



Kent News Lockdown Edition

Kent Area of NAFAS Summer 2020

Editor's Introduction – Kim Marie Williams

Hello to all Kent News readers. First let me thank all the clubs who ordered the spring edition at a loss to many clubs where you were unable to meet and receive funds due to club cancellations. During this difficult and challenging time this is a totally different format due to the many cancellations of Kent Area Events as well as National ones plus the effect on both the usual and special events planned for the clubs. I hope all clubs are slowly recovering and that this issue brings a wealth of new articles, hints, tips, and insights on floral understanding from designers, demonstrators, and other specialists within the field of flowers, arranging and displaying. So good reading and good health to everyone.

If you have any articles, adverts or special events for the Autumn/Winter edition please forward them by 2nd October as we hope for a normal style edition which will be distributed at the AGM 7th November. KM
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Chairman's Message – Jean Schofield

Hello Kent members

Welcome to our lockdown issue which we felt was our safest option to keep members up to date during these difficult times. Please enjoy our variety of articles and photos for you to peruse.



As I write this on NFA day it's lovely to see so many clubs posting their own arrangements safely made at home on our Facebook Forum page. My aim was to try and keep everyone motivated and flower arranging. We have lost so many of our special events planned for our 60th anniversary year and moving forward we are looking at the September council meeting as our first catch up, government guidelines permitting. We hope to make the AGM a little more special for members to try and cheer us all up. I know many clubs have also had to reschedule their own special celebrations and I sympathise, let's hope you can celebrate them later in the year too.

Like many members my garden is looking better than it has in years - since retiring in December I now have more time to myself and I hope to get it straight and under control to enjoy at long last!

I know going forward we will continue to prosper as an area and will achieve great things, once we step back into what we hope will be a more normal existence and be able to enjoy our beautiful Kent countryside.

Take care friends and stay safe till we meet up again, keep calm and arrange flowers!

Jean

[Design by Hazel Bentley from Kent Area Facebook Forum]

Dahlias Are Back – by Alan Hayward

Dahlias have become fashionable again, but for me they never went away. I have enjoyed the huge range of colours, sizes and forms of dahlias since my dad showed varieties including Doris Day and Cheerio at his local show back in the 1950s. Although I enter my dahlias at our local show in Loose, Maidstone, I don't grow enough of any one variety to be a serious exhibitor. Instead I grow my collection of about 20 varieties just for the enjoyment they give me. It gives me even more pleasure to come home from my allotment with a random bunch of blooms and to see the arrangements which my wife, Pam, conjures up.

Which ones should you grow? In Spring the garden centres have a bewildering array of tubers on offer. They will make a great garden display but will they be a good cut flower? Not always and you can't tell from the descriptions. I order mine from a specialist grower (Halls of Heddon but there are other very good ones) whose catalogue classifies them as good for Garden, Cutting and/or Exhibition – possibly all three. I buy them as mini plants, rooted cuttings, but tubers are available early in Spring. I pot up the mini plants, pinch the tops out to make more stems and grow them on inside until frosts are over. I plant out in full sun in good, rich soil.

The flower buds will start to form on each stem and usually in clusters of three. If left, you will have a lot of blooms with short weaker stems and a good garden display. However, I remove the two side buds to leave one strong one. To ensure a long stem I also remove side shoots from the axils of the pairs of leaves down the ones which will grow on for more flowers. To keep the flowers coming you should keep cutting back to the next two side shoots on the stem, dead heading and feeding with a high potash fertilizer (e.g. tomato feed).

The first frosts end the season. The blackened foliage can be cut down to about 10cm. Tubers which have formed can be left in if your soil is well drained. Otherwise the tubers should be lifted and washed off and stored frost free in barely damp compost ready for planting out next spring. Tubers can be started early in the greenhouse and can produce cuttings to grow on for new plants. The new plants will produce slightly better, but later, blooms.

The choice of dahlias is vast but can be narrowed down. For arrangements, the small or miniature sizes are best. Of the different forms, decorative, cactus and waterlily, the waterlily type is the most versatile for cut flower arrangements. For colour you can have any except true blue or green. Varieties which have pleased my flower arranger are Cameo, a creamy yellow waterlily, Rip City, a deep blackberry coloured decorative and Rycroft Zoe, a peachy semi cactus.



Cafe au Lait is rightly popular for weddings but needs a lot of attention to get quality blooms.

