



HOME COUNTIES AREA NEWS SPRING 2023



A MESSAGE FROM CAROLYN CRANSWICK - OUR AREA CHAIRMAN

I was very honoured to take over as Area Chairman from Audrey Balderstone in November. She was an excellent Chairman guiding the Area through the pandemic with her frequent newsletters and words of encouragement. She is a great role model for me but will be a hard act to follow.

I began flower arranging in 1965 by attending some classes with my future mother-in-law. In 1974 I met Barbara Hudson who was a NAFAS demonstrator and she invited me to help her start Clophill and District Flower Club. In 1976 we began with local members but over the years we have drawn in members from a wide area. When Barbara moved to Hampshire I took over as Chairman. During the following years there has been one other Chairman but I have continued for many years. The Club has continued to flourish with over 75 members and an excellent Committee – some of whom were also founder members. I am also Chairman of Odyssey21 where I have the opportunity to make more friends.

I was a teacher at St Mary's Lower School, Clophill for 28 years and was the Deputy Headteacher before retiring in 2003. Since then I have been involved with the Area in several capacities, with the first being part of the Area Team to stage the exhibit at the National Flower Festival in Westminster Abbey together with Edna Holt, Penny Hyde and Rayna Shiach. We depicted Handel's Messiah on a very large plinth.

I was The Flower Arranger Representative for about 10 years and enjoyed being involved with the Area Clubs and being part of the Executive Committee. In 2012 I was asked to be the Area Show Chairman and organised 5 successful Area Shows in the Riding School Centre at Hatfield House. Again, it was an opportunity to meet

members from other Clubs and make some lasting friendships with members of the Committees.

I have represented the Area at Harrogate Flower Show on two occasions, Hylands House and Westminster Abbey. I enjoy a challenge and organising flower festivals also gives me great pleasure.

My husband John, is very supportive and takes an interest in my activities. I have a daughter Claire and son Jason and five grown up grandchildren. They are all following successful careers and interests.

As your Area Chairman I want to support and encourage all clubs in the Area. I am holding a Club Chairman's Forum in March to share ideas and information with them to help to involve and make all members fully aware of the opportunities they have as affiliated members of NAFAS. Our Area events are always good and we hold regular refresher days in the disciplines of demonstrating, teaching, judging and speaking as well as competing in Shows. I hope to move the Area forward in the future to greater success and hope to meet as many members as I can along the way.



How to Go Greener - Floral Foam Free - by Gill McGregor



Gill's new book gives step by step instructions, both written and with photographs, showing how to support, control and anchor your plant material in floral designs whilst, at the same time, going greener.

This A5 Paperback has 76 pages

Available from the NAFAS Shop NAFAS.org.uk

£9.99



HOME COUNTIES AREA OF NAFAS



A warm invitation to our

Area Members' Day

Spotlight Theatre, High Street, Hoddesdon, Herts, EN11 8BE

Wednesday 19th April 2023

Doors open at 10am

Stalls to browse and drinks available

11am A talk by Katherine Kear (National Chairman)
and an opportunity to ask her questions

12noon A delicious buffet lunch will be served

1.30pm A demonstration by Lucy Ellis
A National demonstrator

'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'

Tickets are £28

Tickets may be ordered through your Club or the Area Treasurer, Celia Thompson
c.thompson759@btinternet.com

Please order no later than 12th April

Edna Holt



Edna was born in Slip End Luton on 28th January 1932 and died on 11th February 2023.

All at South Stevenage Flower Club were very sad to hear of Edna's passing. The club, all her family and friends have lost a very special person, who will be greatly missed by everyone who knew her.

Edna had a real passion for flowers, fun and enjoyed having people around her. We all remember her gift for making everyone very welcome. Her knowledge of flowers and plants, her energy and ideas lifted the love of flowers for many to a new level. One member recalls that she had a way of entering the club into festivals without telling us. We, all very willing, stepped up - nobody wanted to let her down.

Edna started flower arranging after she was shocked by the bill at her daughter's wedding in 1987. Two years later she did all the flowers for her son's wedding.

