

NATIONAL
SWEET PEA SOCIETY
ANNUAL
— 2023 —



The Early National Show

Will be held at

**SQUIRES GARDEN CENTRE
SHPERTON T17 8SG**

1 & 2 JULY 2023

The Show will be open

Saturday 10.30am - 5.00pm

Sunday 11.00am - 4.00pm

Presentation of awards at 2.00pm on Saturday

Show Managers: Laurie Burrell & Roger Dix

Entries to:

Laurie Burrell

48 Stewart Avenue

Shpperton TW17 0EH

Tel: 01932 5645560

Email: laurieburrell48@gmail.com

Staging:

Friday 31 June 6.00pm to

8.30am Saturday 1 July

Judging:

8.45am Saturday 1 July

FREE PARKING • REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

NATIONAL SWEET PEA SOCIETY ANNUAL 2023

*Flowers always make people better, happier and more helpful.
They are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul*

Luther Burbank

Patron: Alan Titchmarsh

Honorary Editor: Caroline Ball
caroline_a_m_ball@yahoo.co.uk

Published by: National Sweet Pea Society
Registered charity no: 226802

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www.sweetpeas.org.uk

Cover: 'Sweet Caroline'
a new introduction from Johnson's Sweet Peas

THANKS

The editor would like to thank Ray Guzenda of GD Associates (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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'White Frills'.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

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Editorial

By Caroline Ball

I don't normally include an editorial because, I hope, the Annual stands for itself. However, 2022 was a memorable year for me for a number of reasons, which I thought worth noting and hope others will agree (or at least indulge me).

It started with a massive surprise at the AGM when I was presented with my Henry Eckford medal thanks to the duplicity of my great friends Phil Johnson and Roger Parsons. I still can't believe it. In June at Wisley, 30 years after my first National also at Wisley, I won my very first NSPS Cup, not for the want of trying and after winning copious amounts of crystal! This was for best exhibit in Division VII, the Henry Eckford Memorial Trophy that I had happened to re-donate back to the Society a few years ago after finding it on eBay. Also at Wisley, Phil Johnson took me to the Trials to show me amongst other things, a product of his hybridisation activities, a pretty, bright pink grandiflora flake. To my surprise, he wished to name this after me. We agreed on the name 'Sweet Caroline' which you will see pictured elsewhere in this Annual.

In October, I sadly lost my father. He was never a gardener, but he never ceased to be proud of and encourage my achievements, horticultural or otherwise. At his funeral, I discovered from one of my cousins that my maternal grandfather had grown Sweet Peas and had once won a rosette for them, so they are in my blood after all!

I very much enjoy hearing from members and cherish the notes, photos and drawings sent to me. We editors welcome contributions from all members, if you have interesting things to say that other members will enjoy reading about, do not be shy in contacting Graeme or me. Here is one such contribution from 30 years ago that I have been encouraged to include in this Annual, researching the 1992 show report in connection with former chairman John Land, I found an aside from author, Pauline Matthewman. She wrote:

'There was a young lady just behind David and me, obviously entering in the Novice section, who had a very well worn BRJ Sweet Pea book on her staging table. She literally did not make a move without consulting this Bible. She thumbed through every section, checking and rechecking and read it out to her partner, who just nodded his head in agreement. I don't know how she fared, but if she was not successful it certainly wasn't because she was misinformed.'

Whilst not forming part of my memories of that National, this was clearly a description of me staging! Thank you to everyone who made 2022 such a good year and supported me through the tough times, you know who you are!



Modern Grandiflora 'Dragonfly'.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

Officers and Committee for 2023

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Alan Titchmarsh

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 Coordinator)

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 26 April 2023

The 2022-23 elected representatives were Janet Bulstrode, Gill Hazell and Roger Parsons.

The NSPS website is run and managed by:

Jess Harvey 89, Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2NT
 Warracks Ltd ☎ 07968118894 Email: jess@warracks.com
 (Webmaster)

AGM

AGM 2023

By Caroline Ball

The 118th Annual General Meeting of the members of the National Sweet Pea Society was held on Saturday 4 March 2023 on Zoom as a result of the continued reluctance of people mixing post Covid. Alison Shreeve, chair, welcomed 20 members and committee to the meeting.

The reports of the Secretary and Chair had been printed in the Spring Bulletin, and were accepted. Treasurer, Caroline Ball, gave a comprehensive report of the financial performance of the Society in the year to 31 October 2022. The full reports of all three are reproduced elsewhere in this Annual. The new Independent Examiner, Lucinda De Quincey Adams had completed her work in examining the accounts and was happy with them. The accounts were adopted and the Independent Examiner reappointed.

President Roger Parsons made the 100 club draw. The winners were as follows:

- 1st:** No. 77 – Gwen Bishop, Stokenchurch,
- 2nd:** No. 30 – John Cooper, Wolverhampton
- 3rd:** No. 71 – Roger Parsons, Bracklesham Bay

The current office bearers:

- President:** Roger Parsons
- Chair:** Alison Shreeve
- Deputy Chair:** Graeme Hollingdale
- Membership Secretary:** Julia Beardmore
- General Secretary:** Carole Tate
- Treasurer:** Caroline Ball

were willing to stand for another year, and all were re-elected.

Phillippa, Cooper was due for re-election under the three year rule and was also re-elected. Alison Shreeve thanked Phillippa for her work for the Society during her period on the committee. Andrew Beane had resigned from the committee, leaving one space. One nomination had been received for Laurie Burrell. The above changes to the general committee were accepted.

No matters of any other business had been received in advance of the meeting. Alison opened the floor to questions from the attendees. Gill Hazell questioned whether a decision had been made to accept advertising on the Society's new website? Alison

confirmed that no decision had yet been made, and it was a matter for the general committee to consider at a future meeting. Nicky Edwards raised concerns about the continued fall in membership numbers. Roz Warley, newly created district rep coordinator, noted their importance in retaining members and mentioned plans for this group to get together to support each other and to focus on beneficial activities. The usefulness of the workshops run in the North West was raised as helpful in this regard.

Allan Evans noted that smaller shows were struggling and that the three Welsh district reps were struggling to get support for the Royal Welsh show activities, despite its popularity and royal patronage. Allan saw the importance of such events in encouraging new members and growers and cited that this is how Jenny Morgan had been encouraged into the Society and look how she was doing now. Jenny Morgan noted that Wales was a large geographical area with low population areas which didn't help matters.

Laurie Burrell noted that he joined the Society in 2020. He and Roger Dix were managing jointly the Early National at Squires garden centre in Shepperton, at the kind invite of Colin Squires. Laurie noted that the rose society show will be the weekend before the Early National and encouraged people to go along to visit the rose show so that they could see the marquee and feedback to Laurie and Roger as necessary. Laurie explained that the maximum sized marquee that would fit in the available space is 80m x 40m, and that Roger Dix has organised additional lighting for overnight if it is needed. The Society will also have access to the Orangery on-site should the level of exhibits need the extra space. Roger Dix is dealing with show logistics and Laurie is dealing with the show admin.

Graeme Hollingdale noted that it was good to see a sharing of ideas at the AGM, that there was more to do for the Society, and that some good ideas had been shared. Roger Parsons congratulated and thanked Alison Shreeve on the handling of her first AGM. Pat Hargreaves noted how lovely it was to see the old faces as well as the new faces in the Society at the meeting. A sentiment many will share. Such is the nature of zoom, that concluded the 2023 AGM.

*“The flower that smells the
sweetest is shy and lowly.”*

William Wordsworth

Chairman's Report

By Alison Shreeve

This has been my first year as chair of the National Sweet Pea Society and it has been a very rich and rewarding time, though a bit stressful too! I have learned a great deal and begun to find out much more about our Society and the people who make things happen.

The growing season has been excellent, with no rain to damage the blooms at critical times here in the Chilterns. I had my first experience of helping to set up an exhibition stand and information desk for the Society at the Royal Windsor Flower Show. We were inundated with people amazed at the scent and abundance of blooms and struggled to keep up with the enquiries and the sale of blooms. This was repeated at the Early National where Julia and Carole did an excellent job as so many people came through the New Hilltop exhibition hall at Wisley. We could really do with more people to help man the desks at shows and indeed to help set up and take down, so if you are interested, please get in touch with your District Rep or any of the committee who can point you in the right direction.

I managed to travel to take part in the Wem show, revived thank goodness in large part to Phillippa Cooper who was awarded the Jack Davis award for her efforts with well-earned recognition from the Society. I exhibited at Wem, the Early National and at two local shows, WARGAS and the Chiltern Society with some success. I also visited the Chorley Flower Show, where rain had unfortunately struck just before staging. In spite of this there was a good show and many (rather damp) visitors. I hope to see a few more areas of the country next summer to meet people and see how things are done.

The biggest development this year has been the building of our new website. This was mapped out by a sub-group of the Committee who researched similar plant society sites and planned an outline structure for the new site. The brief was put out to tender and we interviewed and did further research on two companies. The contract was awarded to George Foster and I think we are all agreed that it does look very good. We have had some teething problems, with technical hitches which were not present in the testing stages, and some which have surprised even the technical backup team at WordPress! For those of you who have struggled to log on to the members' area we send our sincere apologies. We hope that this won't put you off using the site. It will bed down I'm sure and provide us with an easier and more comprehensive service for members whilst providing non-members with sufficient information to help them grow and understand Sweet Peas.

You will remember that we put out a call for anyone interested in becoming a Merchandising Manager for the Society in the Autumn Bulletin. Unfortunately, we had no response from this request, so there will be no sale of Sweet Pea related items, rings or cane clips in future and no shop on the Website, although we have this facility should we need it in the future. I would like to extend my thanks to Julia Beardmore, Caroline Ball, Nicky Edwards and Bob Rishworth for their input and hard work in relation to the new website.

We also welcomed Roz Warley's offer to act as District Reps Coordinator. This will help us to reinforce the network of keen growers and experts throughout the UK and enable the sharing of good ideas. We hope also to make sure there are showing opportunities and encouragement for new growers in local areas. The Schedules for the NSPS shows and some local shows have been amended to encourage beginners to have a go at showing and to access help from all you expert enthusiasts around the country. Please do contact your local Representative (listed in the Annual) if you need information or use the contact us buttons on the website.

We reluctantly took the decision to make the AGM a zoom meeting for 2023, though many of us would prefer to have a face-to-face meeting. We recognised that many members cannot travel easily to the centre of England and we will have to be more versatile in our approach to social events in future with, we hope, more regional activities spread around the UK. If there is enough demand, we are certainly happy to reinstate the face-to-face event in future, so please let us know your feelings about this.

Finally, it remains for me to wish you all a good growing year and much success with showing and much enjoyment from your Sweet Peas in 2023.

General Secretary's Report

By Carole Tate

I am delighted that 2022 has seen lovely weather, fantastic Sweet Peas and an abundance of Flower Shows. It was great to get back into the swing of things last Autumn when I was turning over the Sweet Pea beds, stacking the canes and planning which varieties of Pea to plant for the Shows. The Winter saw me checking out the schedules and drawing up a grand plan with the various show dates, Sweet Pea requirements, planting times and expected flowering dates.

Spring saw hundreds of seedlings shooting up in the propagator ready for pottin on, nipping out and hardening off, with more work on the beds to incorporate manure and keep a fine tilth, and keeping the local cats off the bed with judicious placings of rose thorn cuttings!

Summer flew by in a flurry of National and local shows, along with NSPS stands at RHS Tatton and Southport. We won Gold Awards for our excellent displays where we used pre-loved glassware rather than plastic bowls and Oasis, receiving full marks from the judges. We received good feedback from the public who visited the displays and information bureaux also signing up some new members. Well done to all of the teams involved.

I entered the NSPS Early and Late Shows which were well attended and very enjoyable. The North West Region Show was held at Chorley Flower Show, where we again won a Gold Award. Such events are a good opportunity to catch up with fellow Sweet Pea growers and pick up hints and tips on growing and displaying. Show reports will appear in this Annual.

That brings me back to Autumn where the season starts again! I have found useful information on our Facebook page, "For the Love of Sweet Peas INC The National Sweet Pea Society" and this year we have our updated website www.sweetpeas.org.uk which will enable renewals and online membership to be automatically handled, plus giving us the capacity to pass on more information to our members.

I am looking forward to another busy 2023 season and wish you all success and happiness growing our beloved Sweet Pea.

Treasurer's Report

By Caroline Ball

Every year we seem to bemoan something in the world of Sweet Peas; the 2021/22 financial year was no different. The heatwave was too much for some and as usual the rain came at the wrong times! The NSPS activities and finances showed some recovery post Covid, but were not yet quite at pre Covid levels.

The overall result for the year was a loss of £(5,760) (2021 profit of £9,449) this was after an unrealised loss of £(6,520) on investments held and managed by the CCLA, which showed a £12,613 unrealised gain in 2021. The CCLA is the UK's largest charity fund manager. They are mindful of the investment strategy of charities like ours which includes the creation of revenue, the sustainability of investment over time and the control of risk, both financial and reputational. As I have said previously, investments do fluctuate in value year on year and should be looked at longer term, this year's reduction in value reflects many factors affecting the investment market including the energy/cost of living crisis and the war in Ukraine which have had widespread financial consequences. Despite the fall over 2021 the value of our investments are now still more than in 2020 with a value of £70,703 at October 2022 versus £64,610 at year end 2020. Whilst we do not have direct control over the performance of our investments we

do control our charitable activities, which this year show a modest profit of £850 (2021 loss of £3,164).

Income levels are up slightly to £20,373 (2021 £19,612). Membership income had dropped with the trend in reducing levels of members, bouncing back to 412 at Feb 23 versus 400 in the same month last year and 537 in Feb 19 whereas the year end numbers were 570 for 2022, a drop from 658 in 2021. The resurrection of more shows with more visitors post Covid saw the level of sales at events rise by £1,429 to £1,732. Overall costs were down to £19,523 from £22,776 in the previous year, the most notable saving being that of the cost of staging the two National shows of £3,315 due to careful management and the generosity of our RHS hosts. Our publication costs were up by £586 as the printers had no choice other than to pass on the increased cost of paper and energy.

The cost of the new website, which we hope will benefit the Society and help it achieves its objectives as our old website did, has been capitalised and will be depreciated over 5 years once the work is complete. During 2022 the new website construction costs incurred were £1,200. The value of our investments were £95,386 at this year end (2021 £101,906). Stock, debtors, cash and creditors were all at a similar level to 2021. Stock at £16,484 (2021 16,713) included the purchase of smart new design award cards for £2,124, that people will start see awarded in numbers in 2023. Debtors include £1,964 gift aid claimed on membership and donations and £510 from Chorley council in prize money and other contributions regarding the NW Regional show which were received in November, post year end. Creditors include the cost of the independent examination and show prize cheques not yet cashed. The overall value of the Society was £125,801 at year end versus £131,471 last year.

BENEFITS OF NSPS MEMBERSHIP

Your NSPS membership card will give members

FREE ENTRY

into RHS Bridgewater during the
NSPS show, whether you are showing or not.

Trustees Annual Report

Year ended 31 October 2022

The Trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 October 2022.

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.

There shall not be fewer than three members of the Society appointed by the general committee as 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 authority of the general committee.

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

In 2022 Society activities started returning to a more normal level following the Covid pandemic restrictions. Some activities and administration continued online and that included the AGM on 5 March 2021. Members were invited to join but only limited numbers did so. Committee meetings were also conducted largely online.

The Society ran two successful National shows. The Early National was held in the purpose-built new Hilltop Centre at RHS Wisley. This proved to be extremely popular with the public and for most of the two days of the show the helpers were kept extremely busy providing information about Sweet Peas and other *Lathyrus* species, including providing guided tours of the Sweet Pea Trials being held on site. Exhibitor numbers at both shows had not recovered to pre-pandemic levels which we consider was down to natural caution on behalf of some exhibitors, a very hot season making growing exhibition standard blooms challenging, the ban on certain non-recyclable staging materials at RHS venues and the high cost of fuel amongst other factors. The Late National was again hosted by RHS Harlow Carr. Whilst there were teething issues with overnight staging not being possible these were overcome and there was a high standard of exhibits at both this and the Early National. The Society information Bureau at the Late show was busy throughout the duration of the show. A total of 293 vases and exhibits were shown at the Nationals.

Regional shows were held by the Chiltern Sweet Pea Society, the Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society, in Wem, the Welsh and the North West Regions of the NSPS and each was well supported.

During 2022, the Society produced three informative and educational journals, the Annual and two Bulletins. The comprehensive classification list of varieties and the show schedule were also produced. 'Enjoy Sweet Peas' was provided to all new members and made available to a wider public. A revamp of the Society's website was commenced in 2022 and went live in November, shortly after year end. This has resulted in a refreshed look and innovations such as a members' only area. It is hoped that this new look will enable the Society to promote its aims to an even wider public. An online only membership has been introduced to this end. During the year the Society has increased its social media activity by adding a topical Instagram presence to its popular Facebook and Twitter pages.

Trials of novel Sweet Peas were held at Sparsholt College, Winchester, and Askham Bryan College, York with 16 varieties grown at each venue. For technical reasons no awards were given at Sparsholt whereas 7 new introductions were considered to be of sufficient merit for awards at Askham Bryan. The RHS Sweet Pea trial forum was well represented by NSPS members in the first of a two year trial of Grandiflora type Sweet Peas. The Trial was very popular with visitors to Wisley and helped bring Sweet Peas to the notice of a much wider audience of gardeners. A new proposal is in hand for a future Trial at one of the RHS gardens. A National Collection of *Lathyrus*, which also has

Scientific National Collection status, is held by Society Trustee and President of the Society, Roger Parsons. This collection covers approximately 70 species and 1,400 cultivars. The Society staged displays at many prestigious horticultural shows open to the general public. The President of the Society, Roger Parsons, contributed to the Plant Heritage exhibit at RHS Chelsea which was awarded an RHS Gold Medal and best exhibit in the Discovery Zone. The Society exhibit at RHS Tatton Park was awarded both an RHS Gold Medal, the Holford medal for the 2021 display and the Lindley Award for best educational exhibit in all of the RHS shows during 2022. Tom Atherton was awarded the RHS Harlow Carr medal for his contribution to horticulture in the North of England for his work promoting Sweet Peas over many years. Other major shows attended included the Royal Windsor Flower Show where the NSPS display was visited by the Countess of Wessex and Society Patron Alan Titchmarsh, the Royal Welsh Show where the display was visited by the Princess Royal and attracted local TV coverage, and Southport. Advisory desks were staged at many venues including a series at the RHS Garden, Harlow Carr.

A network of area representatives is maintained and regional activity resumed at its pre-pandemic level, especially in the areas where stands at major shows took place.

Financial review

Incoming resources of £20,373 arose during the financial year whilst outgoings were £19,523. The revaluation of our investments has given the Society an unrealised loss of £(6,520). The overall result for the year is net loss of £(5,670) with a small profit of £850 before the unrealised loss on investments. The Society's unrestricted funds as at 31 October 2022 amounted to £125,801 (2021: £131,471) which includes Designated Funds of £30,583 (2021:£30,583).

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 and the Life membership fund contributes towards the cost of publications for life 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 twenty two 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. 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 4 March 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Prof A Shreeve, 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 2022.

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.

Lucinda De Quincey Adams MA ACA
Independent Examiner

Income and Expenditure Account

Year ended 31 October 2022

		Year from 1 Nov 20 to 31 Oct 22	Year from 1 Nov 20 to 31 Oct 21
	Notes	Total funds	Total funds
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS:		£	£
Subscriptions, donations, legacies and sponsorship	4	14,410	15,448
Charitable activities	5	3,735	2,053
Investment income	6	2,228	2,111
TOTAL INCOME		20,373	19,612
EXPENDITURE:			
Charitable activities	7,8	19,523	22,776
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		19,523	22,776
NET GAINS/(LOSSES) ON INVESTMENTS	10	(6,520)	12,613
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(5,670)	9,449
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward		131,471	122,022
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		125,801	131,471

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

YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!

Join the 100 Club. £10 joining fee, 5 draws a year.

Prizes £100, £25, £10.

Contact: Caroline Ball, Challow Mead, Silver Lane,
West Challow, Oxon OX12 9TN

Statement of Financial Position

31 October 2022

2021	Notes	£	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Investments	14	95,386	101,906
Website	13	1,200	–
		96,586	101,906
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock	15	16,484	16,713
Debtors	16	2,474	2,012
Cash at bank and in hand:		11,496	11,920
		30,454	30,645
CREDITORS			
Amounts due within one year	17	(1,239)	(1,080)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		29,215	29,565
Total assets less current liabilities		125,801	131,471
NET ASSETS		125,801	131,471
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Unrestricted funds		125,801	131,471
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS		125,801	131,471

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 4 March 2023, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Prof A Shreeve, Trustee

Ms C Ball, Trustee

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 October 2022

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.

Accounting period

The accounting period runs to the 31 October each year.

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.

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

Website – 20% straight line

Investments

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

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

FUNDS	Unrestricted	Total 2022	Unrestricted	Total 2021
DONATIONS	£	£	£	£
Donations	4,839	4,839	4,179	4,179
Legacy	–	–	1,000	1,000
SUBSCRIPTIONS				
Members	6,328	6,328	7,634	7,634
Affiliated societies	1,112	1,112	1,148	1,148
Gift Aid	2,131	2,131	1,487	1,487
TOTAL	14,410	14,410	15,448	15,448

The Trustees contributed £2,014 to the Charity in donations and sponsorship during the year (2021: £964).

5. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Total	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds £	2022 £	Funds £	2021 £
Sale of goods as part of direct charitable activities	1,732	1,732	303	303
Publications	–	–	24	24
Advertising in publications	850	850	662	662
100 club lottery	990	990	940	940
Exhibition entry fees	163	163	124	124
TOTAL	3,735	3,735	2,053	2,053

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted	Total	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds £	2022 £	Funds £	2021 £
Interest on bank deposits	146	146	5	5
Bank Compensation	–	–	90	90
Charities Investment Fund dividends (COIF)	–	–	–	–
Dividends	2,082	2,082	2,016	2,016
TOTAL	2,228	2,228	2,111	2,111

7. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

The breakdown of expenditure on charitable activities is shown below:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cost of merchandise	44	165
Trials	–	–
Award cards	68	361
Society medals	517	609
Printing Annual & other publications	8,635	8,049
Exhibitions - prizes	2,661	2,175
Exhibitions - expenses	1,541	4,856
100 club prizes	710	–
Sundry costs	1,010	635
Support costs	3,337	4,846
Governance costs	1,000	1,080
TOTAL	19,523	22,776

8. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	2022	2021
	£	£
Charitable activities	18,523	21,696
Governance costs	1,000	1,080
TOTAL	19,523	22,776

9. Analysis of support costs

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

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other printing & stationery	803	1,151
Postage & telephone	2,271	3,215
Meeting expenses	263	240
Sundry expenses	–	240
TOTAL	3,337	4,846

10. Net gains/losses on investments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2021 £
Gains/(losses) on other investment assets - COIF Charity Investment Fund	(6,520)	(6,520)	12,613	12,613

11. Independent examination fees

	2022	2021
	£	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for:		
Independent examination of the financial statements	100	1,080

12. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No Trustee received any remuneration in the year (2021: £Nil).

The average number of employees during the year was Nil (2021: Nil).

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

6 Trustees were reimbursed a total of £1,792 (2021: £1,021) for travel and other costs on Society business. This sum includes £1,516 of costs incurred directly by three Trustees in their roles as show managers for the two National shows.

13. Tangible fixed assets

The tangible assets of the Society are largely fully depreciated but remain in use with the exception of the website which was work in progress at 31 October 2022.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Website work in progress	1,200	–
TOTAL	1,200	–

During the year the Society commenced construction of a new website. At 31 October 2022 this was work in progress. Once complete the expenditure will be amortised over 5 years.

14. Investments

	Cash or cash equivalents £	Other investments £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 November 2021	24,683	77,223	101,906
Additions	–	–	–
Fair value movements	–	(6,520)	(6,520)
At 31 October 2022	24,683	70,703	95,386
Impairment			
At 31 October 2021 & 31 October 2022		–	–
Carrying amount			
At 31 October 2022	24,683	70,703	95,386
At 31 October 2021	24,683	77,223	101,906

Listed investments

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

15. Stocks

	2022 £	2021 £
Finished goods and goods for resale	16,484	16,713

16. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Prepayments and accrued income	510	525
Other debtors	1,964	1,487
TOTAL	2,474	2,012

17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	1,239	1,080

18. Analysis of charitable funds

	At 1 Nov 21	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 Oct 22
	£	£	£	£	
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	100,888	20,373	(19,523)	(6,520)	95,218
Designated fund	30,583	–	–	–	30,583
TOTAL	131,471	20,373	(19,523)	(6,520)	125,801

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

*“If you’ve never experienced the joy
of accomplishing more than you
can imagine, plant a garden.”*

Robert Brault

19. Analysis of net assets between funds

Designated Funds are analysed as follows:

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	66,003	30,583	96,586
Current assets	30,454	–	30,454
Current liabilities	(1,239)	–	(1,239)
Net Assets	95,218	30,583	125,801

	At 1 Nov 2021 £	Income during the year £	Transfers (to) from income and expenditure account £	At 31 Oct 2022 £
Movements in the year:				
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
FC Harriss Memorial Fund	500	–	–	500
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
	30,583	–	–	30,583

20. Related Parties

During the period, Roger Parsons of Roger Parsons Sweet Peas, and Phil Johnson of Agrifusion made purchases of advertising from the Society. These transactions were completed at arms length and at market value.

Jack Davis Award 2022

By Caroline Ball

This citation was given by Alison Shreeve at the Wem Sweet Pea Festival on 25 June 2022.

I am now going to go slightly off piste with an extra presentation. Others in my position have said this is a joyous part of the role and I have to say this is the first time I've had to do it as chair of the NSPS. The Jack Davis award is given to the person, in the view of the awarding committee, who has contributed most in the previous 12 months to promoting Sweet Peas. This can be as an exhibitor or in any other capacity.

It is tradition within the Society that the recipient of this award is concealed for as long as possible in the citation. It will be difficult, but I'm going to try.

The recipient would readily admit that exhibiting it's not the most important thing to them, but they like to have a go and it's true to say can be a formidable competitor. They also enjoy helping with displays, doing talks and have taken on the role as District Rep in their area. Being here in Wem it is probably no surprise that the recipient is very enthusiastic about old fashion Sweet Peas. As many of you will know the old-fashioned varieties were expanded greatly in the 19th and early 20th century by Henry Eckford, who spent most of his time working with Sweet Peas here in Wem. The recipient has done much research on Henry Eckford and his varieties, sharing that knowledge within the NSPS and beyond. They joined the NSPS more than 12 years ago triggered I think by prior membership of the Eckford Society. They joined the NSPS committee two years ago to ensure that the old fashioned were better represented within that Society.

I suspect a few of you might have already guessed the recipient of this award.

In 2021 she worked tirelessly to reignite interest in Sweet Peas here in Wem, liaising with the local council to put on a display of Sweet Peas and well researched information about them in the town hall. I think we're all delighted that this resulted in the resurrection of this fantastic show here in Wem, thanks to much hard work of the recipient and the entire team. I suspect the recipient is thinking that other people have done all the hard work, and of course these things are team efforts. However, I'd like Phillippa Cooper to put modesty aside as we thank her for all her efforts and ask her to come forward to receive the 2022 Jack Davis award from the National Sweet Pea Society.

NSPS Shows

The Early Show – RHS Gardens Wisley

29 & 30 June 2022

CLASS	SPECIAL CLASSES	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
A	THE DUO CLASS 1st J & M McDonald 2nd J & L Morgan 3rd –	(2)
B	E W KING CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
C	SIX VASES (No Entries)	(0)
D	THREE VASES (No Entries)	(0)
E	W E ALSEN NOVELTY CUP 1st G Hollingdale 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
F	UNWIN CLASS 1st G Hollingdale 2nd J & L Morgan 3rd R James	(3)
G	THE SOCIETY 20 1st R James 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

DIVISION I

1	THE DAILY MAIL CUP 1st R Read 2nd B Bartlett 3rd K Gray	(3)
2	SUTTON CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
3	TOM JONES CUP 1st D Fitton 2nd K Gray 3rd –	(2)
4	BURPEE CUP 1st D Fitton 2nd R Read 3rd –	(2)
5	HAMMETT CLASS 1st B Bartlett 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

CLASS	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
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 (No Entries) (0)
9	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st B Bartlett 2nd – 3rd – (1)
10	ONE VASE, PINK OR PICOTEE (No Entries) (0)
11	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st G Hollingdale 2nd J Rieley 3rd R Read (3)
DIVISION II	
12	ONE VASE SPENCER 1st T Atherton 2nd D Fitton 3rd – (2)
12a	ONE VASE NON-SPENCER (No Entries) (0)
DIVISION III	
14	9 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries) (0)
15	6 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries) (0)
16	3 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries) (0)
17	MIXED BOWL 1st J & M McDonald 2nd T Atherton 3rd – (2)
18	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM (No Entries) (0)
19	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries) (0)
20	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE (No Entries) (0)

CLASS	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
21	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries) (0)
22	ONE VASE, PINK (No Entries) (0)
23	ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY (No Entries) (0)
24	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st J Rieley 2nd T Atherton 3rd – (2)
DIVISION IV	
25	LEVINGTON CUP 6 VASES DISTINCT 1st B Herbert 2nd – 3rd – (1)
26	THE BEN BULSTRODE MEMORIAL PRIZE 3 VASES DISTINCT 1st J & L Morgan 2nd H Graszlea 3rd – (2)
27	MIXED BOWL 1st J & L Morgan 2nd R James 3rd – (2)
28	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st J Rieley 2nd – 3rd – (1)
29	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries) (0)
30	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st B Herbert 2nd R James 3rd – (2)
31	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st B Herbert 2nd H Graszlea 3rd R James (3)
32	ONE VASE, PINK 1st – 2nd – 3rd R James (1)
33	ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st J Rieley 2nd B Herbert 3rd R James (3)
34	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st J Rieley 2nd J & L Morgan 3rd R James (3)

DIVISION V

35	EVAN HINCE CUP 3 VASES DISTINCT 1st A Shreeve 2nd N Hatch 3rd –	(2)
36	MIXED BOWL 1st A Shreeve 2nd P Champion 3rd –	(2)
37	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st A Shreeve 2nd – 3rd –	(4)
38	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED 1st A Shreeve 2nd N Hatch 3rd J Adams	(3)
39	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st P Champion 2nd – 3rd –	(3)
40	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st A Shreeve 2nd P Champion 3rd J Adams	(4)
41	ONE VASE, PINK 1st J Beardmore 2nd P Champion 3rd J Adams	(4)
42	ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st J Adams 2nd P Champion 3rd A Shreeve	(3)
43	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st A Shreeve 2nd J Beardmore 3rd –	(6)

DIVISION VI

50	HENRY ECKFORD BOWL 1st A Shreeve 2nd C Tate 3rd J Beardmore	(3)
51	VAL & JOHN GOOD CLASS 1st P Johnson 2nd G Hollingdale 3rd –	(2)
52	OLD FASHIONED CLASS 1st G Hollingdale 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
53	WHITTEMORE CLASS 1st C Tate 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
54	SEMI-GRANDIFLORA CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
55	GRANDIFLORA CLASS 1st A Shreeve 2nd J & M McDonald 3rd –	(2)

CLASS	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
56 THE NEWINGTON TRIPLE 1st P Johnson 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
57 THE CHRISIE CLASS 1st G Hollingdale 2nd A Shreeve 3rd –	(2)
58 AMY ANDREWS PERPETUAL TROPHY 1st T Atherton 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
59 BOWL OF LATHYRUS SPECIES PERENNIAL 1st C Ball 2nd J & L Morgan 3rd J & M McDonald	(3)
60 ANY LATHYRUS GROWN IN POT 1st J & L Morgan 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

DECORATIVE

61 THE JOHN BISHOP MEMORIAL CLASS 1st J & M McDonald 2nd C Ball 3rd –	(2)
62 UNWIN BASKET 1st J & M McDonald 2nd T Atherton 3rd A Shreeve	(4)
63 TOM BAINES CLASS 1st C Ball 2nd J & M McDonald 3rd J Beardmore	(3)
64 E R JANES VASE 1st G Hollingdale 2nd J & L Morgan 3rd R James	(6)
65 THE CORNISH BOWL 1st R James 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
66 THE FRANCES WILLIAMS MEMORIAL DRIFTWOOD CLASS 1st C Ball 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
67 THE SYDENHAM CLASS 1st C Ball 2nd J Beardmore 3rd C Tate	(4)
68 LES HARVEY PEDESTAL CLASS (No Entries)	(0)

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

R Read (Class 1)

THE CLAY CUP (Best Vase)

K Gray ('Anniversary' Class 1)

THE COLLEDGE PRIZE (Best Lavender)

D Fitton ('Karen Louise' Class 3)

THE TERRY SEWELL PRIZE (Best Anniversary)

K Gray (Class 1)

THE GOWER SEEDLING PRIZE (Best Seedling)

T Atherton (class 12)

THE CYNTHIA DAVIES CUP (Best Vase Div III)

J Rieley (Class 24)

THE WARWICK CUP (Best Vase Div IV)

J Rieley ('White Frills' class 28)

THE DIVISION V PRIZE (Best Vase)

A Shreeve ('Mary Priestley' Class 35)

KEITH BREWER PRIZE (Best Vase Div VI)

A Shreeve (Class 35)

THE HENRY ECKFORD CUP (Best Exhibit Div VII)

C Ball (*Lathyrus Latifolius* 'White Pearl' Class 59)

BEST BOWL PRIZE

A Shreeve (Class 36)

BEST DECORATIVE PRIZE

C Ball ('Driftwood' Class 66)

THE TOM SHILLING PRIZE (Best Vase by Newcomer)

J Adams ('Sir Jimmy Shand' Class 42)

Audit of the Early National Show – RHS Gardens Wisley

29 & 30 June 2022

By Roger Parsons & Carole Tate

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class
1	Gwendoline	5	3	1	0	9	Magenta (Pale)	4a
	Sir Jimmy Shand	5	3	1	0	9	Striped	16
3	Mrs Bernard Jones	4	1	1	0	6	Rose Pink (White Ground)	10b
4	Mary Prestley	4	1	0	0	5	White	1
5	Queen of Hearts	3	0	1	0	4	Striped	16
	Anniversary	2	1	1	0	4	Picotée (White Ground)	15
	Eclipse	2	1	1	0	4	Mauve	7
	Just Julia	2	0	2	0	4	Mid Blue	9a
	Karen Louise	2	0	2	0	4	Lavender	8
	Windsor	1	3	0	0	4	Maroon	5
11	Honeymoon	2	1	0	0	3	Lavender (Flush)	8a
	Jilly	2	1	0	0	3	Cream	2
	White Frills	2	1	0	0	3	White	1
	Valerie Harrod	1	1	0	1	3	Orange Pink	13
15	Dalesman	1	1	0	0	2	Mid Blue	9a
	Naomi Nazareth	1	0	1	0	2	Pale Blue	9b
	Somerset Lady	1	0	1	0	2	Magenta	4
	Judith Wilkinson	0	2	0	0	2	Magenta	4
	Mumsie	0	2	0	0	2	Crimson	3a
	Daily Mail	0	1	1	0	2	Cerise Pink	10c
	Esme Rowena	0	1	1	0	2	Lavender (Flush)	8a
	Millennium	0	1	1	0	2	Crimson	3a
	Princess Elizabeth	0	1	1	0	2	Salmon Pink (Cream Ground)	11a
24	Bridget McAleer	1	0	0	0	1	Mauve	7
	Grandma Butt	1	0	0	0	1	Magenta	4
	Josie	1	0	0	0	1	Magenta	4
	Lady Nicholson	1	0	0	0	1	Striped	16
	Syd Dunscombe	1	0	0	0	1	Orange Red	14
	The Princess Royal*	1	0	0	0	1	White	1
	Gilly Norah	0	1	0	0	1	Salmon Pink (Cream Ground)	11a
	Ballerina Blue	0	1	0	0	1	Mid Blue	9a
	Harrogate Gem	0	1	0	0	1	Scarlet	3a

*The Princess Royal was exhibited under a trade name as Gardener's Jubilee.

