



HOME COUNTIES AREA NEWS Spring 2024



A letter from Your Chairman

Carolyn Cranswick

2024 is going to be busy with lots of events that we hope our Clubs and members will attend.

Area Members' Day 17th April at Spotlight, Broxbourne. You will have received the publicity for this day. We have an excellent speaker in the morning, a buffet lunch and a demonstration by Annette Urquhart (National Demonstrator). Tickets are £28 – **please encourage your members to come.**

We are holding an **Area Competition** at our Council Meeting on **17th June** to select a representative to enter a NAFAS/RHS Competition at Malvern Autumn Show. Please see the information that has been sent to all Clubs. This is a great opportunity as we want to encourage members who would like to compete.

Area Members' Day 26th June Runnymede Hall, Thundersley, Essex. We have organised this day especially for the members who live in Essex so that the journey is not so long, but all members are welcome. Brenda Evers (National Speaker) will talk in the morning, followed by a buffet lunch and a demonstration by the popular Lee Berrill in the afternoon. Tickets will be £28.

President's Day. 4th July. Audrey Balderstone has invited all members to her beautiful garden in Kings Langley for Morning Coffee or Afternoon Tea. Please put this in your diary.

Area Flower Festival. Thursday 19th – Sunday 22nd September. We are holding a Flower Festival at St Mary's Church, Hitchin to showcase the talents in our Area and to

promote our Clubs and NAFAS to the public. I would like all clubs to support this by sponsoring and sending representatives to stage an exhibit. There will be large and small designs and all clubs will have the opportunity to promote their club details. Hitchin is a lovely market town with good parking facilities and lots of coffee shops and small shops, so it would make a really good day out or Club outing. You will receive more details in the next few months.

Competition/Fun Day Wednesday 23rd October. This will be held at the Memorial Hall in Wheathampstead and is for all members who would like a social day with friends, flowers and lots of information.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require more information. I welcome discussions with Clubs and members and I am willing to help and support whenever I can.

Wishing you all a very Happy Easter.

HONORARY MEMBER AWARDS

Honorary Membership of the Home Counties Area of NAFAS is given in recognition of outstanding service to our Area. Due to the pandemic awards were not made but at our AGM in November 2023 five new awards were presented.



Angela Patteson, our Area Secretary, (left) has now retired after 14 years and a special presentation was made to her at the end of the AGM, with very grateful thanks from everyone. She has served six Area Chairmen giving continuity and has developed excellent communication with all our Clubs. In recognition of her service she received Honorary Membership of Home Counties and was presented with her badge of honour by the present Area Chairman Carolyn Cranswick. Angela was also appointed as Vice-President and we will continue to benefit from her extensive knowledge of NAFAS.



Pamela Ferguson (right) retired as President of the Area and was also awarded Honorary Membership. She has been Area Chairman, a Trustee of NAFAS and an Area demonstrator.



Audrey Balderstone (left) received Honorary Membership and is now our new President

for the second time. She was Area Chairman during a difficult time from 2019 – 2022 and is an Area judge. Audrey has been actively involved with NAFAS for many years at National and Area level.



Janneke Jones (left) received Honorary Membership in recognition of her years of service to the Area as Area Chairman, President and Area Speakers' Representative. She is very knowledgeable about our organisation and supports many Clubs in her part of the Area.



Shirley Perkins (right) was awarded Honorary Membership for many years of service to the Area. She has

been Area Chairman, President, an Area demonstrator and Chairman of Eastwood Flower Club also for many years.

South Stevenage Flower Club Christmas Workshop

Members of South Stevenage Flower Club are very fortunate to have the facility to sign up to regular Wednesday afternoon flower classes, which run approximately every other week during term time.

The classes are always fun and informative and, for a couple of hours on a Wednesday afternoon, you can completely lose yourself in your creative endeavours. Although everyone has the same brief, there will be as many different variations on a theme as there are students in the class, meaning that, as well as the expert tuition, we all learn from each other too and, of course, everyone goes home with something beautiful that they have created themselves.

Every December, there is also a Christmas workshop but, this year, it was a little different, and we ran a newbies class, inviting 20 enthusiastic local ladies, most of them complete beginners, to come and watch a demonstration and then create their own design. As you can see from the photo we think they did rather well and hope that they will be inspired to sign up to our regular classes.

Feedback was very positive, and all the ladies were delighted to go home with a finished arrangement.

Christine Speirs



Home Counties Special Area Day – 3rd October 2023

An excellent multi-discipline day was held at the Marford Memorial Hall, Wheathampstead attended by 60 members.

