KEW HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER – JULY 2025





Dear Members,

Our annual, and most important event, the Flower and Produce Show, is coming!

Saturday 23rd August is the day and we will be on the Green as usual. Your printed Schedule should just have been delivered so we hope you will be leafing through the classes and thinking about what you might be able to exhibit! Entries will be taken on Friday, 22nd August in the marquee between 5 and 7pm, and on the Saturday morning between 7.30 and 9.30am.









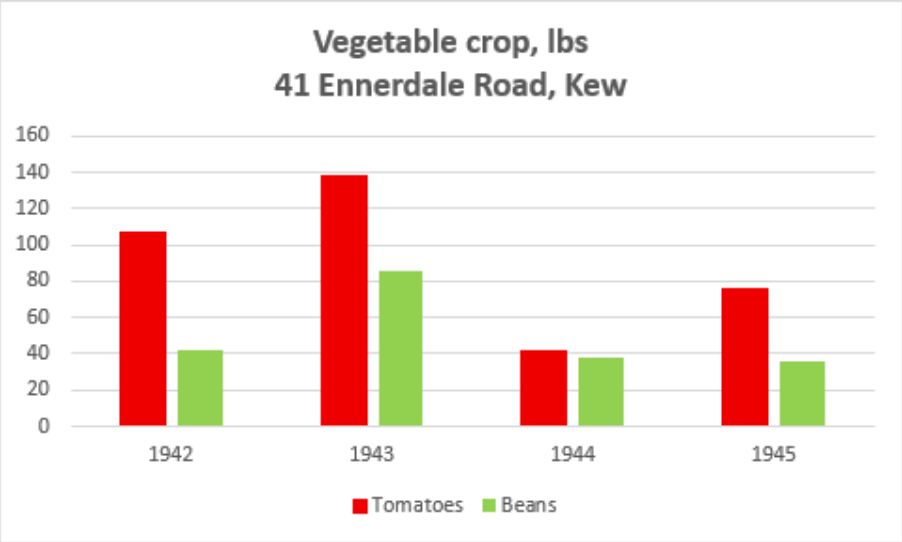


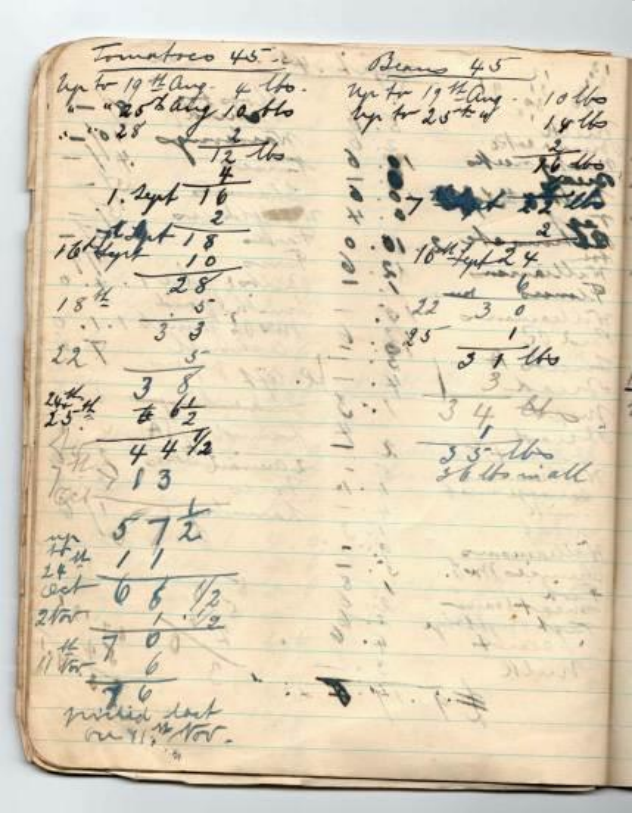


Please display the poster and spread the word about the day - anyone can enter, so do encourage friends and family to have a go. Don't forget that there are classes for children and as this year is our 80th Show and also the anniversary of VE Day, we have a SPECIAL SECTION – The 1940s Revisited.