Edna went to Oaklands College taking the City & Guilds Flower Arranging course, then started South Stevenage Flower Club in 1989. She did every job possible in the Club, she was Programme Secretary/Treasurer/Secretary and was Chairman for over 30 years, 1991-2023.

In 2004 she won a Silver Gilt medal at Chelsea with Miriam Hill and in 2006 she organised a large flower show at Barclay School, Stevenage to celebrate 60 years of Stevenage New Town.

She was asked to be the group leader for the NAFAS 50th anniversary, representing the Home Counties at Westminster Abbey in 2009 with a design based on Handel's Messiah.

Edna took part in many local flower festivals including Woburn, Bennington, St Mary's, Shephall, Walkern and in 2016 she organised a flower festival at St. Georges Church. Stevenage. Edna's energy took the club on numerous coach outings and holidays to Blackpool (twice), Holland, Dublin and Jersey.

Edna leaves a huge hole impossible to fill, a kind person with a big heart who was active in the club to the end even writing her Chairman's report for the 2022 AGM on 17th January 2023.

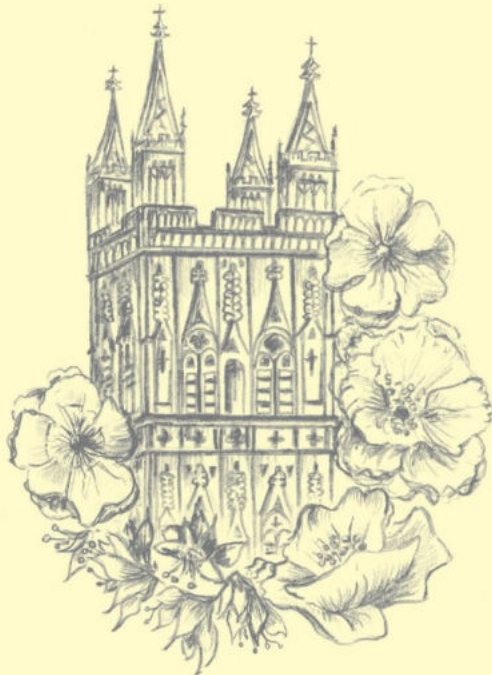
'A life dedicated to flowers and flower arranging'.

THE NAFAS NATIONAL SHOW



Florilegium

A gathering of flowers



- Stunning floral designs in this glorious setting
- Competitive flower arranging classes
- Demonstrations and workshops with leading floral designers
- Food, drink and retail therapy

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL
12 & 13 MAY 2023

Tickets www.eventbrite.co.uk



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FLOWER ARRANGEMENT SOCIETIES www.nafas.org.uk



MY LAST DEMONSTRATION – VIKKI TRAHERNE

I have been demonstrating for 26 years. I heard on a television programme around Autumn time, that a couple had been together for 25 years. They said- a quarter of a century – so this made me think – wow I've demonstrated for over a quarter of a century!! I had been thinking for some time that age was creeping up on me and thoughts of retiring were uppermost in my mind. I was booked to do a Christmas demonstration on the 15th November last year at a club I had previously enjoyed visiting in Radlett, and I decided that this was going to be my last demonstration.

Thinking back, the person who put me on the road was Suzanne Boet who used to run flower competitions in Stockwood Park, Luton. I had entered and was chatting to her as I arranged, she suggested that as I could talk and arrange at the same time, I could be a demonstrator. And this is how it started. At around this time, I was doing a City & Guilds Flower Arranging course at Dunstable College, under the tutorship of Lesley Sturdy. My dedicated night of the week was Wednesday and for four years I learnt and loved a lot, which gave me the confidence, also the inspiration for my demonstrations. I have very much enjoyed my life in this wonderful hobby of 'fun, flowers and friendship' and would encourage others along this road.



Here are some of my 'fun' experiences – I've arranged at Kensington Palace for a festival and the design I was involved in was featured on the front cover of the newly designed Flower Arranger magazine, which used to be little booklets we could carry in our handbags. My Christmas designs have also been featured in the magazine, and I have written an article on candles from ancient times to the present day.

