

New cup for centenary

The 95th Annual General Meeting and Prizegiving of the Horticultural Society was held on 24 November. Chairman Michael Franklin said that the centenary year had been an outstanding one for the society, with magnificent events, a new flowerbed and current membership standing at almost 500. Treasurer Chris Page had his audience in stitches while delivering a spoof report comparing committee members' expenses claims with those of MPs. Returning to his genuine report, his review of considerable centenary expenditure revealed that the society had still been able to break even, due to luck with weather and a very positive response to the centenary events that had attracted far more visitors than usual each time.

Cups and medals were presented by Joan Rees Phillips, a Vice-President of the Society. Erna and Harold Karton generously gave the society a new cup to celebrate its centenary and Harold presented it for the first time to

Diane Berger for the best cut flowers at the September Show.

A packed programme for 2010 was announced, starting with a talk on orchids on 14 January and a supper quiz on 6 February. Details can be found in What's On and on the Horticultural Society's website, www.hortsoc.co.uk.

Not one but two Ham & High photographers were present, as Polly Hancock turned the tables on her colleague by photographing regular Nigel Sutton being presented with a bottle of champagne in gratitude for his many years covering society events.

MARJORIE HARRIS



Harold and Erna Karton presented a new cup for the Society's centenary. It was won by Diane Berger for her cut flowers in September. Pic Nigel Sutton



Nigel Sutton is presented with champagne by Marjorie Harris. Pic Polly Hancock

Apple Hunt results

As you may have read in the autumn edition of Suburb News, more than 100 Suburb residents brought quantities of apples from their gardens to the Horticultural Society's September Flower Show in the hope that they would be named by experts Martin Skipper and Ross Cope of the East of England Apples and Orchards Project.

We thought you would be interested in the final results. Many of the apples came from trees that had been donated to the original owners or tenants at Dame Henrietta Barnett's instigation in the early years of the Suburb (although 45 varieties were identified, the selection submitted by residents in 2009 was entirely random. It is therefore not possible to make a scientific comparison with the 41 apples

named at our original Great Apple Hunt in 1989. However, during the organisation of the event, I did receive anecdotal reports from residents that they could not submit apples this time because some of their older trees had died in the intervening 20 years). Obviously apples that ripen earlier or later than September were not included.

Forty-five varieties of apple were identified (four up on the society's original Great Apple Hunt in 1989). A few could not be identified despite further research. The full list is as follows (numbers in brackets denote how many of each were submitted): Adams Pearmain (1), Annie Elizabeth (2), Bismarck (2), Blenheim Orange (8), Braeburn (2), Bramley (13), Cellini (2), Charles Ross (3), Chivers Delight (4), Cox's Orange

Pippin (6), Crispin (2), D'Arcy Spice (1), Edward VII (1), Ellison's Orange (2), Gascoyne's Scarlet (1), Golden Delicious (5), Granny Smith (1), Grenadier (2), Hambling's Seedling (1), Howgate Wonder (1), James Grieve (10), Jonagold (1), Katy (1), King of the Pippins (4), Lady Henniker (2), Lady Sudeley (1), Lane's Prince Albert (3), Laxton's Fortune (2), Laxton's Superb (10), Lord Derby (1), Lord Grosvenor (2), Lord Lambourn (1), Newton Wonder (4), Nonpareil (or Sturmer Pippin) (1), Peasgood's Nonsuch (2), Queen (1), Queen Cox (2), Red Delicious (2), Ribston Pippin (2), Sandringham (1), Spartan (1), Sturmer Pippin (4 or 5), Tydeman's Early Worcester (2), Warner's King (8), Worcester Pearmain (7).

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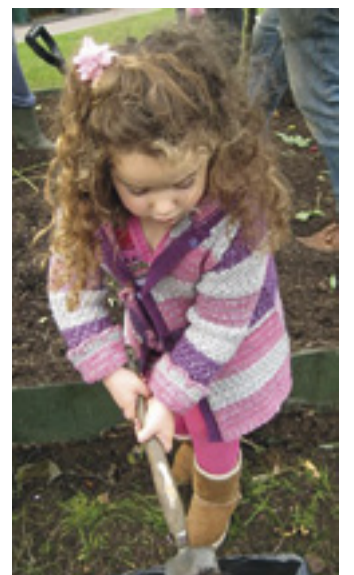
Question Time record?