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class	
	Joejess	0	1	0	0	1	Orange	12	
	Laila K	0	1	0	0	1	Cerise Pink	10c	
	Memorial Flight	0	1	0	0	1	White	1	
	Olivia Grace	0	1	0	0	1	Dark Blue	9	
	Pink Ripple	0	1	0	0	1	Striped	16	
	Solitude	0	1	0	0	1	Lavender	8	
	Southbourne	0	1	0	0	1	Rose Pink (White Ground)	10	
	Clotted Cream	0	0	1	0	1	Cream	2	
	White Supreme	0	0	1	0	1	White	1	
	Linda C	0	0	0	1	1	Mid Blue	9a	
	Seedlings	1	1	1	0	3			
	Totals	47	37	19	2	105			
	Non Spencers								
1	Henry Eckford	2	1	0	0	3	Orange Scarlett	OF	
2	Scarlett	2	0	0	0	2	Red	MG	
	Black Knight	1	1	0	0	2	Dark Maroon	OF	
	King Edward VII	1	1	0	0	2	Red	OF	
5	Almost Black	1	0	0	0	1	Dark Navy Blue	MG	
	Cupani	1	0	0	0	1	Maroon/Violet	OF	
	Janet Scott	1	0	0	0	1	Pale Pink (White Ground)	OF	
	Little Red Riding Hood	1	0	0	0	1	Red/White	MG	
	Lord Nelson	1	0	0	0	1	Navy Blue	OF	
	Matucana	1	0	0	0	1	Maroon/Violet	MG	
	Prince Edward of York	1	0	0	0	1	Red/Pink	OF	
	Purple Prince	1	0	0	0	1	Maroon/Violet	OF	
	Unique	1	0	0	0	1	Blue Flake (White Ground)	OF	
	America	0	1	0	0	1	Red Flake	OF	
	Chrissie	0	1	0	0	1	Marbled Lavender	MG	
	Flora Norton	0	1	0	0	1	Pale Blue	OF	
	Mrs Collier	0	1	0	0	1	Cream	OF	
	Totals	15	7	0	0	22			
	Mixed vases	6	5	4	6	21			
	Total Vases	68	49	23	8	148			
	Decorative & Bowls	15	13	5	2	35			
	Total	83	62	28	10	183			

Report of the Early Show - RHS Wisley

By Roger Parsons



An early season for growers in the south of England meant that the 2022 show had fewer exhibits than some years. Other factors which had an impact on entries were concerns about not being allowed to use Oasis for staging, the high cost of fuel for travelling and a general wariness of people about socialising during the first year after the pandemic. Despite all this, the 2022 Early Show will be remembered as very successful because of the superb venue and facilities in the new Wisley Hilltop Centre, visitors to the show in their thousands and a general good feeling of returning to normality after two years of pandemic.

The hall used for the show had wonderful lighting and heating during overnight staging and during the day. The RHS provided a free buffet breakfast for exhibitors. Vehicles were

allowed to drive right up to the hall during overnight staging. The show was enhanced by a giant screen at one end where a slide show prepared by Roger Parsons was on continuous display and cause a lot of interest to visitors. An adjacent area of the foyer was equipped for talks and these were provided by Jim & Mary McDonald. Two large non-competitive exhibits of blooms caused a lot of interest. One of these was prepared by the RHS garden staff and consisted of blooms cut from the Trials ground to display 64 cultivars of mostly modern grandiflora cultivars. The second exhibit was staged by Phil Johnson using blooms from his seed production, some 60 cultivars of all types of Sweet Pea. Phil also worked as joint show manager and took guided tours of the Trials ground, so had a very busy few days. A hastily-



Judging. Photo by Lewis Morgan.

A snapshot of visitors. Photo by Lewis Morgan.



convened committee meeting of those present resolved to award Gold Award cards to both the RHS and Phil Johnson for their wonderful non-competitive exhibits.

Turning to the competitive classes, there were 3 entries in the Daily Mail Class, all of good standard. First time entrant Robert Read had taken a bit of persuading that his blooms were good enough for the class but his faith was rewarded with first prize and best exhibit in show. His exhibit consisted of: 'Queen of Hearts', 'Jilly', 'Sir Jimmy Shand', 'Windsor', 'Dalesman', 'Somerset Lady', 'Mrs Bernard Jones', 'Mary Priestley', 'Eclipse', 'Lady Nicholson', 'Honeymoon' and 'Gwendoline'. Previous winner Brian Bartlett found staging without Oasis a bit of a struggle but persevered and was



The Daily Mail Class. Photo by Anne Adams.



Graeme Hollingdale receives his cup from President Roger Parsons.
Photo by Lewis Morgan.



John Rieley and his alternative to Oasis. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*

rewarded with second prize. His exhibit consisted of: 'Sir Jimmy Shand', 'White Frills', 'Jilly', 'Judith Wilkinson', 'Millennium', 'Eclipse', 'Gwendoline', 'Solitude', 'Mrs Bernard Jones', 'Valerie Harrod', 'Anniversary' and 'Windsor'. Third place went to Kathy Gray who staged: 'Naomi Nazareth', 'Clotted Cream', 'Gwendoline', 'Somerset Lady', 'Esme Rowena', 'Karen Louise', 'Just Julia', 'Anniversary', 'Mrs Bernard Jones', 'Eclipse', 'White Supreme' and 'Millennium'. Kathy was rewarded with the Clay Cup for her superb vase of 'Anniversary', which also won the Terry Sewell prize.

I thought it interesting that all three exhibits in the Mail included 'Eclipse', 'Mrs Bernard Jones' and 'Gwendoline'. It shows how good stocks of these older cultivars can still hold their own. Other exhibits which stood out for quality included Dave Fitton's wins in the Tom Jones Cup (6 vase) and the Burpee Cup (3 vase), winning the Colledge Prize for his vase of 'Karen Louise' in the Burpee. The Gower Seedling Prize went to Tom Atherton for a striped seedling raised by John Robson which I hope to introduce from August 2023 as 'Tom Atherton'.

An unusual feature of the show was an almost complete lack of entries in division 3, for those growing up to 400 cordons. Just 2 mixed vases and two mixed bowls were staged, leaving John Rieley highly surprised to win the Cynthis Davis Cup for best vase in division. John also won the Warwick Cup for the best vase in division 4 with a vase of 'White Frills'. Congratulations to our Chairman, Alison Shreeve, who had the best vase in division 5 with 'Mary Priestley', the Keith Brewer Prize for best exhibit and the Best Bowl Prize for her mixed bowl in class 36. Alison also won a most competitive class in the show, winning the mixed vase class against 5 other entries. The Tom Shilling Prize for best vase by a newcomer went to Jim Adams for his vase of 'Sir Jimmy Shand', which won class 42.



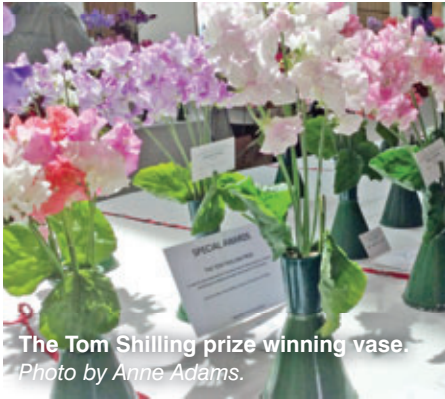
Henry Eckford Cup winning bowl of *Latifolius*. Photo by Caroline Ball.



RHS display of *Grandifloras*. Photo by Lewis Morgan.



Jim Adams receiving Tom Shilling award from Roger Parsons.
Photo by Anne Adams.



The Tom Shilling prize winning vase.
Photo by Anne Adams.



Kathy Gray and her Clay Cup winning vase. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*

Division 6, for non-Spencer exhibits, saw the best exhibit awarded to a delightful bowl of *Lathyrus latifolius* 'White Pearl' exhibited by Caroline Ball. The classes in this division are normally hotly contested and extra classes were added this year but the early season led to reports of plants having gone to seed. Congratulations to all who did manage to stage an entry. Entries in this division were generally down in numbers but there was good competition in some classes.

The Duo class was an interesting innovation, requiring an exhibit of one vase of Spencers with one bowl of non-Spencers. Congratulations to Jim & Mary McDonald for their winning entry. Decorative classes were quite strongly supported, making a wonderful display for visitors, with the Decorative Prize going to Caroline Ball for her exhibit in the Driftwood Class. There were 6 entries in the E R Janes vase where no staging material was allowed. This was judged by the general public on the first day of the show so thanks most go to Laurie Burrell who diligently managed the re-circulation of voting tokens. In a close-run contest, the class was won by Graeme Hollingdale with

an eye-catching vase. E R Janes was very opposed to displaying Sweet Peas in fans, when this was introduced some 90 years ago, so would have been pleased to see his name honoured by this class.

All in all, this was an excellent venue for a show with superb facilities, large numbers of visitors, and at little cost to the Society thanks to generous support from the RHS. The only thing to put off some exhibitors is the inability to use Oasis but I suspect that is something we are all going to have to learn to live with. Robert Read's exhibit, just like Darren Myers at the Late show, shows that alternatives to Oasis can produce equally good displays.



Robert Read and his Mail winning exhibit.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

The Late Show - RHS Harlow Carr

9 & 10 July 2022

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	SIX VASES (No Entries)	(0)
D	THREE VASES (No Entries)	(0)
E	NOVELTY CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
F	UNWIN CLASS 1st T Atherton 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
G	THE SOCIETY 20 1st I D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

DIVISION I

1	THE ROGER PARSONS CHALLENGE PRIZE 1st I D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
2	EASTBOURNE PRIZE (No Entries)	(0)
3	CHARLES HANMER MEMORIAL CLASS 1st I D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
4	THE MATTHEWMAN CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
5	HAMMETT CUP 1st I D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
6	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM (No Entries)	(0)
7	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries)	(0)

CLASS	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
8	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE (No Entries) (0)
9	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries) (0)
10	ONE VASE, PINK, PICOTEE (No Entries) (0)
11	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st I D Myers 2nd – 3rd – (1)
DIVISION II	
12	ONE VASE SPENCER 1st T Atherton 2nd – 3rd – (1)
12a	ONE VASE NON-SPENCER (No Entries) (0)
DIVISION III	
14	9 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries) (0)
15	DAVIS CUP 6 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries) (0)
16	3 VASES DISTINCT 1st M Lloyd 2nd – 3rd – (1)
17	MIXED BOWL 1st T Atherton 2nd – 3rd – (1)
18	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st M Lloyd 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 M Lloyd 2nd – 3rd – (1)
22	ONE VASE, PINK 1st M Lloyd 2nd – 3rd – (1)

CLASS	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
23 ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY (No Entries)	(0)
24 ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st M Lloyd 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
DIVISION IV	
25 M.K. FRANKS CUP – SIX VASES DISTINCT 1st M Hargreaves 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
26 MONRO TROPHY – THREE VASES DISTINCT 1st M Hargreaves 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
27 MIXED BOWL CLASS 1st M Hargreaves 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
28 ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st S Twist 2nd R Durrant 3rd –	(2)
29 ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries)	(0)
30 ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st S Twist 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
31 ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st S Twist 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
32 ONE VASE, PINK (No Entries)	(0)
33 ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st – 2nd R Durrant 3rd –	(1)
34 ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st S Twist 2nd M Hargreaves 3rd –	(2)
DIVISION V	
35 GEORGE HERBERT CUP – 3 VASES DISTINCT 1st P Hargreaves 2nd A Fletcher 3rd –	(2)
36 MIXED BOWL 1st P Hargreaves 2nd S Hayward 3rd –	(2)
37 ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st S Hayward 2nd R Rishworth 3rd –	(2)

CLASS	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
38 ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED 1st S Hayward 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
39 ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st A Fletcher 2nd R Rishworth 3rd –	(2)
40 ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st S Hayward 2nd R Rishworth 3rd –	(2)
41 ONE VASE, PINK 1st J Beardmore 2nd R Rishworth 3rd –	(2)
42 ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st S Hayward 2nd R Rishworth 3rd A Fletcher	(3)
43 ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st P Hargreaves 2nd A Fletcher 3rd N Edwards	(3)
DIVISION VI	
50 HENRY ECKFORD BOWL 1st C Tate 2nd P Hargreaves 3rd T Atherton	(3)
51 VAL & JOHN GOODE CLASS 1st T Atherton 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
52 OLD FASHIONED 3 VASE 1st P Hargreaves 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
52 OLD FASHIONED CLASS 1st I D Myers 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
53 WHITTEMORE CLASS 1st C Tate 2nd N Edwards 3rd T Atherton	(3)
54 SEMI-GRANDIFLORA CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
55 GRANDIFLORA CLASS (No Entries)	(0)
56 NEWINGTON TRIPLE (No Entries)	(0)
57 THE CHRISSIE CLASS 1st P Hargreaves 2nd T Atherton 3rd N Edwards	(3)

CLASS	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
58 DAVID ARCHER PERPETUAL TROPHY 1st C Tate 2nd N Edwards 3rd T Atherton	(3)
59 BOWL OF LATHYRUS SPECIES PERENNIAL 1st C Bromley 2nd T Atherton 3rd –	(2)
60 ANY LATHYRUS GROWN IN POT (No Entries)	(0)

DECORATIVE DIVISION VII

61 THE HARROGATE CLASS 1st S Twist 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
62 BURFOOT CLASS 1st T Atherton 2nd S Twist 3rd –	(2)
63 TOM BAINES CLASS 1st J Beardmore 2nd S Twist 3rd –	(2)
64 E R JANES VASE 1st T Atherton 2nd C Tate 3rd R Rishworth	(5)
65 THE YORKSHIRE BOWL (No Entries)	(0)
66 THE DRIFTWOOD CLASS 1st C Tate 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
67 THE SYDENHAM CLASS 1st C Tate 2nd J Beardmore 3rd –	(2)
68 LES HARVEY PEDESTAL CLASS 1st R Rishworth 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

SPECIAL AWARDS**THE TOM CORDY PRIZE – BEST EXHIBIT**

I D Myers (Class 1)

THE CLAY CUP – BEST VASE

I D Myers ('Mary Priestley' Class 1)

THE COLLEDGE PRIZE (BEST LAVENDER)

I D Myers ('Karen Louise' Class 1)

THE TERRY SEWELL PRIZE (BEST 'ANNIVERSARY')

I D Myers (Class 1)

THE A W GOWER SEEDLING CUP

I D Myers (Class 1)

THE HINCHCLIFFE PRIZE (BEST IN DIVISION DIV III)

M Lloyd ('Mary Priestley')

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

M Hargreaves ('Alec Love' Class 25)

THE RANDALL CUP (BEST VASE DIV V)

P Hargreaves (Class 35)

THE HENRY ECKFORD PRIZE (BEST IN DIVISION VI)

T Atherton (Class 51)

BEST BOWL PRIZE

C Tate (Bowl of Species Class 58)

DECORATIVE PRIZE (BEST DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT)

C Tate (Bowl of Species Class 58)

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

Stephen Hayward (Class 37)

“I always see gardening as escape, as peace really. If you are angry or troubled, nothing provides the same solace as nurturing the soil.”

Monty Don

Audit of the Late National Show - Harlow Carr

9 & 10 July 2022

By Carole Tate

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class
1	Gwendoline	5	1	0	0	6	Pale Magenta	14a
2	Mary Priestley	5	0	0	0	5	White	1
3	Grandma Butt	4	1	0	0	5	Magenta	4
4	Just Julia	3	1	0	0	4	Blue	9a
5	Kippen Cream	3	0	0	0	3	Cream	2
6	Karen Louise	2	1	0	0	3	Lavender	8
	Route 66	2	1	0	0	3	Red	
8	White Frills	1	2	0	0	3	White	1
9	Anniversary	2	0	0	0	2	Picotee	15
	Eclipse	2	0	0	0	2	Mauve	7
	Naomi Nazareth	2	0	0	0	2	Pale Blue	9b
	Nora Holman	2	0	0	0	2		
	Pink Pearl	2	0	0	0	2	Pale Pink	10
14	Wild Swan	1	1	0	0	2	White	1
15	Sir Jimmy Shand	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy	16
16	Alec Cave	1	0	0	0	1	White	
	Alice Hardwicke	1	0	0	0	1	Orange Red	14
	Dalesman	1	0	0	0	1		
	Jilly	1	0	0	0	1	Cream	2
	John Williams	1	0	0	0	1		
	Just Jenny	1	0	0	0	1	Blue	9
	Marjorie Carrier	1	0	0	0	1	Orange Pink	13
	Mrs Bernard Jones	1	0	0	0	1		
	Parsifal	1	0	0	0	1	Lavender	8
	Ruby Anniversary	1	0	0	0	1		
26	Betty Maiden	0	1	0	0	1	Fancy	16
	Len Harrod	0	1	0	0	1	Orange Pink	13
	Patricia Marilyn	0	1	0	0	1	Pale Pink (White)	10
	Seedlings	3	0	0	0	3	No classification	
	Totals	50	11	0	0	62		
	Non Spencers							
	Black Knight	2	1	0	0	3		
	Cupani	2	0	1	0	3	Maroon/Violet	OF
	High Scent	0	1	1	0	2	Cream/Lilac Edge	SG
	America	1	0	0	0	1	Red Flake	OF

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class
	Flora Norton	1	0	0	0	1		
	Henry Eckford	1	0	0	0	1		
	Lord Nelson	1	0	0	0	1		
	Prima Donna	1	0	0	0	1		
	Romeo	1	0	0	0	1	White/Blue Edge	GR
	Wretham Pink	1	0	0	0	1	Pale Pink	OF
	Totals	11	2	2	0	15		
	Mixed vases	4	2	1	0	7		
	Total Vases	65	15	4	0	84		
	Decorative & Bowls	12	8	4	2	26		
	Total	77	23	8	2	110		

Report of the Late Show - Harlow Carr

By Tom Atherton

There was a feeling of anxiety in the show team as the late show approached. The RHS ban on Oasis, the clash of dates with the Chiltern show and the ban on overnight staging did not encourage exhibitors. However, it was decided that 'the show must go on' and, on the day, the sun shone and the number of exhibits actually increased from last year.

The Harlow Carr purpose-built event marquee makes a wonderful venue. The low number of exhibits allowed plenty of space for the large number of visitors who seemingly enjoyed the spectacle. The bureau stand was busy throughout the show and a number of new members were enrolled. It is right at this point to give thanks to all the exhibitors, the show team and the Harlow Carr staff for creating a splendid event in the face of so many difficulties!

Pride of place amongst the exhibitors must be given to Darren Myers for the superb quality and quantity of vases that he displayed – his 12 vase entry in Class 1 winning him the Tom Cordy prize for the best exhibit in the show as well as the Roger Parsons Challenge prize. His vase of 'Mary Priestley' in this class also won the Leweston cup for best vase in the show. His vase of 'Karen Louise' won the Tom College Prize for the





Judging.
Photo by Carole Tate.



Tom & Jane Atherton.
Photo by Carole Tate.

best Lavender in the show and his vase of 'Anniversary' won the Terry Sewell prize for the best vase of 'Anniversary' in the show. In his 12 vases, he entered a seedling that is to be named after his father Ian Myers – this won the Gower Cup for the best seedling. Darren also entered the 3 vase class winning the Charles Hanmer Memorial Trophy. His vase of fancy in class 5 won the Hammett Cup. Overall, a superb achievement considering the lack of staging time and no Oasis!



NSPS Show Harlow Carr. *Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*

The Hinchcliffe Prize for the best vase in Division III went to Matt Lloyd with his vase of 'Mary Priestley' and the KE Andrews prize for the best vase in division IV was awarded to Mike Hargreaves with his vase of 'Alec Cave'. Pat Hargreaves received the Randall Cup for the best vase in division V. I was pleased to win The Henry Eckford prize for the best exhibit in division VI with my 6 vases of old fashioned varieties – 'America', 'Black Knight', 'Henry Eckford', 'Flora Norton', 'Prima Donna' and 'Cupani' (due to a shortage of time and patience I did not use any staging material in these vases!).

The best bowl prize was won by Carole Tate for her bowl of mixed annual Lathyrus species in class 58. This same entry also won the best decorative arrangement prize. The Tom Shilling prize for the best vase entered by a newcomer was won by Stephen Hayward for his vase of 'Route 66' in class 37. Sadly, most classes were not overwhelmed with entries but it should be noted that a popular class was number 64 the ER Janes vase which specified no staging material and was judged by the general



Ready for prize giving. Photo by Andrew Fletcher.

public. I'm pleased to say that I was awarded first prize in this class tastefully arranged by my wife Jane!

The prizes and trophies were presented by Kirstie Blything who is the Education and Learning Manager at RHS Garden Harlow Carr – the presentation taking place outside in beautiful sunshine! The highlight of the presentation for myself was the re-awarding to me of the RHS Harlow Carr Medal (this medal was awarded earlier in the year for services to horticulture in the north of England but I was unable to attend the London ceremony).

As I have already stated, the sun shone for the whole of the 2 days, the show went without a hitch and I am sure we will at some point return to this venue.



**Darren Myers, Matt Lloyd,
Pat & Mike Hargreaves,
Kirstie Blything.**
Photo by Andrew Fletcher.



Darren Myers top prize winner.
Photo by Andrew Fletcher.



Stephen Hayward receiving the Tom Shilling prize
Photo by Andrew Fletcher.



Decorative bowl class 36. *Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*



Darren Myers' winning 12 vase entry. *Photo by Andrew Fletcher.*



20 stem vase of 'Alice Hardwicke' and 'Mary Priestley'.
Photo by Andrew Fletcher.



Bob Rishworth's pedestal.
Photo by Andrew Fletcher.

Trials

NSPS Trials Sponsored
by Westland Horticulture



National Sweet Pea Trials at Sparsholt & Askham Bryan 2022

By Jim McDonald & Andrew Beane

SPARSHOLT

This year the trials at Sparsholt had mixed fortunes. When checking the plant progress early in the year they looked well, maybe a little leggy, and the plot was prepared. We were aware that the overall control of growing the Sweet Peas had different members of staff. Unfortunately two lady members of staff who had previously looked after the Sweet Peas left the college during the pandemic and were not replaced. This meant moving the responsibility to another section who again had limited staff and RHS students to carry out the work. After visits and discussions we were able to agree an acceptable standard of Trial. After planting out all looked well then in April we experienced gale force winds that wrecked large areas of the plot. They were repaired only to have severe frosts for at least two weeks which left the site looking very depleted.

At the first main visit in mid May the plants were starting to recover and it was agreed that a feed of Maxicrop would give the plants a boost!

On the second visit on 7 June there was a big improvement with some flowers. After discussion with Roger Parsons and Phil Johnson it was agreed not to carry out Trials assessments with a full team but Mary and myself would make a further two visits to assess the situation and provide a report.

On the third visit on 20 June it was agreed we could make a decision on the varieties, e.g. make sure all entries were identified, any varieties with rogues and assess the quality of the varieties which were true to colour.

On the fourth visit on 4 July, despite the intense heat we were experiencing the Sweet Peas on all sixteen varieties had improved and in full flower, most of them strong growing. This was due to feeding and the use of the watering system which allowed them time to recover from the adverse conditions.

We inspected all varieties and gave suitable comments, but as we did not have a full committee to judge, no awards could be given.

My grateful thanks to both colleges for growing our Sweet Peas. Since judging was completed a meeting has taken place between myself and the two college staff members at Sparsholt responsible for growing the Sweet Peas and we discussed 2023 improvements and alterations to growing techniques to improve growing and presentation. Sparsholt are confident they will be in a better position to carry out the trial in 2023.

Our thanks go to Westland for sponsoring the trials by providing the majority of items required by the two colleges. And finally to Andrew Beane and Mike Hargreaves who keep an eye on the growing at Askham Bryan together with the rest of the team who carry out judging.

REPORTS ON ALL VARIETIES AT SPARSHOLT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1	C.A. Beane / White	Code 12AC9
	Strong variety, true colour, could be an excellent variety for exhibition. No Awards	
2	C.A. Beane / Cream	Code 205C3X
	True colour, very frilly and strong. An exhibition variety. No Awards	
3	Roger Parsons Sweet Peas / Crimson	Code George McAra
	Very dark crimson, not large flowers, ideal for garden decoration. No Awards	
4	Roger Parsons Sweet Peas / Deep mauve	Code 20241
	True colour, strong grower, suitable for exhibition and garden decoration. No Awards	
5	A. Hubbuck / Red/Magenta Bicolour	Code ED1
	Old fashioned type with lots of flowers. Similar to Prince Edward of York. Ideal for garden decoration. No Awards	
6	A. Hubbuck / Pale Blue	Code AH7
	First visit looked true, second and third visit had mid blue rogues. Strong growing, needs reselecting and sending again. No Awards	
7	Chris McAleer / Pale Lilac	Code 318-10-17
	All visits true colour, strong plants. Exhibition a possibility, definitely one for garden decoration. No Awards	

REPORTS ON ALL VARIETIES AT SPARSHOLT CONTINUED:

8	A. Hubbuck / White/Pink Blush	Code UN4
	No pink blush at all visits. A nice cream with some white rogues. Would like to see white/pink blush. Reselect. No Awards	
9	Roger Parsons Sweet Peas / Pale Pink Flush on White	Code 11120
	Strong plants, several rogues of different colours. No Awards	
10	C.A. Beane / Mauve Stripe on White	Code 14C2A
	Flowers on small side, true colour and strong growing. Suitable for garden decoration. No Awards	
11	C.A. Beane / Blue Stripe on White	Code 14C3
	Strong plants, true colour, flowers well placed on stems at both visits. Good for both exhibition and garden decoration. No Awards	
12	C.A. Beane / Pink Stripe on White	Code 28D2
	Very attractive and true, strong plants with many good flower stems. Good for both exhibition and garden decoration. No Awards	
13	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Dark Blue Stripe on White	Code DJM2
	Small flowers. Suitable for garden decoration. Reselect. No Awards	
14	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Maroon Stripe on White	Code DJM3
	True colour on all visits. Some small plants. Good for floral art. Reselect. No Awards	
15	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Magenta Stripe on White	Code DJM1
	Rogues. Reselect. No Awards	
16	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Red Stripe on White	Code DJM4
	1 rogue. Strong plants. Reselect. No Awards	

ASKHAM BRYAN

The last trial judged was 2019 and therefore due to a change of staff at the college it was inevitable that more input was required. Several meetings and emails with the new college lecturer, Harry Johnson-Firth occurred. With his enthusiastic input and his staff the trials progressed extremely well. It was decided to use the RHS Level 2 and 3 students to work on the trials.

The sowing date was the first week in November, 6 seed to a 1.4 litre pot using John Innes compost. Germination was extremely good. The plants were transferred to a polytunnel soon after germination.

The soil preparation was well composted bark dug in followed by chicken pellets and fish, blood and bone.

A visit on the 3 February, 2022 found plants looking very healthy but a bit on the leggy side. It was decided to go for a plant out date on the 1 March, 2022 using the RHS Level 2 students. Mike Hargreaves and myself did a short talk followed by a question and answer session before planting out. This year we decided to use plastic clematis netting rather than chicken wire for supports. Plants were sprayed with garlic, 50 mls to 5 litres soon after planting out and again a few weeks later.

A visit on the 27 April found extremely strong plants looking very healthy. Periodically strong winds caused a few problems but these were overcome. A further visit on the 19 May to work out the judging dates. The plants were not allowed to flower until growth was over 4ft high. A tomato feed was given on the 6 June and plants allowed to come into flower. Judging was carried out on the 23 June, 28 June with the final judging on 5 July.

The judging results. First, it was disappointing that a lot of seedlings had rogues and in some cases mixed. Out of 16 seedlings 9 had rogues. These were not judged but the judges comments are in the results.