Have a look at the categories in this section and try your hand at a wartime cake, a VE Day floral display or 'Make Do and Mend' – it should be a fun challenge!

And to inspire you, here is what Marian Mollett's grandmother, Lily Drew, managed to produce at 41, Ennerdale Road during the war, plus a page from her notebook.





Thank you to Marian for showing us this amazing feat of wartime vegetable growing.

Our Show Organisers, Alison Greenwood and Mandy Botta, are co-ordinating the outside stalls, marquee, tea tent and all the other elements to make the Show another great community event.

For our own KHS stalls, we will need your help in collecting the following:

Book Stall – any saleable books (not travel guides from the 1980s please…) but no DVDs or CDs, thank you.

Plants – please start potting up anything available in your garden for our plant stall.

Tea Tent – cakes, biscuits etc. gratefully received

Bric-a-Brac – anything goes! (except electrical items)

Tombola – there will be a children's Tombola and a Bottle Tombola for adults. Donations of any sort of bottle for the adults (sauce, shampoo, alcohol) would be much appreciated.

All items can be brought to the Green on the Friday evening or early on the Saturday morning. If you cannot do this and need anything collected, please email the Secretary on the following: frgoodwin@hotmail.com

Volunteers - will be needed for the Show, to help with taking in exhibits, manning the various stalls etc. If you have an hour or so to spare on the day, please email frgoodwin@hotmail.com. Thank you!

If you won a cup last year and our Secretary has not yet contacted you about returning it, would you email Frances Goodwin on frgoodwin@hotmail.com

Borough of Richmond Allotments Group

BRAG, as we know them, won First Prize at the RHS Hampton Court Flower Show for Best Allotment. Many congratulations to them!

A Crowdfunding site was set up to raise money for this project and the KHS gave a donation of £150 to support them.







Recent Events

THE KHS HOLIDAY TO GARDENS OF MALVERN 6th – 10th May

Mary Fisher writes:

We set out bright and early from Kew Green with our coach driver, Mark, from previous KHS holidays. Tony Russell met us at Spetchley Park where an introduction to the estate was given by Chris, the Head Gardener. Home to the Berkeley family since 1605, the Palladian style house replaces the original Tudor building, which was burned down on the eve of the battle of Worcester (1651) by disgruntled Scottish Royalists determined to prevent Oliver Cromwell from using it for his headquarters. A delightful 30 acres of extensive walled kitchen gardens, vast lake, parkland, chapel, and dipping pond all made for a very interesting and enjoyable visit. The homemade Turkish apricot cake a bonus! Trees of note were the cork oaks and Paulownia tomentosa. A magnificent display of paeonies, wisteria and flowering shrubs such as deutzia and weigela were enhanced by the late Spring sunshine. Ellen Willmott, sister of Rose Berkeley, had a strong influence in the design of the garden at Spetchley.



The lake at Spetchley Park

Upon arrival in Hereford, Mark skilfully negotiated the narrow streets to The Green Dragon Hotel where we were greeted by the May Fair. Supper was to the accompaniment of all the fun of the fair, a very large ride being immediately outside our dining room window – most amusing!

The following morning, we visited Hergest Croft Gardens where an imposing rambling house set on a ridge,is flanked by majestic copper beeches, limes, oaks and redwoods, with stunning views to the Black Mountains. The garden, created by Richard Banks, hosts the National Collection of maples, birches and zelkovas, and boasts over 130 Champion Trees. Following Tony's tour of the maple grove and azalea garden, we enjoyed coffee on the terrace whilst admiring the beautiful double tulips. The handkerchief tree, Davidia involucrata, is one of the UK's largest specimens.



The group at Hergest Croft



On to Brobury House Gardens. A garden in which to sit, admire and listen. The sound of water and birdsong is very soothing, and comfortable seats dotted around the garden encourage relaxation. Lutyens-inspired water features dominate this tranquil seven acres on the banks of the River Wye. The owner, Pru, described how she had, over 25 years with the help of the designer, Peter Antonius, transformed the garden into what it is today – sheer delight at every turn. The wealth of beautiful and unusual trees, the birch grove, bog garden and well thought out planting result in a marvellous horticultural experience.

