

NORTH EAST AREA NEWS

WINTER EDITION 2020



Hello everyone,

What a beautiful Autumn we have had. Trees have been absolutely gorgeous, in particular the beech trees, leaving carpets of golden coloured leaves all over the floor. We have had some spectacular rainbows too. I guess my garden is very much like yours as most of the flowers have succumbed to the wet and cold, leaving the sedum flowers looking a dirty red colour as the only remains of the Autumn splendour. Many of us have had the opportunity, through Lockdown and different forms of isolation, to appreciate even more the dynamics of nature that surrounds us and winter too will have its beauty with the frost and snow that changes our gardens and landscape beyond.

You do not need me to tell you that Christmas is nearly here – but what sort of a Christmas can we expect? Will we be able to be with family and loved ones or no-one but ourselves? I write this when we are already in the second Lockdown, the day the Pfizer vaccine has proven to be more than 90% effective, Donald Trump has yet to concede defeat in the US elections and the weather could certainly be better! What then have we to do to survive the coming days and weeks ahead? We are folks who love flowers, love being in each other's company, talking laughing, doing and sharing conversations, maybe with a glass of something and importantly being together at a Flower Club event and possibly being the lucky winner of one of the floral arrangements!

Can I encourage you over the coming winter months to continue to keep in touch with one another, through phone calls, distanced visits, Zoom or other means of technology? These create precious opportunities to hear someone's voice, see someone smile, share memories of those past Flower Club events and maybe speculate on what is in store at your Club, Area and National level when we are able to meet again. Let us exchange Christmas cards with chatty news and exchange Christmas presents wherever possible.

The North East Area Executive committee are continuing to look at the 2021/22 calendars when trying to plan events, some of which you will have read about in the details sent out with the AGM papers. If you have any thoughts or ideas about what type of events you would like us to do differently, please get in touch with either myself or Ann Simpson, Area Secretary. I am sure there will be many anniversaries to look forward to whether they are new for 2021 or re-scheduled from 2020.

In the meantime, we have an experienced group of demonstrators and speakers who are more than willing to offer online demonstrations, workshops and talks leading up to Christmas or to take your Club through the winter months. Talk to your Club Chairman or Programme Secretary to see if this is something your Club could do, as this could be an important means of keeping your club active and alive. More information can be found on the N.E. Area website. Clubs fear that they will lose members following the effects of Covid-19 this year, so now might be an opportunity to encourage non-members, family and friends to think about joining you when your Club opens again. You never know there may well be a lot of talent that could be captured by your Club, not just floral art enthusiasts but potential Committee Members – who knows! How about passing on some of your Flower Arranger magazines or purchasing a subscription as a Christmas present!

Finally, on behalf of the N.E. Area Executive Committee, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas, a Happy and Healthy New Year. Take care and keep safe through the coming months until we can all meet up again.

Janet Ratcliffe
N E Area Chairman

2021 AREA PROGRAMME (subject to change)

January 30	Council meeting via Zoom
March 20	Education Day at Wigginton Recreation Hall, nr York
April 17	Council meeting at the Folk Hall, New Earswick, York
April 21-22	Pre- National Assessment & National Demonstrators Test in Northwich
April 22-25	Harrogate Spring Flower Show Spring Essentials
May 9	Demonstrators and Speakers Refresher Day
July 13-15	Great Yorkshire Show
July 24	Council meeting at the Folk Hall, New Earswick, York



August 19-22	Residential weekend at Scarborough
September 17-19	Harrogate Autumn Flower Show
September 25	Education Day at Wigginton Recreation Hall, nr York
October 16	Council meeting at the Folk Hall, New Earswick, York
October 20	Area Lunch at the Parsonage Hotel, Escrick, nr York
November 20	Annual General Meeting at Queen Elizabeth School, Wakefield.

OH, WHAT A TREAT!

Like many other Organisations, Societies and Clubs, the Committee decided in the Summer, that the way forward under these difficult times of Covid, was to hold Club meetings via Zoom. It was also agreed from the very beginning of Lockdown that we would continue with our monthly Newsletter albeit in a different format.

Zoom meetings started in September with the speaker Martin Fish talking about his garden. He is passionate about gardening and features regularly on television and radio.