I wish you every success in your dahlia adventure, who knows it may become your passion too. Alan Hayward



A design by
Pam Hayward
using Alan's
dahlias
Leeds Castle
2019



CLUB FUND RAISING – by Chris Thomas

Raising additional funds for our clubs' sustainability is essential and in turn often encourages additional members to join when they see what a friendly, sociable group we are. As an active member of both Margate and Canterbury Flower Clubs I am more than happy to organise Wine and Wisdom evenings twice a year for both clubs. We provide a good Ploughman's Supper for everyone currently charging £7 for the evening which, together with a good raffle, brings us a healthy profit and allows us to keep booking good demonstrators. They are always fun filled events with everyone bringing the drinks of their choice (excluding spirits), to liven up the evening, however, not too much for me as I have to read out the questions clearly! You may like to have a go at the following, a sample of one of our quiz rounds.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

1. In a standard UK Monopoly game the green set consists of Bond Street, Regent Street and which other?
2. What does the acronym UNESCO stand for?
3. After how many years would you celebrate your crystal anniversary?
4. Who was the first famous non-royal to appear on a UK postage stamp?
5. Name the missing suspect from the game of Cluedo. Rev. Green, Miss Scarlet, Mrs Peacock, Col. Mustard, Mrs White and who else?
6. Who painted the 'Water Lily Pond'?
7. In which year were Premium Bonds first issued in Britain?
8. Who designed the Beatles Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album cover?
9. A phlebotomist extracts what from the human body?
10. How many feet are there in a fathom?

[Answers on Page 15]

If you are looking to raise funds for your own club this had always proved itself but, you cannot rely on club members alone for support, friends and families play a huge part in making up teams. There is always a small prize for the winning table and a booby for the one who comes last, i.e. Smarties and lemons! Good luck

Rainham Visits Kings Orchard & Gardens – Jenny Abbott

Just before the Country went into isolation "The Flower Guild" at Rochester Cathedral were invited by the Head Gardener Graham to visit King's Orchard & the wonderful historical grounds that surround the Cathedral. Graham thought it would be useful to see the grounds and gardens with a view to the possibility of using some of the foliage in future displays in the Cathedral. However, the History of the grounds and the parts of the buildings that you do not see when visiting the Cathedral were so interesting that foliage almost got forgotten.



Such an interesting morning which came to an end with us visiting Graham's latest additions to the gardens the Bee Hives which are now producing Honey, and Wax which he is making into the most beautiful candles which will eventually be on sale in the Cathedral shop. Graham's passion in preserving the history of the gardens and its many ancient trees is a joy to experience.

The garden tours will be available to book when life gets back to normal. Information is available on the Cathedral website.

Over the years Rainham Flower Club have had many members have proudly supported "The Flower Guild" at the Cathedral. At the present time we have six members forming almost half of the Guild. We are all looking forward to the day when the Cathedral can open its doors again and we can experience again the joy of arranging flowers in this glorious building.

Size Matters – by Sue Shaw (Judges Rep)

I had just given a presentation at a horticultural club. The audience had been animated, enthusiastic and engaged. I was feeling great. As I was packing away my visual aids an elderly lady shuffled up and lent on my table. She looked me directly in the eyes and commented, "I had a fabulous evening dear, I loved your talk, I won something in the raffle, BUT, why did you disqualify me".

She had entered the petite floral arrangement class. Size not to exceed 25cms in width, depth or height. Along with three other competitors hers was over 40cms, in all directions. I had no option but to not consider for an award. The exhibitors who had not been placed, had used stunning flowers from their own gardens such as Dahlias and Chrysanthemums so there was much to be admired. However they were far too big for a delicate petite arrangement, where everything needs to be scaled down.

I explained about the sizing and commented on proportion and scale. She responded with, "*you do need dominance*". I agreed but commented that you did need to stay within the stated dimensions and repeated my comments about scale. "Umm" she said, "*have I told you I'm 97*". I complimented her and we continued to debate for a number of minutes. She then looked at me with a steely glare and declared, "*you do know that the judge isn't always right*". I laughed and we agreed to disagree.

At the door she turned and called over, "*I've had a fabulous time dear, did I tell you I'm 97*". As the door closed behind her I felt a bit numb and then shell shocked. It was as if I had been in the ring with Lennox Lewis and then been run over by a bus.

On the way home I had to stop the car. I had an uncontrollable fit of laughter with tears running down my face. Wasn't she wonderful? In one evening I had delivered my presentation, judged the competition and then debated the results with a 97 year old. I felt inspired by this wonderful lady who had touched my life for just a few moments. I will never forget her and always be thankful that I met her. She was 97, she was still going to her horticultural club, she had entered the competitions and best of all she was feisty.

(I hasten to add that the judge's decision is final and that their opinion should be respected at all times. Please be kind to them.)

Do keep supporting, learning and entering competitions. It is a great way to improve your own flower arranging. It helps promote your club and our wonderful organisation. No excuses. Remember 97 not out.

The Flavours of Honey – by Jean Schofield

Many people ask what gives honey it's flavour and how do we know? When you buy shop bought honey you take for granted what it says on the label but if you buy from a local beekeeper they will tell you more accurately as honey is flavoured by where the bees forage for food.



My own bees forage around 2 miles of the surrounding countryside which at present is made up of oil seed rape, horse chestnut, hawthorn, tree ivy and wild flowers. Honey predominantly made from oil seed rape sets firm and is very white due to the high sugar content but it is wonderful on toast! This does give some problems if left too long in the hive as it sets like cement and won't come out of the frames on spinning.

Bees that forage on one particular crop will produce honey of that flavour, that is the only way you can confirm for sure - mine in Summer feed predominantly on meadow flowers as we leave part of our field



to grow naturally and this is followed by a long season of chestnut and tree ivy giving the honey a slight toffee flavour which my husband hates to part with when I sell it.