REPORTS ON ALL VARIETIES AT ASKHAM BRYAN ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1	C.A. Beane / White	Code 12AC9
	Looked excellent at both judgings. Exhibition (FCC), Garden Decoration (AM) 2nd Florist Award, Best Sweet Pea in trial.	
2	C.A. Beane / Cream	Code 205C3X
	Not as good as the above but looked very good at both judging. Exhibition (AM), Garden Decoration (HC)	

REPORTS ON ALL VARIETIES AT ASKHAM BRYAN CONTINUED:

3	Roger Parsons Sweet Peas / Crimson	Code George McAra
	Small size blooms. Modern grandiflora? Very deep crimson. Plenty of blooms at both judgings. Garden Decoration (HC)	
4	Roger Parsons Sweet Peas / Deep Mauve	Code 20241
	Bicolour. Rogues. Grandiflora? Slight variation in colour. Plenty of 4s. Reselect. No Awards	
5	A. Hubbuck / Red Magenta Bicolour	Code ED1
	Scent +++ Old fashioned flower. A mass of blooms at both judgings. Garden Decoration (AM)	
6	A. Hubbuck / Pale Blue	Code AH7
	2 mid blue rogues. This has very good potential as an exhibition pea. After discussion with the sender it appears he may have accidentally placed a mid blue seed pod when re-seeding. Send again next year. No Awards	
7	Chris McAleer / Pale Lilac	Code 318-10-17
	3 lilac pink rogues and 1 deep lavender seen. The judges felt this had a lot of potential. Reselect and send again. No Awards	
8	A. Hubbuck / White/Pink Blush	Code UN4
	his seedling was a cream with 3 white rogues. After discussion with the sender there has been a labelling mishap with the original packet of seed. Has very good potential. Reselect and send again. No Awards	
9	Roger Parsons Sweet Peas / Pale Pink Fush on White	Code 11120
	This seedling was mixed with pink, pale pink, magenta, lavender rogues. No Awards	
10	C.A. Beane / Mauve Stripe on White	Code 14C2A
	Looked very good at the first judging, but not as good at the second judging. Garden Decoration (HC)	

REPORTS ON ALL VARIETIES AT ASKHAM BRYAN CONTINUED:

11	C.A. Beane / Blue Stripe on White	Code 14C3
	Extremely good scent+++ . Plenty of flower and 4s. Looked good at all judgings. Garden Decoration (AM), 1st Florist Award	
12	C.A. Beane / Pink Stripe on White	Code 28D2
	Almond pink stripe and nice colour for the stripe family. Was throwing some 4s and liked by the judges. Garden Decoration (AM), 3rd Florist Award	
13	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Dark Blue Stripe on White	Code DJM2
	Unfortunately a lot of rogues. Maroon self coloured, bicoloured and a lavender self coloured. No Awards	
14	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Maroon Stripe on White	Code DJM3
	Bicolour rogues. Has good potential. Please reselect and send again. No Awards	
15	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Magenta Stripe on White	Code DJM1
	Bicolour rogues. This seedling has very good size bloom for a stripe. Very strong growth. Nice, has potential. Reselect and send again. No Awards	
16	Mary & Jim McDonald Sweet Peas / Red Stripe on White	Code DJM4
	Bicolour rogue, 1 maroon stripe rogue. Slight variation in the red stripe. Strong grower and good size blooms. Reselect and make a stem selection. No Awards	

To conclude, the third judging was used to confirm results from previous judging and further assess the seedlings that hadn't received awards. The judging panel was the same with one exception. Alec Cave has retired from judging the Trials and his vast knowledge will be missed. Thank you Alec for your contribution over the years. His replacement is Aaron Hickman, a younger version of Alec!

RHS Sweet Pea Trial – Progress Report

By Rosalyn Marshall

The summer of 2022 saw the first year of a two year Sweet Pea Trial take place at RHS Garden Wisley. The aim of the trial is to grow and assess Sweet Peas that are available to the public and award the Award of Garden Merit (AGM) to excellent, garden-worthy selections.

This is the first Sweet Pea trial to take place in the new Trials Garden, opened in 2021, and the first RHS trial to focus solely on Grandiflora cultivars, often overlooked in terms of awards as the frillier Spencer Sweet Peas are more often used for showing.

Grandifloras, including Semi-grandiflora, Old-fashioned and Modern selections do however have characters that make them excellent garden plants; they are floriferous, producing an abundance of highly scented flowers. Among the 68 entries entered into the trial by Sweet Pea growers and collections in the UK are new (the newest introduced in 2022) and old (the oldest raised in 1868) cultivars, with a huge range of flower colours and patterns.

Cultivation



RHS Trials plants before planting.
Photo by Rosalyn Marshall.

Most entries had two autumn-sown bushes, 6 plants in each bush, 12 plants in total. Current AGM-holders were included for comparison and just one bush of each was sown. Most seeds were sown in November 2021 and moved out in their pots to cold frames in December. They grew quickly in the mild winter and were pinched out

in January 2022, to keep the plants from growing well above their supports. For eight selections we also included one clump of spring-sown Sweet Peas, sown on 2 February. Storm Eunice passed through on 17 February, damaging the cold frames and knocking over some of our Sweet Pea pots. This meant resowing of some entries that had lost their labels in the process, but the plants came through unscathed.

Planting out of the autumn-sown Sweet Peas took place on 28 March 2022, swiftly followed by a -4.3°C night on 1 April. Bushes were individually covered with fleece

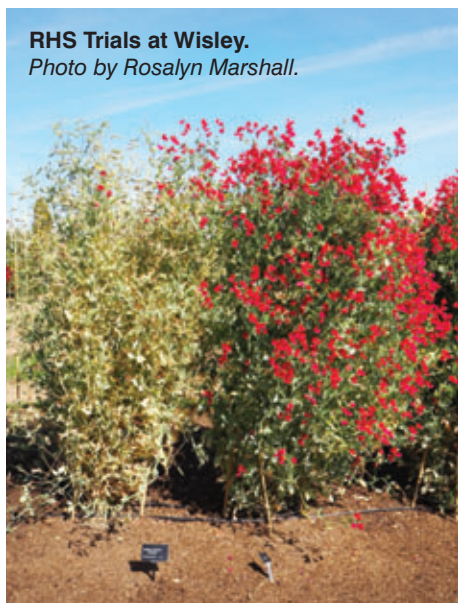
over the weekend and all entries survived. The spring-sown plants were planted out on 27 April 2022. The beds were mulched with Apsley Farm Soil Improving Mulch.

Flowering was observed by the expert assessment forum to be about two weeks earlier this year in their own gardens and the

first visit to the trial was early in June. Over three visits the forum looked at the general visual impact, the vigour and health of plants, the quality and quantity of blooms, their distribution, colour and scent, and length of flowering season. Flowers were deadheaded each week, to keep the plants flowering and ensure a good display.



General overview RHS Sweet Pea Trials at Wisley. *Photo by Rosalyn Marshall.*



RHS Trials at Wisley. *Photo by Rosalyn Marshall.*

Weather extremes over the course of the summer led to some bud drop from cold nights early on and then some flower bleaching from sun exposure on hot days (maximum temperature of over 30°C in June and 38.6°C in July). There were some instances of virus, aphid, powdery mildew, leaf miner and dieback. Garlic Barrier Foliar was sprayed as a preventative fungicide in May and SB Plant Invigorator was used as a spot spray for aphids and on occasion more widely for aphids and powdery mildew, however neither pest or disease was completely controlled. Many aphid-eating ladybirds and evidence of parasitoid wasps, as well as visiting birds were noticed on the trial. Some rogue plants were identified and

the differences between cultivars displaying genetic drift or deterioration, and where a known named cultivar had got into the seed mix was discussed.

The Sweet Peas eventually overtopped their supports, many reaching heights of over 2m tall with masses of sideshoots, and in some instances caused their metal frameworks to buckle! The open site of the Trials Garden also meant strong winds

threatened and sometimes succeeded in destabilising the supports. We found that the spring-sown Sweet Peas took longer to get going than their Autumn-sown counterparts, and didn't quite make the same sized plants, though on the whole they flowered longer into August. Time constraints meant not all plants were deadheaded towards the end of the season. Where plants continued to be deadheaded we saw a definite increase in length of flowering and the plants stayed greener for longer (apart from the exception to the rule 'Almost Black').

An Autumn forum visit, to see how the spring-sown Sweet Peas looked was proposed, however the scorching weather meant by this time most plants were looking poor. Some entries seemingly overnight turned brown and straw-like.



Plans for 2023

Sowing seeds in the Autumn or Spring for the second year of assessments was discussed. Autumn-sown Sweet Peas are usually more vigorous and we saw evidence of this in the trial. However, many gardeners sow their Sweet Peas in the Spring, and Spring-sown Sweet Peas flowering later can fit in well to a garden border. The decision was that each entry should have one Spring sown and one Autumn sown clump this year to compare how each variety performs when treated both ways.

The order the plants are planted in has been turned around, so that no plant is in the same position. We hope this will help to pull apart the cultivar or environmental factors that influence a plants performance. In fact, the plan for the second year was adapted to separate the Autumn and Spring plants into separate beds. For the second year of the Trial it was decided that entries with rogues should be resourced from the same supplier and another source to compare.

Interesting findings

Lathyrus odoratus 'Cedric Morris' was included in the Trial by Sarah Cook, holder of the National Collection of Sir Cedric Morris Iris introductions, to compare with the well-known 'Matucana' and 'Cupani'. The entry had characters closer to the wild Sweet Pea or a cultivar introduced as 'Quito' with brighter flowers. This year we are going to grow 'Cedric Morris', stock of 'Quito' and the wild Sweet Pea to compare.

A mutation on a plant of 'Monaco' (Riviera Series) sparked interest and was highlighted in The Plant Review. One plant out of the 12 produced interesting flowers which some investigation and enquiries found to be a reappearance of a mutation first recorded in 1911 by William Bateson and Reginald Punnett, founders of experimental genetics in the UK. They wrote of their plant 'It is a monstrous form of which the chief characteristic is the straight stigma protruding through the cleft keel'.

The Trial attracted a lot of interest and positive feedback from garden visitors and we were also able to tie in with the Early National Sweet Pea Society show to give tours of the trial.

Currently, we have lots of healthy plants growing in cold frames, waiting to go out in March and we hope that the second and final year of the Trial will be just as much of a success, come and visit if you can!

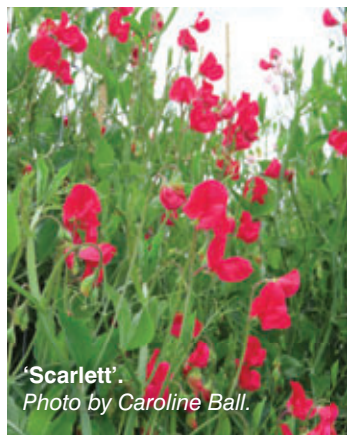
Look out for the report which will include all the AGM selections on our trials report 'bookcase' here: www.rhs.org.uk/plants/trials-awards/plant-trials/growerguides

AGM plants should be:

- Excellent for ordinary use in appropriate conditions
- Available
- Good constitution
- Essentially stable in form and colour
- Reasonably resistant to pests and diseases



Trial entries in 2023 order	
1	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'King Edward VII'
2	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Prince Edward of York'
3	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Nightingale'
4	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Dave R'
5	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Queen Alexandra'
6	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Monaco' (Riviera Series)
7	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Scarlett'
8	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Genoa' (Riviera Series)
9	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Zorija Rose'
10	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Annie B Gilroy'
11	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Fire and Ice'
12	<i>Lathyrus x hammettii</i> 'Spanish Dancer'
13	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Queen of the Isles'
15	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'America'
16	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Our Heroes'
17	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Sweet Caroline' (AB 1)
18	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Lady Turrall'
19	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Little Red Riding Hood'
20	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Sicilian Pink'
21	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Miss Willmott'
22	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Crown Princess of Prussia' (syn. 'Kronprinzessin von Preussen')
24	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Prima Donna'
25	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Emily'
26	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Rosay'
27	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Janet Scott'
28	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Alisa'
29	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Enigma'
30	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Bramdean'
31	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Valentine'
32	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Cannes' (Riviera Series)
33	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Princess of Wales'
34	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Senator'
35	<i>Lathyrus x hammettii</i> 'Three Times As Sweet'
36	<i>Lathyrus x hammettii</i> 'Erewhon'
37	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Matucana'
38	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Cupani' (syn. 'Cupani's Original')
39	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Quito'
40	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> wild type
41	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Cedric Morris'



Trial entries in 2023 order continued

42	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Indigo King'
43	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Jack Ellis'
44	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Almost Black'
45	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Black Knight'
46	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Dr Robert Uvedale'
48	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Monty Don'
50	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Montpellier' (Riviera Series)
52	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Roosterville'
54	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Memories'
55	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Heathcliff'
56	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Lord Nelson'
57	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'My Navy'
58	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Violet Wings'
59	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Marseilles' (Riviera Series)
60	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'NZ Gardener'
61	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Nice' (Riviera Series)
63	<i>Lathyrus</i> 'Adorabel'
64	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Flora Norton'
65	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Lady Grisel Hamilton'
66	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Albutt Blue'
67	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Chrissie'
68	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Astrid'
69	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Butterfly'
70	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Kingfisher'
71	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Dragonfly'
72	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'More Scent'
73	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Cream Eggs'
74	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'High Scent'
75	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Juliet'
76	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Primrose'
77	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Mrs Collier'
78	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> 'Cathy'

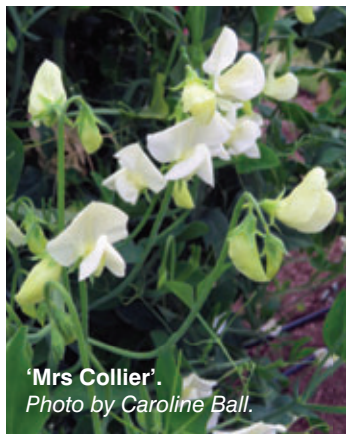
*“Life begins the day
you start a garden.”*

Chinese proverb



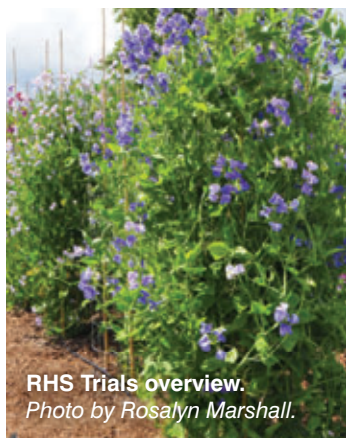
'Erehwon'.

Photo by Rosalyn Marshall.



'Mrs Collier'.

Photo by Caroline Ball.



RHS Trials overview.

Photo by Rosalyn Marshall.

Articles

Lathyrus Collection Report

By Roger Parsons

National Plant Collection: *Lathyrus*

Collection holder: Roger Parsons

Period Covered by report: 2022

Database system used: Persephone and Excel

Plant list additions

'Primrose', 'Platinum Jubilee', 'Sweet Caroline' and 'Serenity Remembered' from Philip Johnson

'Platinum Sensation' from Eagle Sweet Peas

'Cedric Morris' from Sarah Cook

'Melanie Jane' from Kerton Sweet Peas

'Summer's Day' from Matthewman Sweet Peas

'Seabrook's Fantasia' from E W King & co

L. oleraceus 'Rosakrone' and 'Sugar Magnolia' from Real Seeds

Plant List losses

'William and Catherine' was lost but has been re-stocked from Eagle Sweet Peas.

Desired plants:

Vavilovia formosa has been renamed as *L. formosus*.

Developments to the collection:

Roger attended an online Persephone 2 workshop on 24 Feb. 2022.

In March 2022, Roger was elected President of the National Sweet Pea Society (NSPS).

Chelsea flower show – we supported the Plant Heritage stand by exhibiting cut blooms and were pleased to see the exhibit achieved a Gold medal with top marks in all categories. It also received a trophy for best exhibit in the Discovery Zone. My thanks

and congratulations to Gill Groombridge and her support team for enabling this to happen. Cut flower blooms were also supplied for a Chiltern Sweet Pea Society / NSPS display at Windsor on 10 June to help celebrate the platinum jubilee.

A new website was launched in Summer 2022 and has attracted much favourable comment.

Set backs:

The 2022 season was generally favourable with a very good seed harvest. Two cultivars suffered from excessive ground water in the polytunnel. The outfall from a rainwater downpipe was the cause of this and needs to be remedied before that area can be cropped again.

Contacts / visits:

Roger provided slides and information to David Ford for talks at Hilltop centre promoting Plant Heritage.

No open days were held in 2022 but visitors to the collection included:

22 April: Marryn Mathis of the Farmhouse Flower Farm, Oregon, and Nicole Laird of the Let's Grow Girls podcast series;

1 June: Emma Beardshaw (Unwins Seeds) and Mark Sage (Marshalls Seeds);

20 June: Maggie Tain and Katie East from Bramdean House

Roger was a member of the Panel judging a 2-year trial of Sweet Peas held at RHS Wisley on 3 occasions in June and was joint show manager for the Early National Sweet Pea show held at the Hilltop Centre, Wisley, on 29 & 30 June.

13 June: hosted a meeting of the NSPS Classification sub-committee.

Visiting photographers were:

15 June: Clare Newton of Equinox Partners producing photographs for an exhibition at the Gilbert White museum in 2023.

16 June: Natalie Morey.

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

Research, shows and publicity:

The year started with considerable activity. A radio interview with David Maxwell was broadcast on BBC Radio Ulster's Gardeners' Corner, 5 Feb. 2022. We were featured in Gardens Illustrated magazine Feb.2022. An interview with Val Bourne for an article in Country Life magazine has yet to materialise. A podcast was recorded with Mike Palmer,

in Feb. 2022 and is available online. A Zoom presentation was given to the RHS Plant Societies webinar on 22 Feb.

On 8 September, the day of the Queen's death, Roger gave a talk to Rustington Horticultural Association members. A second live talk was given to the Plant Heritage Sussex group AGM held on 1 October.

Research continued to expand and update the online register of epithets, available at: <https://www.rpsweetpeas.com/epithets/>

Has the succession plan changed?

No.

Counterparts

By Keith Hammett

There is a big difference between plants that are propagated vegetatively and those produced from seed. Dahlias, for instance, are multiplied by taking cuttings or dividing tubers. In essence once a plant has been selected from a seedling population and multiplied each plant of that cultivar has the same combination of genes, even if many thousands of plants exist. Technically such cultivars are clones.

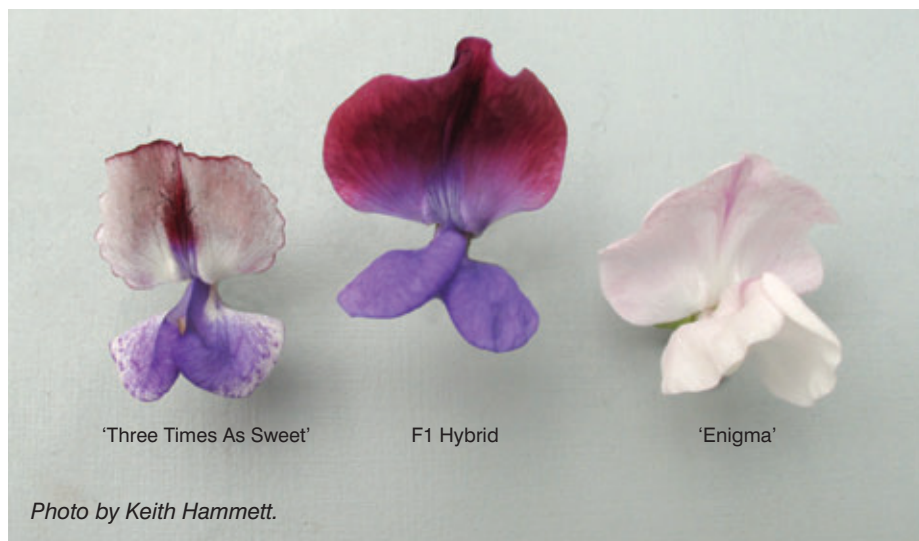
In contrast, cultivars produced from seed, such as Sweet Peas undergo rearrangement of the genes each season as a consequence of the flowering and seed production process. Only when the major characteristics that interest us, such as flower colour, shape and stem length breed true, can a cultivar be said to be "fixed" and suitable for dissemination. Other characteristics such as hairy or smooth seedpods, which do not really interest us, often continue to occur with both forms being present in a single cultivar.

Normally when two supposedly fixed cultivars are cross-pollinated the plants produced from the resulting seed should all be alike. If they are not, one or other of the parents was not fully fixed. This generation is termed the first filial generation, F1, and when plants of this generation pollinate themselves all the genes are rearranged. It is in the next F2 generation where we can look for plants that have the combination of characters that we sought when we planned the cross.

When we save seed from a plant that conforms to our goal, we hope that it will breed true, with all the plants in subsequent generations looking identical. Most often this does not happen and it usually takes several more seasons and single plant selections before a cultivar can be considered to be fixed.

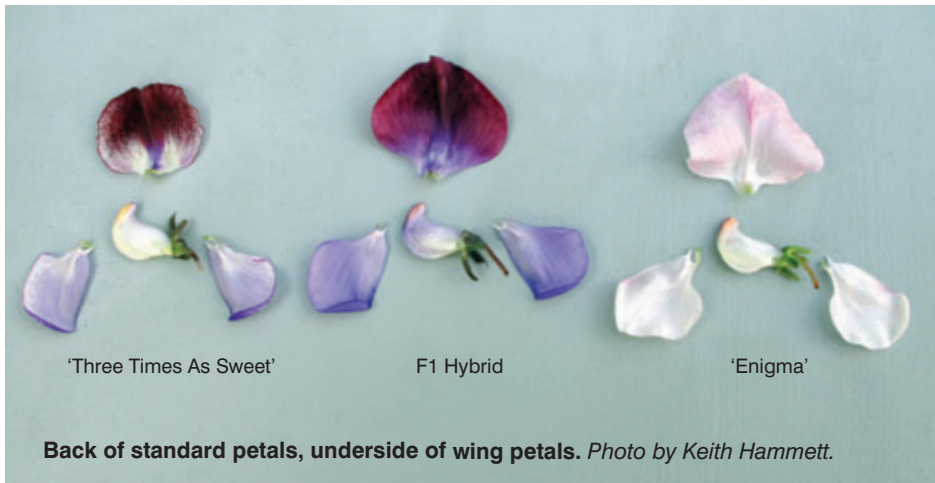
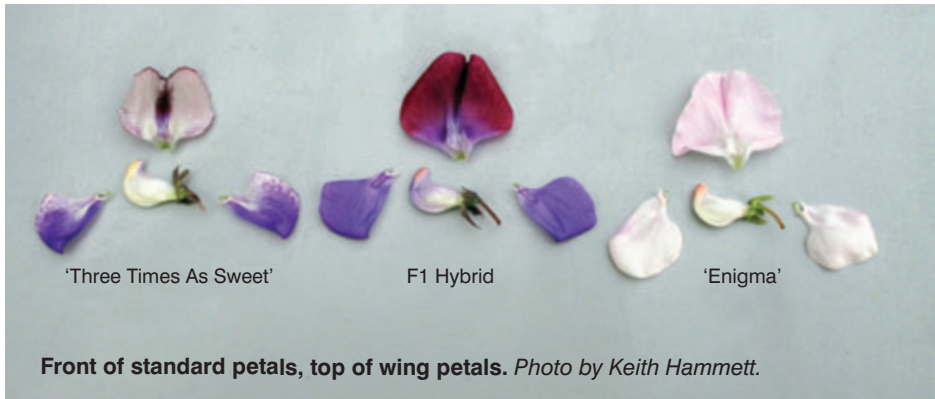
Quite a few years ago I pollinated 'Little Red Riding Hood' with pollen from *Lathyrus belinensis*. A single pod resulted containing a single seed. The plant that grew from that seed grew strongly and produced modest pink flowers with clamped keels and a strong distinctive scent. Surprisingly when the F2 generation flowered, all the plants were identical to those of the F1 generation. In subsequent generations, now around ten, plants have bred true, hence the cultivar name 'Enigma'.

Meanwhile, back in the UK, plant breeder extraordinaire, Charles Valin, at that time with the seed company Thompson and Morgan, pollinated the cultivar 'Matucana' with pollen from *L. belinensis*. His experience was similar to mine, namely a single pod with a single seed that produced a plant that bred true from the F1 generation onwards.



Two years ago, this cultivar was introduced in the form of young plants rather than seed, under the name 'Three Times As Sweet'. This is an excellent cultivar, which as the name suggests has a strong scent.

Beyond breeding true from the F1 generation onwards, the cultivar is exceptional as it has Unwin Stripe or Ripple colouration. As far as I am able to determine, the mutation that produced differential colours between the back and front of the standard petal and between the upper and lower surfaces of the wing petals was observed and secured only once. From his find, Charles Unwin produced and introduced a series of Unwin Stripes, also known as "Butterfly Hybrids" during the 1920s. Until 'Three Times As Sweet' was produced all Stripes and Ripples seem to have been derived from Charles



Unwin's original series.

Naturally, as soon as it was possible, I pollinated 'Three Times As Sweet' with pollen of 'Enigma' to observe the outcome of combining cultivars with a similar unusual background. [The reciprocal cross 'Enigma' x 'Three Times As Sweet' did not result in any seed].

This season, the F1 produced vigorous plants that grew taller than either parent at about 4 metres under cover. A good quantity of F2 seed has been harvested. As can be seen in the images, the F1 plants had a similar colour to the original wild *L. odoratus* and the cultivar 'Matucana', namely maroon standards and violet wings.

In our ongoing scent study, both 'Three Times As Sweet' and 'Enigma' were recorded as being highly scented, with differing individual scent profiles, as was the F1 hybrid. It will be interesting to see if the plants in the F2 vary from each other or are all alike, both

with regard to flower colour and scent.

In all research, one set of observations and answers stimulate further questions. What role is *L. belinensis* playing in the generation of 'Three Times As Sweet' and 'Enigma'? With these cultivars it is difficult to observe anything of *L. belinensis* either at the observable morphological or molecular levels.

With all earlier combinations between *L. belinensis* and *L. odoratus*, plants of the F1 generation have always been weak and unwilling to produce seed. It has been necessary to back cross to either *L. odoratus* or *L. belinensis* to make any progress.



Joshua Hall, expert sniffer, alongside the F1 hybrid between 'Three Times As Sweet' and 'Enigma' right, showing height of plants. Photo by Keith Hammett.



Study of a tendril. Photo by Andrew Fletcher.

SELECTION
SWEET
PEAS



In the large Sweet Pea house at Rogers Park
U.S.P. Examiner Fred W. Vanover



Pea house at Rogers Park

CARTERS LARGE-FLOWERED NAMED SWEET PEAS—Continued

- 1917 **HUNTERMAN**.—Award of Merit, 1917. Gold Medal, 1918, N.S.P.S. Rich shade of dusky violet, prominently variegated. Good garden variety. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1918 **INTERNATIONAL**.—Award of Merit, Holland National Sweet Pea Society, 1918. Long flower, deep magenta, long stems, incline a strong branch. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1919 **IVORY WHITE**.—Rich cream on ivory. The form and habit of the original. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1920 **JACK CORNWALL, V.C.**—Dark blue. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1921 **JACK MORRIS**.—Large heavily frilled double. Flushed pink on cream. Richly suffused. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1922 **JESSIE**.—Award of Merit, N.S.P.S. A bright rich pink on cream, fully frilled, long stems and long stems, most vigorous to grow. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1923 **NEW JUBILEE**.—The flowers, which are of giant size, double, beautifully frilled and waved, are of a vivid orange vermilion shade, and compact. Long stems and very vigorous. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1924 **JUMBO**.—A.M., N.S.P.S. and R.H.S. 1921. A.M., S.S.S.P.S., 1923. Deep cream with an outer coloring of cherry red. The flowers in bud, vigorous, and strictly beautiful. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1925 **KAMES**.—Pure white, beautifully waved. Flies in abundance and deliciously sweet. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1926 **NOVELTY, KING LAVENDER**.—A clear lavender, slightly lighter than Pineson. The vines are very robust. Flowers large and frequently five to stem. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1927 **LADDE**.—A shade of apricot cream pink that is distinctive from any existing variety. Similar culture with Companion Laddie, with perhaps just a shade more salmon when grown outside. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1928 **NOVELTY, LEADER**.—Award of Merit, R.H.S. and N.S.P.S., and 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1929 **NOVELTY, LEADER**.—A rich cream ground, less than any variety of fullness. Shade of salmon pink on a rich cream ground. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1930 **[GARTER] LAVENDER LADY**.—See page 130. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1931 **LEVATHIAN**.—A delightful shade of maroon, similar to that of Whistler, but much deeper. The duplex and triple standards are beautifully frilled and somewhat large stems. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1932 **[GARTER] LEMON QUEEN**.—See page 131. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1933 **[GARTER] LEMON QUEEN**.—First-class Certificate, without the slightest suggestion of yellow. The flowers are large, fully rounded, well placed on strong, magenta or purple. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1934 **LOCH LOMOND**.—First-class Certificate, without the slightest suggestion of yellow. The flowers are large, fully rounded, well placed on strong, magenta or purple. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1935 **LOVELINESS**.—S.S.S.P.S., 1923. Rich pink on a deep cream pink ground. The flowers are exceptionally large and frilled. The growth is vigorous and long stem. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1936 **NOVELTY, LOVELY LADY**.—Clear bluish pink. Large solid flowers with long stem. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1937 **LOUSTRE**.—A giant pea. Extra vigorous in growth and habit. The color is a delicate greenish blue. Suitable for garden and show. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1938 **MAGNET**.—A brilliant pink, very heavily suffused on a rich cream ground. A double of lavender color. Suitable for garden and show. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1939 **MAMMOTH**.—A intense orange-marlet of mammoth size and habit, this color is a remarkable color when cut. Award of Merit, N.S.P.S. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.

CARTERS LARGE-FLOWERED NAMED SWEET PEAS

1 Varieties which have slightly and require shading

Our list of Sweet Peas includes only the very best varieties, but we have underlined those varieties we specially recommend.

NOTE.—We have selected the best of other values' varieties for 1927, the seeds have been obtained direct from the raisers and have not been grown by us. In each case the raiser's own description or extracts therefrom have been used.

- 1940 **NOVELTY, ACHIEVEMENT**.—Standard rich shade of warm magenta and with shading of orange, wings bright crimson with suggestion of orange toward the apex. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1941 **ADONIS**.—Rich rose pink suffly shaded with salmon on cream ground. Large, vigorous, and very fine flowering. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1942 **ADMIRAL BEAUTY**.—Large navy blue bell. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1943 **AMBITION**.—Gold Medal, N.S.P.S., 1923. A giant showing like shade of remarkable color and of wonderful constitution. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1944 **AMETHYST**.—Clear amethyst blue; vigorous. Large waved flowers. Good garden pea. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1945 **AMY JOHNSON**.—A rich carter, heavily frilled rose. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1946 **ANGLO**.—Lightly flushed and varied rose on cream ground, rather deeper towards the edge of the petals. Large heavily frilled flowers, long stems. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1947 **NOVELTY, ARISTOCRAT**.—Gold Medal, N.S.P.S., 1923. Wings rich pink with delicate well rose coloring at base of petals. The flowers are of mammoth size. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1948 **ARCOT**.—A clear deep bright pink self, the flowers are of largest size, intensely colored and perfectly placed on long strong stems. Good garden variety. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1949 **AVALANCHE**.—Pure white, large well frilled and a strong ground. Good garden variety. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1950 **[GARTER] BALNORAL**.—Slightly commended R.H.S. and N.S.P.S., and 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1951 **BEATLE**.—Brilliant rich pink with suggestion of salmon rose, well placed on long stems. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1952 **BEAUTY**.—A large and vigorous bluish pink. Suitable for exhibition or garden. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1953 **BLACK DIAMOND**.—Large rich dark maroon, vigorous grower. For exhibition or garden. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1954 **BLUE BIRD**.—Very large, beautifully waved rich blue flowers, well placed on long stems. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1955 **NOVELTY, BLUE LAGOON**.—See page 132. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1956 **[GARTER] BLUE MOON**.—First-class Certificate, Scottish National Sweet Pea Society, 1925. One of the best blue ever raised. It is a real clear blue possessing an intensity of color, quite free from any reddish tinge. Very large flower. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.
- 1957 **BONNIE LARKS**.—Gold Medal Scottish National Sweet Pea Society, 1925. 10 seeds, 1/-.
- 1958 **BONNIE LARKS**.—Gold Medal Scottish National Sweet Pea Society, 1925. 10 seeds, 1/-.