Thursday was spent at The RHS Malvern Spring Festival. The forecast promised sun but it didn't shine on a chilly showground. Yet this mattered not as we had a wonderful day enjoying the show gardens, floral marquee and talks by Rachel de Thame, Chris Collins, Raymond Blanc and others. A great day with live music to enhance the festival atmosphere, and plenty of unusual plants to take home.

Our last full day began with a visit to Stockton Bury Gardens. Created by the current owner, Raymond Treasure, Stockton is pure joy. Originally a monastic farm, and to this day a working farm, the garden runs above and alongside fields of livestock. "Abundant and luxuriant" as one visitor was overheard to describe it. A series of individual gardens, including a secret garden, with views through wisteria-clad arched stone windows to Hay-on Wye. One area held surprises in the form of an enchanting Styrax obassia tree, the most stunning pink splashed actinidia, and small, rare, red tulips encircling the base of the old dovecote. Beth Chatto and Christopher Lloyd were friends of the previous owner, which perhaps explains the exuberant planting and bold colours. Alas, the original house succumbed to death watch beetle and had to be rebuilt in 1974. It is only 4 acres of cultivated garden yet seemed so much larger. Definitely the KHS People's Choice!



Carolina allspice



Dovecote

Originally laid out by the architect, John Treasure, Burford House and Gardens is famous for being home to over 100 varieties of clematis. The adjoining nursery sells many of these. An imposing Georgian manor house presides over the vast lawns and walled garden. A magnificent handkerchief tree, giant redwood and golden rain tree take pride of place. Situated on the banks of the River Teme, the garden has been flooded on several occasions yet the river has advantages in encouraging a wealth of biodiversity.

Saturday morning, we said our goodbyes to The Green Dragon Hotel, and the cathedral city of Hereford; the delightful Bishop's Meadow and Castle Green for early morning walks. We set off to visit our final garden on our way back to Kew.

Coughton Court has been the Tudor home of the Throckmorton family since 1412. Clare Throckmorton took over the running of the house in the 1980 and her garden-designer daughter, Christina, set about re-designing the garden a decade later. An avenue of limes and yew hedging form a strong symmetrical structure to the long view from the back of the house, with sunken gardens partially hidden beyond. The large walled garden has an unusual feature of pan tiles to protect the brickwork. Trees of note are the Manna ash and medlars. The purple wisteria 'trees' underplanted with dark pink paeonies are delightful.

Many thanks, as ever, go to Ellen at Travel Editions, our expert guide, Tony, and our wonderful coach driver, Mark.

Thank you to Mary for this entertaining account – and for her help in organising the tour.









And an interesting note from Jenny Long:



Is this a Wollumi Pine (Wollumia Nobilis)? No it isn't but looks very similar. Seen in a garden visited during the Malvern tour, it is in fact a close relative called a Chinese Fir (Cunninghamia lanceolata). Of course it was discovered by Mr (James) Cunningham, in China around 1701. He was one of the first Europeans to collect botanical specimens from China.

For your diary: Next year's holiday will be from 19-23 May 2026 based at The Barnstaple Hotel, EX31 1LE. We will have a new guide, David Hurrion, a gardening journalist, lecturer and RHS judge. For more than 20 years David has written and edited for the main British gardening magazines, currently as Associate Editor for BBC Gardeners' World Magazine. He has also appeared as a regular contributor and an expert commentator on TV and radio. We will be in safe hands! On 14 August, David Hurrion is giving a talk via Zoom on the history and origins of our garden plants.
If you're considering next year's trip and would like to register for this talk, please email Travel Editions. info@email.traveleditions.co.uk

SHORT LOTS/KHS OPEN DAY 18th MAY

The KHS joined Short Lots for an open day, to tie in with the NGS open gardens on Kew Green. We enjoyed a good number of visitors on a lovely, sunny day and signed up about ten new and returning members. We also gave out 80 flyers for the Show, so a successful venture! Visitors were able to look round the allotments, sample some homemade cakes and browse the plant stall, run by Celia Fisher and Chris Morley-Smith. Thank you to Short Lots and all our members who contributed cakes and plants on the day.