Honey has many uses and is great for sore throats and burns, it's also a natural antiseptic as the NHS are now back using it in dressings because of the healing properties - some people prefer it instead of sugar in tea and it's also great for cooking and great to use local honey for helping combat hay fever. Bees are wonderful in a garden so plant something today to help with pollination, and watch your garden flourish.



A Demonstrator's Lot – by Sue Thompson (Demonstrator's Rep)

I used to be a Flower Club member who went to the meeting to sit and watch the demonstrator and hope I had a winning raffle ticket. I didn't think about what the demonstrator did beforehand, just that they turned up with lots of delicious flowers and foliage plus interesting containers and chat. Now I am on the other side of the table, so to speak, I know what happens!

Plan the demonstration: Pick a title with a theme pulling together the designs and chat to keep the audience interested and entertained...Choose containers....Work out a variety of designs to suit the theme and chosen containers.... Sketch a stage layout so the finished dem looks balanced....Select a plastic dish to fit each container so the raffle winners have something decent to take home... Work out how much floral foam is needed in each dish (or test tubes etc for a foam-free design)....Decide which flowers and foliage will work well in each design – with alternatives to allow for seasonality, varying budgets and scale of design (small Clubs, small budgets, small halls vs the other end of the scale!) Calculate the number of each type of flower....Most of my demo flowers are from Southeast Flowers so I plan around stem price and wrap numbers (ie 10 roses, 25 carnations, 15 gerbera)....Prepare words to go with each arrangement – including facts about the foliage and flowers and hints and tips.

Take demonstration booking: In agreeing to a booking I have to ensure I've time free in the day or two before the demonstration for preparation as well as the day itself. And that my diary isn't so booked up with demonstrations there's no time for a holiday! ... Negotiate the flower allowance and arrival time (to unload, get set up and do any second placements - an hour is only enough if the staging area is ready for the demonstrator's arrival!)....Await the blue form's arrival in the post. Keep Part A, complete part B and return it in the SAE. Wait for Part C to come back - forming the contract between me and the Club....

The demonstration day draws near: Having heard from the Club at least 3 weeks beforehand I place my flower order 2 weeks before the dem date if I want flowers from Columbia etc. and decide if any supermarket flowers are needed. If my original flower choice isn't available or is more expensive (perhaps because of Valentine's Day or Mother's Day) I have to choose an alternative....Look on Google maps to see the venue's location - with a street view - so I am familiar with where the hall is in relation to other buildings. Halls are often not easily visible from the road!...Add contact details from blue form to mobile phone.

2-3 days beforehand: Gather garden foliage from mine and/or from neighbours and friends....Condition it – strip leaves, recut stems, put in buckets of water. Some need special attention (eg euphorbia – seal ends with a flame; arum or hosta leaves – need more gentle attention and are put in a jam-jar of water).

The day before: Containers ready... Plastic dishes prepared with cut and soaked floral foam – taped in place....Condition flowers - stripping lower leaves, re-cutting stems, removing cellophane wrappings etc. More buckets of water with flower food.



Demonstration day: Check likely travelling time – continue to do so during the day in case of major traffic problems on the route to the Club...Venue address in SatNav – check milometer in case of diversions (on planned “AA recommended” route) alter the expected mileage... Car boot ready, car seats folded down, non-slip matting ready....Load car with box stand, turntable, containers, dishes with floral foam....Box up designs – in reverse order of arranging – flowers first usually then foliage and leaves – to stop rummaging (hopefully!) for a particular piece of plant material. Check “crib sheet” that the right flowers are in the right box....Put boxes in car....Double-check I’ve the correct number of containers, boxes, plastic dishes...Pack toolbag, water, lipstick, phone, dem notes, blue form, other Club info... Get changed, do make-up.



Off we go! The rest you know!

About Photography – by Pauline Pearce (Photography Rep)

One of the Kent committee asked me a couple of months ago if I could say some words about photography to which I replied “I wouldn’t know what to say”. Since then I’ve been thinking and for me photographs hold all of my memories. If my house was burning down I’d save my photo albums which hold my oldest memories, fortunately my more recent memories are held “in the cloud” so no need to run back into a burning building for them! So here are my simple, very non-technical, tips.



BACKGROUND: When taking your photographs pause for a tiny second to check the background, you don’t want a lamppost coming out of the top of a friend’s head! When photographing floral arrangements if you can move them to get a better background then do that, or hold up a sheet or board behind. If you can’t move them then you can try a different angle (looking up or looking down) or if it’s people in the background wait until they’ve moved.

FOCUSING: Most modern cameras, phones and iPads will automatically focus for you giving you a good chance of capturing a good shot. When taking a close-up by clicking or touching the screen you can usually choose which part of the image you want to be in focus (sharp) rather than relying on luck.

LIGHTING: if you take photographs into the light or the sun then the foreground will usually be very dark, so try to have your back or side to the sun. If I’m taking photographs with a window behind me I sometimes close the curtains or move myself to the side so that I’m not looking directly into the light.