Is it a record? Early in December some members of the Horticultural Society joined other London groups invited to attend a special Christmas recording of BBC Gardeners' Question Time at the Garden Museum in Lambeth.

Anne Lowe's question on disappearing hellebores was discussed by the panel and broadcast on 27 December. It was the third time Anne has appeared on the programme (the other two broadcasts came from the Suburb itself).



Plants laid out for the auction



Very young member helps

Horticultural Society completes triumphant 100th year

On a blustery but bright Autumn day members of Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society gathered to clear out the beautiful plants and trees in the raised flowerbed that had won them first prize in 2009's Barnet in Bloom competition.

Sadly, this was the end of the flowerbed's life, as the society is now handing back this part of Willifield Green to Barnet to revert to grass. It was started as a present to the community on the Suburb's 100th birthday in 2007 and its bedding became ever more adventurous over three years, culminating in 2009's design by Stephen Crisp, celebrating the society's own centenary. Said chairman Michael Franklin, "we have taken great pride in this raised flowerbed, which has become more beautiful each year. Members have titivated and watered it for three summers and

residents have told us how they changed their walking patterns to pass it. But we are now responsible for the larger flowerbed opposite for the foreseeable

future, that we created for the society's centenary this year, and we can't afford the time or money for both of them."

MARJORIE HARRIS



It was calling all wheelbarrows when a free delivery from Barnet's Compost Dept was arranged for the Chatham Close allotments.

Inspiration from a great gardener

Speaking to a packed audience of nearly 90 people at the Free Church Hall and, as a hands-on gardener still wearing the clothes he had been working in earlier in the day, Fergus Garrett, Head Gardener of Great Dixter in East Sussex, gave Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society's Autumn Lecture on Tuesday, 3 November. This was the last event in the Society's centenary year.

With his enthusiasm for the beauty and variety of planting in these special gardens pouring out of him, and illustrating his words with wonderfully evocative

slides, Fergus described his 18 years working with influential gardener Christopher Lloyd at Great Dixter. He also told his listeners that, since Christopher Lloyd's death, enough money had now been raised to ensure that the gardens could remain open to the public. Planting in the gardens would continue to evolve under his leadership as Head Gardener, in the spirit of Christopher Lloyd, who had not been afraid to make many changes over the years, following the early involvement of his parents and Lutyens.

Thanking Fergus for coming to London after a busy working day, Society Chairman Michael Franklin (left in picture) handed over a cheque for £250 to help the Great Dixter Trust continue its work.



Suburb weather watch

At first it looked as though the rather sparse rainfall of the last quarter of the year was going to result in an annual total appreciably below average. In September, with 1¾ inches, the water butts were getting low and the beans needed watering. In October there was even less rain, just over 1¼ inches. This compares with the mean of 3½ inches, which normally makes the average October the wettest month of the year by more than ½ inch. This year it was the second driest, only bettered by May.

November is the wettest month with over 2¾ inches. This year's figure of 6½ inches was, therefore, way above normal. However there were only six days without any rain at all, the lowest recorded in November in thirty years.

We did have snow in December, along with the rest of the country, but not so badly. Apparently Brim Hill had cars all over the place and the gritter which came to the rescue had to

be rescued itself by another gritter. Meadway had been attended to, but even here, on the evening of the 21st when snow fell immediately after rain, wheels were spinning and engines revving wildly. In all there was 3½ inches of precipitation in December, well above average.

At the time of writing, terrible cold and snow is forecast, but it does not always turn out as bad, or, for would be tobogganers and

snowman makers, as good, as wary weathermen predict.

So the annual total rainfall has ended up as 2 inches above average. The groundwater has been replenished for the coming year and the hard frost could be breaking up the ground exposed to it. Shall we hope for not too many exciting weather events in 2010? But thunderstorms are rather fun!

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