The day began with a **focus on the Principles and Elements of design** illustrated by 7 exhibits and explained by Lesley Sturdy. This was followed by a very busy session with everyone, in pairs, collaborating with another, to create an imposed arrangement. All the materials were provided and a wide variety of designs were produced.



Ann Swain led a plant identification activity followed by Valerie Best talking about judging. Everyone was asked to judge 8 large exhibits entitled ‘Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder’ and it was interesting that the design that was most popular was not judged



by Valerie as the best according to Competition Rules.



Linda O'Toole gave an excellent talk about **Photography** and tips on the best way to photograph floral art. She illustrated her talk with photographs of her work and techniques.

The session on **Speaking** was led by Janneke Jones, the Area Speakers' Representative, who encouraged Clubs to have a Speaker at their meetings and also gave guidance on ‘How to give a Vote of Thanks.’



The day ended with a **Demonstration** by Jane Ellis, our Demonstrators' Representative who illustrated some of the Principles and Elements of Design in three arrangements.

It was a very interesting and informative day, enjoyed by everyone.

HOME COUNTIES AREA OF NAFAS



A warm invitation to our

Area Members' Day

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

Wednesday 17th April 2024

Doors open at 10am

Stalls to browse and drinks available

11am A talk by Maria Pennington on Pearls

12noon A delicious buffet lunch will be served

1.30pm A demonstration by Annette Urquhart
'The Sound of Rhubarb'



Tickets are £28

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

Please apply no later than by 10th April

Leigh-on-Sea Floral Group Sharing the Seasonal Joy!

Leigh Floral Group has been active since 1950 and continues to flourish. Like clubs across the UK, our membership age range is 'mature', most are accomplished flower arrangers who enjoy watching enchanting demonstrations and occasional workshops which help those of us with less well-honed skills to learn and improve!

With an excellent calendar of events our club is growing stronger. Local press provides free advertising and shares information about our events. In 2023, together with monthly club nights, we held an unwanted Christmas gift sale, 2 coffee mornings, a plant sale, a club lunch and capped the year off when Linda Kingcott (our NAFAS Qualified Demonstrator) led a Festive Wreath workshop that was greatly enjoyed and attracted support from outside our membership.



Our November club night included our popular annual hamper raffle and our annual 'decorate a gift for a homeless person' competition. In and around Leigh there is strong charitable support for the homeless and those living with addiction and poverty. Annually our club members each buy a gift – a food item, hygiene products or thick socks, hats and gloves. The donors festively wrap each item and at our club meeting members vote for the most imaginatively wrapped gift. Its donor receives a small prize for their efforts! The gifts are then delivered in December to 'HARP' (our largest local organisation in this sector). Centre managers were overjoyed!

At monthly club nights we ask members for a small (unspecified) donation for refreshments. 50% of the donations are added to club funds and 50% are saved for our club charity of the year. At Christmas most club members forego sending cards within the club, instead donating money for our club charity. Since 2020 that charity has been HARP. During lockdowns we could not raise any money, but in 2022/3 we raised £225 for HARP, delivering the cheque with the gifts.

Our charity for 2024/5 will be Southend Hospital's Spotlight Radiotherapy Appeal, raising funds to buy new machines to make treatments for head and neck cancers less unpleasant. We will continue our festive gifts to HARP too! Thus, our group is affiliated to and supports NAFAS but also provides charitable support close to home.

Like all clubs, our committee is dwindling but we ably cover all the jobs that need doing – and whilst we can, we will continue in this way. It is difficult to attend Area events in the northwest of the Home Counties Area; the journey round the M25 is arduous and high fuel costs are prohibitive. But we are a strong club, with a great membership, local support and a willingness to try new things and spread the joy of our floral arrangement adventures!

Karen Cobb

FLORAL ARTIST VISIT FROM PAKISTAN

I received a phone call from Shaista Khawar who was visiting her brother in Hemel Hempstead where Stoneycroft Flower Club is based. She had been the President of the Floral Art Society of Pakistan, Rose Chapter, Lahore from 2020 -2022. By background she is a Floral Artist, SOGETSU IKEBANA teacher and Garden Landscaper. She is currently advisor to her Flower Club in Lahore.



Shaista wanted to visit our club and to make connections with other clubs in the area while she was here for 3-4 weeks. Shaista came in November to a workshop at Stoneycroft and led a small demonstration on wire work after the main workshop. Using Power Point, she gave a teaching presentation on her floral designs and other work in Pakistan. This included an amazing number of large installations using a variety of materials including flowers for the entrances and displays at large horticultural events throughout Pakistan. The photograph is of Shaista receiving an award from the Governor of the Punjab, Mr. Muhammad Ur Rehman at Governor House, Lahore for the Jilani Park Chrysanthemum Show.