I have arranged twice in Westminster Abbey both quite different events. One for the service of The Order of the Bath, this for the Knights of the Realm, and the Queen and the then Prince Charles were to be in attendance. Events in which Royalty are present follow exact timing. I was seated in the back row of the Knave – the service was due to start promptly at 11.00 am. Minutes passed and, after a lot of whispering, the trumpets sounded and the procession began. As you all probably know the Queen was tiny and despite standing tip-toe all I could see above the heads in front of me was the Crown moving slowly along. I couldn't see the Queen. After the service I was able to turn around and watch the Knights walk past in all their regalia, which included Prince Charles. I was surprised at how short he is with his ruddy complexion but did get a nice smile. It was revealed in the media the next day that he was due to fly into Westminster, but because of fog his helicopter couldn't take off and he had to travel by road creeping into the Abbey via a backdoor, I bet he got a telling off from his Mum!!!

My next Abbey experience was when a TV production company was making a film about a Year in the Life of the Abbey. I was in a position by the Quire stalls and was

manipulating Phormium leaves for my design when I became aware I was being filmed. I answered lots of questions and was quite chuffed at how the crew were interested. My friend Rayna Shiach was opposite to me and I saw she was being watched as she arranged. At the end of the day, I was requested to sign a document which roughly stated that if I was not featured in the programme, I had to accept this. In the event when it was shown there were about 15 seconds of me pointing towards Rayna saying, "You've got texture there". So that was my brief claim to fame. But yes, I did get several calls that I had been seen on the programme!

I have been involved in arranging at the Chelsea Flower Show and the first time gained a Silver medal for my Flower Club. The title of the exhibit was "Garden of Distinction". I worked with another club member, Tina Belderbos. We built a 'tree' out of bits of driftwood and, on each branch, we depicted an area of the RHS gardens at Wisley from annuals to orchids.



The second Silver medal I received was when I was in the team representing the Home Counties Area of NAFAS. The title of the huge design was "Earth's Diversity". This was an amazing fun time. Lots of laughs with fellow arrangers and extremely, exhausting hard work on the 20 feet across, 15 feet high stand in the Grand Marquee. I will never forget holding my breath as we watched our own Audrey Balderstone on a 'cherry picker' adjusting an item on the top of the design. Remember the height of the display!! On Press Day, as I was by our stand, I was fascinated watching a beautiful lady dart around the arrangements taking notes. I was aware of someone next to me and turning around I found myself gazing up at Pierce Brosnan. The beautiful lady turned out to be his wife and she was wanting information for her garden in Ireland. At this stage I thought I had better try to get his autograph and get for him the information leaflet with all the plant details. At that time there was the editor of the Flower Arranger magazine standing a few yards away and as I collected the leaflet from her, she said 'send him a kiss from me'. I returned and was delighted he was still there. I said to him see that lady over there – well she wants to send you a kiss. Well guess who got the kiss – right on my cheek. Obviously, I didn't wash my face for a week. I've also gained a Bronze and Silver Guilt medal at this wonderful event. The hard graft, working through the night, is rewarded in the early morning hours by the dawn chorus and being able to wander around the grounds admiring all the gardens without the crowds on open days. Definitely a bonus.

I have enjoyed working with the Rose Society which was based in St Albans, on their stand at the Hampton Court Flower Show. The team was picked up to travel to the show by coach very early, so we missed the traffic and no car parking. We usually finished about lunch time which meant a whole afternoon to wander around

the show and to actually buy plants, which you can't at Chelsea. My Hostas were purchased this way. The only downside here was that the roses were picked direct from the fields by the growers, then placed in buckets for the arrangers to use and then we had the joy of removing rose thorns from our fingers on the way home!!



I once entered the Hatfield Flower Show and to my surprise and delight won Best in Show. The title was 'Gardeners Delight'. I based my design on tomatoes with the same name, together with vegetables and a few flowers. It was amusing to hear some of the viewing public's views such as 'how can that have won Best in Show when there are no flowers'. I've often felt the same. The fun here was being presented with my prize by the Marchioness of Salisbury (she who helped and advised the then Prince Charles on his garden at Highgrove). She was a delightful lady and on giving me a beautiful glass rose bowl suggested I should fill it with roses to enjoy. This was the first time the bowl had been used and knowing how hard our water is, I felt this was not a good idea as the water could etch into the glass. I was so worried about it getting damaged that it remained

wrapped up securely in a cupboard until returning it for the next prize winner.