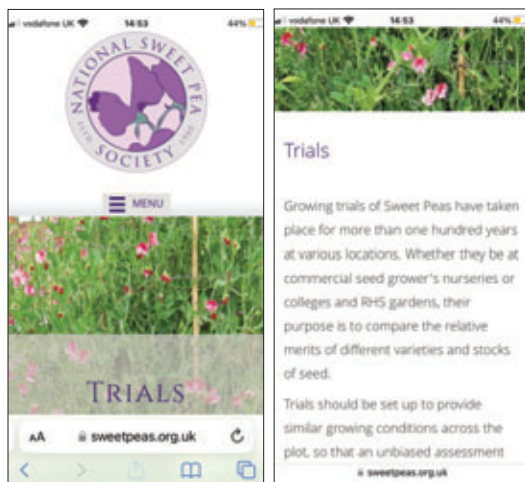


Phis CARLOTTA.—Award of Merit, N.S.P.S. and R.H.S. The Sweet Sweet Pea in this section. The color is a pure self and the flowers are of giant size. A wonderful pea for the exhibition table. Per pkt., 1/- and 1/2.

Introducing the New Website

By Alison Shreeve

It is with great pleasure that the Society updated its website this year. As technology moves forward, so the functionality of these sites changes and fashions change in their visual appearance too. This is our fourth version and we have had fantastic support from Bob Rishworth who managed the previous website for us. Now we welcome Jess Harvey who is going to help us out over the next few years.



The design was worked to a brief set up by a small group of committee members, the Chair, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Nicky Edwards. This was sent out to a number of companies for tender. We selected George Foster Design to complete the task. The visual impact of the site, we think, is very pleasing, with plenty of images of our lovely flowers. We have a dedicated members' area with resources available which we will add to as the need arises.

Following this new structure your committee agreed to have an online only membership, as all publications are now available on the website. This will hopefully enable more international members to join us and will be a more cost effective way for them to receive the publications. We hope students and young people will also think this is good value for money too.

Like all new technology projects, and this was no exception, we had a few teething problems fitting our existing membership structure into the renewal system. Some unexpected gremlins appeared too, but these have now been sorted out and we hope for plain sailing from now onwards! An additional facility has been Mailchimp, which allows us to email groups from the members' lists in the backend of the site. This will facilitate fast updates and messaging about shows and events and calls for help to man stands across the country. Please do take time to read these communications from the committee as your involvement in the Society is important to us.

We hope that you will continue to use the website to check for updates, new articles and to see what is happening across the UK in terms of shows and displays. If you would like to see anything else on the site please let us know.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who helped by sending information and photographs for the website. This includes highly expert members and most of the committee. Without them we wouldn't have the informative and beautiful site we have

A Poet Inspired...

By Jen and Lewis Morgan

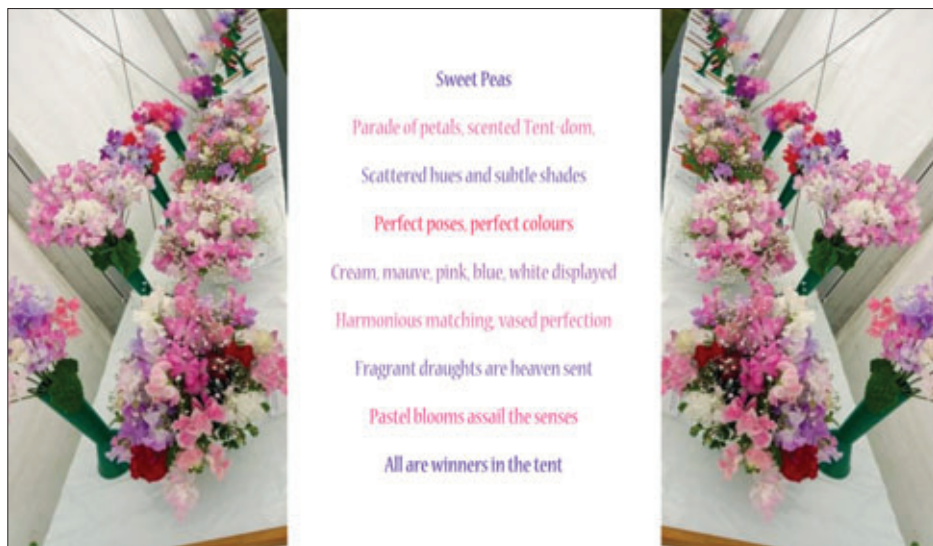
On the Monday of The Royal Welsh Show a lady approached us on the Society Stand and we had a very pleasant conversation about all things Sweet Peas. Her name was Clare Donnison and amongst many things Clare informed us that she wrote Poetry.

Clare was enchanted by the displays, the colours, and the fragrance.

As Clare wished us well and moved on to the rest of the Marquee Clare commented that she hoped she would gather some words to write about her visit.

Low and behold on the Tuesday morning an email popped up from Clare within which she kindly shared the Poem she had been inspired to write about her experience.

So we're pleased to be able to share this poem with you with Clare's blessing.



Clare can be found on Twitter - @DonnisonClare.

Showing Old-fashioned Varieties

By Roger Parsons

When choosing Spencer varieties for exhibition, new growers are often advised to start with the leading varieties in the show audits. The most popular varieties with other exhibitors are likely to be more successful for the newcomer. It is only with experience that new growers find which varieties do best from their own soil, microclimate and growing methods.

For people starting to show Old-fashioned varieties, the show audits might be less helpful in deciding which varieties to grow because there are so few entries, perhaps from just a few exhibitors at each show. I thought it might be more helpful to aggregate the audit results from National shows over the past ten years to see what emerges, taking account of more growers and different seasons. The results are as follows:



Old Fashioned show vases. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*

Variety	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour
Mrs Collier	12	11	6	7	36	Cream
Black Knight	12	9	8	7	36	Dark Maroon
Cupani	9	4	5	11	29	Maroon / Violet
Dorothy Eckford	7	6	4	7	24	White
America	7	7	1	1	16	Red Flake
Lord Nelson	7	4	0	5	16	Dark Navy Blue
Henry Eckford	8	4	0	2	14	Orange Scarlet
Miss Willmott	5	1	4	3	13	Orange / Pink
Painted Lady	1	2	3	7	13	Pink / White
Prince Edward of York	6	1	1	1	9	Red / Pink
Flora Norton	5	2	1	1	9	Pale Blue
Janet Scott	4	2	3	0	9	Light Pink
King Edward VII	1	3	2	2	8	Mid Red
Senator	1	2	3	1	7	Maroon / Violet Flake
Prima Donna	3	1	0	1	5	Light Pink
Unique	2	0	0	3	5	Blue Flake
Countess Cadogan	1	1	0	0	2	Violet / Light Blue
Purple Prince	1	1	0	0	2	Dark Maroon / Deep Violet
Bramdean	0	1	0	1	2	White
Mauve Queen	1	0	0	0	1	Mauve
Lady Grisel Hamilton	0	1	0	0	1	Lavender
Mrs Walter Wright	0	0	0	1	1	Purple
Queen Alexandra	0	0	0	1	1	Scarlet
Sicilian Pink	0	0	0	1	1	Pink Bicolour

We know that pale coloured Spencers are popular with exhibitors, being less prone to weather damage, so it should come as no surprise that 'Mrs Collier' and 'Dorothy Eckford' figure prominently. It is all the more interesting to see some very strong coloured varieties doing well in 'Black Knight', 'Lord Nelson' and 'Henry Eckford'. Perhaps people can't resist their gorgeous colours. 'Henry Eckford' is prone to bleaching in full sun but is well worth the extra effort of growing it with some shade. I wonder how many growers cover their blooms to bring out the rich velvet colours in 'Black Knight' and 'Lord Nelson', I know I do. But I also think that the petals are thicker and less prone to weather damage than a Spencer variety of the same colour.

In choosing varieties, the exhibitor of Old-fashioned varieties should be looking for an upright flat standard, good stem length and a tendency to produce four flowers per stem. Threes are more common but 'Queen Alexandra' is as likely to produce twos as threes. Hooded standards should not be penalised if characteristic of the variety but in my experience a flat standard is more likely to impress a judge. While most Old-fashioned varieties are consistent wherever the seeds come from, a few can be variable in the trade. 'Cupani' is one of these, depending on the seed supplier, which might



account for there being so many unplaced vases over the years. 'Queen of the Isles' has sometimes been sold as 'America' so I am wary that 'America' features so prominently in this audit. To my mind the true 'America' has small notched and hooded flowers so I would expect it to perform as poorly as 'Lady Grisel Hamilton' and 'Mrs Walter Wright', which are also hooded.



Although stem length is important, growers new to showing Old-fashioned varieties should be sure to avoid growing them as cordons. The plants will branch much more freely than Spencer varieties, so a profusion of blooms is achieved by growing the plants naturally and allowing all side shoots to develop. Stem length and flower number are achieved in a sheltered position on good soil. Anyone making the mistake of growing them as cordons, would find the flowers no bigger and too widely spaced on excessively long stems. Such blooms are coarse and inelegant, quite the opposite of what attracts people to this type (along with their fragrance).

When plants are in full bloom, a small clump grown naturally might provide many dozens of potential stems to cut for a show. I prefer to choose blooms carefully before cutting so as to avoid wasting time at the show sorting through a large number of unsuitable stems. If a class requires 12 stems per vase, then I will cut up to 20 stems to take to the show. These are selected for condition and form, stem length and straightness, number of flowers per stem: in fact all the aspects we know the judge will be looking for when assessing a vase. It is rare for a variety to produce sufficient fours for a vase so some threes are usual. When staging a vase, 12 stems are usually set up as rows of seven and five. It is important to finish staging with a balanced set of stems so sometimes one of my rows are all fours and the other all threes. I try to avoid mixing threes and fours in a row if possible, because this upsets the balance of the vase, but sometimes you just have to put up what you have got. Presentation considerations, such as matching left- and right-handed blooms apply as much as when staging Spencers.



Henry Eckford bowl of old fashioned.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

If you have not shown Old-fashioned varieties before, they are easier to grow than Spencers and fun to stage so are particularly valuable for people who cannot manage as many Spencers as they used to grow.

*“Gardening requires lots of water –
most of it in the form of perspiration.”*

Lou Erickson

End of Season Musings

By Keith Hammett

A week or so ago, at the end of a season from Hell, I looked up and noticed this last hurrah being put on by 'Maloy'.

As you know I greatly appreciate the aesthetic of Sweet Pea tendrils. Invariably here, the blooms of rogues end up in a vase with some of their leaves and tendrils. It caused me to reflect how our recreational activities reflect the overall zeitgeist of the Society and time in which we live. For millennia there seemed to be endless wilderness punctuated by a few pockets of civilisation. Gardens of the rich sought to demonstrate man's mastery of nature, The gardens at Versailles stretching kilometres into the countryside are the epitome of this. On a smaller scale topiary and the cult of the lawn are further examples of this mind set.

Now with climate change becoming undeniable and the realisation that mankind has all but destroyed the world, there has been a sea change in paradigm. The show gardens at the Chelsea Flower Show and the gardens attempting to mimic those of Piet Oudolf reflect this desire to return to nature before it is lost.

I have for long thought that competitive shows as we have known them, are not so much about the flower, but more about how well competitors are able grow blooms to match predetermined judging standards. Only cultivars that have the ability to match show standards are grown, in much the same way that race horses and greyhounds are only valued vis a vis their ability to win races. From a breeding point of view, if the aim of breeders is only to produce cultivars that can match show standards, they are unconsciously in a developmental cul de sac. For both Dahlias and Sweet Peas, cultivars that were available 50 years ago closely matched the show standards. In reality the most that exhibitor breeders can hope to do is to produce lookalikes that can replace older cultivars as they inevitably deteriorate. Seldom are the aims and consequences of show standards and show schedules questioned? How useful are Sweet Peas with long ramrod straight stems in a floral arrangement? How many people have gardens large enough to stage 12 vases, each containing 15 stems, in a single class? Let alone the time and dedication.

It is refreshing to see that the presentation of blooms in the various National Sweet Pea Society display stands, mounted in some of the larger British shows, has gone beyond the obligatory fans and mounds of yesteryear. We need to constantly question what we are doing as a specialist society and its relevance in a constantly changing world, if we are to continue to exist. Congratulations on the innovations made to recent show schedules, a world away from when I first joined in the early 1960s. May they prove successful.

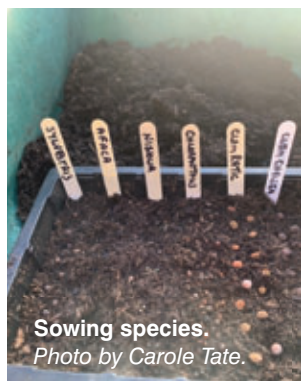


'Maloy'. Photo by Keith Hammett.

Growing and Showing *Lathyrus* Species

By *Carole Tate*

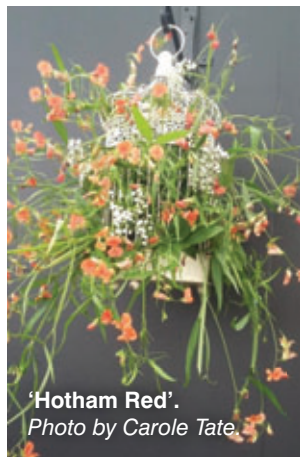
I first came across the delightful small reddish orange 'Hotham Red' in a bridesmaid basket display at a local flower show. I was absolutely fascinated by how delicate it was, with beautiful red markings on the flowers and the tiny leaves and tendrils. I was hooked and purchased seeds from the NSPS display stand, not just this, but a variety of colours and species. I sought help and advice



Sowing species.

Photo by Carole Tate.

on how to grow from my friend, Tom Atherton, who lived nearby, not realising he was one of the country's best growers and regularly won the species class at the National Shows.



'Hotham Red'.

Photo by Carole Tate.

I was pleased to find that I could grow the species in large 40 litre tubs as my mature garden had little room, so late January saw me sowing the several different varieties of species seeds in a half sized seed tray along with a tray of Spencers. These went into the propagator, and 2/3

weeks later some shoots started popping up. I potted them on into root trainers, carefully adding labels as I went and moved them into the cold greenhouse. I realised that different species germinated at different times, some taking 4/5 weeks to germinate, so I popped the seed tray back into the propagator and was rewarded with more shoots which I could pot on.

Species benefit from nipping out the same as the Spencer seedlings, though the timing was a bit hit and miss as there were lots more small leaves with the species so the rule of thumb "two sets of leaves then nip off" did not apply, but trimming back leggy growth after 2/3 weeks saw the seedlings putting on side shoots.



Lathyrus Tingitanus 'Roseus'.

Photo by Caroline Ball.

In early April I prepared the tubs for the hardened off species seedlings. I put a couple of inches of stones in the bottom for drainage and to prevent them being blown over then filled with a mix of general purpose potting compost, a good spadeful of well rotted horse manure and a sprinkle of blood, fish and bone. Chicken pellets and slow release



Lathyrus Sativus 'Azureus'.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

granules also work. I planted the seedlings around the edge of the pot, six or eight to a tub, keeping the varieties separate as they grow to different heights. The *Tingitanus* is a vigorous climber that can reach 3 meters high with 2 or 3 bright purple flowers per stem. *Roseus* is a pale pink version, both the size of a thumb nail. Mine grow happily in a fan shape fastened to the garage wall. *L Annuus* (yellow) and 'Mrs R Penny' (orange) along with 'Hotham Red' grow a couple of feet high then start to flower. As they are small flowers the stem containing the flowers needs to be cut for arranging. New shoots form from below the cut giving a succession of flowers, attaining a height of 1.5 meters. Removing seed pods will keep them flowering.

L Sativus (common name Chickling Pea) can be widely found on North Africa and Southern Europe. Similar to the *Annuus*, it is ideal for tub growing. The variety *Albus* is white and *Azureus* is a gorgeous bright blue. Seeds of *Azureus* were found in Tutankhamun's tomb where they were placed as fodder crops for the animals in the after life!

L Clymenum (Spanish Pea) *Articulatus* is a cute red and white bi-colour with thin leaves whilst the variety *Chelsea* is a plain mauve/ pink. It grows slightly taller than *Annuus* and *Sativus* but still great in tubs.

L Chloranthus makes up the rainbow of colours with the variety *Lemonade* which has bright greenish-yellow flowers. It can attain a height of 2 metres with light green leaves then practically overnight bursts into flower, 2/3 per stem.

All these species are annuals and by no means a complete catalogue of *Lathyrus* species which also includes many perennials.

As they start to grow in the tubs the species do need support. I place 6 bamboo canes around the inside of



Container growing of species.
Photo by Carole Tate.

the tub with a thin metal hoop fastened with florist tape near the top. This creates a cylinder shape which I then spiral twine from bottom to top about 6 inches apart. The seedlings put out tendrils and will happily climb up the middle. Tucking in now and again to keep them contained is helpful as they do their best to escape and mingle with nearby plants.



Mixed species.
Photo by Carole Tate.

Remember to water regularly. If you are lucky the plants will start to flower in time for the National and local shows. De-podding or cutting back can delay flowering. If space allows you can do a succession of planting. Local weather conditions can foul the best laid plans!

When it comes to exhibiting, cut the flowers with the haulm attached the day before the show and stand in cold water overnight. To highlight the beauty of the flowers trim off excess foliage and ensure seeds, dead and dying flowers are removed. The varieties can be displayed individually or mixed. Check the schedule to see if it is a bowl/saucer and if it is with own foliage. The small flowers are excellent for the decorative classes where they can be mixed with Spencer and other *odoratus* to create wonderful displays. Petite arrangements, buttonholes, and classes allowing any *Lathyrus* species can be enhanced by using these delicate colourful gems. Let your imagination run and you may find you not only win at the Show but you will also end up loving these flowers just as much as I do.

Good luck with your growing and your enjoyment of these stunning little flowers.

Showing a Basket

By Alison Shreeve (with comments by Caroline Ball)

At the Early National at Wisley last year I had the pleasure of being one of the stewards accompanying the floral art judge for the decorative classes. It is always illuminating being a steward, you learn such a lot. In this particular case I had some exhibits in the categories she was judging. It is even more pertinent to hear criticism when it relates to your own efforts, so I thought it might be worth sharing some of the comments regarding exhibiting a basket of Sweet Peas.

If you have some experience and training in floral art it is a big help, and if you haven't it is a bit daunting entering the decorative classes, but you should not be deterred. It is very satisfying however, when you learn through experience and have a go, so I would recommend it to anyone who is showing to look at these classes where a few rules and

a bit of advice can point you in the right direction. I am calling on Caroline Ball's knowledge and experience here to help provide some pointers for this article.

When I put together my basket on Friday night I was so pleased with the amount and quality of the blooms I had left that I joyfully used a lot of them to fill the basket! This however, proved my downfall. When the judge came to look she said it had been 'stuffed'...who knew you could have too many Sweet Peas in a basket?!

So a few guidelines to help with decorative baskets. The obvious one is that you need to be able to lift the basket by the handle when you have finished, so your flowers and foliage should be kept clear of the handle. There are many ways to design your arrangement, the most obvious is a symmetrical one.

The floral art judge did say though that it would be much more imaginative to have something flowing and asymmetrical and this requires a bit more skill and forethought. A basic asymmetric design could be in the form of an asymmetric triangle. More challenging would be the so called Hogarth curve which might be adapted to follow the shape of the basket handle, or a crescent shape that would work very well with a basket.

Colour – a colour palette is always helpful to have in mind. Foliage comes in all shades of green from silver to nearly black and even red and purple. Look at your blooms and decide whether you are going to have a harmony of lilacs and mauves for example or contrasting colours such as mauve and orange. What is the best foliage to use for this palette? Something which contrasts and shows up the blooms or something which blends them into the background?



Floral arrangement.
Photo by Alison Shreeve.



Asymmetric arrangement that can be adapted for a basket.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

Assembly

You will need a small container for water such as a plastic fruit container which you can cut down a bit at the front if necessary. Floral foam (not Oasis unless specifically allowed) or scrunched up chicken wire are good for holding the arrangement in place.



Start with your background foliage and small flowers like Gypsophila or Alchemilla Mollis if the schedule allows them. Arrange these according to your planned design so that the blooms will sit against the framework filling the basket shape. Foliage should vary in form, colour, size and texture to maximise interest in your arrangement, whilst also remembering your *lathyrus* should be taking centre stage. Ideas for foliage to use as a background includes ferns, grasses, pittosporum, purple sage, thalictrum, jasmine, hostas, ivy, heuchera, eucalyptus and myrtle. Make sure that you have conditioned your foliage well before using it in your arrangements. This means give it a good soak, Caroline swears by submerging hers in a large flat container or bath for 12 hours before the show. Not only does this ensure the foliage is nice and turgid it also makes sure it is

clean. Then add your Sweet Peas. Think about the colour and how it repeats across the arrangement and how your eye follows the colour of the flowers through the design. These lines should flow through the arrangement providing movement and rhythm.

There should also be space around the blooms so that they are set off to their best advantage, not stuffed and crammed into the basket! Think of it as each of the blooms having air to breathe around them. Sometimes a show schedule will give you a limit to the number of blooms you can use in a basket and this can be helpful, but you will also need to balance where they are placed so that you don't leave too large a gap between them. Never be afraid to trim down your stems. An arrangement really should comprise flowers on different lengths of stem to create an overall pleasing effect.

Check that you don't have any of the mechanics showing (wire, foam, pins) and if necessary, add a little foliage to cover these. However, knowing when to stop is an art – remember the maxim that 'More is Less' and stop before you add them because you have them to hand. Not an easy task of course! Do have a go and good luck!

Floral Art Competitions at National Shows

By Mary McDonald



Jim and Mary McDonald staging at Wisley. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*

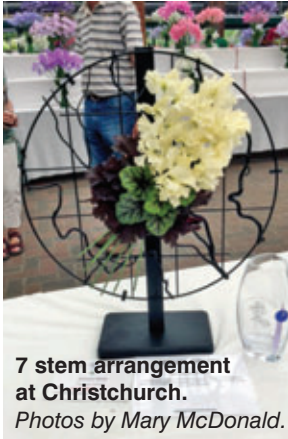
I may give the impression to competitors and visitors that I wish to cause controversy in the Floral Art classes at the National Show. This is not my intention but I do want to promote discussion.

In recent years the NSPS Schedule Committee have introduced new and, may I say more interesting competitions. When I started competing the Floral Art classes consisted mostly of bowls of Sweet Peas. Now we have a mini pedestal, a large pedestal, a basket, an arrangement using driftwood and an arrangement using seven stems of Sweet Peas with any foliage.

Several years ago I did an arrangement



Sydenham Class at Wisley. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*



**7 stem arrangement
at Christchurch.**

Photos by Mary McDonald.

using seven stems on a circular structure which caused much criticism, but the judge approved and gave me Best Arrangement in the section. At the National Show at Wisley last year the RHS banned all floral foam so we had to find ways of displaying our Sweet Peas using other mechanics. Jim made me a frame covered in copper wire and onto this I attached seven orchid tubes and also decorated the wire with two strings of beads to compliment the flowers. Into the tubes I placed one stem and some delicate foliage. I think the judge liked the idea but I was disqualified because she said the beads were an accessory and according to the Schedule this was not allowed. I am not quite sure whether I agreed with her as I felt the beads were part of the structure but the judge's decision is final. It is interesting to note that at this year's Shows accessories are now allowed. Well done Schedule Committee for continuing to introduce new and challenging competitions.



**7 stem arrangement
at Wisley 2022.**

Photos by Mary McDonald.

The Changes We Have Made

By Phil Kerton



**Kerton's gold medal winning
stand at Bath and West Show.**

Photo by Caroline Ball.

In the past we always used well rotted farmyard manure on our plot. However, due to the weather our source had a problem with a build up of cow manure slurry. So to help out, we had the plot covered with slurry when planting out. We then planted down through the slurry, the plot was left, then rotavated when we started to pick seed. We have used this method for the last 5 years and found it worked well this year as the season was the driest we have ever had.



Lathyrus grandiflorus. Photo by Caroline Ball.

End of an Era

By Andy Hubbuck

Having reached the ripe old age of 80, I have decided to cut down on my growing and showing. I have shown at National level for 40 years and enjoyed every moment, and met loads of lovely people who we now call friends. I learnt my growing and showing from old guys like Alec Cave, Tom Cordy, John Pratt and many others. It is so nice to reminisce about old times with old friends.

My first show under the NSPS banner was at the 1982 Provincial at Wakefield. On arrival, seeing a mass of quality blooms we were tempted to run away, but we were encouraged by Charlie Hanmer from Doncaster, and were made very welcome. I even managed to win a first and two third prizes. I treasured the cheque for £3.50 prize money! We have amassed a lovely collection of cut glass trophies over the years.



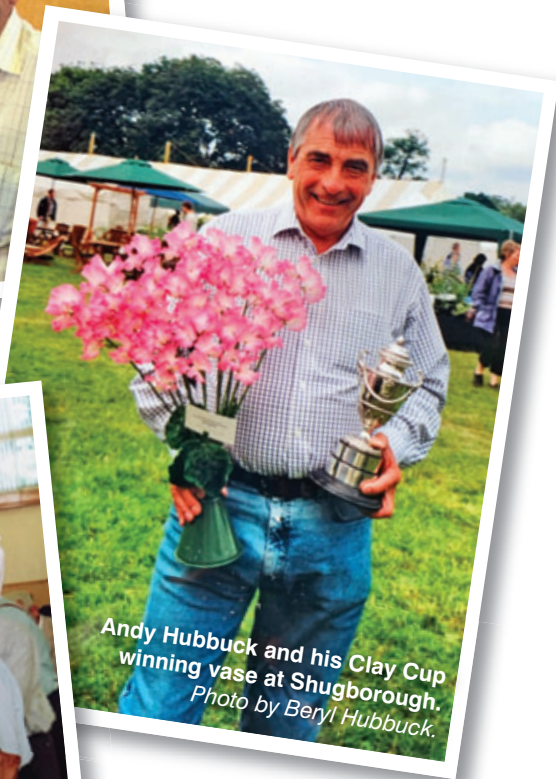
As time went by I endeavoured to grow for the Daily Mail class, and over my 40 years exhibiting I managed to enter five times, winning twice and receiving three third place prizes. My other achievement was to win the Clay Cup four times, of which I am very proud. But all good things do come to an end and I feel I can no longer do the long journeys and sleepless nights, so to that end will no longer exhibit at NSPS shows.

In these difficult times I am sure our Society will continue to thrive and hope we can encourage young growers to support what is known as 'the friendly society'.

Good luck and best wishes to you all in the forthcoming shows.



Andy and Beryl with some of their prizes.



Andy Hubbuck and his Clay Cup winning vase at Shugborough.
Photo by Beryl Hubbuck.



Andy after one of his Daily Mail wins.



Andy Hubbuck and College Prize winning vase at Lyndhurst.
Photo by Beryl Hubbuck.

Everlasting Peas

By Roger Parsons

After Sweet Peas, the most popular and widely grown *Lathyrus* species is the Everlasting Pea, *Lathyrus latifolius*. Reading the excellent and beautifully illustrated article by Caroline Ball on this species in last year's Sweet Pea Annual set me thinking about the diversity of colours and form within the species.¹ This species really deserves to be more widely grown, providing stems suitable for cutting from mid-Summer till late Autumn. The blooms have thick petals to resist rain damage and the species has been grown as a commercial cut flower crop from time to time. I have never found it fragrant but there have been reports of people detecting a faint perfume.

Caroline told us how she had grown the typical magenta variety and a white variety for many years, but the pink variety had eluded her until it arose spontaneously in her garden. This seems to mirror the historical evolution of colours within the species. Magenta was introduced first, then we have white, followed later by pink, perhaps as a cross between the first two.

Evolution of colours

The typical species is a native of central Europe but has become widely distributed around the world and is considered to be invasive in some places. We don't know exactly when it was introduced into cultivation but it has been reported to be the 16th century. Gerard's Herbal of 1597 includes *Lathyrus major latifolius* commonly known as the "Pease Everlasting" but the illustration in a 1636 revision suggests this is the Narrow-leaved Everlasting Pea, *Lathyrus sylvestris*. *L. sylvestris* is not otherwise listed by Gerard even though it is native to the UK.² Sylvia Norton reported it being correctly listed by John Tradescant, the Younger, in his "Museum Tradescantianum" of 1656 and thought the Tradescants may have introduced it in the 17th century.³

The typical species has what Caroline and I call magenta flowers though these have more purple in them than the Sweet Peas classified as magenta. Some people describe them as purple but that too means different things to different people. Whenever it was introduced, it first appears in seed and nursery catalogues without any variation in flower colour. The earliest reference to a white variety that I have found is in Carters' 1843 seed catalogue where both *Lathyrus latifolius* and *L. latifolius albus* are listed. I have not seen the pink listed before the 1897 seed catalogue from Peter Henderson & Co. of New York, which lists:

Lathyrus latifolius white

Lathyrus latifolius red

Lathyrus latifolius rosea carnea (delicata)

These days, the three colours are sold in the UK as 'Red Pearl', 'White Pearl' and 'Pink Pearl'. 'White Pearl' is first seen in the 1910 Henderson catalogue alongside white, red and 'Delicata'. Selling this in addition to "white" suggests it was a superior selection and it sold at 15 cents per packet instead of 10 cents for the other three. When we established the *Lathyrus* Garden at Hotham Park, Bognor Regis, some 30 years ago, we planted a considerable number of Everlasting Peas from a variety of sources and I was surprised by just how much variation there was in petal size, number of flowers per stem (raceme) and earliness / lateness of flowering. Around that time, Ray Appleby used to exhibit magenta *L. latifolius* at our shows and his blooms were earlier and always had more flowers and larger petals than anyone else's. The problem with selecting and naming superior forms is that those superior qualities need to become fixed in order for them to breed true from seed. Commercially, this is more work than the crop is worth. Seeds saved from such plants will be variable and before long the superior characteristics are lost. The RHS still lists both 'Albus' and 'White Pearl' as AGM plants even though they have become indistinguishable. A problem for the RHS is that 'Albus' was named first so is the valid name but all the white *L. latifolius* now in commerce are sold as 'White Pearl'.

Does this mean that only three colours can be found in Everlasting Peas? There is in fact more variation than that because the basic colours can be varied by modifying genes. Some examples of this are known so it is worth considering what has been named and the extent of such colour variation.

Magenta

Usually sold as 'Red Pearl', I am aware of two variations around this theme. In Autumn 1998, Robert Bolton & Sons introduced 'Wendy's Joy' and I have maintained it. To my eye, it is more mauve than magenta. Another way to describe it might be less purple than the type. The second variation is an un-named plant sent to me by Steven Marsland when at Easton Walled Gardens which needs further consideration but may have more blue in it than 'Red Pearl'. It also has narrower leaflets than other forms. Some botanists consider broad-leaved *L. latifolius* and narrow-leaved *L. sylvestris* to be a single species while others consider both to be a group with *L. heterophyllus*.



***Latifolius* 'Wendy's Joy'**
Photo by Roger Parsons.



***Latifolius*. 'White Pearl'**
Photo by Keith Hammett.



***Latifolius* white (hooded white seen at a Lakeland show)**
Photo by Roger Parsons.



***Latifolius* 'Blushing Bride'.**
Photo by Roger Parsons.



***L Latifolius* 'Appleblossom'.**
Photo by Richard Roslyn.

White

It would be easy to think that white is white, but I recall seeing a bowl of white *L. latifolius* at one of the Lakeland shows many years ago that had a faint greenish tinge to it. The flowers were slightly smaller than we usually see and the standards very hooded so, at the time, I thought it much less attractive than 'White Pearl'.