TAKE 2: When photographing people, especially more than one, I take at least 2 photos just in case someone is blinking, moving or talking. In this digital age it’s easy to check them afterwards, choose your favourite and delete the others.

COMPOSITION: a good photograph is like a good floral design ... you want something to draw your eye into the focal point. It tells a story but for me, more importantly, it is a memory of a moment in time.

When I started flower arranging one of the club members said “not to worry about making mistakes, just have fun, because all flowers are beautiful” ... so similarly take lots of photographs and have fun with it!

Area Photography Competition - Results

We are all missing our flowery friends during this awful coronavirus pandemic but it seems to have given members time for other things including photography. As a result, a fantastic 147 photographs from 13 competitors were entered into this year's competition, compared to 77 photographs in 2019. This includes entries from 6 novices – so well done for having a go! The very talented Janet Susan Kent A.R.P.S. (Associate of the Royal Photographic Society) and member of Bexley Photographic Society, has kindly been our judge for the third year in a row.

The winner of the Carolyn Raisbeck Trophy has been awarded to Sue Shaw who won 1st prize in 3 classes; “Rhythm”, “Urban Beauty” and “Little Things Mean a Lot” ... well done Sue! Also congratulations and well done to the following members who were awarded first prize in the following classes:-

| | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 : Kent – The Garden of England | 1st | Valerie Pressley | Hartley & Southfleet |
| 2 : Rhythm | 1st | Sue Shaw | Maidstone & Vanguard |
| 3 : Urban Beauty | 1st | Sue Shaw | Maidstone & Vanguard |
| 4 : Little Things Mean a Lot | 1st | Sue Shaw | Maidstone & Vanguard |
| 5 : Sky Scape | 1st | Georgina Baker | Romney Marsh |
| 6 : My Favourite Places (Novice) | 1st | Helen Hare | Gravesend & Vanguard |

Full details of results and all of the photographs can be found on the area website (www.kentfloralart.co.uk) but the winners fabulous photos are here below. Look out for the schedule for next year's competition and get snapping!



Class 1



Class 2



Class 3



Class 4



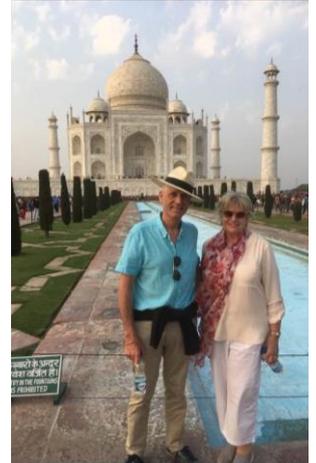
Class 5



Class 6

A Passage To India – Jacqui Arnold

Earlier this year 75 friends and members of NAFAS met at Heathrow Airport ready to embark on what would be a most memorable trip. We were off to India with Michael Bowyer and Tom Hodge and part of our trip was to visit and for some of us compete at WAFA – the World Association of Floral Artists. WAFA is staged every three years and was this year in Jaipur. I was travelling with John my husband and we began our journey in Delhi where the competitor's boxes were collected from the airport and driven ahead to our hotel in Jaipur. We were introduced to both Old Delhi with its 16th and 17th Century Mughal-built monuments and congested souk-like bazaars which incidentally we saw by rickshaw (quite an experience and plenty to talk about at my next demonstration!) and New Delhi with its wide avenues, colonial mansions and the 1930s British built Government buildings. One of the highlights here was our early evening visit to the majestic Taj Mahal. Just breathtakingly beautiful!



Seven days later we arrived by road in Jaipur (The Pink City). The colourful streets where motor bikes jostle for space with camels and turbaned village elders rub shoulders with youngsters in jeans. We visited block printers and carpet weavers and saw the remarkable work they produced. The vibrancy of this fascinating place with the hustle and bustle of everyday life reminded me of Hyde Park Corner on a Monday morning with its vast lanes of traffic be it tut-tut, rickshaw, Uber cab, bus or even the odd cow or horse thrown in for good measure! To the relief of the competitors, our boxes had all arrived safely at our hotel.

The big day arrived - The WAFA Competitions! A few sleepless nights had preceded the holiday with preparations for this great event and quite a lot of organisation. It began with the title Layer by Layer which appeared in the competitions schedule as a design with four separate grids, measuring different lengths and placed as layers, suspended on a central metal pole. The idea appealed to me, and I was pleased if not slightly apprehensive, to have my entry accepted a few months prior to the competitions. The final details of my design were completed just a few days prior to leaving for India. However, the ordering of my flowers and bringing together the different mechanics, dried plant materials including painted lotus seedpods, unusual sculptural forms of dried eucalyptus had all been painstakingly dried over many months including aspidistra, croton leaves, Strelitzia, some remarkable pieces of celosia and some vine. To comply with Indian Import Regulations a phytosanitary certificate from DEFRA was required I found a very helpful lady locally who obliged. This involved a visit to my house 3 days prior to departure to inspect all the plant material which I had ready packed and labelled in a box. The lady from DEFRA was very impressed with my preparations and having inspected everything, happily signed off all my paraphernalia.