In October it was such a delight to have Vanessa Wellock demonstrating live via YouTube. We always knew that she would exceed our highest expectations and we were treated to an array of arrangements, which she staged in her home.

Vanessa has inspiration, flair and vision and she demonstrated three designs. The harvest ring for attaching to your door or wall used a purchased twig wreath with additional larch twigs, orange calla lilies and roses with asparagus fern. The hand tied was frame of twigs and calla lilies, roses and fern. The arrangement was a mixture of pussy willow, twigs, and orchids inserted into wool covered tubes with pink calla lilies.

In November two members will be leading what would have been our Christmas Workshop.

In December it has been customary to serve mulled wine and mince pies with our Christmas demonstration and members will be encouraged to do likewise when we have our very own Christine Hinchcliffe.

Barbara Newby

Headingley Flower Club at Bramhope



TIME TO LOOK FORWARD A CLUB CHAIRMAN'S THOUGHTS

Our National CEO Steven Lane joined a NE area zoom meeting with club chairmen in November. This was a very interesting meeting, with Steven answering questions and explaining the changes that have taken place at NAFAS head office.

Financially the 2019 Diamond Show showed a substantial deficit amongst other factors, with fewer than expected visitors attending. Covid 19 has prevented club members attending meetings for much of this year and it is feared that some clubs may lose members or won't survive.

Sometimes a disaster is the catalyst to great improvements, and I felt that Steven had a clear vision of the way forward for our organisation. Changes are happening at Head Office and there is work in progress. I feel confident that the present trustees are now working on tasks that many of us have wanted for several years. The membership and Area chairmen will continue to have a big input into the way the organisation moves forward, but Steven suggests that there is a need for other areas of specialism in order to promote our organisation and bring in younger members. I can certainly see the logic in this.

If you look on our area website and click on links and downloads you can find the YouTube video of the National AGM. In this Steven explains the ideas for the way forward. His report starts at 20mins and ends at 32 mins and is very interesting to watch.

My thanks to Janet Ratcliffe and the NE Area Executive committee for organising such a useful meeting with Steven.

Hazel Bell

Ossett Flower Club

SCARECROW STORY!

In the early stages of lockdown, I was pottering in my front garden when a man stopped by the wall with an interesting proposition, would I be interested in making a scarecrow for a festival that local support group were organising for the end of May Bank Holiday in aid of children's charities. I could not grasp the information about the event quickly enough, something to do that did not involve cleaning or sorting out the drawers.



As the back of my house and garden is ancient woodland a theme quickly came into my head, a woodland fairy. Not being blessed with sewing skills I resorted to the medium I know best, plant material.

The problem, however, was how to access the Aspidistra leaves I had decided would make the perfect handkerchief skirt as the wholesale market and florists were closed. A call out to members of my fellow flower club committee came up trumps as usual and several socially distanced collections were made of fresh and dried leaves.

Many an enjoyable hour was filled gathering, gluing, painting to achieve the result. A woodland crown made of birch twigs, an ivy-covered bodice, beech nuts split down made striking painted fingernails. In addition, I created pinecone mice and an owl with dried fern feathers.

Within the 3-mile area 101 households entered the festival staged to be viewed from pavements, you can tell we were all looking for something to lighten our moods. A grand total of £4,000 was raised through entry fees, raffles and sponsorship so a great local effort that brought fun and smiles to residents and visitors over a 3-day period.

**Joyce Hearnshaw
Huddersfield Flower Club**

THE GENESIS OF THE NAFAS NORTH EAST FILM UNIT

Over a year ago there was a meeting of the committee of the New Earswick Flower Club (of which I am a member) where we discussed the forthcoming programme for 2019/2020. In common with a lot of Clubs, in late Spring / early Summer we usually organise a garden visit but for this particular year we organised two. One was a visit to Rewela Cottage in Skewsby, but the second visit was something of a fund-raising opportunity, as three members of our Club decided to organise a joint garden opening scheme: our Flower Arranging officer, who lives in one of the Arts and Crafts townhouses in New Earswick village, our Treasurer (and President) who happens to be an Area Demonstrator from Haxby, and yours truly.