Pink

Usually sold as 'Pink Pearl', there have been many other names given to pink *L. latifolius*. This name is invalid because a Sweet Pea 'Pink Pearl' was first introduced by Unwins in 1905. Until recently, most of the world's latifolius seed was distributed by Jelitto from Germany under the names 'Rote Perle', 'Weisse Perle' and 'Rosa Perle'. A valid name is required for an AGM plant so 'Rosa Perle' is the accepted name.

The RHS Floral Committee considered two Everlasting Peas on 27 July 1897. 'Pink Beauty' was sent by Hurst & Son in 1897. It was described as "deeper in colour than the pink-striped 'Delicata', which the Committee certificated some years ago". 'Her Majesty' was sent by W J Stokes & Son of Hilperton, Trowbridge, and was regarded as identical to 'Delicata'.⁴

When I first started collecting *Lathyrus* species, just over 30 years ago, the pink variety being distributed among NSPS members was named 'Appleblossom'. I lost my original plant when moving house in 2000 but still have seeds from it. A picture of it appears on the front cover of the 2004 Annual. The name is invalid because Eckfords introduced a Sweet Pea named 'Apple Blossom' in 1888.

John and Gwen Bishop collected a stock of a pink variety that was spotted growing on an embankment of the M40 not long after its construction. John clocked the location and went back later to collect seeds, wading around fields to avoid parking on the motorway. The colour was different to 'Appleblossom'. I thought John wrote about this in an Annual but have been unable to find it. Peter Grayson introduced 'Bishop's Pink' in 1998 and I still have a few seeds of this.

Around the same time, a pale pink plant was spotted by John Metcalf which he distributed as 'Blushing Bride'. Again, the name is invalid having been used for a Sweet Pea introduced by Joseph Breck & Co of Boston, Massachusetts in 1891. Graham Rice very kindly sent me seeds of this so I grew 'Blushing Bride' and 'Pink Pearl' alongside each other in 2022 and the two are distinct. 'Blushing Bride' is paler than 'Pink Pearl' so might be similar to 'Delicata' being paler than 'Pink Beauty'.

Further Trials needed

Pink varieties have arisen in recent years both with Caroline Ball and with our chairman, Alison Shreeve. I saw Alison's variety exhibited at the 2022 Chiltern Show and it looked close to 'Blushing Bride' but I would hesitate to say they are identical. Both Caroline and Alison have kindly sent me seeds of their plants so I would like to make space to do a proper trial of all pink varieties to assess variation and help determine which names have priority. In fact, over the years, I have received seeds of *L. latifolius* varieties from around the world but trialling them has not been a priority so they just sit in the seedbank awaiting their moment. Graham Rice has recently sent one he reports as being bicoloured, gleaned from another garden in his village, so I really should try to make more time and space for exploring further the diversity of colour and identifying superior plants of existing colours. If anyone thinks they have other varieties or can add anything to this report, then I would be delighted to hear from them.

References

- ¹ C Ball 2022 In praise of *Lathyrus latifolius*. Sweet Pea Annual :111-2
- ² G Kenicer & R Parsons 2021. *Lathyrus*: the complete guide. :22. RHS
- ³ G Kenicer & S Norton 2008. *Lathyrus latifolius*. Bot.Mag. 25(4):325-332 Wiley-Blackwell
- ⁴ Gardeners Chronicle 1897 ser.3 22:77

*“A flower does not think of competing
with the flower next to it. It just blooms.”*

Zen Shin

Displays

By Caroline Ball

The Society has been staging displays for as long as I can remember at shows both big and small. They are a great way for the Society to get out to different places to promote Sweet Peas and other *lathyrus* species as well as providing a means of education about these wonderful flowers, to raise money for the Society from the sale of blooms and seed, from winning prizes for the displays and of course recruiting new members. The gold medal winning stand at RHS Tatton for example generated an amazing £650 in prize money alone. The displays can also provide the opportunity for assessing potential new National venues.

This year the Society is planning to stage displays at a number of non-NSPS shows some of which are detailed below:

Date	Venue
10 June	Windsor Flower Show
17 - 18 June	RHS Wisley Plant Societies Show
23 - 25 June	Blenheim Flower Show
16 July	Westmoreland Show
16 - 23 July	RHS Tatton Show
24 - 27 July	Royal Welsh Show
5 August	Garstang Show
12 August	Disley & Lyme Show
17 -20 August	Southport Flower Show
26 August	Poynton Show

Displays may also be included within the following:

1 - 2 July	NSPS Early National at Shepperton
8 - 9 July	NSPS Late National at Bridgewater
15 - 16 July	Eckford Society Show at Wem
28 - 30 July	NW Regional Show at Chorley

Support is needed to create and run these displays. This might be donations of flowers, helping to create the display, manning the display throughout the duration of the shows which entails talking to the public about the flowers, their cultivation and the benefits of joining the Society, breaking down the display at the end of the show. In return you can be ensured of a fun if busy day with like-minded people and the opportunity to look around the show for free. You don't need to be an expert to help, there will be others to support you should you get stuck. We can't do the displays without help, if you can please contact me, Carole Tate or Julia Beardmore (contact details at the front of the Annual).

Observations from the Membership Bureau at the Early Show

By Julia Beardmore

The early show at RHS Wisley looked stunning, it was a lovely venue for the Society's early show. Looking after the Bureau stand is a great place to be to meet many of our members who visit the early show, and also the public who are RHS Members or visiting the gardens. Many of the RHS Members visiting do so because a Plant Society is holding an event, they have a real interest in our flowers. They were looking to attend the talks being given and visit to the Trials Garden.



Julia Beardmore breaking down the show. Photo by Caroline Ball.

Some of our Members asked questions about showing, and would maybe like to dip their toe in the water. My advice was to talk to the Show Manager beforehand and seek help from your District Reps. At the show other exhibitors will be happy to give guidance. Most of all read the regulations in the Exhibition book and the Judges rule book. We need more exhibitors, just remember the top showmen started off somewhere. Please have a go.

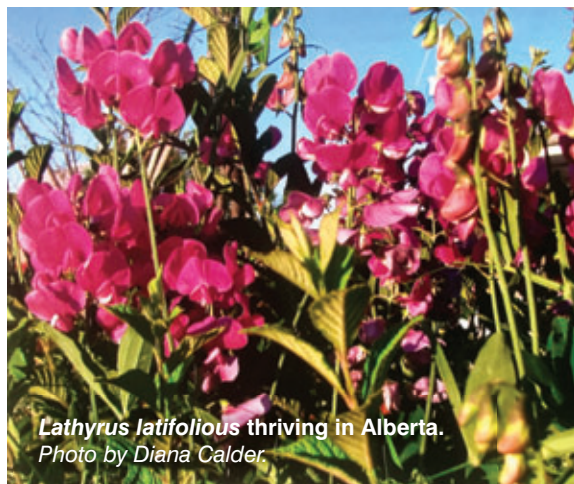
Other Members asked about other growers opening their gardens, or are there local meetings. It would be great if you have a Sweet Pea garden and would like to share or could possibly have a small group of people you could give guidance to, this could be growing, layering, showing etc. Please let any of the Committee know, then we can share it on the website, even if you are passing in your knowledge to one person, it's worth doing.

Here In the North West we have workshops for both members and potential members alike. We start with Seed sowing, pricking out, soil structure, planting, layering, finally how to arrange your blooms for showing. I know there are other pockets of events through the country.

Notes from Southern Alberta

By *Diana Calder*

As I write these notes, it is mid January 2023, and after a brutal spell of bitter cold right before Christmas, when it went down to -50° it is now mild and sometimes actually sunny and only -5° . The ground is still frozen and the patches of ice are very nasty, the only way to safely navigate outside it's to walk like a penguin to stay upright.



Lathyrus latifolius thriving in Alberta.
Photo by Diana Calder.

Last year was quite a challenge. I had so many Sweet Pea seeds on hand that it really seemed opening the greenhouse had to be done, even if I felt like a wet piece of paper towel. I had come out of hospital mid January after having a chunk of my insides removed, and with good news - there was no plans for radiation or chemo. I had hopes of having more energy as the days got longer, even as I was struggling to get stronger.

March began very cold. It was impossible to heat the little greenhouse to even vaguely bearable conditions. The pots of Sweet Peas in the cold room in the house, just had to put up with it. Finally, by the end of the month, it warmed up and they went very happily out, and we're doing nicely. On April 9 I did a Sweet Pea talk in Calgary and it was well attended and a lot of fun. It left me completely exhausted. I think it took about a week for me to recover but did make me wonder if opening the greenhouse for the season was really the best move, after all, but it was too late to do anything about that then.

Mother's Day in May, came a bit early in the month, but sales were very good, and everyone promised to protect their plants until it was safe to put them



Perennial *L. subandinus*.
Photo by Diana Calder.

out. This was a good thing as we got a very hard frost on the 22nd. Then it warmed nicely 'til there was another blast on the 31st. Luckily I had delayed, putting my Sweet Peas outside in place, only because I didn't have the energy required.

June, usually our wettest month, was true to form. Cold drenching rain went on and on. Sales slowed to a mere trickle, and I tried to catch a break and watched a lot of horseracing on the TV. I sold off the hens, which was sad, and the property was listed for sale. By July it was hot and dry, my customers let me know that their Peas were doing very well. They were asking me not to stop selling Sweet Pea plants, which was very nice of them, but it really was getting to be too much. We had the most fantastic Sweet Peas Challenge, our little show in Pincher Creek in July, and I hope the enthusiasm shown continues, and I have inspired more growing of Sweet Peas in Southern Alberta, which was the original idea behind it.



Sweet Pea Challenge.
Photo by Diana Calder.



Pow Wow Dancers.
Photo by Diana Calder.



Sweet Pea Challenge 2022.
Photo by Diana Calder.



'Gilly Nora'.
Photo by Diana Calder.



Sweet Pea Challenge Prizes 2022.
Photo by Diana Calder.



'Miss Wilmott'
Photo by Diana Calder.

**Diana Calder and Sky moving
 cattle on Waldron Ranch.**



In the fall, which was quite glorious last year, and went on and on, Sky, my grey horse, and I got to move cows up in the Porcupine Hills for several wonderful days. It was as close as we got to a Summer as we prepared for the move to town, Sky to a boarding ranch to the south and me and the cat are now settled in a little matchbox of a house in Fort McLeod, half an hour east of Pincher Creek, that is cosy and warm and life is much easier. I will still grow some Sweet Peas for friends and myself, and hope my plans for a new greenhouse go to plan. Many thanks to all the support from everyone in the help generously given to my Sweet Pea endeavours, I am so lucky to have been able to do this.

Best wishes to all for 2023 and happy growing and showing.

It's all in the Preparation

By Darren Myers

For me, ground preparation is possibly the single most important aspect of growing.

Like many plants, Sweet Peas have their own parameters in which they do best, whether that be for exhibition or for garden decoration. Understanding their requirements and what your plot provides is essential to growing the best that you can. I have seen excellent plants, when planted out, not materialise into anything due to poorly prepared ground. Conversely, I have seen poor plants flourish in well prepared ground.

It was common practice 50-100 years ago that growers would dig down several feet to cultivate their Sweet Pea trenches. Double digging took over as the preferred method as we moved into the latter stages of the 20th Century. Now, few growers go no deeper than a spit deep. Have we become lazy or was all that work in yesteryear all unnecessary?

Charles Unwin wrote in his book 'Sweet Peas Their History Development and Culture' first published in 1926, when referring to the incorporation of manure, '*What is the best animal manure? This depends on soil type: for preference, a good rich horse or pig manure for heavy soil, and cow or sheep manure for lighter. A mixture of blood, pieces of flesh, and manure from a slaughter house, if well rotted, is excellent*'. The incorporation of flesh into our Sweet Pea beds may now be frowned upon but manure, albeit general farmyard, is still used widely.

I however no longer use manure. Firstly, and I must stress, that if you have a trusted source of manure then there is no need to discontinue using it, and I am in some ways rather jealous of those who have such a source. But I know a growing number who have used manure in recent years, that has unknowingly contained residues of herbicide in the straw and has ruined their Sweet Pea beds and it has been around 3 years before they are able to grow anything of note again.

Although I am unable to categorically prove this, I believe that I may have had some infected manure previously. Therefore, as a precaution, I now do not use manure in the preparation of my ground. Instead, I use the content the compost bin along with the compost from the numerous pots and containers that we have during the summer. I also grow tomatoes and cucumbers in bags and pots, and this also gets added to my ground.

I will double dig my plot every 3 years, but in the intervening years I will merely rotavate the above-mentioned material into my plot. Whilst I have had a fair amount of success with doing this in early spring, I much prefer and have found I have better results if this is done in the Autumn. Working full time, and the weather, can restrict my attempts to weekends and therefore I do it as and when I am able.



Several years ago, I asked for a soil testing kit as a birthday present. The kit itself tests pH along with NPK levels. Whilst it doesn't provide trace element levels, it has proven to be an invaluable piece of kit, and possibly one of the best investments I have made in growing Sweet Peas

Whilst the kit itself cannot be described as accurate as when compared to a professional soil test, it nonetheless provides me with an invaluable understanding of what is happening with my soil.

It is widely noted that Sweet Peas will do well in soils with a pH between 6.5 and 7.5. Should your soil be outside of those parameters then the vital trace elements will become 'locked up', making them inaccessible to the Sweet Pea.

For my plot, I have found a narrow window of between 6.8 and 7.2 works well for me. Should my land become more acidic, then I will apply garden lime. This not only provides vital calcium to aid cell formation, but will add alkalinity. You will need to allow at least 6 weeks from applying the lime before you plant, due to its slow reaction time.

Conversely, if my soil has a high pH, then I would use sulphur chips in the preceding Autumn if I needed to make bigger changes in pH. However, this has never been necessary and instead I merely need to make slight changes to lower the pH by using either Iron or Ammonium Sulphate 2-4 weeks prior to planting.

I will then next test for Nitrogen levels. I have found that higher levels of Nitrogen in the soil, whilst provide a little more longevity to my plants, compromised quality and for exhibition purposes will produce a course (thicker) flower stem, and gappy blooms whilst the leaves will be a darker green and produce a form that resembles a savoy cabbage leaf.

It is worth noting that Sweet Peas are a legume, and as such have the ability to fix their own Nitrogen. I therefore aim to have a low level of Nitrogen in my soil, and should my plants need a little kick, then I will apply a light application of Hoof and Horn, a slow release high Nitrogen fertiliser, to my rows when I first layer in mid June.

Should your soil be low in Phosphates the likelihood is that your plants will produce weak growth. Similarly you may experience similar if Phosphate levels are too high. So I therefore conduct several tests across the entire bed to establish where there may any potential issues. If, Phosphate levels are too low, then I will apply bonemeal. If the Phosphate levels are too high, then I will revert to using straight fertilisers and avoid using one that is high in Phosphate.

Finally, I will then test for Potassium, or Potash levels. If those levels are low then I will add Potash to my plot. I like my Potash levels medium to high, as this will aid both root and flower production. However, I like to avoid it being too high as this can disrupt the uptake of other nutrients, and in severe cases, the plants can become deficient of vital nutrients.

Other fertilisers that I may use, depending upon the results of my soil test, will include chicken manure pellets and fish blood and bone as a base fertiliser.

The one thing that my soil tests doesn't cover is the level of trace elements in my soil. Should I be overly concerned at those levels then I would look to pay for a professional soil test. However, the performance of my plants the previous season is a good starting point to gauge whether I have any deficiencies. Should that be the case then I have the option to make a light application of fertilisers that are solely focussed on providing trace elements only.

We all have our own method of preparing our soil, and I have found that using the above method and applying fertilisers around 2 weeks prior to planting works well for me. A mix of fertilisers means that they become available to the plants at different times as this allows the vital nutrients to be available for longer, in different forms. This not only provides my plants with some longevity but makes them more resistant to environmental factors such as high temperatures or a lack of water. Using a single fertiliser, such as Osmocote or Vitax Q4 will mean that the nutrient they provide will breakdown at the same time and be available for a shorter time frame, as such plants will lose longevity with a shorter flowering period.

Others may have success using different methods and using different fertilisers, so please don't take this article in isolation and should be read in conjunction with other articles and literature and considering your own soil conditions.

*“Flowers are like friends;
they bring color to your world.”*

Unknown

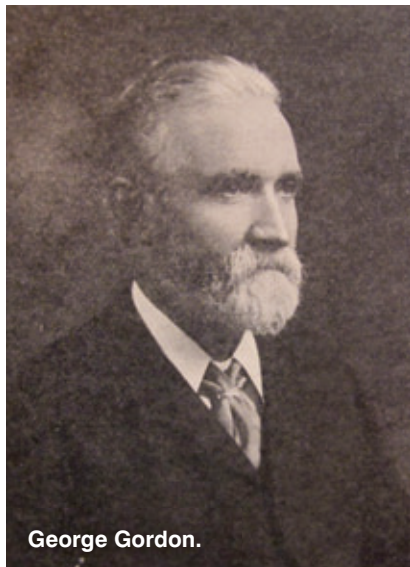
Society Minutes 1901 to 1907

By Roger Parsons

Concerned that Sweet Pea breeders and seedsmen might favour their own varieties when judging at shows? They were in 1902-3. This is one of many insights into the formation and early workings of our Society found in the minute book for 1901 to 1907. The first Annual did not appear until 1905 so these minutes are the only record we have of that period. They are hand-written in an exercise book and not easy to read so I have spent a few days typing them up.

The decision to have only amateur judges did not end well. The show manager, exhibition secretary as he was called then, Richard Dean, was a seedsman and eminent garden writer who had been awarded the Victoria Medal of Honour in 1897 by the RHS. He proposed a list of judges for the 1902 Show and his list was approved by the Society's Executive Committee in May 1902. All were what one might call amateurs or gardeners in private service rather than having any connections with the seed or nursery trades. A meeting of the Executive Committee on 7 July 1902, just prior to the show, resolved that the stewards at the show be instructed not to allow any interference with the judges in the discharge of their duties. This seems such an obvious requirement that one wonders what may have occurred at previous shows, or be suspected, for such a resolution to be made. We have very little information on the show itself, but a meeting of the Executive Committee was held on 29 July to approve the cost of several extra prizes awarded by the judges at the show. There are no other references to the judging in the meeting's minutes.

At the AGM in December 1902, George Gordon VMH was elected President for the year 1903 and Richard Dean retired as exhibition secretary. The general secretary, Herbert J Wright, agreed to combine the two roles to create a single secretary. George Gordon proposed that a hearty vote of thanks be accorded to Richard Dean "for the invaluable services he had rendered to the Society in the past. Mr Leonard Brown seconded & it was carried with acclamation." Dean remained an active committee member, for example proposing in January 1903 the introduction of standard variety name cards and sponsoring at least one class at the 1903 Show.



George Gordon.

On 27 March 1903 the Executive Committee unanimously agreed that judges for the National Show would again be selected exclusively from amateurs. Dean was present at that meeting and most of the judges chosen were the same people who had judged in 1902. There then followed an extra-ordinary note from Dean, published in the *Gardeners Chronicle* on 4 April 1903 and two other gardening publications, in which he said:

*“The Committee of this Society met at the Hotel Windsor on the 27th ult to make arrangements for the annual exhibition in July next, and select judges; Mr Geo. Gordon presiding. The matters affecting the exhibition were mostly those of detail, but when the appointment of judges was reached, an unmistakeable objection was shown to any person connected with the trade, whether principal or employee, being selected”.*¹

The Committee met again on 7 April 1903 and unanimously agreed a lengthy rebuttal of Dean’s comments. This included reference to Dean’s selection of judges for 1902 being all amateurs and that he had not raised any objection, directly or indirectly, to the same approach being taken in 1903. An extra-ordinary thing about Dean’s accusation is that the Committee included trade members, Dean himself being one, so could not be considered anti-trade. Feelings against Richard Dean were clearly running high because the April meeting refused to accept a letter of resignation from him on the grounds that he had not yet paid his subscription for 1903. If he would pay his subscription, then they would be in a position to accept his resignation. The AGM at the end of that year resolved to select the 1904 judges in equal numbers from the trade, professional gardeners and amateurs. Dean died in 1905.

A Showing Society

The Society has always been proud of its logo which includes the words “inaugurated 1900”. The minutes show that the Society was inaugurated on 26 March 1901. Most of those involved in creating the Society had been part of the group organising the 1900 bicentenary celebrations, so they regarded the Society as a continuation of the work begun by the bicentenary event. Organising an annual exhibition was the main focus of the Society.

Things that we take for granted nowadays as essential requirements of our shows, only came in gradually. Initially, exhibitors used their own containers to display bunches, which need not be vases, and there was no maximum number of stems to a bunch. Tiering was introduced in 1904. This show also saw the introduction of vases provided by the Society. Only bowls and vases provided by the Society could be used and exhibitors were charged for the hire of these at 3d each. For the 1905 show, the Society bought 5 gross of Jasper vases and bowls (1 gross = 144). Jasperware is a type of unglazed pottery made by Wedgewood.

At some point a regulation about the maximum number of stems in a bunch must have been introduced because for the 1906 Show it was decided to rescind this. Instead, it was suggested that an ideal bunch for the NSPS vases consists of 20 stems. The judges to be instructed to regard the overcrowding of a vase as a fault.

Most of the varieties shown during this period were of the old-fashioned / grandiflora type. It was agreed to introduce an audit of varieties for the 1904 Show. The advent of the Spencer type caused concern. It was decided for the 1906 Show to all allow one class for Spencer blooms of a single variety, any number of blooms in a vase and one square yard of bench space was allowed for this. Following this, it was decided to hold a separate section for Spencer varieties at the 1907 show.

The AGM at the end of December 1904 decided to offer an Annual to all members as a way of distributing various documents, including the Audit of varieties, a list of too-much-alike varieties, the Committee's annual report and balance sheet. The first Annual appeared in 1905 and had a huge impact on the recruitment of new members, doubling it in the first year. We have been enjoying them ever since.

A National Society

Right from the start, the Society was very much based on London and the home counties. As early as May 1901, an enquiry was received from Kidderminster about the possibility of local horticultural societies affiliating to the National Sweet Pea Society. The 1901 and 1902 exhibitions were held at the Royal Aquarium, Westminster, but when this closed in 1902 R Wilson Ker of Liverpool proposed that the show in 1903 be held in the provinces if satisfactory arrangements could be made. It was resolved that Wolverhampton be first approached in the matter & that Leicester & Hawley be the first & second reserves. Nothing can have come of this because it was agreed at the December 1902 AGM to hold the 1903 show at Earls Court, Kensington. A year later, the AGM agreed that the 1904 show would again be held in London but the possibility of holding a "supplementary show" in the provinces be explored. The London venue was soon confirmed as the Crystal Palace and classes would be sponsored for 1904 at the Southampton show "and one other show, Ulverston to be explored". It is unclear whether the Ulverston show was supported in 1904. In September 1904, it was agreed the 1905 London show would again be held at Crystal Palace and the secretary was asked to communicate with various provincial societies with a view to offering them prizes and medals in 1905.

A February 1905 meeting confirmed that classes would be sponsored in 1905 at shows in Dublin (Ireland then being part of the United Kingdom), Saltaire, Yorkshire and Ulverston, Cumbria. The show at Ulverston was organised by the North Lonsdale Rose Society and it was agreed to this becoming the venue for a first Provincial show in 1906. The London venue in 1906 was moved to the RHS Halls in Westminster and remained



there for a considerable number of years. In November 1905, the secretary was instructed to write to the RHS of Ireland regretting that prizes could not be offered for their 1906 show because a Northern provincial show was being held at Ulverston. Then a month later, a letter from the Benfieldside Sweet Pea Society, Durham, was considered and it was agreed to provide them with a silver medal to award. The secretary was empowered to allocate three other silver medals "should applications arise from reputable societies".

The Ulverston show appears to have been a great success but it was decided not to hold a Provincial show in 1907 although clearly Dublin had been considered. It was agreed that a gold & silver medal be offered to the Dublin, Edinburgh, Southampton, Ulverston, Wolverhampton & Cardiff Societies for Sweet Pea competitions in 1907. The secretary was also empowered to offer silver medals to "colonial societies". The acceptance of the Society's Silver Medal by the Societies at Edinburgh, Dublin, Cardiff, Southampton, Ulverston & Wolverhampton was reported in January 1907. A Scheme of Affiliation for local Societies was agreed. Societies subscribing 10s 6d per annum were entitled to:

1. One of the National Sweet Pea Society's Silver Medals, to be offered as a Prize for Sweet Peas only.
2. One copy each of the Society's "Annual", and other publications.
3. One Ticket of Admission to the Society's London Exhibition.
4. To nominate one of its members to represent it at the Annual and other General Meetings of the Society.



That first year of 1907 saw 26 local societies affiliate, all from England. 1908 saw an increase to 54, including three societies in New Zealand. By 1909, the number increased to 94 societies so the scheme of affiliation was very successful. These included the first “Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society” based at Beverley. Many were based in other parts of the British Empire so within 10 years the Society had moved from south east England to the rest of the empire. 1908 saw a second Provincial show held, this time at Dublin but there was no Provincial show again until Carlisle in 1913.

The minutes of 120-year-old meetings will not interest everyone but if anyone would like a copy of my transcription, then I would be happy to email it to them.

References

¹ Gardeners Chronicle ser.3 33:223 4th April 1903.

“My neighbour asked if he could use my lawnmower and I told him of course he could, so long as he didn’t take it out of my garden.”

Eric Morecambe

RHS Lindley Award for Tatton Stand

By Julia Beardmore



Lindley Award.
Photo by Julia Beardmore.

The North West team are delighted to have been presented with the Lindley award for the stand at RHS Tatton in 2022. This is awarded annually to the best Educational Exhibit shown to the Society during the year. This was truly an honour to be judged against all the floral marquees for all the RHS shows during 2022.

Myself and Catherine Bromley attended the annual event including lunch, held at Lindley Hall on the 6 March 2023, we are very proud to receive the award on behalf our team, this presented by President Keith Weed CBE. There were many trophies, glassware and medals presented at the event for all things Horticultural. 23 graduates were awarded the professional qualification Master of Horticulture (MHort)

The Lindley award is a beautiful tall vase in Darlington glass, this will need some very 'long stemmed Sweet Peas' to fill it. It is inscribed with 'Best Lindley Exhibit' Presented to The National Sweet Pea Society, for an exhibit of *Lathyrus Odorata* and Species, Tatton Park 2022.

An article on the stand at Tatton 2022 is published separately.



Show vases. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*

Give Older Peas a Chance

By Darren Myers

2022 marked 40 years of my involvement in the growing and showing of Sweet Peas.

During that time I have seen many varieties come and go, and looking through the Epithets on Roger's website (a magnificent piece of work and everyone involved in putting this together should be widely applauded), brought back some memories of varieties that were once the darlings of gardens and show benches up and down the country, many of which are no longer commercially available.

Over the years, a huge number of varieties have been launched, some more successfully than others. 'Aerospace' was a large flowering white variety that was introduced by Suttons with much fanfare amongst the Sweet Pea showing fraternity, but fell from grace rather quickly due to its propensity to pink.



'Eclipse'.
Photo by Darren Myers.

Some others have stood the test of time, with 'Eclipse' being a great example. Launched in 1975, this mauve has beaten off competition from varieties of similar colour over the years. The appropriately named 'Challenger' along with the variety 'Gorleston' being considered of equal merit and being equally popular on the show benches in the late 1980's and early 1990's. But 'Eclipse' has managed to stand the test of time whilst the others are now largely forgotten. One of the main reasons why 'Eclipse' is still going strong is due to the work of Brian Thompson, who carefully reselected 'Eclipse' back in the mid 1990's.

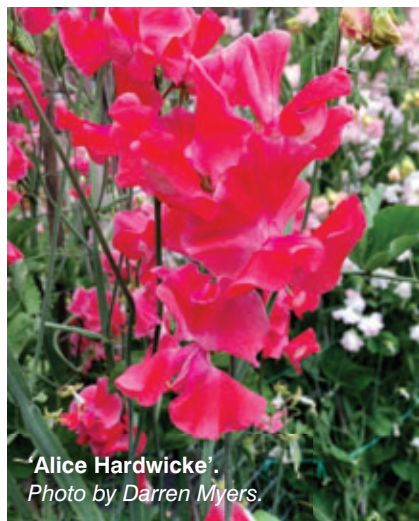
A more pertinent example of why some varieties are no longer available is the variety 'Honeymoon'. Originally launched in 1972, this pale lavender flush was a firm favourite for many years. However, my own personal experiences with 'Honeymoon', may go some way to explain why some varieties have seemingly been lost. Having bought seed in from a Sweet Pea specialist in the mid/late 1990's my 30 plants all produced grandiflora versions of 'Honeymoon'. Not a single Spencer type bloom was to be seen. Whether this was down to poorly managed stock by the seed merchant, I wouldn't like to say. But it's worth remembering that Spencer Sweet Peas are a hybrid of the old fashioned varieties and as such, they rely on their hybrid vigour to maintain their

qualities. If this isn't managed carefully then the quality can be lost and they can revert back to being grandiflora types. Thankfully, enough good stock remained across individual growers, for this particular variety to keep going.

A more noticeable recent example of a loss of hybrid vigour is the variety 'Beaujolais'. Released in 1972 as a Spencer type, this has been a popular garden decoration variety since its release. But a quick search of the internet reveals that some seed merchants are selling 'Beaujolais' to this day. But the form of the flowers advertised from some of those seed merchants seems to suggest that the stock they are selling, under the name 'Beaujolais', is a grandiflora type rather than a Spencer type.

We, as Sweet Pea growers, have been renowned for being followers of fashion and have been quick to ditch tried and tested varieties in favour of a new shiny variety. When that new shiny variety has failed to deliver we have looked for another new shiny variety to replace it with rather than going back to the tried and tested.

Thankfully besides the National Collection held by Roger (it would be good to have a list of varieties held in the National collection, being made available) some dedicated growers have kept their own, small stocks of some varieties, whilst, some older varieties are still commercially available from the well maintained stocks from the specialist suppliers.



'Alice Hardwicke'.
Photo by Darren Myers.

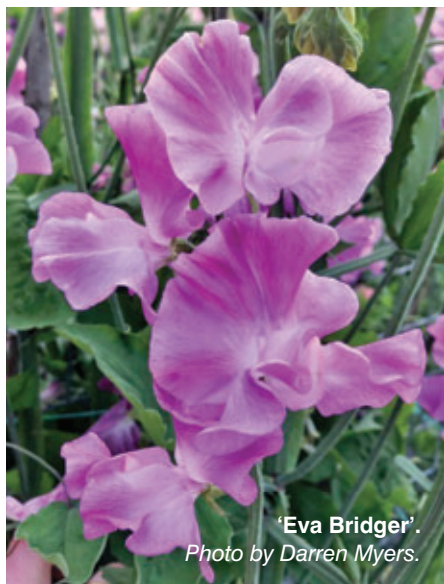
'Alice Hardwicke' was originally released in 1971, but fell out of favour in the later 1990s/early 2000's and quickly became a rare sight in seed catalogues. Andrew Beane held a stock of the seed who I understand then shared some seed with Alec Cave. Having built up his own stock, Alec in turn sent some seed to Peter King at Somerset Sweet Peas, and because of this 'Alice Hardwicke' is back in commercial circulation, which is very pleasing to see.

One variety that continues to serve me well is 'Nora Holman'. A relative newcomer compared to some of the varieties mentioned in this article. Released in 1991, it won the Clay Cup for Derek Pacey in the early 1990's but again

has fallen by the wayside commercially. Speaking with one seed merchant last year, their stock of 'Nora Holman' reverted to Grandiflora, despite being a well managed stock, as such they had no option but to withdraw it from their catalogue. The stock that I hold came about, in some respects by accident. The late George Priestley was sorting through his stock of 'Nora Holman' when he dropped a seed that fell into a crack in his

patio. That seed not only grew but produced sufficient bloom and seed to allow George to maintain his stock. Following George's passing, his stock was passed onto my Dad and I and it is this stock that I now maintain.

In recent years, and with thanks to fellow growers and friends, I have begun to add some older varieties to my own collection to try and preserve my own stocks for future use and include them for breeding. Last summer I used a variety called 'Morning Rose', a delicate pale pink on white that was introduced in 1980 and was a firm favourite with Alan Swallow, in a cross with a pale blue seedling. I have also used other varieties such as 'Eva Bridger' in recent years for breeding, and hope to use more going forward.