The day prior to staging I collected my pre-ordered flowers and whilst waiting in the queue it was lovely to see a familiar face – Purnima from Gravesend, a complete surprise as I had no idea she was competing in the Imposed Class. As we chatted we had our photo taken!



The 5am early morning start felt like the middle of the night to most of us as we left our hotel by coach for The Diggi Palace. Help was on hand to manoeuvre everyone's mechanics and flowers to their staging areas. I was in good company with familiar faces, Craig Bullock, David Rylands, Diane Fair, Barbara Collier, Dr. Christina Curtis, and Pam Lewis, many of my friends from Ireland and later Purnima who was staging just behind me. At 6am we began. Time went incredibly quickly and with just one quick coffee break I finished in time for the noon deadline. What a relief it was over! There was no more I could do. I had done my best and was reasonably happy with the finished result! Later that evening I checked online for the results and was absolutely amazed to see that I had been awarded Second place in my Class. A complete surprise! Purnima too had been successful and had been awarded Commended for her Imposed. Kent was on the map!

The following afternoon those receiving First, Second and Third prizes were invited to

attend the Awards Ceremony staged a short distance from The Diggi Palace. The ceremony was quite an experience and one I shall never forget - somewhere between The Oscars, The Eurovision Song Contest and the Open Ceremony of the Olympic Games! My Class was announced and as I walked towards the stage the words 'In second place, Jacqui Arnold for The United Kingdom' a sudden sense of pride did I have to admit occur. A superb tea party followed with Indian dancing and live music – such memories. As we left Jaipur and headed to Shimla at the foothills of the Himalayas to continue our journey, I felt very privileged to have taken part in this amazing World Show.



Let's Spin – Jaipur – Purnima Patel

I have always enjoyed nature and flowers since childhood. I was born in Uganda, East Africa and having a beautiful garden well stocked with flowering shrubs and trees I used to make corsages when I was five years old, little did I know at that time what they were called.

I spent my adult life in India, studying at University, and came to England with my husband, Mahen. When we eventually moved to Gravesend I met Sylvia Cheeseman, my neighbour and mentor, who introduced me to flower arranging and, of course, I became a member of the NAFAS Gravesend Club and the Vanguard. I also attended the Kent Area courses tutored by Avril Hill.

Over the years my interest in flower arranging progressively increased. I had the opportunity to visit WAFA Dublin 2014 and much enjoyed the experience. When I discovered that WAFA 2020 was being held in Jaipur, India, I felt quite excited and thought of visiting Jaipur, as we often went to India at the time of year it was being held. My husband, Mahen, knowing about my passion for flowers, surprised me by registering for the show as he wanted me to go and enjoy the event.

Thinking of this opportunity I had, and with encouragement and support from family and friends, it was easier to make up my mind to participate in the show. I chose the Imposed Class, Let's Spin, as I wouldn't have to source flowers and materials, plus the fact that I had so far only exhibited at the Kent Area shows and at Club level. It was a big challenge for me to exhibit at a World show.

I went to Jaipur with some anxiety and trepidation. On the day of registration I was hoping to see a friendly face. Meeting Jacqui Arnold, Craig Bullock and Rekha Naidu was a great relief, although a little daunting, and they helped to put me at ease about what I was going to face the next day.

The day of staging came and having found my allocated space I was confronted with a large cardboard box containing various materials including sisal, jute mesh, metal stand, various dried plant materials, wire cages of different sizes..... and two buckets full of flowers and foliage. There was also a Charkha (spinning wheel, a device for spinning thread or yarn from fibres). I had to stand back in amazement looking at the amount of flowers and materials given for the allocated space. Finally, the four hours allowed was over and I was exhausted.

Next morning I was woken up by Sylvia's call at 0600hrs (IST) congratulating me. The UK knew the results before I did, so I was surprised and excited as I was not expecting any prize. I was awarded a Commended, a certificate of my participation at the show and a rosette.



During the rest of the time I was at the show I studied all the exhibits, did some workshops and had a fabulous time. I learnt a lot about the importance of flowers as they bring joy and pleasure into one's life. I met lots of interesting and friendly people from different countries as well as the co-ordinator of WAFA, New Zealand who congratulated me and was very encouraging. She said that she looked forward to seeing me in Auckland, New Zealand in 2023!!!

Isn't the world of flower arrangers a lovely, friendly place to be? Hmmm! I have always wanted to go to New Zealand! (Hope my wish will be fulfilled).

My thanks to NAFAS, Kent Area and my friends at Gravesend Club for encouraging me to exhibit at Jaipur, an experience which I will remember a for long time.

Kent Area Workshop with Neil Bain – Cicely Finnis (Education Rep)

It seems a long time ago that life was normal and we had a wonderful day with Neil Bain at the Godmersham Village Hall. Neil is a brilliant teacher and all who attended enjoyed the day and learned some new skills. We were lucky that Pauline our photography rep was able to come to take some good photographs. Some are set out here but do check the area website (Gallery) for more!