One of my proudest events in which I was chosen to represent Home Counties Area, was the WFA Elimination Competition in Weston-Super-Mare in October 2004. This was to choose the designer to travel to Japan on behalf of the United Kingdom. The title of the competition was "Masterpiece", and I gained a Commended award. I was very content with the result, as I was up against top international designers. Two on either side of me were unlucky. The winner was National Demonstrator Ian Buxton.

I've travelled all distances around the UK flower clubs, and another highlight was being asked to demonstrate in Spain. This time I was able to take my husband, David, and after an enjoyable day choosing flowers and club members' containers the event went off successfully. We had hired a car, and as my husband speaks Spanish, we took to the road not knowing exactly where we were going to travel to, and staying in delightful hotels ending up in Granada. This meant we were able to visit the amazing Alhambra Palace. We finished up in Malaga and visited the museum devoted to Picasso's art. His early portraits of his children are a delight, but I cannot say that I enjoyed his later cubic art – quite weird.

As you can see, I have had a great time being part of NAFAS and the opportunities I have had with wonderful memories, and meeting special people. I was a bit sad at the end of my 'Last Demonstration' but will continue to keep arranging by being a member of five clubs and learning more through attending workshops. There is always something new and exciting in our floral art.

Vikki Traherne



Canvey Floral Art Club took part in the St. Nicholas Tree Festival last Christmas. Many members had a hand in making a variety of flowers for the recycled pallet wood tree.



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Home Counties Area of NAFAS



SAVE THE DATE

AGM, Lunch and Demonstration

Wednesday 22nd November

at Spotlight Theatre, High Street, Hoddesdon, EN11 8BE

Doors open 10.00am

AGM at 11am followed by a hot lunch

Demonstration by Tracey Griffin

National Demonstrator

Stalls to browse and tea/coffee and drinks available throughout the day

Further information will be available soon

Tickets may be ordered through your Club or the Area Treasurer,
Celia Thompson c.thompson759@btinternet.com

Flowers for the Commonwealth Day Service



I was so excited to be invited to arrange flowers in Westminster Abbey for the Commonwealth Day Service on 13th March, having missed an opportunity last year due to the service being cancelled. I asked Ann Swain who is Vice Chairman of Clophill and District Club to come and work alongside me to create two matching designs at the High Altar. Ann and I have arranged together many times and it required co-operation to make the pedestals reflect one another.

We went on Saturday 11th March with our scissors and foliage. Fortunately, Ann's husband David took us and also carried the buckets and bags and swept up after us! The Abbey was closed to the public as the preparations were taking place for the service. The chandeliers were being polished, the BBC were setting up their equipment and various groups were rehearsing and 6 NAFAS ladies were arranging the flowers. The excitement was growing!

We had a large amount of flowers and foliage in white, gold and purple to create a traditional pedestal 9-10' high with no step ladders, just lots of reaching and stepping back to inspect and compare. It was a challenge to keep the shape and place all the stems into the foam. We were very pleased with the results.

We received invitations to attend the service and were told we would be sitting in the South transept behind HM The King and members of the Royal family. We were just round the corner but I was able to look across and see them arrive and then the back of the ladies hats! We were pleased to have a large screen in front of us so that we could watch all the service at close hand. It was a multi cultural, multi faith service with an accent on youth and the theme was 'Forging a Sustainable and Peaceful Common Future'

There was a very friendly atmosphere within the Abbey and a sense of occasion and excitement. 2,000 people from all parts of the Commonwealth, schools and organisations, government and dignitaries. We both felt very proud when we saw

our designs featured on the television screens, particularly when all the religious leaders stood in front of them. It was a privilege and honour to be part of such a special day.

We had travelled to Westminster Abbey by train and taxi, stopping for a lovely lunch before going to join the queue to get through the high security. The bells were peeling as we left and went to find a taxi back to the station. We had much to reflect on as we headed home and all our family and friends had watched the service on the television but we were lucky as WE WERE THERE!!