'Eva Bridger'.
Photo by Darren Myers.



'Mrs Bernard Jones'.
Photo by Darren Myers.

By contrast to some of the varieties mentioned that have seemingly disappeared, other older varieties such as 'Jilly' and 'Mrs Bernard Jones' still remain popular and readily available. Their qualities and longevity have allowed them to exist alongside newer varieties. Besides some of the points that I have previously referred to, as popular exhibition varieties, I believe this may go some way to explaining why some varieties remain in circulation longer than others.

I have long held the belief that any Sweet Pea show is the best form of advertisement for our societies and the flower we all love. As such those varieties on the benches are showcased more than probably many other varieties that are in circulation. The list of seed merchants that sell the likes of 'White Frills', 'Gwendoline' and 'Anniversary', as examples, are considerably longer than those that sell varieties that do not make it on to the benches.

As an exhibitor, I have probably been as guilty as most for dropping some varieties long before their time. I have however, for several years now, tried to grow varieties that are less than popular, whether they are untested, rare or old. Not all have been successful picks, but some like 'Imogen' have proven to be reliable varieties for me. My choice of varieties in 2022 included 'Eclipse', 'Alice Hardwicke' and 'Nora Holman'. I have retained these varieties my 2023 and have added 'Eva Bridger' and the newer, yet rarer, 'Mary Mac'.



'Mary Mac'.
Photo by Darren Myers.

The purpose of my ramblings are not just to waffle on about how good it was in yesteryear, but more so to try and encourage people to have a go with the older or rare varieties that deserve to be grown and are at risk of being just another name added to the list of Epithets. Just because it's an old one, doesn't mean it's still not a good one.

The Gardeners Hymn

From Janet Bulstrode (via Parkstone Gardeners)

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
 All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.
 But what we never mention, although gardeners know it's true,
 Is when he made the goodies, he made the baddies too.
 All things spray and swatable, disasters great and small,
 All things Paraquable, the Lord God made them all.
 The greenfly on the roses, the maggots in the peas,
 Manure that fills our noses, He also gave us these.
 The fungus on the goosegogs, the club root on the greens,
 The slugs that eat the lettuce and chew the aubergines,
 The drought that kills the fuchsias the frost that nips the buds,
 The rain that drowns the seedlings, the blight that hits the spuds.
 The midges and mosquitoes, the nettles and the weeds,
 The pigeons in the green stuff, the sparrows on the seeds.
 The fly that gets the carrots, the wasp that eats the plums,
 How black the gardeners outlook, though green may be his thumbs.
 But still we gardeners labour, mix vegetables and flowers.
 And pray what hits our neighbours will somehow bypass ours.

Alternatives

By Brian Thompson

The editor gave me a challenge when she asked me to write a piece for the 2023 Annual - "To suggest alternative Sweet Peas that might be considered when exhibiting, doing floral art or just for home decoration" I am sure most members will have read the NSPS publications in which all new varieties are classified after the Trials – given normal circumstances which were of course disrupted by Covid - but here are a few of my own alternatives to the ones listed in the publications – nothing ventured, nothing gained!

'White Frills' is the current most popular white Sweet Pea but in my ground I did not find it did well at all so I grew 'Mary Priestley' but then the seed became unavailable so I switched to 'Glasnevin' and found this to be fantastic. In the salmon pink on cream 'Valerie Harrod' heads the group, whilst I found 'Lauren Landy' to be an excellent substitute. 'Gwendoline' has been the go to pale magenta for many years but for me 'Bill's Choice' has proved very reliable. 'Anniversary' (except for John Jacques' seed) is not the Pea it used to be, but the newest Pea in this group is 'New Dawn' which at least is true to its form. In the pink flake group many people grow 'Queen of Hearts' but 'Olivia' by my reckoning is a preferable Sweet Pea. My last suggestion is the 'marmite' Sweet Pea – 'Kings Ransom'



Sweet Pea 'Glasnevin'.
Photo by Sydney Harrod.

- a burnt orange, you either love it or hate it. I first saw it at the Sparsholt trials in 2017 and is to me the most significant 'new colour' to be released over the past few decades – do give it a try.

The simplest way to keep a good variety true to form is to keep your own seed... early in the season – no later than July – let one plant go to seed making sure you choose the plant which is true to colour and form, this one plant should give you upward of 30 seeds. New varieties 'Novelties' will generally be more vigorous in their first few years but may not stay true forever. Which novelties to try? The best way is to keep an eye



'Bill's Choice'.
Photo by Caroline Ball.



'Kings Ransom'.
Photo by Lewis Morgan.

out for the new ones that get the awards at the NSPS Trials, – infrequently new seedlings are exhibited at National Shows and places like the Windsor Flower Show. If you do see a new seedling at a Show or in someone's garden that you like, if possible make yourself known to the raiser and ask the question -“is it available to buy yet” or has the seedsman taken it to be ‘bulked up’ in which case it may well be at least two or three years before it is readily available. The numbers you see in the Trials reports are the growers reference numbers so you should be able to record the details, colour description etc and the raisers name may be used when the varieties are released. Once they are released the most specialist seedsman are only too happy to answer any questions you may have. So, I would like to suggest that you try some different varieties other than the ones which are in the Show audits as there are some terrific specimens out there – just try one!

North West Event Programme 2023

By Carole Tate

In addition to the displays detailed in the separate article, the following events will be attended in 2023. Should you be able to offer any help with any of them please contact Carole Tate.

Date	Venue
Sunday 26 March 2023	Arley Plant Fair
Saturday 1-2 April 2023	Bridgewater Plant Fair
Sunday 23 April 2023	Cholmondeley Castle Plant Fair
Saturday 29 April 2023	Awareness Day at Walled Garden, Astley Park, Chorley
Sunday 14 May 2023	Capesthorpe Hall, Macclesfield Plant Fair

NSPS Early Show 1-2 July 2023

By Laurie Burrell & Roger Dix

Mr Colin Squire has been keen for a while to host the NSPS Early Show at his company's popular Garden Centre in Shepperton. After consultation with senior members of the Society the venue has been selected for the 2023 Early Sweet Pea show on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 July. Full details of its location in Shepperton are given in on pages 2 & 3 of the 2023 Show Schedule.

The show will be staged in a full sized self-supported marquee within the outside display area of the Garden Centre with access gained via a security-controlled gate off the adjoining car park when the garden centre shop is closed to business. We will be installing additional lighting on Friday evening for staging if the marquees own lighting is not sufficient for the purpose. Toilets for exhibitors when the garden centre shop is closed are available in a separate block in the main car park some two or three minutes walk from the show marquee.

Light refreshments will be provided for exhibitors in the marquee over Friday evening and night for those wishing to stage their exhibits out of business hours. The Garden Centre café will be open for breakfast from 0900 whilst judging takes place on Saturday morning. We are negotiating with the management to start the breakfast service from 8.30am prior to judging at 8.45am.

When you arrive on the Friday evening the main gate to Squires Garden Centre will be open for exhibitors, drive to the first mini roundabout turn left and the security gate for access to the outside display area is located about fifty yards on your right hand side. This will be manned over night by security personal to allow out of hours access and egress for exhibitors. Please have your Sweet Pea Society membership card available to again access at all times when the garden centre shop is closed. Trolleys will be available to move your exhibits and show material from the car park to the marquee as it isn't possible to gain access for vehicles within the display area. The access route pathway will be signposted to assist exhibitors.

There is ample on-site parking for shoppers and visitors to the marquee however the directors of Squires Garden Centre have requested that those exhibitors who wish their own vehicles to remain on site from Friday to when they leave the show move them to the overflow car park adjacent to the display area entrance security gate.

Roger and Laurie look forward to seeing you all at the show. Please don't hesitate to contact us on our mobile phones, details of which are in the schedule, should the need arise for any reason.

NSPS Late Show, 8 and 9 July 2023

By Carole Tate

The NSPS Late Show will be held at RHS Bridgewater Gardens, Worsley M28 2LJ. This is a new venue for us but has been chosen to give accessibility to as many members as possible with good motorway access and fantastic facilities. We are expecting good footfall at this RHS venue.

A supportive team will be available at the show to help with things like transporting blooms from your car, supply water, vases and staging materials, help with staging and make copious cups of tea and coffee.

It is important for everyone to note that there will be no overnight staging at this venue. Staging starts at 6pm on Friday 7 July and runs to 10pm that evening then restarts at 6am on Saturday morning. Judging is scheduled to start at 9.45am on Saturday but can be delayed for the bigger vase classes, should this be necessary, as we appreciate that time is limited with no overnight staging available. Please do not hesitate to contact Carole Tate with any queries.



YSPS Show and October Meeting 2023

By Darren Myers

The YSPS Show made a welcome return in 2022 following Covid. The venue, St Michael's Church School Rooms provides an excellent venue and is only 2 mins from the M1. The show itself was deemed a success with 126 vases staged. It was good to see many faces that we hadn't seen during the Covid years, and the Society would like to thank everyone who came and supported the show to make it such a success.

The YSPS Show will this year be held in the same venue just outside Wakefield and will be held on Saturday 1 July 2023. Should anyone who hasn't exhibited the show before require a schedule then please contact either Darren Myers or Joan Myers (details below).

The West Yorkshire Sports Centre has been the home of the October Meeting for close to 30 years, but as with many things the price of the room hire was set to increase for 2023. This has prompted the YSPS to review the whole day, to keep it relevant but trying to reduce the costs of the day as much as possible. We are therefore pleased to announce that for 2023 the meeting will have a new home, and a venue that will allow the cost of the day to be significantly reduced from previous years.



The date of the 2023 meeting will be Sunday 8 October, and will be held in Wrenthorpe Village Hall, Wrenthorpe Ln, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield WF2 0NE. The venue itself is approx. 5 mins from Junc. 41 of the M1. Whilst there will be no bar, as in previous years, anyone wanting something a little bit stronger than tea or coffee at lunch will be able to visit The New Pot Oil Pub next door.



9 vases of 12 stems at the Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society Show.
Photo by Darren Myers.



My vase of 'Eclipse'
at the YSPS Show.
Photo by Darren Myers.

Lunch will be simplified to a choice of either Pie and Mushy Peas or Jacket Potato with filling. Please advise of your choice of food and let us know if you require a vegetarian option when you book your place. We will require all bookings to be made by Sunday 1 October 2023 at the very latest.

The day will be filled with guest speakers, along with a quiz and raffle.

The cost for the day is now just £7.50 per head. To book your place please either email: darrenmyers77@outlook.com or ring Darren Myers on 07736 469343, Joan Myers on 01924 870748

We hope that you are able to join us for either or both events. Best wishes to all for the



The YSPS show.
Photo by Darren Myers.



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Shows and Displays

North West Show – Chorley

By Carole Tate



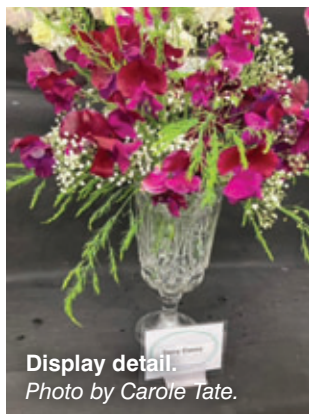
Jonathan Moseley presenting the award to Bryn Edwards.
Photo by Nicky Edwards.

The NSPS North West Region Show was again held this year at the Chorley Flower Show on the 29, 30 and 31 July. The warm weather gave exhibitors a challenge to produce enough flowers but Kevin Preston managed enough blooms to enter Division I and sweep the board. His vase of 'Promise' won Best in Division I. Matt Lloyd won Best in Division II with his vase of 'Mary Priestley' and Michael Partington Division III with a vase of 'Pips Maroon'. Peter Matthewman won Division IV with an old favourite, 'Jilly' and novice John Richards won Best in Division V and the Novice trophy. Best bowl was another newcomer Stephen Hayward with Nicky Edwards winning Best Decorative for her delightful 'Tea for Two' entry and her son Bryn winning the Junior trophy with his bowl of shifters.

The decorative classes were well supported, in particular the buttonhole, corsage and miniature classes which perhaps reflects a season of shorter stems. The Presentation of Awards was made by Jonathan Moseley the well-known horticulturist and floral designer, and each award winner received an additional prize donated by our sponsors.

Chorley Flower Show is exhibitor friendly with good parking, staging and refreshment facilities. It has a true horticultural focus with a high standard of trade and amateur stands and is one of the top North West attractions.

The Society stand was a huge success using glass bowls and vases to display the Sweet Peas. No Oasis or plastic bowls were used on the stand and we were delighted to win a Gold Award. The information boards and timeline floral displays attracted much interest from the public and our team of helpers did a terrific job of selling seeds, merchandise and membership as well as providing



Display detail.
Photo by Carole Tate.

information on Sweet Pea varieties and growing methods. A big thank you to all the exhibitors, sponsors, judges, members and helpers and a special thanks on behalf of the society to Chorley Council Events team for all their support.



Some of the volunteers. Photo by Jane Atherton.

Audit of North West Region Show – Chorley – 29 – 31 July 2022

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	Unplaced	Total	Colour	Class
1	White Supreme	3	1	0	0	4	White	1
2	Wiltshire Ripple	3	0	0	0	3	Fancy	16
3	Route 66	1	2	0	0	3	Fancy	16a
4	Elizabeth	2	0	0	0	2	Rose Pink	11b
	Gwendoline	2	0	0	0	2	Pale Magenta	4a
	Jilly	2	0	0	0	2	Cream	2
	Promise	2	0	0	0	2	Fancy	16a
8	Just Julia	1	1	0	0	2	Mid Blue	9a
9	Anniversary	1	0	0	0	1	Picottee	15
	Ella Marie	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy	15
	Karen Louise	1	0	0	0	1	Lavender	8
	Mary Priestly	1	0	0	0	1	White	1
	Mumsie	1	0	0	0	1	Red	3b
	Pips Maroon	1	0	0	0	1	Maroon	5
	Sir Jimmy Shand	1	0	0	0	1	Fancy	16
	Total	23	4	0	0	27		
	Mixed Vases	5	3	3	2	13		
	Total Vases	28	7	3	2	40		
	Bowls and Pots	5	4	0	0	9		
	Decorative Classes	7	6	6	14	33		
	Total	40	17	8	16	81		

DIVISION I – 15 STEMS

CLASS	SPECIAL CLASSES	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
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 (No Entries)	(0)
5	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
6	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries)	(0)
7	ONE VASE, PINK (No Entries)	(0)
8	ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY 1st K Preston 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
9	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st K Preston 2nd K Preston 3rd –	(2)
10	MIXED BOWL 1st S Hayward 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
11	TWO VASES 15 STEMS (No Entries)	(0)

DIVISION II – 12 STEMS

12	6 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries)	(0)
13	3 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries)	(0)
14	MIXED BOWL (No Entries)	(0)
15	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st Matt Lloyd 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
16	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED (No Entries)	(0)
17	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE (No Entries)	(0)
18	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE (No Entries)	(0)
19	ONE VASE, PINK (No Entries)	(0)
20	ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY (No Entries)	(0)
21	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS 1st Matt Lloyd 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

DIVISION III – 9 STEMS

CLASS	SPECIAL CLASSES	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
22	3 VASES DISTINCT 1st M Partington 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
23	MIXED BOWL (No Entries)	(0)
24	ONE VASE, WHITE OR CREAM 1st R Durrant 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
25	ONE VASE, RED OR ORANGE-RED 1st R Durrant 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
26	ONE VASE, MAGENTA, MAROON OR PURPLE (No Entries)	(0)
27	ONE VASE, MAUVE, LAVENDER OR BLUE 1st M Partington 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
28	ONE VASE, PINK (No Entries)	(0)
29	ONE VASE, ORANGE, PICOTEE OR FANCY (No Entries)	(0)
30	ONE VASE, MIXED CULTIVARS (No Entries)	(0)

DIVISION IV – 7 STEMS

31	3 VASES DISTINCT 1st P Matthewman 2nd S Hayward 3rd –	(2)
32	MIXED BOWL 1st C Nightingale 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
33	ONE VASE OF ANY CULTIVAR 1st S Hayward 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
34	ONE VASE MIXED 1st P Matthewman 2nd S Hayward 3rd –	(2)

DIVISION V – 5 STEMS

35	2 VASES DISTINCT (No Entries)	(0)
36	ONE VASE OF ANY CULTIVAR 1st J Richards 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
37	ONE VASE MIXED 1st J Richards 2nd – 3rd –	(1)

DIVISION VI

CLASS	SPECIAL CLASSES	No. OF EXHIBITS STAGED
38	MIXED BOWL 1st C Tate 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
39	ONE VASE OF 12 STEMS OLD FASHIONED (No Entries)	(0)
40	ONE VASE 12 STEMS GRANDIFLORA (No Entries)	(0)
41	BOWL OF SHIFTERS 1st B Edwards 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
42	BOWL OF LATHYRUS SPECIES 1st C Tate 2nd C Tate 3rd –	(2)
43	BOWL OF PERENNIAL 1st C Bromley 2nd J Beardmore 3rd –	(2)
44	ANY <i>LATHYRUS</i> GROWN IN POT (No Entries)	(0)

SPECIAL CLASSES

A	TEA FOR TWO 1st N Edwards 2nd S Haisley 3rd J Beardmore	(7)
B	BASKET (No Entries)	(0)
C	DINNER TABLE 1st J Beardmore 2nd – 3rd –	(1)
D	DRIFTWOOD 1st C Tate 2nd E Ross 3rd J Beardmore	(3)
E	7 STEMS 1st C Tate 2nd J Beardmore 3rd E Ross	(3)
F	PETITE 1st N Edwards 2nd E Ross 3rd C Tate	(7)
G	GENTLEMAN'S BUTTONHOLE 1st J Richards 2nd J Richards 3rd N Edwards	(9)
H	LADY'S CORSAGE 1st S Haisley 2nd C Nightingale 3rd C Tate	(3)
J	ONE SINGLE BLOOM 1st S Hayward 2nd J Richards 3rd K Preston 4th M Lloyd 5th K Preston	(7)

SPECIAL AWARDS**BEST IN DIVISION I**

K Preston ('Promise' Class 1)

BEST IN DIVISION II

M Lloyd ('Mary Priestley' Class 15)

BEST IN DIVISION III

M Partington ('Pips Maroon' Class 22)

BEST IN DIVISION IV

P Matthewman ('Jilly' Class 31)

BEST IN DIVISION V

J Roberts (Mixed, Class 37)

BEST IN DIVISION VI

S Hayward (Bowl)

BEST DECORATIVE

N Edwards ('Tea for Two' Class A)

BEST NOVICE

J Richards (Buttonhole, Class G)

BEST JUNIOR

Bryn Edwards (Bowl of Shifters, Class 41)



'Sir Jimmy Shand' Sweet Peas on plants. Photo by Andrew Fletcher.



'Prince Edward of York'. Photo by Andrew Fletcher.

Poynton Show

By Nicky Edwards



Display at Poynton. Photo by Nicky Edwards.

This event had not taken place since August 2019 so it was fantastic to see it up and running again. There was an often repeated theme at many events this year of starting over after the pandemic. Organisers weren't sure how much interest they would get in terms of entries or visitors so it was lovely to be able to support the show with a National Sweet Pea Society display stand and information bureau in the Horticultural Marquee. There were several plant societies there with stands; notably the British Gladiolus Society were having their National Show 2022 there and the Macclesfield and East Cheshire branch of the British Cactus and Succulent Society were having their annual show there too. Along with the other sections in the general horticultural show this made for a very full and interesting horticultural tent.

The main worry about the stand for this show was how many flowers we would actually have to put on it. As mentioned earlier, the season has not been typical and flowers finished very early for many people. The stand involved using the "History of the Sweet Pea" timeline sign boards to mitigate this. As luck would have it we did get a late flush of flowers in the Society beds, thanks to Sarah and her very (in fact too) small team, and we had more than enough flowers to fill the stand admirably.

We continued the theme of using pre-loved glassware for the stand so as to minimise use of disposable baskets and plastic containers. To arrange the vases we used water-storing gel beads which are made of an environmentally safe polymer which swells when immersed in water. We also made use of re-usable crystals in clear and white colours. Bowls, especially larger ones, were arranged using layers of chicken wire. This proved a very successful way of arranging bowls of Spencers, old fashioned and species and was a technique that some of us used when entering our exhibits for the Late Show at Harlow Carr. Further details can be found in the Autumn Bulletin report.



It does take time for a stand like this to come together. Of course this depends on the size of the team doing the arranging and our small team spent much of the Friday before the show creating the stand. Judging took place at 8.30am on the Saturday and we were thrilled to achieve a Gold medal and win the Silver Challenge Cup for the best plant society stand. We signed some new members, gave out lots of advice and promoted the NSPS and the

workshops which we run in the North West. We also sold seeds and merchandise. All in all this was an excellent event and thanks go to the team of Sarah Haisley, Catherine Bromley, Stephen Heyward, Carole Tate and Mavis Duxbury for all their hard work. A great day was had by us all, made particularly special by the catering offered in the Horticultural Tent and friendly show managers. We also enjoyed watching our North West members Don and Liz Ross competing with their donkeys and winning some prizes – well done to them. This is a fixture in our calendar of events and is usually on the weekend of the last August Bank Holiday of the year and it would be great to see more members getting involved and making entries next year.

RHS Tatton Show

By Julia Beardmore

The planning of the stand at RHS Tatton always takes much preparation, 2022 being no exception. All the Plant Societies who have previously been in the Plant Hub Marquee, were moved in 2022 into the Floral Marquee. After many negotiations on the size of the stand we were given a larger stand than previous at 12 metres long, a little more than we bargained for.

With the ban on Oasis floral foam, and our experience with the alternative 'Agrawool' in 2021, we decided to have a complete change and use pre-loved glassware. All the 'team' were tasked in finding vases, trifle and fruit bowls, carafes, champagne glasses and the odd celery jar from charity shops or some family heirlooms, and a bottle of Champagne needed to be drunk for the empty bottle. We used chicken wire, and gel beads to support the blooms, the gel beads add a glister to the water.

The build-up of the stand at RHS Tatton commences on the Sunday prior to the opening day on Wednesday. Peter, John and myself travelled to the show in 2 cars packed with



Display stand at Tatton Photos by Julia Beardmore.

construction materials, sign boards and all the glassware. All the tables were covered in black material. Peter had made 3 large picture frames which were fixed on the back wall. The sign boards were fixed to the tables.

This year we had the hottest few days on record in July, and is not great for Sweet Peas, we generally pick the Sweet Peas on Sunday late afternoon to bring into the show on Monday, this year it would be better to pick them early Monday am and bring direct into the show, so Sarah, Catherine and Stephen travelled up at the crack of dawn in Sarah's camper van to pick buckets of Spencers North of Lancaster. The old fashioned and species are grown locally.

Monday, it was arranging day, with Mavis guiding us, Carole, John, Tricia, Monica, Dedrah, Lisa and myself, to get on with the job in hand arranging Sweet Peas. This was completed on Tuesday am and finished by 12 for judging in the afternoon. We had found that some of the arrangements at the top of the tiering were struggling with the heat and needed to be refreshed, the heat at the top of the Marquee is awful.

The 3 picture frames, depicted an arrangement of old fashioned on a glass candlestick, gladioli style Sweet Peas in wine glasses using Spencers and Champagne and bubbles using species.

Having more space allowed us to have a table with 1 tier, where we were able to display small jars and diffuser bottles to display 6 stems of all the varieties displayed on the stand and the seeds we had for sale. This was extremely popular with the public to help them select their favourite blooms.

Tuesday am, with 2 additional helpers, Tom and Sarah, we had a short window to finalise the display, it was all hands on to complete, water, perfect it. One of the finishing touches was the *Latifolius* display at the back of the stand carefully stitched in by Mavis. Just time for us to stand back and view the finished stand, we were very pleased with it.



The Tatton team. Photo by Jane Atherton.

Wednesday is the opening day of the show, members' day and to find out if we had been awarded anything. Yes, it was a Gold. The Judge came to visit mid-morning, to talk and give us feedback. He loved the style and our use of pre-loved glassware, we had full marks in each section of judging.

The show was busy, we wowed the public, our volunteers were able to assist many questions and we signed up a good level of new members. Thankfully the unbearable heat had cooled a little. On Thursday, we refresh the flowers, which then takes us through to Sunday.

We have a fantastic group of volunteers in the North West, and it's thank you to all of them making this Show a huge success. As well as the set up team, we welcomed Phillippa and John from the Midlands, Larysa, Jane, John, Rachel, Don and Susan.

The Wem Sweet Pea Show

By Phillippa Cooper

Three years ago, it was with great sadness that a report on the final show by the Eckford Sweet Pea Society of Wem was written. Fast forward three years and it is wonderful to announce that due to the hard work and enthusiasm of Rose Horner, Director at Wem Town Hall, a new era of Sweet Pea Shows in Wem has begun.

Our first joint committee meeting was in November 2021. It was decided to keep the schedule very similar to previous years. A great deal of practical help was needed during the months before the show and the wealth of experience within the Eckford Committee played an important role in the organisation. Although it is always difficult to single out individual members of the committee it is appropriate to repeat some of



An overview of Wem. Photo by Rose Horner.

Rose's comments. Thanks go to Len Bennett for producing our superb "recycled" staging and to Rhona and Allen Owen for their help in many ways over several months. It is also important to thank the very efficient team of Janet and Andrew Hankey for their exceptional work behind the scenes throughout Saturday making sure that everything ran smoothly. I know that many others, too numerous to mention, helped in various ways.



Rhona Owen, Philippa Cooper and Len Bennett, enthusiastic growers of old fashioned varieties. *Photo by Rose Horner*

As not even the residents of Wem were aware that the show was restarting it was vital to start publicity as early as possible. The articles in both preceding NSPS bulletins and the Annual were very important in helping to advertise the Show. Many thanks to Caroline Ball and Ray Guzenda for producing the eye-catching advert that was used many, many times. As we are not local to Wem, John and I set about contacting and visiting a number of local gardening groups in the West Midlands, Staffordshire and Shropshire. As well as advertising the Show we gave away packs of our own old fashioned seed to encourage as many people as possible to start growing the wonderful varieties that are so important to the Wem Show.

As the Show was almost a month earlier than the traditional date, we weren't sure how many entries we would have, however we were delighted to welcome some new exhibitors as well as many familiar faces.

Every year the British weather is unpredictable and 2022 was no exception! A temperature of 31 degrees was followed by a drop to just 16 degrees in 24 hours during May! Our main problem in the early part of the season was severe bud drop, however on a more positive note we were delighted that our Autumn sowing of green manure had resulted in our plants growing extremely vigorously.

The settled sunny, mostly dry weather in the weeks preceding the Show was a welcome change although the orange 'Henry Eckford' blooms started to bleach severely in the sunlight. For the first (and last!) time we rigged up some DIY shading using net curtains. Although the plants thrived in the hot, humid conditions I think that the fabric was too close to the plants as they were very enclosed. Unfortunately, a yellow warning for severe, localised thunderstorms was forecast for the Midlands on the Thursday night (June 23rd.) We crossed our fingers and hoped that we would escape. On Friday lunchtime we drove through torrential rain on our way to Wem and realised how lucky we had been to escape the storms.

It was a great pleasure to be back in Wem to stage our blooms and to meet up with friends who we hadn't seen for quite a while. Saturday was very busy and we had many wonderful, positive comments whilst "manning" the information desk. A return to the original venue was especially welcome by many visitors. It was particularly pleasing to welcome some Wulfrunians and members of the various gardening groups who had made the effort to support the Show. Hopefully, next year, this may translate into more novices and exhibitors of old fashioned varieties. Unfortunately, there were a few gaps on the show benches due to the severe weather in the Shrewsbury area during the Thursday night before the Show. Graham Johnson the NSPS rep for Shropshire was severely affected, being disappointed to have insufficient blooms for his planned six-vase class in Division Four.

A brief summary of the winners of Wem 2022 is as follows:



Val Good MBE presenting the Bronwen Eleanor Perpetual Challenge Cup to Jenny Morgan of Abergavenny. Photo by Lewis Morgan.

Congratulations go to Jenny Morgan of Abergavenny for winning both the Bronwen Eleanor Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best vase in the Show with her superb vase of 'Mrs Bernard Jones' and also the Mike Jones Memorial trophy for lavender, blue or mauve Spencer varieties with her twelve stems of 'Eclipse'. Local grower, Neil Cooper



Neil Cooper. Winner of the Archie Silvester perpetual trophy for the most points by a Shropshire grower.
Photo by Phillippa Cooper.



Cup winners John Cooper and Alison Shreeve
Photo by Phillippa Cooper.

of Whixall had a very successful Show winning the Archie Silvester Perpetual Trophy for the most points by a Shropshire grower, and the President's Plate.

In Division One there was success for Neil Cooper (15 stems of 'Gwendoline') and Allan Evans of Llandudno Junction for his mixed vase.

In the classes for old-fashioned, pre 1910 varieties there was close competition between Len Bennett of Worthen, Phillippa Cooper of Penn and Rhona Owen of Harlescott. Rhona was successful in the five-vase class, Len victorious with his 'Cupani' and Phillippa winning the class for 'Lord Nelson'. Overall Phillippa had slightly more points and was awarded the Dorothy Eckford Perpetual Cup.

Neil Cooper swept the board in Division Three (growers of not more than 400 cordon plants) entering five out of the 8 classes. He was awarded the Jack Timpson Perpetual Shield.

Great interest was shown in the new Spencer variety, 'Tom Atherton' that won the D. Morlais-Jones Seedling Class. Tom Atherton of Chorley



The new variety 'Tom Atherton'.
Photo by Rose Horner.

was presented with the Wellington Rotary Club Perpetual Silver Salver. I am sure that this new variety will be extremely popular in years to come.

Division Four was very competitive with excellent exhibits from Jenny Morgan, Lynne Silvester of Prees, Les Grisdale of Ellesmere Port and Graham Johnson of Shrewsbury. Les Grisdale was awarded the NSPS Bronze Medal in this Division.

The Wem show has always included a number of decorative classes. Jenny Morgan won the John Good Memorial Class for a beautiful container of mixed Spencer and Old Fashioned blooms with foliage, Phillippa Cooper was successful in class 42 (basket of mixed Sweet Peas) and Jane Atherton of Chorley won class 43, the Dinner Table arrangement with a lovely display of the new variety 'Tom Atherton'.

Division Five is for growers of not more than 100 cordon plants and this received the most entries across the divisions. NSPS Chair, Prof. Alison Shreeve of Buckinghamshire entered several superb vases and was the worthy winner of the W. Jenkins Perpetual Cup for the best vase for her 'Eclipse' in class 49. Allan Evans was successful in the multi vase classes. Overall, there were joint winners, Alison Shreeve and John Cooper of Penn, of the Preston Brockhurst Horticultural Society Challenge Cup for the most first prizes and the Maurice Graham Perpetual Challenge Cup for the most points in Division 5.

It was lovely to have a local novice grower, Sue Holliday of Wem, enter her Old Fashioned blooms. Sue was awarded the NSPS certificate for the best exhibit in Novice classes. Sue announced that she was looking forward to entering the Old Fashioned classes next year.

Hopefully there will be more novice growers at the next Wem Show which will be held on the 15 and 16 July 2023. We are organising an information/ demonstration evening in October to encourage as many growers as possible to start exhibiting the pre 1910 varieties as they are so important to the town of Wem and the Show.

*“Gardening is learning, learning,
learning. That’s the fun of them.
You’re always learning.”*

Helen Mirren

Royal Welsh Show

By Jen and Lewis Morgan

Hooray!! The Royal Welsh Show was back after a two-year Covid enforced absence. However, there was a certain amount of trepidation about how the Horticultural Marquee would look and more importantly how much support the National Sweet Pea Championship of Wales would receive.