Designs by Sue Shaw and David Williams



Design by Avril Austen



Design by Dee Hickman



Design by Pam Hamilton



Design by Sue Walters

Unfortunately, for the moment our workshops have had to be cancelled but as soon as we are able they will resume. I hope that when this happens we will get to have more enjoyable days.

We Will Remember Them – Chris Jenkins

Hartley & District Flower Club were honoured to be asked by Hartley Parish Council to make a wreath for V E Day. Jean Hoar did a wonderful tribute on our behalf.



Monet's Garden – Kim Marie Williams



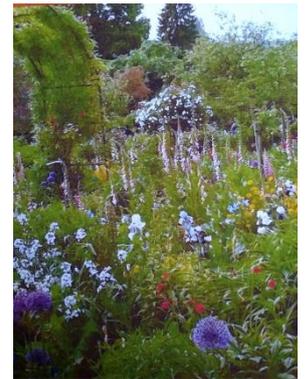
A few years ago we visited Monet's Garden in Giverny and I recall the glory of the artist's house and garden. On entering the passageway it was as if we had stepped over the rainbow into Oz, the flowers were sublime – a real cottage garden with delphiniums, hollyhocks and lavatera plus other plants jostling for a position in his flowerbeds, as you walked up and down the rows of endless florals more surreal heads of beautiful flowers caught your eye, I remembered that there are actually two gardens as one is with the main area and one over the road – set as a Japanese inspired water garden.

Although it was very busy with people in awe and taking endless pictures it did not impact on the sheer beauty of his garden.

Further on we reached the pinnacle to his world famous green bridge crossing the stream reflecting the glorious willow trees and shrubs and reminding us of his watercolour of water lilies.

The house with its quintessential green shutters lovely rooms felt homely a place I would love to live in and was splendid above the glorious garden bursting with colour and scent.

Once England and Europe overcome this terrible virus I wholeheartedly recommend Monet's House and Garden and once in France do travel further to Avignon, Nimes, Pont du Gard in Provence and Monaco too, they are all glorious places to see.



Want to have a go at Competitive Flower Arranging? – Jenny Nye

So you've thought about entering a floral art competition but it does look rather complicated when you haven't done it before and really what you need is a bit of encouragement so below is some information to help you get started!!!



You have a schedule and have found a class title that appeals and decide to have a go. Next you need to put your idea/s into practice by doing a mock-up/s but firstly read the Schedule thoroughly noting the exact title of the Class. Research can be helpful even just looking up the words in the dictionary. Also study the Rules making particular note of staging times.

For your mock-up make a space of the given size and have a go and it does not need to be the exact finished design, just make use of whatever you have to hand garden foliage, a few flowers even artificial which then leads you to the overall design. Your exhibit should fit comfortably within the space, that is, it should not be to the outer edges thus making it overly large neither should it be too small. The "fit" making it visually pleasing within the space.

I always find it a surprise when components I try out and think are going to fit are too small or too large for the space. Also it is a good idea to walk away from your work and then go back this refreshes your view of it and taking a photograph can be very telling! Remember plant material should predominate Now begin putting it together.

EXHIBITS ARE JUDGED ON.....

** The Creativity of the Design taking into account the Elements and Principles of Design – more information below

** Interpretation of the Class Title

** Presentation of the exhibit – all the plant material must be in good condition, as well as the mechanics of the design and it should all be well presented.

The Most Common Faults in Competition work:-

I Not complying with the show schedule. The very worst examples of this are when: (a) the plant material extends over or above the boundary of the given space making it oversized. Some plant material continues growing, tulips and gladioli are some of those that do and foliage is often a culprit too and (b) the exhibit is larger than the given size. Very often a fault with small scale designs namely “miniature” and “petite”. Sadly these situations cause disqualification and have to be marked as “Not According to Schedule”. For Judges this is the worst possible outcome as there is no other choice.

II Wilting plant material – so make sure your plant material is well conditioned remembering that from the time your design is completed to the judging there is often a time delay.

III Poor workmanship and/or presentation -Placing of the exhibit in the given space is very important, it’s a natural instinct to place it totally front facing but sometimes angling the design (whilst still fitting into the space) will enhance its presentation – give it try, often you will notice a difference for the better.

IV Poor interpretation of the class title.

VI Poor use of the Elements and Principles of Design



Very Briefly the Elements of Design are:-

Colour – is infinitely variable its visual effect is dependent on light, texture, placement and distance. It affects all the Principles of Design and has a strong effect on mood, emotion and is steeped in symbolism;

Form - that is the 3D shape of the components therefore variety of form creates interest;

Line - a visual path, created by flowers, foliage and sometimes accessories which the eye follows so they appear to have visual movement and is called rhythm;

Space – the space around it, within it; and lastly

Texture - the visible and actual appearance of the surface qualities of the components e.g., shiny, rough and the actual feel and visual appearance

Very Briefly the Principles of Design are:

Balance – the actual and visual state of stability;

Contrast – the use, for example, of differing colours and textures which are opposites yet compliment each other;

Rhythm – organised movement, provides a path along which the eye may travel, can be subtle and not necessarily using the same components;

Scale - refers to the *size* relationship between components and is particularly relevant in small scale designs;

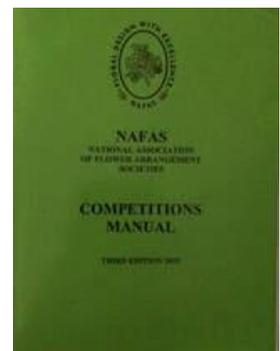
Proportion – refers the *amount or quantity* of the components, or the overall design in relation to the space it occupies;

Harmony - an ordered relationship of the parts which complement the design; and

Dominance – helps produce unity, achieved by emphasis of one or more parts of an exhibit over other parts.