Our club had a November trip to Savin Wholesalers and a nearby Garden Centre on which Shaista accompanied us. It was an amazing experience for her. These types of outlets are not available in Pakistan with Christmas displays and a huge variety of flower arranging materials. Fitting all her purchases into the minibus was quite a challenge.

We helped to connect Shaista with a few other local clubs. Also, with the London & Overseas Area, enabling her to attend the London & Overseas Annual General Meeting in a Central London Hotel. She was delighted to renew her acquaintance with Valerie Best whom she had met through Wafa and to make new friends. These included Gill McGregor who was demonstrating at the West Herts Flower Club Open Evening in Hemel Hempstead a week later. We had arranged to take Shaista along with our club members. She was able to go on stage for a photo opportunity with Gill. The visit revolved around making new friends, sharing knowledge and gaining insight into how we share the joy of flower arranging. Fun, Friendship and Flowers are a common denominator crossing continents, wherever we meet up together with like-minded individuals.

Anne McPherson

South Stevenage Flower Club – The Limoncello Cup

On Tuesday 17 October, South Stevenage Flower Club held their second competition of the year for the coveted 'Limoncello Cup'. The trophy is a beautiful crystal vase decorated with dragonflies, established in memory of our late Club Chair, Edna Holt, who many of you reading this will know.

The brief for this event was a flower arrangement in a teacup and, with 13 entries (shown right), there was certainly a delightful spread.



After careful consideration, the judges, Mavis Norris and Susan Horne, demonstrator for the evening, declared that Angie Rayapan's design, featuring deep pink cosmos and space for the butterfly, the winner.

Very well done, Angie!



Christine Speirs

ALL THE WORKS OF THE LORD PRAISE HIM

A Flower Festival at
Holy Trinity Church,

Southchurch Boulevard, Southchurch SS2 4XA
25th to 27th May 2024



NAFAS members from Benfleet, Canvey, Eastwood, Leigh and Thorpe Bay Clubs are joining together with members of the local community to decorate the church to celebrate 1200 years on that site. The theme of the flower displays will be taken from images in the church's beautiful East Window.



Home Counties Area of NAFAS
MEMBERS' DAY in Essex

Wednesday 26th June 2024

RUNNYMEDE HALL, THUNDERSLEY SS7 1TF



*A Talk, a Buffet Lunch
and Demonstration
by Lee Berrill*

Doors open at 10.15am

There will be retail therapy available, of course, as well as tea/coffee. Come and browse the stalls and speak with the Area Officers.

At 11 am

**A Talk by Brenda Evers (National Speaker)
'If You Want to Get Ahead'!**

A Buffet Lunch will be served at noon

**Lee Berrill's Demonstration,
entitled 'Summer Daze'
will commence at 1.30pm.**

Tickets are only £28 and may be ordered from
Celia Thompson our Area Treasurer cthompson759@btinternet.com

HOW TO ENCOURAGE PRACTICAL WORK IN CLUBS – SOME IDEAS

These ideas will assist both individual participation and social interaction; encouraging members through our enthusiasm to firstly enjoy workshops or dabble evenings and to have a go at simple competition work and then to try at a club show. This will hopefully lead on to shows at Area and then National level.

All these shows are ways that we can inform members of the public about our work and possibly encourage them to join a club. It is then up to us to be welcoming and to start the process of active participation all over again.

1 At a club meeting set a simple title for a class and ask members to bring an arrangement they have done and ask members to place a coin eg 5p or more next to the one they like most. (This money could then go to club funds) An experienced member would then state some positive points about each one.

2 Another idea is to record, on each occasion a class is staged, who had the most coins, the second most and third most. The person with the most coins over a year could be presented with a prize. A class could be staged on alternate months.

3 Choose some titles that encourage the use of garden plant material if appropriate.

4 Possibly have 2 classes, one for the experienced and one for novices, so that each feel comfortable and not intimidated.

5 After a time have a competition night rather than a demonstrator with possibly 3 classes and make it a social evening.

6 The Area could set a title on one occasion for all clubs to each have a competition and the winner from each one to come to a council meeting and set up their designs and the best one given a prize.

Unless all of us show enthusiasm and encouragement to all members to participate actively we shall die as an organisation.