Little did we know on that dark evening in early 2019 what lay in store for 2020, cancelled demonstrations, talks, and everything!!

We were able to transfer our booking for Rewela Cottage to 2021, but in the lead-up to the date at which the three members' gardens were to have been opened up, I had a bright idea, as workshops and demonstrations could be shown through the medium of YouTube, why not garden visits?

After a few telephone calls between us all, on a bright and sunny Saturday in June, I set off on my bike with a fully-charged mobile phone and took some videos of the three gardens. The results were much better than I hoped. A few messages later with a friend who recommended a video editing software package called Power Director (free!), I managed to stitch together the separate files and even add titling, background music and some explanatory labelling. The result was about nine minutes long, and for a first attempt, not bad. After a few false starts, I managed to upload it onto YouTube.

That got me thinking. Why not carry on with more gardens? We are lucky to have as a member of New Earswick our Area Secretary, Ann Simpson. Ann not only has a lovely flower arranger's garden at her house (also in New Earswick) but has a large allotment just off Wiggington Road, on the way to Nestlé's. Ann was kind enough to allow us to film both of these, and again that turned into another seven minutes or so of YouTube video.

After a number of phone calls, we managed to obtain permission to go to and film the gardens of Janet and Keith Hayton in Skelton, Sue Guillatt's garden (a bit further afield in East Yorkshire) and the gardens of both Sheila, the Area Vice-Chairman, and Janet Ratcliffe, the Area Chairman.

It was a full day out, as both live in deepest West Yorkshire: Sheila in Birkenshaw (very handy for IKEA) and Janet with her husband Gordon in Brighouse.

Each time, the stitching together of the image files using Power Director became simpler as I became more adept at using it.

I was also delighted to be able to add to this directory of online garden visits, a walkthrough of Joyce Hearnshaw's garden in Huddersfield. She was much more professional than I could be as not only did she film it herself; she also provided a running commentary!

So, there they all are. If you haven't yet seen the videos on YouTube, please go and have a look, especially (by the time you read this) we have said farewell to summer and the clocks will have gone back.

I would like to offer my thanks to all the expert gardeners I have had the privilege of meeting over the past few months: Alex, Daphne, Ann, Janet and Keith, Janet and Gordon, Sue, Joyce and Sheila. I would also like to confirm that the old film adage of "never work with animals or children" is absolutely correct as Ann Simpson's garden video was completely upstaged by a guest appearance of Rosie, Ann's very friendly black Labrador.

There are links to all the videos on our Area Website but here they are again:

New Earswick Flower Club: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWc0vOU023g>

Ann Simpson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2YmprlbtYg>

Keith and Janet Hayton: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F- ND65zI4k>

Joyce Hearnshaw: <https://youtu.be/v3mu0OSnd1l>

Sue Guillatt: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dFxm-uod-M>

Sheila Drybrough: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqCQ_qHwwD4

Janet and Gordon Ratcliffe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iS49eTs43dl>

Peter Mathers

New Earswick Flower Club

COPING WITH LIFE UNDER COVID AT OSSETT

Like many clubs we have kept in contact with our members by email, text and phone calls. Committee meetings have taken place on Zoom, which has been an interesting education in the use of new technology.

Demonstrations for the rest of the year were cancelled. Information was sent out regarding a variety of web sites members could access on flower demonstrations etc on line.

In August we looked into the possibility of restarting club meetings. Our venue is the concert room of a club and they were open for business. Committee members visited the premises and it was agreed to have a trial meeting in September following these rules:

- It would be a workshop
- All members to wear face coverings throughout the evening
- Each person to sit at an individual table 2m from any other
- Everyone to bring all the equipment and materials they needed
- There was a one-way system marked out around the room
- Hand sanitizer and wipes were available
- Members needed to book places with a maximum of 16
- Information about what to bring was provided



Members were contacted and the above information was included. Places were quickly filled. Many were delighted that they could meet under the safety of these rules, others were worried about protecting the family or themselves. The trial was a great success and two further meetings have taken place.

Normally, we run workshops once a month for both club members and the public. Several of these people have joined as space allows. We deliver a short demonstration to give ideas and support is on hand, from a safe distance, for those needing advice. We will keep safe and carry on!

Hazel Bell Chairman Ossett

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