NAFAS booklets are available on the Elements and Principles of Design, and A Flower Arrangers Guide to Colour Theory often obtainable via your Club, or the Kent Area, at www.kentfloralart.co.uk and go to the Trading Section. See also the Flower Arranger Magazine for a full list. Also most flower arranging books contain such information.

All the Rules and Regulations are in the Competitions Manual Third Edition 2015 which can also be obtained through your Club or via Area Trading. There is much information in this booklet so don't be put off. I found it best when I started by dipping in and out of it. *For competitive work it is the first place to go to.* Since the Manual was published many more items have been added which are now considered to be plant material, if you do not have the “Material in all its Forms Sept 2018” it can be downloaded from the Kent Area Website at www.kentfloralart.co.uk and go to the JDSE&P Section and then Judging.



Another *TIP* is to participate in workshops which the Kent Area run annually Details of the Workshops run by the Area can be found on the Website which do include some on Show Work again go to www.kentfloralart.co.uk and to the JDSE&P Section and then Education.

The most important part of all this is that you enjoy working with flowers and other plant material whilst increasing your knowledge, it's an endless subject and who knows where it might lead you. Good luck with your endeavours.

BONJOUR FROM THE DORDOGNE – Tricia Bashford

Life is full of surprises and no-one could have predicted the virus that has changed our lives completely. We of course had our own challenges, moving to a new country away from family and friends, to a whole new way of life, so this lockdown was not so hard for us. We did not foresee that our friends and neighbours would decide to split up weeks before we moved, so we have already been quite isolated since we moved here.

There are a few English people here and we have made friends. I have joined a club in Bournell where ladies from different cultures and countries meet and enjoy crafts. A lot of chat over tea and biscuits takes place just like the UK, so it is a place to make friends and learn new crafts. I have tried to get them interested in flower arranging, but these things take time, and life is different here.



We live in a very rural setting, our nearest village is Molliers which has 1 bar, the Marie (village Hall), the Church and a pottery. Our nearest town is the picturesque Lalinde, where we cross the Dordogne River, to buy groceries etc. Markets are held every week which are great for fresh produce and local crafts. Medieval villages with wonderful churches and village bars are all around us, where you can soak up the ambiance over a coffee or sample the local vino.

We live in an old cottage, which we had modernised and renovated. The garden is still under construction, where I spend most of the time. My poor plants have been on their own journey, losing some to the scorching heat, heavy clay soil, and wildlife. Being moved several times did not help. Most have now settled into their new positions, hopefully. I will put more photos on my Facebook page.



I feel like Barbara from the good life, (I wish), as I live in wellies and keep chickens. (They roam free)

After 25 years, Bob the builder has revealed himself. Yes, who would have thought it, Barry has built, with a bit of my help, a potager, 8 raised beds, a shed, erected a 20ft poly tunnel, and built a great bench, where I raise my seeds. We were trying to go self-sufficient but the bugs are eating everything as fast as I put them in the ground. This year will

be a learning curve as to what we can grow.

Let's celebrate the fact that circumstances have made us spend time to sort out our gardens, and enjoy them too. The spirit of friendship and flowers is so important, now more than ever. Keep bringing the power of flowers to brighten someone's day.



Cheers! Adieu x

Foliage for Flower Arranging – Helen Hare

Foliage is key to creating beautiful arrangements, the addition of good foliage and fillers will turn a floral arrangement into something special. Here are some of my favourite shrubs and must haves for a flower arranger.

Pittosporum - is the perfect evergreen shrubs, there are many attractive varieties, it's fast growing, varies in height with some lovely variegated forms, a must have for flower arrangers.

Sarcococca Confusa 'Christmas Box' - a invaluable fast growing evergreen shrub, you can cut every winter spring and summer, dark green arched stems are similar to soft ruscus, the tiny white flowers that appears in late winter is a added bonus with a delicious scent.



Stephanandra Tanakae - deciduous shrub with long arching stems, pale green leaves that turns yellow/orange in autumn, vine shape leaves, nice to use later in the year with its creamy flowers.



Bupleurum fruticosum - one of my favourite! Evergreen shrub, grow in a sunny border, H to 2 m, it will delight you with umbels of green/sulphur yellow flowers, 3-4" across on upright stems. Adds colour, forms and texture to any designs.

Griselinia littoralis variegata - attractive evergreen shrub, with upright branches, boasts creamy splashes over shiny apple green foliage, the tall straight stems are good for flower arranging. This shrub is often grown as hedging.