So, here's the background to what transpired. Due to ongoing Covid concerns The Show Organisers could not commit to staging the Show until well past their normal timescales and procuring all the necessary infrastructure support proved a challenge. The Horticultural Marquee due to actual Marquee availability was only anticipated as going to be

60% of it's normal size so there were concerns if the Marquee could accommodate all the exhibitors. In the end fears were allayed as the actual Marquee was larger than anticipated, and unfortunately there was still a certain amount of Covid uncertainty amongst exhibitors, the combination of both saw the Marquee able to cope.

The Sweet Pea Championship show benches were re-sited along one side of the Marquee which proved to be successful as the exhibits drew visitors along the length of the Marquee to the Society Stand which was centrally located and proved to be a focal point for visiting royalty and media, more of which later.



View of Exhibition benches.
Photo by Lewis Morgan.



Welsh region exhibition stand.
Photo by Lewis Morgan.

The Society Stand whilst having to be reduced in size due to the previously mentioned space constraints, and availability of help to stage the exhibits, again proved to be very popular with a lot of visitors seeking advice, this year's theme being to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. The use of floral foam was minimised to one exhibit, and



S4C filming. Photos by Lewis Morgan.



remarkably despite the heatwave experienced during the set-up day and first two days of the Show both the Show exhibits and the Society Stand fared remarkably well, and possibly remained in better condition longer than seen in previous years when the climate was more temperate.

John Rowlands and Allan Evans maintained the Society media presence and were interviewed for the S4C Show coverage which also included the Show benches and a separate S4C Gardening programme. As with previous years, all being well, coverage is usually on the Tuesday morning of the Show sometime up to 12 noon, available on freeview / freesat for those outside Wales to record, or watch on catch up.



Princess Royal discussing all things Sweet Peas with Jenny Morgan.
Photo by Lewis Morgan.



Childrens Class Winner - Poppy Harper. *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

The Marquee again integrated the Schools, Amateur and Trade sections of all things Horticultural, Bee Keeping and Honey, and welcomed many visitors including The Princess Royal, Princess Anne, who toured the whole of the Marquee and was introduced to representatives of all sections of the Marquee.

The Princess Royal spent a considerable amount of time admiring both the exhibits on the Show Benches together with the Society Stand Display which featured a Bowl of the Platinum Jubilee variety Sweet Pea. The Princess Royal remarked to Society Members that Her Majesty would have adored the Display, a fact borne out by Sweet Peas adorning Her Majesty's coffin on its journey from Balmoral.

In 2019 The Welsh Region introduced and sponsored a special celebration class which comprised a mixed bowl of Spencer Sweet Peas to include foliage and gypsophila, and a mixed vase of Spencer Sweet Peas. Whilst it has been decided to continue this class for 2020, Covid saw it carried over to 2022 instead.

The Children's classes were well supported, and along with their prize cards copies of previous annuals and the growing advice information sheets were included to add some encouragement for the future.



Welsh Region Celebration Class. *Photos by Lewis Morgan.*



RESULTS

NINE VASES DISTINCT

(No Entries)

SIX VASES DISTINCT

1st Allan Evans 2nd – 3rd –

THREE VASES DISTINCT

1st John Rowlands 2nd Jennifer Morgan 3rd –

ONE MIXED VASE

1st Glyn Jones 2nd J Lesley Jones 3rd Megan Clay

MIXED BOWL

1st John Rowlands 2nd Allan Evans 3rd Megan Clay

ONE VASE OF WHITE OR CREAM

1st W D Williams 2nd Jennifer Morgan 3rd –

ONE VASE OF MAUVRE, LAVENDER OR BLUE

1st Jennifer Morgan 2nd John Rowlands 3rd W D Williams

ONE VASE OF PINK

1st W D Williams 2nd – 3rd –

ONE VASE OF ANY OTHER COLOUR

1st John Rowlands 2nd Glyn Jones 3rd W D Williams

SINGLE STEM

1st Jennifer Morgan 2nd John Rowlands 3rd Megan Clay

NOVICE CLASS - ONE MIXED VASE

1st Bryn Probert 2nd – 3rd –

WELSH REGION CELEBRATION CLASS

1st Jennifer Morgan 2nd John Rowlands 3rd Allan Evans

MIXED BOWL OF OLD-FASHIONED SWEET PEAS

1st W D Williams 2nd Jennifer Morgan 3rd –

MIXED VASE OF OLD-FASHIONED SWEET PEAS

1st Allan Evans 2nd – 3rd –

CHILDREN'S CLASS – 4-11 YEARS - ONE MIXED VASE OF 5 STEMS

1st Poppy Harper 2nd Mari Davies 3rd –

No	Name of Cultivar	1	2	3	4
	White Anniversary	0	1	0	0
	Bristol	0	0	1	0
	Charlie's Angel	0	0	0	1
	Eclipse	0	1	0	0
	Gardeners Jubilee	0	1	1	0
	Gwawr Cymru	0	1	0	0
	Gwendoline	0	1	1	0
	Happy Birthday	0	1	0	0
	Jilly	0	1	1	0
	Judith Wilkinson	0	0	0	1
	Just Julia	0	0	0	1
	Karen Louise	0	3	1	0
	Mrs Bernard Jones	0	1	1	0
	Pink Pearl	0	1	0	0
	Sir Jimmy Shand	0	2	0	1
	Somerset Lady	1	1	0	0
	White Frills	0	1	0	0
	Total	1	15	6	4

31 vases (8 mixed), 9 Bowls.



The Royal Windsor Flower Show

By Derek Chapple



I read in the Autumn Bulletin that the CSPS were putting on a display at the above mentioned show on June 11 which was a special one for the Windsor Society, being its 115th show and in Platinum Jubilee year too. My Sweet Pea seeds were planted just after mid October, which is when I normally sow them. I was aiming to have 400 plants for the 400 section at the National show. My plants were quite tall when a large amount of them were chewed off, the chewed section being left behind. I think the culprit was a shrew as no efforts were made to dig into the compost to get to the seed. This

reduced my numbers down to a maximum of around 360 and meant having to plant every plant I had. This led to a large variation in the height of the plants. Surprisingly the weaker plants grew well and nearly caught up with their stronger counterparts.

Caroline Ball phoned, asking if I would have any blooms for the 11 June. I thought there would be. The plants grew strongly and by the first week in June many were producing flowers. Caroline came round on the evening of the ninth. By this time the plants were producing long stemmed big blooms which were slightly gappy. We cut threes and fours and filled the largest bucket I had with over 200 blooms. We also received blooms from Robert Read, Brian Thompson, Roger Parsons, Phil and Zoe Johnson, Graeme Hollingdale, Alison Shreeve, Caroline Ball and other members. A small team of talented arrangers created the display on Friday afternoon.

I was picked up by Caroline and her friend, Elaine Davis, on a cool summery Saturday morning which developed into a wonderfully sunny day and taken to Windsor Great Park. There we were met by Alison Shreeve and the most stunning display of Sweet Peas I've seen. This was created on tiered staging



Alison Shreeve laying the groundwork. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*



Blooms from the Johnson's received in the post.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

using glass vases of three different heights, that had been borrowed from Phil Johnson, arranged against a green cloth background. The three different heights of the display vases made it easier to match the length of the Sweet Pea stems to the appropriate vase and created a delightfully light and visually interesting display. Very little staging material was required, mainly foliage and gypsophila. The display was completed with a few small arrangements of Lathyrus species.

Judging of the competitive exhibits was in progress when we arrived enabling us to sort out the extra packets of seeds to their appropriate place in the display drawer on our sales table. Due to a large cookery section, judging continued well past the scheduled opening time of the show. As

our display was near to one of the entrances to the marquee we were asked to repel visitors! By this time our Patron, Alan Titchmarsh, was showing Sophie Wessex around the exhibits. Caroline presented the Countess with a delightful tied bunch of Sweet Peas, which had been created the previous day by Gill Thompson, along with packets of 'Alan Titchmarsh' Sweet Pea seed for them both, gifts which were gratefully received.

When the show marquee finally opened the bunches of surplus Sweet Peas were very quickly sold. Fortunately Caroline had the foresight to buy a card reader which was extensively used. The vase arrangements on the display stand were also sold but could



The Countess of Wessex, Alan Titchmarsh discuss Sweet Peas with Caroline Ball.
Photo by Alison Shreeve.



Lady in Waiting carries the posy of Sweet Peas.



not be collected until the show closed. We certainly could have sold at least three times the blooms that we had available and all had been snapped up before midday. We were also selling Sweet Pea seed. Most of the customers were interested in the old-fashioned varieties especially those on the show stand which also quickly sold out. A few people showed interest in joining the National or Chiltern Societies but very few took up the option on the day. For most of the afternoon there was a steady stream of visitors either asking questions or buying seeds. During this time our Patron presented the prizes, with Roger Dix winning the competitive Sweet Pea classes.

After a busy afternoon it was time to pack away the vases and dismantle the stand. The precision carpentry, using nuts and bolts to secure the timbers of the backdrop, should enable them to be used again in 2023. Thanks go to Adam Heeley for his construction (and arranging) efforts. By this time only two vases were left unclaimed out of 40+. The nature of the display meant there was next to no waste which was a plus. The drawback we found with the green fabric used as backdrop was it showed up water spillages even after they had dried! Alison Shreeve took it home to wash it, hoping this will solve the problem for the next display. This brought an enjoyable and successful day to an end.

The Windsor show organisers were so thrilled with our display that they have invited us back again in 2023 and have indicated they would like to explore the possibility of hosting a Sweet Pea show for us in the future. If you would like to help in any way at the 2023 show please contact Alison Shreeve or Caroline Ball (contact details at the front of this Annual). You will be more than welcome and ensured of a fun day.



'Grandma Butt'.

Photo by Andrew Fletcher.

Competitions

100 Club

By Caroline Ball

Prize winners since those listed in the 2022 Sweet Pea Annual were as follows:

Draw Date	£100	£25	£10
28.4.22	F Towers Preston	A Hubbuck Chesterfield	M Owen Bolton
7.9.22	H Bastone Dartmouth	A Haskins Cuddington	A J Gillingwater Chingford
9.11.22	F Towers Preston	A Haskins Cuddington	G Hollingdale Princes Risborough
8.2.23	R Parsons Bracklesham Bay	J Cooper Wolverhampton	G Hollingdale Princes Risborough
4.3.23	G Bishop Stokenchurch	J Cooper Wolverhampton	R Parsons Bracklesham Bay

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



'White Frills', 'Sir Jimmy Shand'
and 'Mrs Bernard Jones'.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

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

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District Reps – the role, guidance, and developing our network

By Roz Warley

Hopefully by now most of you will have your Peas sown for this year, due to us being so far north our sowing date will be Valentines Day! Therefore, it's a great window for me to grab the time to write this article which is intended to benefit the District Representatives plus their local membership.

It is felt by the committee that this would be a timely opportunity (with the new show season not too far away) to provide some guidance for all the District Representatives in terms of the role they have kindly taken up, plus the steps we are taking as a Society to improve connection between the NSPS and its membership via the District Reps.

A good starting point will be to discuss the role of District Reps, and a very useful guide drawn up by the committee which was passed over to me by Graeme Hollingdale last week and is reproduced in its entirety below:

What we would expect of a 'proactive' District Rep

- To be the local representative of the NSPS in their area
- To promote the Society, it's aims and objectives, whenever and wherever possible
- To welcome new members in their area(s)
- To contact existing members in their area on a regular basis eg (but not limited to) via Newsletters, email and social media
- To draw up a list of local activities (including shows) and encourage members to participate
- To send news items, updates and articles from the region for inclusion in the Bulletins and Annual and encourage members to do the same
- To liaise with both the General and Membership Secretaries about the area membership list and welcome pack for new members **
- To seek advice from the committee if and when required
- Giving (or enabling others to give) advice and guidance on Sweet Peas and other Lathyrus including exhibiting
- Disseminating relevant information down from the general committee to their local membership **

What we would hope that they might additionally do

- Organise at least one event locally, with Sweet Peas and/or the NSPS at the heart each year. These could be area/regional shows, displays or socials, garden visits including practical demonstrations of growing techniques. These would naturally lead into –
- Setting-up and/or supporting a local or regional affiliated group/society
- To assist with setting-up and being available at displays and other promotional events run under the NSPS banner, at locations in or close to their areas
- To either give talks/presentations themselves to local societies/groups, or facilitate others to do so

What would the District Reps expect from us as committee members?

- Continuous flow of information down from the committee through the Secretary, so that they can confidently report accurately and without the possibility of giving incorrect or confusing information, to their local membership* **
- Practical help, guidance and advice when asked for.
- Regular updates on membership in their areas (especially new and non-renewing members)
- Provide a forum system whereby District Reps can share their experiences, ask for advice and work independently from the general committee
- Help to set-up (at least initially) and run a new local/area affiliated society.

*** In my role as District Reps co-ordinator I am happy to upkeep the flow of information from the committee to the reps, its important that all reps are on the same page, and therefore sharing the same information with their membership to avoid inaccuracies. Also as a time saving exercise for example rather than Julia having to send out to lots of Reps an updated list of their localised membership, I'm happy to forward copies to those Reps that require them.*

The committee's intention for developing the role of District Representative co-ordinator is to facilitate a better flow of information to the membership via the District Reps, and back again – in order to improve the experience of being part of the NSPS for the members and ensuring there is a network of people available to assist with any enquiries or questions members might have, and to keep information flowing back to the committee in equal measure. As a Society we are keen to offer a complete network which assists members either through information made available in person or via our information sheets, also in the form of localised talks, groups, shows, growers open gardens or stalls. There are many ways in which we can not only keep our membership involved but also seek out the next generation of members to keep our great Society alive and well.

As you will be aware, I have sent out some emails introducing myself in this role and outlining some of the ideas and intentions we are hoping to put into action throughout the year. We can't do this without feedback from the District Reps. Unfortunately, so far, the level of feedback received is somewhat underwhelming, which could be for many reasons, however we can only ask you to read the guidance above, and our intentions on the modernisation of the network and evaluate your own role in our new path forward. The committee are happy to discuss all ideas from the Reps and their membership, which could assist us to firstly enhance the experience of being an NSPS member, and secondly attract new members.

Also if you are a member with a question, or you feel you too can play a part in attracting new members please let us know, there are a lot of people out there with great ideas, we need to hear them!

Finally, please District Reps, take up the contact offered if you haven't already and let's get things moving. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Wishing you a great growing /showing season.



Colour in Roger Parsons polytunnel. Photo by Caroline Ball.

District Representatives Reports

Buckinghamshire

By Graeme Hollingdale

Thank goodness that the 2022 season felt like (almost) back to normal after all the obstacles placed in our way for the previous 2 years. Yes, it was wet, hot, windy, cold, dry at all the wrong times for those of us aiming for best vases at the top shows (if you do not understand my sense of humour by now, then there really is no hope!)

You will recall how the banning of Oasis by the RHS on their premises took over much of our thoughts last year, and not just if you were planning to exhibit at one of the NSPS shows (the Early in 2022 held at Wisley, in their new Hilltop centre was fantastic, reports elsewhere – we have been invited back whenever we wish to go; which will probably be in 2024 and 2023 for a Plant Society display – keep your eyes peeled on our Website and in the Bulletins). It was great, whilst preparing the bumper Autumn Bulletin, to read so much positivity about using alternatives.

Many local societies were not aware of the fact that Oasis had not been banned anywhere except on RHS premises, with some deciding unilaterally to not allow it, whilst many exhibitors were just left confused. Whilst doing my usual round of judging and speaking during the year, I have been emphasising the facts and whilst encouraging the use of alternatives, I have also suggested that stocks can be used up but to be very careful about disposal. It is so disappointing to see vases of flowers poorly staged, with stems hitting the bottom of the vase and the inevitable bunching up of blooms; simply raising them up with newspaper etc immediately improves the spectacle.

We in the Chiltern Sweet Pea Society (CSPS) along with many local, area and district societies are struggling to get members to attend events other than shows. It used to be the case that if you provided food and drink, people would attend anything!! As our good friend Roger Parsons has highlighted and I concur with, people over a certain age have been very reluctant to go back to pre-covid levels of socialising. He has noticed this at many events he has been invited to this year. I have noticed in the Arts, that those musical performances that involve or are appealing to younger (under 40's perhaps) people are much more likely to be sold out, whereas those mainly of appeal to the 40+ age range are less likely to, with people reluctant to commit in advance and buy tickets, preferring to decide on the day.

All this doesn't help planning and means that often events are still being cancelled. After all, nothing can continue if it operates at a loss. Please everyone not only continue supporting events yourselves but also encourage others to as well.



Brian Butler Alison Shreeve and Chris Gray preparing for prize giving. *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

With leadership from our friend and CSPA committee colleague Alison (who has this year taken over the chair of the NSPS) a new and much more modern, relevant and easy to use Website has been developed. I know that this has taken up considerable amounts of time by many people all wanting the finished product to be of the highest quality, easy to use and (eventually) making life easier for your hard-working committee, especially as regards Membership and Financial matters. I do encourage you all to take advantage of using this site as there is so much for all of us there.

All the usual local shows which have Sweet Pea classes in our area took place but due to the extremely hot and dry weather finishing off our 'Peas very early in 2022, entries were sparse. I didn't manage to exhibit anywhere apart from the CSPA and Early National. Bucks members Kathy Gray and Alison Shreeve were able to support at one or more of Wingrave, Kimble, Long Marston, Bovingdon, thus ensuring that at least we were represented.

At the CSPA show itself, we had 48 vases, 11 bowls and 2 baskets staged, which was significantly lower than in 2021. Brian Thompson exhibited with us once again and his blooms being noticeably better than ours, unsurprisingly netted him the Best Exhibit ('Cilla', 'Glasnevin', 'Solitude') Best Vase ('Bill's Choice') Most Points Trophy in the single vase section and the Challenge Shield for Class A ('Bill's Choice', 'Sir Jimmy Shand', 'Solitude'). Alison Shreeve won the Wessex Trophy for the Best Vase in Small growers sections. Thank you everyone for your support.

Much discussion in committee followed about schedule revisions and dates for 2023, especially as



Wingrave Show benches. *Photo by Caroline Ball.*



Chiltern Show. Photo by Lewis Morgan.

the calls for earlier shows in the south of the country have once again been voiced by many. Sadly, the Early National cannot be moved this year as it has had to be placed on a suitable weekend for our generous hosts. So, we have taken the plunge and by way of experiment, the CSPS show will be held on Sunday 18 June 2023. If all those growers who regularly have plentiful supplies of quality blooms by mid-month bring them along, then not only will our show likely stay around this time but it adds pressure on the NSPS show committee to follow suit! Ask me for a CSPS schedule by dropping me an email (graeme@graemehollingdale.com – which you all know by heart now!)



Benches at Chiltern Show.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

We have also decided to streamline the small growers classes into one section (as for many years the amount of competition has waned) for up to 200 cordon plants. This gives us room for classes for Novice growers (for those who have never won a FIRST prize at a CSPS – or similar – show prior to the current season) Committee members (or their representatives) will happily help to stage if required, and a New Grower class. This will be as open-ended as possible:

5 stems, one or more cultivars of any type of Sweet Pea (*Lathyrus Odoratus*) which can be staged in anything (including Society vases) Entrants will be encouraged to ask for assistance!

The number of classes for non-cordon grown types has been doubled; with both a single cultivar vase and a mixed for Old Fashioned and the same for Grandiflora/semi-Grandiflora types, as well as 6 miscellaneous/decorative classes.



Chiltern Show. *Photo by Lewis Morgan.*

As the staging time is limited (8.30 – noon) but with an extra hour allowed for bowls and baskets whilst the judging of vases is taking place from 12.15, we retain the format that the maximum number of stems per vase is 12 (with many at 5) and the maximum number of vases in a class is 3, which works very well.

The popular Wingrave and Rowsham open Sweet Pea show will be held on Saturday 8 July in 2023.

CSPS members continue to do extremely well at the Early National, with wins coming from Kathy Gray (Clay Cup) Alison Shreeve (Best Vase and Exhibit in Div V and Best Bowl) Rob Read (Daily Mail and Jack Harriss) Caroline Ball (Best Div VII, the Henry Eckford cup and best Decorative) and I managed the Alsen Cup. Many others won classes in all divisions.

At our October Autumn meeting, we invited Phillippa Cooper to the Chilterns to do a presentation for us, incorporating aspects of Henry Eckford, Old Fashioneds, Wem and the Eckford Society with which she has been associated throughout and instrumental in restarting the annual show in that Shropshire town with which we Sweet Pea lovers have an affinity. Those in attendance were rewarded with a very wide-ranging and delightfully presented session. We highly recommend you attempt to book her for your area meetings as well. This year's Autumn meeting (incorporating the AGM) will take place again on a Sunday in early October. Details will appear on the Website when they

are finalised. We are open to suggestions for a speaker who hasn't visited us previously; however, as we are a specialist group, the topic must be to do with Sweet Peas!

The opportunities to take on displays at major shows in our area are significantly lower than in others (noticeably in the North of England) however several members (under the leadership of Caroline and Alison) joined forces to stage at Royal Windsor in 2022 (report elsewhere) on behalf of the NSPS and CSPS. Plans are already underway to stage a display and bureau there again this year (setting up on Friday 9 June) for the one-day event on Saturday 10 June.



Blenheim Flower show have long attempted to attract a Sweet Pea display from us and are potentially a possible new venue for a National. However, until now it has always been impossible for various reasons, least of all the proximity to the Early dates. In 2023 set-up will be on Thursday 22 June and the three-day event open on Friday to Sunday 23/24/25 June. As it stands, we do not have enough members willing to offer themselves (and flowers) for slots to enable it to happen (nobody has to commit for more time/days than they can offer. Please come forward and contact either Caroline or Alison for more details, you will not regret it!

Each year I take on a couple of talks during the flowering season as I like to have flowers to stage and use as props for the talk. They always go down well as something different to the normal monthly meetings that gardening clubs have, usually being slide/powerpoint scripted talks. Out of season I have on occasion been persuaded to do an "everything you wanted to know about exhibiting but were afraid to ask" type of

Q & A session, which again is somewhat out of the ordinary and even if it only applies to the societies own show, there is so much material and information to share.

This year, Alison set-up a Sweet Pea talk and practical demonstration supplying seed, compost, pots and cake(!) with her local horticultural society and invited me along. It was a great few hours on a November Sunday afternoon, with much knowledge shared, questions asked and answered, with many gardeners going home with pots of newly sown 'Peas to look after for the coming season. Hopefully they will be encouraged to order their own seed and join our ranks in coming years.

One member who attended passed on details to another society and so we did a similar but slightly compressed version (as it followed their formal AGM) on a freezing January evening. I expect that we will be doing a few more of these over coming years as they are a great way to inform and show just how easy 'peas are to sow and grow.

Cumbria

By Carole Tate

The Westmorland Horticultural Society Show was held on 17 July 2022 at Endmore Village Hall. It was an early start with staging from 7am till 9 am (or previous evening) and judging from 9.30. I arrived early morning armed with rushes and Sweet Peas plus cacti, succulents and fuchsias on a lovely sunny day. I was welcomed with tea and chocolate biscuits as I began to arrange my exhibits. This one day horticultural show has 11 classes for Sweet Peas and was well attended.

I assisted with the stewarding and was rewarded with an excellent choice of sandwiches and sausage rolls for lunch. The judging was completed before opening to the public at 12 noon. I set up a small Sweet Pea advice and information bureau along with Stephen Hayward and Susan Meek which attracted quite a bit of interest.

Kevin Preston won the Society Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best exhibit of Sweet Peas along with firsts for 6 vases of 9 stems distinct and 3 vases of 9 stems distinct. Stephen won second with his vase of 'Just Julia'. I won first for my miniature arrangement and Chris Nightingale won the P&J Ball cup for the most entries on the bench.

The show was very enjoyable with a well stocked plant stall, refreshments and delicious home made cakes. Well done to the team for organising a super event.

Derbyshire

By Andy Hubbuck

As I write my report on 1 November, my Peas are now pricked out and in my greenhouse. I've cut my numbers down to 200 plants. The reason being – old age is maybe catching up with us! Plus the fact I only did two shows in 2022 due to the RHS rules on Oasis.

The annual show at Middle Rasen in Lincolnshire goes from strength to strength and Brian Jepson, Lou Ashurst and myself were amongst the red cards with John Mabbett and John Jaques also doing well.

My main show was the Yorkshire Sweet Peas Show at East Ardsley, near Wakefield. The venue is perfect – good lighting, plenty of staging facilities and food and drink on Friday night. Also the village hall is 500 yards from the M1 junction. Peas were plentiful and of good quality. Darren Myers won the nine vase class, with very good blooms from his first cut. Weather permitting, he looked good for Harlow Carr for the next weekend.

Brian Jepson, being the only other Derbyshire grower, won the nine stems per vase section. Well done Brian, another well supported show.

A very disappointing show at Harlow Carr, especially in division one as only Darren Myers exhibited. I understand the other divisions were okay. I feel it is difficult to get north and south growers to our National Shows due to weather conditions etc.



Holymoorside show.
Photo by Darren Myers.

Our local show at Holymoorside went well, with Dave Torrington, Darren, Myers, and our lady grower, Clare Hickman, sharing the honours.

My own Peas flowered well, and we enjoyed growing and tending to our plants. 200 plants next year will be just as pleasurable, I'm sure.

Good luck to all growers in 2023.

Devon

By Russell Pettit

Hello everyone. My name is Russell Pettit and I've just taken over as the District Representative for Devon.

I live in Tiverton and I work as a chef so as you can imagine free time is precious but growing Sweet Peas is my escape from the day to day chaos. I'm hoping to run some talks about growing Sweet Peas in my area but if you live in Devon and you have any suggestion for talks or events that I could attend to spread the word about the society or just demonstrate the process of sowing and growing Sweet Peas please get in touch. I'd love to hear from you as there doesn't seem to be much going on in the area (yet) but hopefully that will change in the future.

On a personal note, I've sowed some of my Sweet Peas in November and another lot in January. The November ones are now in the cold frame just waiting for the ground to thaw out and the January ones are just beginning to poke through. The new season is go, go, go.

This year I've decided to concentrate on the Spencer varieties and have chosen these for this year. 'Windsor', 'Jilly', 'Platinum Sensation', 'Gwendoline', 'Hero' and 'Noel Sutton'

This year will be the first time I've decided to grow using the cordon method. Watch this space, it's either going to work or it will be a disaster but I have faith that if I need help I have the whole of the Sweet Pea Society behind me .

I hope to see some of the Devon members over the Summer.

Essex

By Brian Harwood

Hello everyone.

I'm hoping for a good showing season this year as the intense heat of last summer made my Sweet Peas short lived.

My local show was at Elm Park Hornchurch, which was held on 17 June. There were 6 Sweet Pea classes ranging from vases of 3 stems to a vase of 12 stems. The show provided cream teas which were served by the committee and volunteers. There were 3 Sweet Pea exhibitors: Chris Dale from Ipswich, Harry White and myself, with Chris taking 5 firsts the cup and medal and 1 second, Harry White taking 1 first and sharing the minor places with myself. The 2023 show will be held on 17 June and hopefully we can have more exhibitors. Up to the time of writing I have had no feedback from Rayleigh regarding their show results.

Chingford Show was held on 25 June and Alan Gillingwater was the only entrant, winning the 6 vase, 3 vase and the bowl classes. Their 2023 show will be held on 15 July.

Buckhurst Hill Show was held on 9 July and again Alan Gillingwater being the only entrant and taking all the honours.

2023

The seeds were sown on 31 October with a good germination and all looking healthy and standing up to the frosts. Here's wishing you all a very successful season and hoping the weather does not get too hot.

Hampshire

By Jim McDonald

With the affects of climate change to nearly all our seasons, it makes it hard to plan for the future in the garden especially the Sweet Peas. Like many other growers in our area, 2022 was almost a non event. Up to June everything was going well with strong plants, stems up to 24 inches long and excitement was starting to mount. Mary and I did a demo of Sweet Peas at our local Floral Club on the 1 June which was a great success. Downton Show was next on the list and again we had reasonable success. I would say Downton was the best show for quality in the area. The New Forest Society show was next and our flower stems were beginning to shorten dramatically with the heat but Brian Bartlett, Brian Thompson and Peter Beech's flowers were reaching their peak! Our entries at the National at Wisley was now down to baskets, bowls and the odd mixed vase.

Our seed harvest was very moderate with plants dying with the heat before they had produced many pods.

It's now down to 2023 and I have gone back to sowing the main quantity of seeds on 10 October which was the date everyone sowed their seeds when I started growing Sweet Peas 55 years ago! I am planning for another hot summer ahead then maybe I will have reasonable flowers for May and June and a better seed crop in July.

Progress to date – December 2022 the plants are looking good so let's hope we have good flowers to enjoy.

Show Results

Downton Show winners – Brian Bartlett picked up most of the main awards with Mary and myself winning the cup for most points in the Sweet Pea section.

New Forest show – The main prize winners were Brian Bartlett, Yo and Peter Beech, Ted Perren, Lyn Ward and Tony Ashford.

We look forward to the 2023 shows.

Kent

By Richard Borthwick

It is a fact that Sweet Peas are a popular and often grown plant in many gardens. Unfortunately that is not reflected in the number of members residing in Kent. I have volunteered to be the Kent representative for our Society, and was surprised and somewhat disappointed in the roll call of members within our County.

Communication has to be a factor and in my many years of membership I have often commented that there is no peer to peer communication which might encourage new growers. Unless personal contact is made and maintained people are left to their own devices and maybe not encouraged.

In this County advancing years has curtailed several of our exhibitors. However green shoots still appear. At North Tonbridge Horticultural Society Messrs B Cook and C Passey took the honours at their Summer Show. Alan Ford of Deal took prizes at Mongeham and Eastry flower shows. At the early Summer Show held by Weald Horticultural Society of Sevenoaks Brian Jarvis, by all accounts a serious grower, was very successful in the Sweet Pea classes. Peter Ellis won the novice class at the Kent Federation Show and believe it or not a vase of Sweet Peas was judged "Best in Show". Obviously other shows had Sweet Pea classes and we congratulate the entrants there. Surprisingly Faversham a large town will not be holding a Summer Show this year because they lack sufficient committee members.

For many years the Kent Federation of Horticultural Societies staged a combined show at the County Show. After 'Covid' that invitation was withdrawn and rather than the three day show at Detling it now stages a one day show at Ditton, Aylesford, Kent. This year's Show is on Sunday 2 July. This is a tremendous show with top quality exhibits including vegetables, home economics, crafts and roses as well as Sweet Peas. I encourage members to make an entry if possible, but if not come and admire. Free parking and refreshments are available.

I wish you good growing in 2023.

*"I've always felt that having a garden
is like having a good and loyal friend."*

C Z Guest

North West Region

By Nicky Edwards

As you can see from all the activities below, 2022 was a very busy year for us in the North West. With the country out of lockdown and the various events and shows beginning to open their doors to the public once again the year had an air of great excitement. It was as if everything was starting afresh and with renewed vigour. Thanks to our brilliant team of North West members we were able to participate in many events over the season. We put up some fantastic show stands which won several awards and accolades. We spread the word about our favourite flower and the NSPS to many diverse audiences and educated the next generation of gardeners. Thanks to each and every member who got involved. What a great year team!

Growing Workshops



Photos by Nicky Edwards.



Our season started off with our usual programme of five growing workshops. In session 1 seeds were sown in trays and the resulting seedlings potted on singly in session 2. The plants were stopped in session 3 and hardened off in session 4. Session 5 was all about final planting, discussing various growing media and structures, bed preparation etc. A dozen gardeners new to growing Sweet Peas joined in the workshops and took home lovely healthy plants to transplant in April. The programme was extended to demonstrate cordon growing and layering in a sixth session. A seventh session showed participants how to stage and make decorative arrangements with their flowers. Several of them entered shows for the first time, including the Late National at Harlow Carr and the North West Regional Show at Chorley Flower Show. It was great to see them having success with their flowers and getting involved with showing. Hopefully they will continue this new-found interest in Sweet Peas for many years to come.