DAY TRIP TO RHS HYDE HALL 26TH JUNE

Thirty members and friends were booked on the coach to RHS Hyde Hall in Essex. As we are an affiliated society, we had free entry to the garden, which had much to admire and inspire us. Two very knowledgeable volunteer guides showed us parts of the garden including the cottage gardens (traditional and more contemporary), the birch grove, the winter garden, lake and the acclaimed dry garden, with its drought-resistant planting. We ended up in the hilltop garden, where we could see the beautiful rose garden, herbaceous borders and two lovely ponds. The weather was mostly kind and

only gave us a sprinkling of rain, despite the very dramatic skies. Many thanks to Jenny Long for all her organisation of a very rewarding day.



In the cottage garden



The Dry Garden

The large pond



Kew Gardens

We have received a request from Kew Gardens!

Help is needed once a week with Kew's School Room plant care. Taking on this role will automatically mean becoming a Kew Gardens Volunteer with all the benefits of free entry and other reduced ticket prices and events.

The Learning & Content Manager at Kew, Kate Graham, is looking for someone with gardening or plant care experience to help look after the collection of arid, tropical and carnivorous plants in the School Room (ground floor Museum No.1 Building). Kew's Learning Programme Teachers use these plants for school sessions and need a good healthy display of plants. Experience in caring for these types of plants would be helpful but additional guidance and training could be given if necessary.

The role would involve coming in weekly (either before 10am or after 2:30pm, to fit around the school sessions) to water and tend the plants. We would provide any equipment or materials needed. If you are interested in this role, please email schools@kew.org and include 'School Room Plant Care' in the subject field.



Richard Ward's Gardening Tips for August

Natural seasonal variations for flowering are rarely more than 2-3 weeks, whatever you try to do. This year, with so much sun and dry weather, many herbaceous plants are already past their best, although exceptions will be Mediterranean subjects, and those with deep roots.
As areas of naturalised grass start to turn brown, and wildflowers set seed, mow this month on a dry day, and leave the cuttings on the ground. 3-4 weeks later mow again, on a dry day, and rake up and dispose of cuttings. Seeds will have dispersed onto the ground and many will germinate in autumn. Leave it much after August and colder weather may inhibit seed germination.
If you want to make a new wildflower 'meadow' in your garden close-cut the required area in late August, blind over with sharp sand by half covering the grass, and sow your chosen biennial wildflower mix. This latter is best done by well mixing your seed with silver sand in a bucket which makes for easier and more even sowing. Lightly rake in, and roll when dry. A mower will do. Top the grass off in early winter and early spring, introduce annual seeds, then wait for your wildflowers to appear. Mow again in August as above.
Don't forget the 80th. KHS Show on Kew Green on Saturday 23rd August. Details on our website - www.kewhorticulturalsociety.org Anyone can participate. And enjoy our **Auction of produce at 5 p.m.** Richard.

Below are a few seasonal photos with tips……



After flowering allow lilies to die down.



Chicory. Goes to flower if sown too early.



The Ward apricot harvest!
Grow on a south-facing wall or fence.



Honeysuckle. Trim after flowering.

Autumn Event

We are hoping to organise a fungi walk in Kew Gardens, guided by volunteer expert, Janet Bostock. More details later!

Membership News

Carole Brougham writes:

We would like to welcome all those who joined as members at the Short Lots Open Day and for our visit to RHS Hyde Hall. We hope to see many of you at our events, particularly, of course, the Annual Flower and Produce Show on 23rd August this year.



'Celebrating VE Day' floral exhibit at the Malvern Show - to inspire us for Class 109?!

Prize-giving 2024



Happy gardening to you all from the Editorial Team – and looking forward to seeing you at the Show!

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