It is always members of NAFAS who arrange the flowers in Westminster Abbey at all the services. The flowers are provided and we have the privilege to go and arrange, generally large traditional arrangements. This is one of the benefits of being a member of NAFAS. The Area has a list of members with experience and skills and are willing to be part of a team. Please contact me if you would like to be added to the list.

Carolyn Cranswick. Chairman of Home Counties Area of NAFAS

UPDATE ON NEW NAFAS COURSES IN FLORAL ART & DESIGN

Following the funding and accreditation being withdrawn for Flower Arranging classes, NAFAS has been working hard to produce a course promoting the knowledge of flower arranging. This is nearing fruition and at the Florilegium show in May at Gloucestershire it will be highly promoted.

The course consists of modules suitable for all levels of knowledge. From the learner with no previous experience to the person wanting to expand and increase their knowledge. There are 28 modules available and the hope is that they will be accredited by Ofqual in the very near future. If offered by clubs, it could encourage the existing members and could lead to new membership.

It is hoped that the course will be taught by some of our experienced and registered tutors. Already Fiona Harrison from Harpenden has expressed an interest in doing so and will publicise details as they become available at a future date. If you are attending Florilegium please pop in to the Education Stand for any information and for demonstrations of some of the techniques which could be useful to us all whatever your skill level.

**Jan Swan
Area Education Representative**



NAFAS NATIONAL DEMONSTRATORS' TEST

Many congratulations to the three successful Candidates at the recent National Test.

Sara Barrow, Flowers North West

Julia Loudon, SAFAS

Elizabeth Dawn Weaver, Cheshire



Entries are invited for the following:

The
Weird & Wonderful
Floral Art Competition

**NATIONAL
FLOWER SHOW**

19-21 MAY 2023
Hylands House • Chelmsford • CM2 8WQ

19 - 20 - 21 May 2023

Competition Manager
Mig Kimpton
mig@migkimpton.com
07831 838851

Awards
Each Class will be awarded
1st £25, 2nd £15, 3rd £10

The Best in Show exhibit will be awarded the National Flower Show Floral Award 2023

ENTRIES CLOSE ON Friday 5th May 2023



Home Counties Area of NAFAS

Education Day

An exciting and instructive day for all members will be held at

**The Lea, Memorial Hall, Wheathampstead, Herts
on 3rd October 10 am – 3pm**

The focus of the day will be on Education with many practical elements.

The content of the day will include Principles of Design related to Leisure classes, the NAFAS modules, competition work and judging, demonstrating.

There will also be tips on giving a Vote of Thanks.

More details to follow. Any enquiries please contact Celia Thompson at
c.thompson759@btinternet.com or 01462 815433

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – 2023/24

(N) = National Demonstrator
FB = Facebook Page
WS = Website

- 21st March** South Stevenage Flower Club – 7:00 for 7:30pm **FB WS**
Catherine Holness: No Foam! Whatever Next! Stevenage Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, Stevenage, SG1 1XN
For more information, email: southstevenageflowerclub@yahoo.com
<https://southstevenageflowerclub.org/>
- 4th April** Harpenden Floral Decoration Club. 2 pm
Rekha Naidoo: Festivals of India. Salvation Army Hall, Leyton Green, Harpenden AL 2TX email: samhall40@Sky.com
- 12th April** Hatch End Flower Arrangement Group. 7.30 pm **FB WS**
Club Evening – As You Like It
Pinner Village Hall, Chapel Lane, Pinner HA5 1AA
Email: info@hatchendflowergroup.org.uk
- 18th April** South Stevenage Flower Club – Details as for March
Daphne Grant: Forgotten Treasures