Itea ilicifolia - interesting tall erect evergreen shrub, H 3-5 m, with shiny holly like dark green leaves, from mid summer it will produce abundance of small green pendulous catkins like racemes to 12" long, needs a sheltered position, perfect against a wall.



Skimma japonica 'Rubella' - I love to use this for Christmas and spring arrangements, very long lasting. A compact evergreen small shrub with red margined leaves, dark red flowers buds in late autumn and winter.

Phormium cookianum or tenax - structure plant, tough long strappy leaves, very popular in floral art, lots of varieties some with coloured variegated leaves, the long leaves are used in various ways, whole leaves to provide line and height in arrangements, or can be rolled, coiled, twisted, folded and plaited, you can even run it through a pasta machine for special effect. A must have for all flower arrangers.

Fatsia Japonica - tropical looking tough evergreen with leathery large form palmate shape leaves, great for leaf manipulation and in contemporary designs, look out for 'spider web' with white marbles leaves, and Fatsia Aurea with lime green yellow variegated leaves.

Abelia grandiflora - semi evergreen, very vigorous, looks good all year round, arching branches with glossy mid green leaves that adds lightness to an arrangement, the salmon pink calyces left by the pale pink flowers adds colour and interest.



My tip is cut foliage a few hours before arranging it, always condition your cut foliage for at least 2 hours, only cut what you need, use your deciduous shrubs in the summer and save the evergreens for winter use. When cutting, try to maintain the plants character and shape.

Enjoy your garden and happy flower arranging!!

Making a Stand – Athur Clatworthy

When I was invited to write something for the Kent News', I was asked how I come up with something new. Good Question.



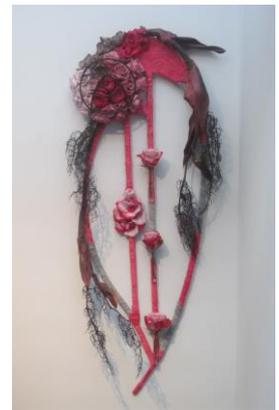
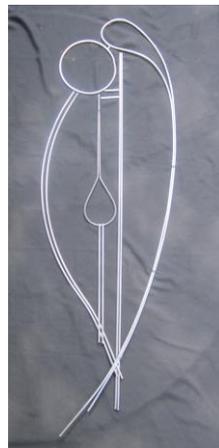
Some ideas have come to mind when my wife, Linda, wanted something for her design, and this was then altered to make something else. I started on the road to making the mechanics for flower arranging in 1998. Linda was on the team for the Kent Area exhibit at the Southport Show, and then again in the Area Class Bournemouth 2003.

Went well as they got first place at Bournemouth.



Most designs are already out there in the shape of an unconnected item. One of my favourite designers is Charles Rennie Macintosh (CRM), and I have done several mechanics based around his building, furniture, and interior designs. I also love Art Deco designs, which can be used quite freely. There are so many designs in both interior and exterior of art deco buildings. I have made what is needed for the exhibitor to carry out their design, according to the schedule. Not always an easy task, some designs would need levitation. During the last 20+ years I have been fortunate to have made dozens of mechanics for exhibition work, at least 12 of these for Chelsea.

National 2019. Robin asked me if I could make him a couple of pieces for the “Designer of the Year” as he was representing the Kent Area. This was to be a petite, and a wall hanging. The petite was no problem as it was a larger version of a CRM candlestick, except there was to be a vertical disc where the candle holder would normally be, a most unusual design. Robin sent me a photo of a brooch designed by CRM with a drawing and dimensions. This was a challenge, of turning a small piece of jewellery into a one and a half metre wall hanging. What looked right dimensionally for a brooch had to be severely altered for a wall hanging. An example of using one design for another. A much-deserved result, “Designer of the Year”.



Answers to General Knowledge Quiz

1 - Oxford 2 - United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organisation 3 - 15 years 4 - William Shakespeare (in 1964) 5 - Professor Plum 6 - Claude Monet 7 – 1956 8- Peter Blake (& Jean Haworth) 9 – Blood 10 – Six



SHADOXHURST FLOWER CLUB
EMERALD ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION

Wednesday 5th August
Shadoxhurst Village Hall, Hornash Lane,
Shadoxhurst, Ashford, TN26 1HZ
7.30pm - Doors open 7pm
Visitors £8

Our demonstrator for the evening will be
Mig Kimpton

A buffet will be served

For more information telephone Mrs Gaye Sim on 01233 732212

Leaf Manipulation – Anne Luckett

Design 1

Figure 1



split phormium into
four equal strips

Figure 2



fold outer strips twice
around inner strips and

Figure 3



Figure 4



Continue until the end then tie off with the smaller end at the back of the leaf

Design 2

Figure 1



Split phormium into six equal strips and weave to the **left** starting with the outer strip

Figure 2



Starting with the lowest weave three of these strips **vertically**. Weave the fourth strip back across the to the **right**

Figure 3



Weave three more across to the **right**

Figure 4



Starting with the bottom strip weave three **vertically**. Starting with the last strip weave four strips to the **left** as in Figure 1.