Arley Hall Plant Fair



The weather was unseasonably warm and beautifully sunny for this event and this brought out the plant-loving public in large numbers. The setting was amazing, especially for any fans of “Peaky Blinders”, which is filmed there. We sold vernus plants, seeds and *Lathyrus Odoratus* plants and chatted to a steady stream of people who visited the stall. Carole Tate’s wonderful long-leaved pink *Lathyrus*

Vernus was a great talking point and even the other stall-holders came to ask about it and how to procure these plants. Needless to say, we sold out of these very early in the day and went on to sell many of the other varieties of vernus. All in all this was a very successful and enjoyable day.

Market Stall at Fazakerley Street, Chorley

This presented very challenging weather conditions. One volunteer described this as like “being on an oil rig in the North Sea in a storm”. It was not practical to open the seed boxes as all the labels etc. blew away! Despite this, sales of vernus and odoratus plants were made and Chorley Flower Show was advertised. There were enough volunteers to ensure no one had to spend too much time on the stall.



Cholmondeley Castle Plant Fair

This was another windy day when it was not practical to open the seed boxes but sales of plants were made. Volunteers were able to take a look around the other specialist stalls at this Plant Hunters Fair, held in the wonderful location of Cholmondeley Castle, and offer advice to the public.

Sweet Pea Awareness Day at Astley Park

A fantastic day with brilliant weather in the beautiful location of the Walled Gardens in Astley Park in Chorley. We sold seeds and plants and provided information about Sweet Peas and the Society. Children were invited to plant tingitanus seeds to grow at home and some of them came to tell us how their plants were doing at Chorley Flower Show. All the volunteers enjoyed spending an hour or two at this event in the sunshine.

Adlington Hall Plant Fair

This was a fantastic day with weather to match. Volunteers sold vernus and odoratus plants and offered advice to the public. We promoted the Society, Chorley Flower Show and put on the children's sowing event. There were enough volunteers to make sure everyone made the tour of the beautiful Adlington Hall gardens with its famous bluebell walk in full bloom.



Having held plant fairs for many years, the Adlington Hall is now up for sale and will unfortunately not be hosting this event in 2023. We plan to go to Capesthorne Hall near Macclesfield instead next year.

Early North West Social Meeting

It was great to see a good number of members, especially new members, attending this new-style social. Thanks to Stephen Hayward for his entertaining talk about his first year growing Sweet Peas. Also to Julia Beardmore for her informative talk on Kew Gardens and the RHS Holford Medal which we won for our RHS Tatton Show stand which was then judged Best Society Stand at an RHS Show in 2021. Tom Atherton gave a demonstration on how to arrange exhibits using rushes and how to make the rush bundles. There was the usual raffle, quiz and pie and pea meal and some fun games of stand-up Sweet Pea bingo.

Euxton Open Gardens

We had a small stand selling plants and seeds and offering advice at this local event. The weather was brilliant and volunteers were able to look around some of the seven open local gardens. There was an excellent cream tea for sale in the community hall so all in all a great day.

North West Autumn Social

Our second social of the year was well supported at the new venue with a good turnout of members. Phillippa attended with her husband John and gave us a most interesting talk about Henry Eckford, the Wem Society and the Wem Sweet Pea Festival. Our members were very keen on supporting this show in 2023 so hopefully there will be a good number of entries. John and Trish Pattinson gave us an entertaining talk and we had an informative talk about compost and methods of composting. John Richards told us about his first year growing Sweet Peas. Some of the awards and cups that we had won during the year were on display for members to see. Along with lunch, the raffle, seed sales, presentations etc. the social rounded off the season nicely and members enjoyed the chance to catch up with one another and meet new members.

Other Activities



May Social. Photo by Nicky Edwards.



Southport Show. Photo by Nicky Edwards.

The North West Region also organised display stands and manned information bureau at RHS Tatton, Chorley, Southport, Poynton and a couple of smaller local shows. Further details are in the separate reports in this Annual.

Suffolk

By Chris Dale

Hi again from Suffolk and Norfolk.

So, to continue from last year... at the time of writing, Bojo has gone, the country has been Trussed-up, and now we're being Sunak-ed. Inflation means average people can't really justify the expenditure on parties, wine and cake. Or fuel to visit castles. Or eye tests. Better to save the cash for heating. Little Elsie is a year older. I fear for her future, but her sunflowers grew well enough to produce seed for the birdies and her pip-grown

apple tree is doing very nicely in grandad's garden. In her blissfully innocent world, Peppa Pig is still her queen and grandad's Sweet Peas are the best! And she loves to 'help' arrange them as illustrated in the Autumn bulletin, much to her delight

Brian will probably have written about our adventures at Elm Park in Essex, where I had the pleasure of winning the cup again but even better, enjoying a lovely cream tea and some good company amongst fellow gardeners. If 'we' were in charge, with some good old common sense, maybe some of the damage inflicted by 'them' could be rectified. But I mustn't digress into political judgements. I'll just keep shovelling the manure.

The Sahara-like temperatures and drought conditions that seemed to last forever, very quickly ended my 'Pea season. And the spuds. And over-heated the greenhouse. No amount of watering was going to keep things fresh, so everything was removed from the 'Pea rows pdq, and by early Autumn, several bags of manure, 6x and a dash of topsoil refreshment has been rough dug into next year's trenches.

But when to sow? My old dates of 6-10 October regularly produce plants that are too advanced. But Spring-sown plants just don't seem sufficiently robust to survive early drought or heat stress. So after much pondering and procrastinating, I delayed 2 weeks and started on 22-23 October. By 20 November I had some robust looking plants in the cold frames, each with 2 pairs of leaves and nicely set out in root trainers. 28 of 7 varieties from which to choose 15 x 6 and a 10 to make my 100. That's the current plan. Elm Park show is June 17, so fingers crossed for that one. Whether the early NSPS show will be doable will be in the lap of the weather gods, thermostat and watering system.

December's cold-snap proved a real challenge. Days of sub-zero temperatures so I wrapped up the cold frames in old duvets, and after thawing out gradually (as per Bernard's advice), have only suffered 1 casualty. Something has nibbled 3 plants, but that has been dealt with.

And one last thing before I close. This Oasis thing is still making me a bit bah-humbug and grumpy! The stuff has been manufactured using materials and energy. I get that the world needs to cease creating microplastic residues which pollute the environment. But the stuff that we have produced is going to have to be wasted responsibly to landfill. So having stopped making it, why not let us use what exists, ensuring it is disposed of responsibly to landfill afterwards? Ends up in the same place. Otherwise, the resources used to make it in the past has been wasted.

Anyway, best wishes as always from the far East. I hope that 2023 finds you spared from aphids, pollen beetles and political farce But blessed with perfect 4's.

West Sussex

By Roger Parsons



My plants were running about 2 weeks earlier than usual throughout the 2022 season which meant that by the Early National show all my blooms had gone to seed. This earliness seems to have been a common experience throughout the south coast counties. I think John Rieley was the only West Sussex exhibitor at the show, so congratulations to him. There was a benefit from the earliness in that I had agreed to display blooms on the Plant Heritage stand at the Chelsea Flower Show in May and had no difficulty achieving this. I was pleased to find the stand achieved a gold medal award with top marks in all categories and won a trophy for the best exhibit in the discovery zone.

Other events out of the county included on 10 June I supplied blooms for a Chiltern Sweet Pea Society/NSPS stand at the Windsor Show, which will no doubt be

reported on elsewhere. Trials returned to the RHS Wisley gardens and I was pleased to be a panel member judging these.

In terms of local shows, Jeffrey Hayne took the bronze medal at Yapton on 18 June with a vase of 'Sir Jimmy Shand' from his exhibit in the 3-vase class. Felpham and Middleton show was cancelled, a combination of the early, dry season and societies struggling to get going again following the Covid pandemic. Rustington too struggled but managed to hold a good Rose and Sweet Pea show with sufficient high-quality entries. I judged this show and gave the bronze medal for best vase to a very good 'Pip's Maroon' from Alan Humphrey. Alison Valentini and Dennis Collins of Horsham (best exhibit) were also class winners.

My final judging appointment of the season was at the Chiltern Show where I was very pleased to find a superb vase of 'Bill's Choice' exhibited by Brian Thompson deserved the bronze medal for best vase in show.

On 8 September, the day of the Queen's death, I gave a talk at Rustington Horticultural Association.

Looking ahead to 2023, I have done my main sowing at the end of October as usual but will also be doing a small February sowing in the hope of having some blooms available for the later date of the Early National. Wishing everyone an enjoyable and successful season ahead.

South Wales

By Jen and Lewis Morgan

2022 was a nervous start with Covid having reared it's head in the run up to Xmas, but we hoped the better weather of Spring would chase it away and see an improvement in the situation. The various Shows were confirming their dates, although The Royal Welsh Show left it pretty late and it almost didn't happen as getting some of the infrastructure in place was problematical for them. However, Shows and seedlings were off and running, and in the Morgan household a new garden workshop was under construction.

We gave a talk at our local garden club in January about our journey with Sweet Peas, from where we started just growing them for enjoyment in the garden, to our first show where we didn't really have a clue, and on to where we are now. At that first show which was the Royal Welsh we were indebted to Allan Evans who kindly showed us the way to go and since then Allan and Eirwen have become great friends. The talk was a great success helped by those listening being willing to ask questions as we went along which generated good discussion in the room rather than waiting until the end as we see on regular with other talks.

During the spring sowing period we were able to help those people local to us who had some seed off us with initial propagation tips and different ways to actually grow them on in the garden by being able to show them the stages we had reached in the greenhouse when they called, much easier than just trying to explain by word only.

At our grand-daughter's school where there are various gardening activities undertaken, an offer of Sweet Pea plants from Nanny Jen was gratefully accepted and in early April Poppy delivered enough plants for all twenty in the class, the teacher and her assistant. They had the 'Little Red Riding Hood' variety which proved popular and bloomed very well from late April through to when the school broke up for the summer holidays. They were particularly successful as the children could almost see them growing daily. Maybe we have sowed a seed for some future members, or even encouraged their parents to grow some with their children, we can only hope!

School delivery of Sweet Peas



Planting out took place late March, and we charged up the batteries with a short holiday in Jersey late April. Then it was headlong into the growing and showing season. First off was the local open gardens day which we take part in. Fortunately, the summer heatwave hadn't quite arrived, but the weather was good and again the event was well supported with valuable funds raised for the Charity. The visitors were able to admire the Sweet Peas in full bloom, also view the cordon rows and seed clumps, and we were able to give advice and hand out information on both the Society membership and growing tips.

Wem Sweet Pea Show had returned with a new date which suited the Welsh contingent. It didn't clash with The Royal Welsh Show as it had in past times, so a cross border raid over Offa's Dyke was planned with a two pronged attack from South and North Wales members. We were all pleased to be able to support the Show and look forward to attending once more in 2023 when the date which is a bit later will hopefully allow more participants to attend.

The end of June saw us participate at the Early Show at "H.Q" – RHS Wisley, the Show staged in the excellent hall within the Hilltop Pavilion. The Oasis floral foam situation was almost as controversial as the Oasis pop group Gallagher brothers had been in their time, some may say more! Various showing mediums were used and we thought the quality of the displays was a credit to all the members who persevered. For us we cut down on the number of classes entered to ensure we had sufficient time to successfully stage the classes we did enter. If Sweet Pea Shows wasn't enough, we also had two friend's daughters getting married, and we'd agreed to help with the supply of Sweet Peas and other cut flowers as well, so doubled up on the cutting bed as well. The first at the same time as the Early Show, once we'd picked for the show, everything else went to the wedding, and we also got a call for some blooms for a friend's relatives funeral.

With the Gloucestershire Federation Sweet Pea Show cancelled due to structural issues with the Venue, nothing to do with Covid for once, the Chiltern Show beckoned in early July and we headed back down the M4. The weather and traffic were kind and we had an enjoyable day and some success.

One thing that some members had commented to us both at the Show and before was that we took the trouble to post continual updates on the Facebook page as do other

members up and down the country, and how much it was appreciated by those members who were not able to attend the shows in person due to various circumstances. These members felt they were still able to consider that they were involved in their own way even though at a distance, so we at least will keep this up during 2023 maintaining the connection with as many members as possible.

At the Royal Welsh Show as a Region we were asked to give a demonstration on staging a vase of Sweet Peas to try and encourage those watching to consider entering their small local show in the first instance and hopefully spurring them on to greater things. This was a joint effort, Jenny actually undertaking the demonstration, John Rowlands was the sound man, Allan Evans on showing the “props” around the audience, and Lewis photographing everything for posterity.

Royal Welsh Show demonstration



As soon as we were back from the Show, there was a cry of help! A visitor to our garden during the open day who only lives a few roads over from us in a house with a large garden was hosting her daughter's wedding reception in a Marquee in the garden. The lady was also growing all the flowers to decorate the Marquee, however, the heat wave had seen a lot of the flowers come into bloom and go over. Along with the Sweet Peas we had cutting beds of

other flower varieties as Jen also enters the mixed vase classes at the country shows we attend. It was a stroke of luck for the lady in need that we'd doubled up on general flowers for other weddings, and she basically had everything we had in bloom which went a long way to saving the day, whilst the garden looked a bit bare for a few days fresh blooms were soon in abundance so everyone gained.

August was a month for some local country shows, and our annual visit over to Gill Hazel's Show at Clutton where there are a few Sweet Pea classes. We scraped enough Peas to enter the single vase classes, and Graham Nicol once again took the six vase class. Our return was the signal to start taking out some of the cordon rows as they were various shades of brown! The later sown



plants were still going and were going to be needed. The seed clumps were drying off nicely seed gathering having been ongoing for a few weeks. A few well earned days off saw a visit to Southport Show as visitors and a chance to catch up with the North West Region gang on their stand. With the tide right we stopped off at Crosby Beach to take in the infamous Anthony Gormely sculptures, and noticed everlasting Sweet Peas growing in the sand dunes, which whilst looking nice are considered an invasive species.

Into September and one last flower supply venture and one that wasn't! We have a good friend who now tells everyone that Jen is now "Jenny Sweet Pea". Our friend Gill's daughter was getting married, being a Farmer's wife again a Marquee was the order of the day and all family and friends in the local farming community were roped into help. Jen was on table decoration duty.



Wedding table decorations handywork



This time it was again everything we had in the garden that was still going which included the later Sweet Peas with additional blooms purloined from friends and family's gardens all pleased to be able to contribute. The end result was a typical country farming family wedding that a lot of people all of whom were invited on the day contributed to making it a successful day. Then a call from one of our fellow allotment holders asking a "favour" for their son's wedding as they had been caught out by the weather and planned flowers had gone over to a certain extent, again got cleaned out!

Our Sweet Pea growing and showing year had come to an end, time to tidy up for the autumn and winter, and think about 2023. One of the things that during the

season became apparent was that a lot of people who were taking our seed just wanted to grow Sweet Peas for their own enjoyment, and we spent a lot of time encouraging and advising them not only to do just that, but also to get the best out of them. We were obviously making them aware of the Society and how anyone that was enthusiastic about Sweet Peas would benefit greatly from membership. Along the way we quietly sowed the seed (excuse the pun!) about entering local shows where they could take their vegetables and other flowers and all for a bit of fun if nothing else, as this was how we got started and led to becoming members of the Society.

Apart from the Sweet Peas we did our own version of “4 Weddings and a Funeral”, so that’s all from us, but to say 2023 is all go as we write this, seeds are planted and germinating, and this season’s shows in the diary.

West Midlands

By Phillippa Cooper

It was wonderful to have the Wem Sweet Pea Show taking place again in 2022. Following on from the success of the show in June our Show Manager, Rose, organised a highly successful and informative demonstration evening in Wem Town Hall during October. It was very rewarding to see the room packed with so many enthusiastic gardeners, some of whom had not grown or shown Sweet Peas before. The signs are very positive for more exhibitors at Wem this year. We have had a request for a further meeting to demonstrate the staging of a vase prior to the 2023 show.



Phillippa Cooper recording for Gardener's Question Time with Bethany and Matthew Wilson. Photo by John Cooper.

My main aim for 2023 has been to encourage as many people as possible to grow the old fashioned varieties. To this end John and I have continued to visit local, (and not so local!) gardening groups to distribute old fashioned seed, encourage more people to grow and possibly exhibit as well as advertising the wonderful new NSPS website.

Our autumn sown seeds have been very disappointing. Apart from two very short, sharp cold spells the weather has been very mild. The seedlings have put on more growth than expected despite being outside. With the Wem Sweet Pea Festival returning to the third weekend in July we will be sowing again in February. Hopefully the spring weather will be more predictable and consistent compared to 2022.

A particular highlight in recent weeks was an invitation to return to a local primary school. The children really enjoyed their practical seed sowing sessions. Hopefully some of them will continue with their interest in horticulture. Fingers crossed that I will be invited back again.

Although it is disappointing that the West Midlands has only a few active NSPS members I hope that I may be able to increase the number of young members in the future.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Wem Town Hall (SY4 5DG) on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 July. There have been a few minor alterations to the schedule which we hope will lead to more exhibits. If you have not received a schedule and would like an electronic copy please do not hesitate to email me on pjcooper1953@gmail.com

West Yorkshire

By Bob Rishworth

Events started to get back to normal in the last year, although we are possibly no longer sure what normal means.

The Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society Show had a great number of exhibits, enhanced by the ability for Oasis to be continued to be used and was a fantastic start to the show season.

Following this, a week later it was a trip over the nearby border, to North Yorkshire, for the Late National. The invasion was led by Darren Myers assisted by his daughter Hannah, staging something like 18 vases of 15 stems and winning the major awards.

A few days later the venue was Driffield, this time in East Yorkshire for the Driffield Agricultural Show, once billed as the largest one day show in Europe, but recently changed to a two day show. Special permission had been obtained for the Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society to stage a trade stand, manned on one day only. It was an incredible achievement that this stand won the award for Best Exhibit in the Horticultural Trade Section, essentially produced by the Myers family.

For 2023 the Yorkshire Sweet Pea Society Show will be held on 1 July.

Amongst other events we hope to make a successful invasion of Lancashire for the Late National Show. OK, I think it is actually in Greater Manchester, which used to be

Obituaries

Graham King

By Roger Parsons

Graham was a vice-president of the National Sweet Pea Society who loved showing. He would travel hundreds of miles to attend National shows, which then involved staying up all night staging blooms so they were ready for judging early the next morning. His favourite class in recent years was the prestigious E W King class for 3 vases, each vase 15 stems of a single variety. Entry was limited to vice-presidents and life members so strong competition was guaranteed.

His last National show was in 2019 when he finished second in the E W King class but won several other classes and was awarded the Warwick cup for best vase in division 4 (growers with no more than 200 plants). He last won the E W King class in 2013 with an exhibit which included a vase of 'Ida King', named for his beloved wife. Ida went to college with Anne Chislett and as a result of their friendship Graham introduced Bev and Anne Chislett to Sweet Peas. The two couples had much fun together.

As well as being a successful and popular exhibitor, Graham's lasting legacy is as a raiser of new varieties that will remain with us.

These include:

'Ida King' – lavender

'Lady Nicholson' – mauve stripe on white ground

'Sally Maitland' – carmine pink

He also sent "work in progress" from his breeding programme to the national collection seedbank so we may yet see further varieties raised from Graham's plant breeding.

*"I like gardening – it's a place where
I find myself when I want to lose myself."*

Alice Sebald

Ronald Desmond King (Ron)

By David Rollinson

Ron is survived by his widow, Cathy, daughter Rachel, son Martin and granddaughter Jade.

Ron developed an interest in growing Sweet Peas while working for Dowty's. He won numerous prizes both locally and nationally, in 1985 this included the Carter Cup (division 3, 6 vase class) and second in the Levington Cup for three vases at his 'home' National in Cheltenham. It was around this time that he took on the role as District Rep for North Gloucestershire which he did until 2013. His variety, 'Memorial Flight', commemorating the Battle of Britain, is still available today.

Ron and his son attended many air shows as he worked on several prestigious planes, including the Vulcan bomber.

John Land



John and Rita Land with their 1992 Daily Mail winning exhibit.

It was with great sadness that last year we reported the death of former NSPS chairman and a great friend to many members, William John Land, John to us all. John was the Show Manager in 1992 for my first National at RHS Wisley. Not only was it memorable as my first National but it was a truly

amazing spectacle with almost 1,000 vases shown and 11 staged entries in the Daily Mail. The winners of the latter were John and Rita Land who somehow juggled the complexities of an enormous show with putting up an impressive 12 vase exhibit to win the World Cup of the Sweet Pea world. It is a mark of the man that he did not consider this to be his best Sweet Pea achievement! John and Rita also loved their English Setters and the NSPS AGM was scheduled to avoid the Crufts weekend for many years. We are grateful to John's daughter Wanda Mullen for sharing the following which makes the perfect self-penned obituary for an unassuming, encouraging and fun-loving gentleman.

Caroline Ball

My vase of Alice

By John Land

This story begins 50 years ago in 1970. I had moved from my beloved Devon to Surrey in the 1960s and was living in Cranleigh. In 1969 or 1970 I visited the local flower show and was amazed to see the Sweet Peas exhibited by Ron Cordery and Jeff Brande. My father, like most country folk, had always grown a row of Sweet Peas in the vegetable garden and they were my wife Rita's favourite flower, but what were these things that I was seeing? Off to the library I go to find out more and I learnt how to prepare the ground and grow cordon plants.

In 1971 I exhibited at a few local shows and in 1972 Jeff Brande talked me into entering the National at Southampton. Surprise, surprise I won the Randall Cup for the best novice vase. In 1974 I grew 200 plants (four cultivars 50 of each) and entered the under 250 and under 500 sections of the show at Coventry, the 3 vase in the under 250's and the 3 vase in the under 500 cordons section, taking first and best vase in both – 3 Cups in total!

In 1976 I had some cracking flowers and fancied my chances but the National was cancelled because of the heat wave – big mistake!! I won the Davis Cup for the nine vases (500 section) in London in 1977 and put up a nice 15 stem vase of 'Noel Sutton' in the Open classes.

By 1978 my Sweet Pea plot was just about perfect. I managed to get a load of well rotted farm yard manure – so old that it had no smell at all (the old vicar who lived next door picked up a handful and said 'pure humus') the necessary fertiliser was worked into the first and second spits of soil and the ground left for winter frosts. I must add that the Cranleigh soil is quite heavy but a very fertile loam having been well used in the horticultural trade. At that time of my life I was looking for a new hobby, the children were grown up and a late injury had put paid to my tennis and cricket, I was never very good at either although I did once take eight wickets for two runs for my local Culmstock village cricket club.

So we arrived at Bath with what I considered some fairly good blooms that would not be disgraced in the open classes. I had entered both the six vase and the three vase classes and decided to put my best flowers in the six vase class. There was not much to choose among the seven cultivars grown but 'Alice Hardwicke', raised by Bernard Jones and I think named after his mother, was outstanding. We found a corner in the Assembly rooms and at about midnight started staging. I had discovered early in my Sweet Pea career that my wife, Rita, was far better at staging than me and also was brilliant in seeing faults and colour variation etc. She always made the final selection and location of every bloom in the vase. We always tried to only bring the flowers with a chance of making it to the show bench to the show as the flaws are not going to

disappear in the journey and too many blooms only makes the final selection more difficult. We started off by staging a couple of vases of the weaker cultivars so that all the vases matched. In the small hours of the night it was time for 'Alice' to make her appearance. The best 70 or 80 flowers, then the best 50, then down to 30. Then 20, nothing wrong with any of them. Then lay them on the table, back row, middle row, front row, left side, right side. Five unlucky flowers on the subs bench. At this moment John Pratt was taking a breather and a walk around the staggers. He saw the five spare blooms, looked at them carefully and said 'why have you rejected these' – because the other 15 are just as good, 20 perfect stems! For the record we won the six vase class (Carter Cup in those days) came second in the three vase class and staged three vases of 'Alice Hardwicke' from the 50 plants grown and our best vase of 'Alice', from the Carter Class, went up for the Clay Cup judges to have a look at.

In the meanwhile Jeff Brande had been judging the seedlings class and although the vase of 'Mrs Bernard Jones' was the best seedling, Jeff didn't think it was worth considering for the Clay as it was showing a lot of green at the petal edges. However, the Clay judges needed the best vase from every section and 'Mrs BJ' was sent up. The rest is history. The judges couldn't agree between 'Alice' and her upstart daughter-in-law. Some wanted to give it jointly, but there can only ever be one best vase in show and 'Mrs Bernard Jones' got it. Were they right? Who can say – at 7 o'clock in the morning 'Alice' would probably have won but by Clay Cup judging time with the green gone for the seedling only the judges could say and they had to decide. Jeff said to me many times 'you were robbed' and that's good enough for me. The icing on the cake for me was a letter from Bernard Jones saying that vase of 'Alice Hardwicke' was the best he had ever seen. Like everything in life it's all down to luck in the end. For me in 1978 it was a combination of choosing the right varieties to grow, perfect growing conditions, perfect weather and most important of all, a wife who was so good at selection and staging. She was also a very, very strong competitor.



*'Alice Hardwicke'.
Photo by Roger Parsons.*

We moved from Cranleigh to Farnham in the 1980s, which for Sweet Pea growing was a big help! And although we were lucky enough to win the Daily Mail Cup in 1992 (from the largest entry for many years) nothing would ever be as good as 1978 and that vase of 'Alice'.

Memories of John

By Andy Hubbuck

The 1993 National Show was to be held at Chatsworth Park and Beryl and I were to be Show Managers. It was not long before we realised what a huge task we had undertaken! One task in particular was taking entries to the competition. John Land's assistance was invaluable as he offered to take the entries. He also sent me his diagram of the layout of staging which he had saved from the previous year at Wisley. Also John and Rita were on hand to oversee late entries and cancellations, a task which takes all night. As John and Rita had managed the 1992 National, their expertise was a tremendous help.

I remember at Wisley there were 11 entries in the Mail class, and space for exhibitors became short. John asked the exhibitors to stage with 6 stems in the back row to give a little more bench room. All of this plus his own entry to stage, but John remained calm and collected all night.

To my surprise and honour, John asked me to be the third judge in the Mail, along with Bob Bolton and AN Other (can't remember names these days!) It took a long time to judge as most entries were of good quality. After all of John's work and organisation, he won the prestigious 'Daily Mail' award – what an achievement. Will we ever see that many Mail entries again?

Prior to the aforementioned Chatsworth show Beryl and I were to attend a schedule meeting at John and Rita's home in Surrey, where we were made very welcome and stayed over for two nights to visit the area,

Apart from Sweet Peas, John grew daffodils to show level and did very well exhibiting these. John and Rita also bred and showed dogs, being regular exhibitors at Crufts. They both lived very busy and enjoyable lives and are a great loss to our Society.

Richard Frank Newbery

By Roger Parsons

Frank Newbery died on 18 October at the age of 98. He was a formidable exhibitor of daffodils, Sweet Peas, dahlias and chrysanthus who loved showing and in his 90s would think nothing of driving to Scotland for a show from his home in Bristol.

Other Deaths

We have been notified of the deaths of the following members.

Pat Ball

Norman Martin

Peter Robinson

Valerie Wilkinson

Our sympathies are extended to their families and friends.



'Romeo'.

Photo by Darren Myers.



'Blanche Ferry'.
Photo by Caroline Ball.

Affiliated Shows 2023

To advertise here costs Affiliated Societies £6. Contact the Editor or return the form included within the Autumn Bulletin.

10 June – Downton Horticultural Society

Show held at Downton Memorial Hall, SP5 3NB. Show open 2.00pm – 4.15pm. Show Secretary Tony Ashford, 51 Moot Gardens, Downton SP5 3LG. ☎ 01725 510656. Email: ashfordtony2@gmail.com. 12 open sweet peas classes plus rose and miscellaneous classes.

17 June – Chipperfield Horticultural Society

Show held at Chipperfield Village Hall. Staging from 8.00am – 10.30am. Show open to public 2.30pm – 4.30pm. Chairman John Hopkins ☎ 01923 268852. Email: johnh65@live.co.uk. 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, mauve or blue, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase, cerise, magenta, crimson or scarlet, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase, any colour, one cultivar, 5 sprays; 1 vase, mixed, 12 sprays.

17 June – New Forest Sweet Pea Society

Show held at The Hulse Hall, Breamore, Fordingbridge SP6 2EA. Show open to visitors 1.00pm – 4.00pm. Show Manager Ted Perren, Gay Correl, Ampport, Andover SP11 8BE. ☎ 01264 772814. Email: eperren@btinternet.com. Staging 6.00am to 10.30am.

18 July – Chiltern Sweet Pea Society

Show held at Millennium Hall, Lacey Green, Buckinghamshire HP27 0QT. what3words: 'famous.october.advantage'. Staging 8.30am – 12 noon, bowls and baskets up until 1.00pm away from the exhibition area. Judging 12.15pm onwards. Show open 2.30pm. Show manager Mr. Chris Gray, 68 Narbeth Drive, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 1NU. ☎ 01296 488160. Mixed open classes including sections for novices and 200 cordon growers. All exhibitors welcome.

18 June - Rayleigh Horticultural Society

Show held at The Mill Arts and Events Centre, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 7ED. Show manager Mr Peter Noble, 36 Warwick Road, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8PG. ☎ 01268 745925

1 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 – 4.30pm. Show Manager David Bassil, 31 Princess Road, Poole, Dorset BH12 1BG. ☎ 01202 752014. Email: dcbassil04@gmail.com. Sweet Pea Championship and classes for experienced, intermediate and novices. All classes in show open to all.

8 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. 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..

15 & 16 July – Eckford Sweet Pea Society of Wem (ESPS of Wem)

Show held at Wem Town Hall, 28-32 High Street, Wem, Shropshire SY4 5DG. Show opens on Saturday 15th July 10.00am – 5.00pm and Sunday 16th July from 10.00am – 3.00pm. Show manager Rose Horner of Wem Town Hall (as above). ☎ 01939 232299. Email: info@wemtownhall.co.uk

24 – 27 July – Royal Welsh Agricultural Society

Show held at Llanelwedd, Builth Wells LD2 3SY. Show open 8.00am – 8.00pm. Horticultural secretary Amanda Burton, RWAS Ltd., Llanelwedd, Builth Wells LD2 3SY. ☎ 01982 554409. Email: amanda@rwas.co.uk. Open classes, novice and restricted. Please contact Amanda for a schedule.

12 August – Clutton Horticultural Society

Show held at Ridges Field, Bendalls Bridge, Clutton BS39 5SJ. Show opens at 12 noon. Exhibits to be staged between 7.00am and 10.00am. Show secretary Roger Snary, Brookfield, Carlton Close, Clutton BS39 5SS. ☎ 01761 453063. Email: rogersnary@btinternet.com. For details of classes please see the website cluttongardening.org. Please contact Show secretary for details of classes, entry rules and regulations.

12 August – Disley & Lyme Horticultural Society

Show held at Disley Amalgamated Sports Club, Jacksons Edge Road, Disley SK12 2JC. Show open noon – 5.00pm. Show secretary Jackie Lowe, 6 Bridgefield Close, High Lane, Stockport. Email: deannejlowe@gmail.com. For further details please see www.dlhswweebly.com



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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

DEADLINE: 31 January

FOR THE BULLETINS

Graeme Hollingdale: Email: graeme@graemehollingdale.com

AUTUMN: Deadline 4 September

SPRING: Deadline 31 December



NEWS

Tom Atherton Novelty

Tom Atherton

A striking dark blue stripe on white ground. Very unusual. raised by John Robson in Scotland and presented to Tom as an 80th birthday present a few years ago . We hope to release this in August 2023.



Other 2024 Novelties

Glynnne Collins

Summer flowering spencer type with large, blowsy blush pink and pale blue bicoulor flowers. Pictured right.



Just Christine

Striking contrast purple and violet bicoulor flowers on long stems. Summer flowering spencer type. Pictured left.



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8 & 9 JULY 2023

The Show will be open

Saturday 11.00am - 5.00pm

Sunday 10.00am - 3.00pm

Presentation of awards at 1.00pm Saturday

Entries to: Carole Tate

22 Lime Grove, Chorley, Lancashire PR7 3JA

Tel: 07961 477137

Email: caroletate10@gmail.com

Staging 6pm Friday 7 July to 9.15am Saturday 8 July

Judging at 9.30am Saturday 8 July

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



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