- 19th April** Blackmore Flower Club. 2 pm **Helen Sheard.**
Blackmore Baptist Church, Blackmore, Essex CM4 0RT
- 22nd April** Designer 3 Group. **Workshop with Pauline Foster.**
Leverstock Green Village Hall, HP3 8QG just off M1, J8
Contact Daphne Grant 01727 858545 9.30 for 10 am start to 3.30 pm
or email daphne.grant20@gmail.com Visitors £35 **FB**
- 2nd May** Harpenden FDC. Details as April.
Angela Woodley: Gardeners Galore
- 10th May** Hatch End FAG. Details as April
Linda Seabrook: The Welsh Highwayman
- 16th May** South Stevenage Flower Club – Details as for March
Morag Bennett: With a Song in My Heart
- 17th May** Blackmore FC. Details as April. **Vijay Bhatia**
- 6th June** Harpenden FDC. Details as April. **Jilly Griffin: Whatever Next**
- 14th June** Hatch End FAG. Details as April
Linda Kingcott: The Green Man & Friends
- 15th June** Designer 3 Group – Inbetweeners. **Summer Workshop**
The Pavilion, Flamstead AL3 8DE near J.9 of the M1. 10.15 for
10.30 to 3 pm £20 with light lunch. Contact
daphne.grant20@gmail.com or suzanne.boet@ntlworld.com
- 19th June** Area Council 11 am Whitehill Centre, Ottway Walk Welwyn AL6 9AS
- 20th June** South Stevenage Flower Club – Details as for March
Terri Potter: Diary of a Floraholic
- 21st June** Blackmore FC. Details as April.
Christine Long: Loosely Round the Solar System
- 1st July** Designer 3 Group. **Workshop with Katherine Kear**
Details as 22nd April
- 4th July** Harpenden FDC. Details as April.
Melanie, Janet and Berni: The Wedding
- 12th July** Hatch End FAG. Details as April
Susan Horne: Baubles, Bangles & Beads
- 18th July** South Stevenage Flower Club – Details as for March
Lorraine Saunders: More Magic Moments
- 19th July** Blackmore FC. Details as April
Sally Hardy: You've Seen It All Before
- 15th August** South Stevenage Flower Club – Details as for March
David Thomson (N): This, That and the Other

- 5th September Harpenden FDC. Details as April.
Vikki Hease: Artistry in Autumn
- 7th September Designer 3 Group – Inbetweeners. **Autumn Workshop**
Details as June
- 13th September Hatch End FAG. Details as April. **Patricia Ellis: Serendipity**
- 18th September Area Council. Details as June
- 19th September South Stevenage Flower Club – Details as for March
Terry Babbage: Indian Experience, World Show 2020
- 20th September Blackmore FC. Details as April. **Graham King: How Bizarre!**



London and Overseas Area of NAFAS

Invite you to a Multi Discipline Day

for Demonstrators, Judges, Speakers and Teachers

Hosted by National Instructors Valerie Best and Michael Bowyer

Certificates of Attendance will be issued including CPD

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD



10am – 4.00pm Wednesday 31st May 2023

Canons Hall. 1 - 17 Wemborough Road

Stanmore, Middx. HA7 2DU

Adequate Parking at Rear, entrance Bromefield

Nearest Underground - Canons Park (Jubilee Line)



Candidates - £35 Observers - £15

apply to Valerie Best vab_flowertalkuk@yahoo.co.uk tel. 020 8951 1756



If you have any queries or would like to submit articles, photos or information to be printed in the next issue of Area News please contact the Editor: Suzanne Boet email: Suzanne.boet@ntlworld.com The deadline for the Autumn issue is 28th August 2023.



We are proud to be NAFAS' exclusive travel partner



We offer a wide range of meticulously planned, ready-to-book tours, as well as flexible, bespoke itineraries for groups

Travel with us in 2023 It's our 30th anniversary

EXCLUSIVE FOR NAFAS

Gardens & Growers of Cornwall ~ with Katherine Kear

13 - 16 September 2023

A fascinating three-night/ four-day tour of Cornwall, filled with flowers, gardens, landscapes, and history



Going to Florilegium, NAFAS at National Day Gloucester Cathedral ? We have great accommodation

Did you know we love Christmas Markets & Winter Wonderlands?

And we LOVE having our NAFAS and flower friends join in the excitement
Why not grab a friend - or a few - to experience the magic of a festive holiday. It's a wonderful way to start the Yule season.



Now Booking!

You save by booking early. Confirm with a refundable deposit

What tour would you like us to create?

We are always happy to work with you to create a bespoke tour programme for flower clubs and flower friendship groups. Gardens in the UK or a city break and flower adventure in Europe? We can make it happen.

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