas classes plus 2 novice classes, plus rose and miscellaneous flower classes.

## 11 June – Royal Windsor Flower Show

Show held at The York Club, Prince Consort Drive, Windsor Great Park, Windsor, SL4 2BS. Staging Friday 10 June 3.00pm – 8.00pm and Saturday 7.00am – 9.00am Show open 10.00am – 5.00pm. Show Secretary Email: rwrhs@comxo.com. 4 open Sweet Pea classes including a 3 vase class of 9 stems each plus a novice class. See [www.rwrhs.com/flower-show](http://www.rwrhs.com/flower-show) for the online schedule.

## 18 June – Chipperfield Horticultural Society

Show held at Chipperfield Village Hall. Staging from 8.00am – 10.30am. Show open to public 2.30pm – 4.00pm. Show Manager John Hopkins ☎ 01923268852. Email: chipperfieldhortsoc@hotmail.com Classes: 3 vases, distinct cultivars, 7 sprays of each; 1 vase, white or cream, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase pink, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase, lavender or mauve or blue, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase, cerise or magenta or crimson or scarlet, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase, any colour, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase, mixed, 12 sprays.

## 18 June – Farlington and District Garden Club

Show held at The United Church, 282 Havant Road, Drayton, Portsmouth PO6 1PA. Doors open 1.30pm. Show Secretary Chris Batstone, 26 Farlington Avenue, Farlington, Portsmouth PO6 1DF. ☎ 02392381976.

## 18 June – New Forest Sweet Pea Society

Show held at The Hulse Hall, Breamore, Fordingbridge SP6 2EA. Show open to visitors 1.30pm – 4.00pm. Show Managers Jim and Mary McDonald, St. Annes, The Hollow, Stockbridge S020 8BB. ☎ 01794301490. Decorative and Exhibition Sweet Pea Classes.

## 18 June – Wokingham Horticultural Association (WHA)

Show held at WHA Trading Store, Ormonde Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 2RB. Staging 10.00am – 12.00am. Show open 1.45pm – 3.00pm. Show Secretary Mrs. Pauline MacBrayne, 12 Crutchley Road, Wokingham RG40 1XA. 07941352411. Email [wha-shows@outlook.com](mailto:wha-shows@outlook.com).

### **25 & 26 June – Eckford Sweet Pea Society of Wem**

Wem Town Hall in partnership with the Eckford Sweet Pea Society of Wem Sweet Pea Show on Saturday 25 – Sunday 26 June in the Town Hall from 10.00am until 5.00pm on the Saturday and 10.00am until 3.00pm on the Sunday. The Town Hall will be available for staging on Friday 24 June from noon until 10.00pm. Presentation of prizes will be at 3.30pm on the Saturday. Admission is £3 for the two days or £2 per day, children admitted free. There will be vase classes for Spencers and Grandifloras plus floral art and a children's section. There will be trade stands too. Schedules will be available at Easter from Wem Town Hall, email: [rose@wemtownhall.co.uk](mailto:rose@wemtownhall.co.uk).

### **2 July – Bournemouth in Bloom – The Bournemouth Horticultural Society**

Show held at St. Francis of Assisi Church Hall, Charminster Road, Bournemouth BH8 9SH. Show open noon – 5.00pm. Show Manager David Bassil, 31 Princess Road, Poole, Dorset BH12 1BG. ☎ 01202 752014. Email: [bdhsociety@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:bdhsociety@tiscali.co.uk). Classes for experienced, intermediate and novice growers. All classes are open and not restricted to just members.

### **9 July – WARGAS**

Show held at Wingrave Community Centre, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire. Open to public 2.30pm – 5.00pm. Show Secretary Adrian Reeve, 127 Winslow Road, Wingrave HP22 4QB. ☎ 01296 681372. Email: [showsecretarywargas@gmail.com](mailto:showsecretarywargas@gmail.com). 6 vases distinct, 3 vases distinct, single vase, bowl 30 blooms mixed or 1 cultivar and novelty class. Special class for exhibitors who grow less than 200 plants, 3 vases and bowl 20 blooms.

### **9 July – Witney Horticultural Society**

Show held at The High Street Methodist Church, Witney OX28 6HG. Staging 8.00am – 11.00am. Opening to view 1.00pm - 2.30pm. Show Manager Diana Blackman (Chair), 68 Newland, Witney OX28 3JG. ☎ 01993702444. Email: [di.blackman@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:di.blackman@hotmail.co.uk). Schedule will be available online in 2022 [www.witneyhorticulturalsociety.com](http://www.witneyhorticulturalsociety.com).

### **10 July – Chiltern Sweet Pea Society**

Show held at Lacey Green & Loosley Row Millennium Hall, Lacey Green, Buckinghamshire, HP27 0QN. Staging 8.30am – 12.00 noon, bowls and baskets until 1.00pm. Open 2.30pm. Show manager Mr. Chris Gray, 68 Narbeth Drive, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 1NU. ☎ 01296 488160. Mixed open classes including sections for 100 and 200 cordon growers. All exhibitors welcome.



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# ANNUAL AND BULLETIN DEADLINES

Contributions are most welcome. They can send to us in any format, even by letter (addresses at front of Annual), and don't forget photographs to illustrate your articles.

## FOR THE ANNUAL

Caroline Ball  
Email: [caroline\\_a\\_m\\_ball@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:caroline_a_m_ball@yahoo.co.uk)  
Copy deadline is 31 January

## FOR THE BULLETINS

Graeme Hollingdale  
Email: [graeme@graemehollingdale.com](mailto:graeme@graemehollingdale.com)  
AUTUMN copy deadline 4 September  
SPRING copy deadline 31 December

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**Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th June**

At Wem Town Hall, 28-32 High Street  
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## **OPENING TIMES:**

- **Saturday** – 10am until 5pm with trophy presentation at 3.30pm
- **Sunday** – 10am until 3pm
- **Staging** – from 12 noon on Friday 24th June until 7am on Saturday
- **Sale of blooms** – at 3pm on Sunday

For further details and request a schedule please contact the show manager Rose Horner

**Email:** [info@wemtownhall.co.uk](mailto:info@wemtownhall.co.uk) **Tel:** 01939 232299

Please use the reference “Sweet Pea”

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Tel: 07961 477137

Email: [caroletate10@gmail.com](mailto:caroletate10@gmail.com)

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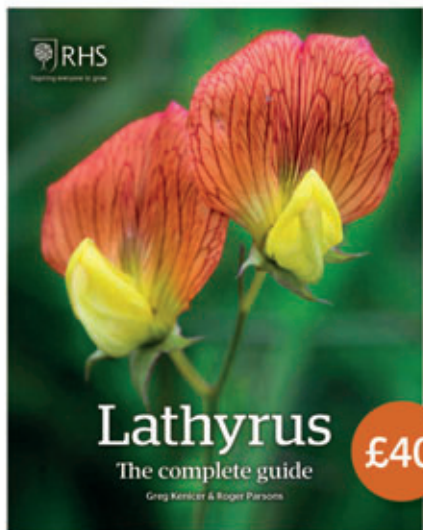
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