On a personal note I must admit going to an Area show as a first time exhibitor, yes, it is a brave step but one worth taking as I learned so much from seeing how others worked and talking to more experienced competitors. Later this also occurred when attempting my first national. I also made friends from around the country with whom I still keep in contact.

Flowers do certainly help develop friendship and fun.

Lesley Sturdy



Canvey Floral Art Club
Flower Festival
Wonderful World of Flowers
'Where Flowers Bloom
so does Hope'.....

SAVE THE DATE

2nd&3rd November 2024
St Nicholas Church Canvey SS8 0JR



**THE HOME COUNTIES AREA OF NAFAS
NEEDS YOU!**

**We currently have a VACANCY for an
AREA EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE
and also due to retirement
we will shortly have VACANCIES for the following roles:-
AREA SECRETARY
AREA DEMONSTRATORS' REPRESENTATIVE
AREA JUDGES' REPRESENTATIVE**

**If you think you might be interested in any of these roles please get in
touch with Anne McPherson anne_mcpherson@ntlworld.com
You will be fully supported during the transition period**



Home Counties Area of NAFAS The Malvern/Chelsea Competition



Have you ever wanted to be an exhibitor at the Chelsea Flower Show with all expenses paid?

Now is your opportunity

We want to find new talent within our NAFAS membership. This Competition is open to all NAFAS members who HAVE NOT previously competed at RHS Chelsea, either as an individual or with another.

We are holding our Area Elimination Competition

on Monday 17th June at the Whitehill Centre, Welwyn

Title 'Shaped by Nature'



Space allowed 90cm wide x 60 cm deep x height optional.

Cream table covering and plain cream background

To be a foam free design (agro wool allowed).

Staging will be from 9am – 11 am

Judging will take place at 11am during the Area Council Meeting.

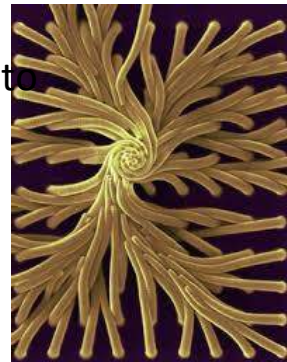
To be judged to NAFAS Competition Manual 4th edition 2023

The Winner will go forward on behalf of Home Counties to

The National Elimination Competition

held at Malvern Autumn Show

with costs paid by Home Counties Area of NAFAS



The timings and schedule will be announced soon. To be judged to RHS rules.

Friday 27th September with the public watching the competitors working

The overall winner from the National Elimination goes forward to

the Chelsea Flower Show in May 2025

with all costs paid by NAFAS

For more details and an Entry Form please contact

Carolyn Cranswick on 07923876634

carolyncranswick@hotmail.co.uk

INTO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT



Thorpe Bay Floral Arrangement Group have been getting into the Christmas spirit with two new ventures. A very successful start to our club's fundraising appeal.



At our December meeting we held a homemade stall selling wreaths and door hangings made by members of our committee alongside a Bring and Buy 'Christmas' stall. This venture raised £180 for club funds.

This was followed by the first 'team flower arranging' at the local church which involved eight flower arrangers from the club and raiding many members' gardens for foliage. It was a huge success and one arrangement was inspired by the demonstration at the recent Home Counties Area AGM by Tracey Griffin.

Sylvia Kittle

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – 2024

(N) = National Demonstrator

FB = Facebook Page

WS = Website. I = Instagram

- 2nd April** Bedford Floral Art Society 7 for 7.30 pm Visitors £8 **FB WS**
Lynne Sharpe: Car Boot Collection. Addison Centre, Kempston MK42 8PN. www.bedfordfloralartsociety.co.uk
- 3rd April** Welwyn Floral Group. 2 pm **Jane Ellis: Shed Shuffle.**
Welwyn Civic Centre, Prospect Place, Welwyn AL6 9ER
Enquiries: joycefurssedonn7@virginmedia.com
- 10th April** Hatch End Flower Arrangement Group. 7.30 pm **FB WS**
Rekha Naidoo: Inspirations of India Pinner Village Hall, Chapel Lane, Pinner HA5 1AA Enquiries: info@hefag.uk
- 12th April** Thorpe Bay Floral Arrangement Group 2.30 for 3 pm
Terri Potter: Diary of a Floraholic St Augustine's Church Hall, Johnson Road, Thorpe Bay, Essex SS1 3HX Enquiries 07765 407602
thorpebayflowers@gmail.com Visitors £5 Refreshments included

- 13th April** Designer 3 Group. **Workshop with Louisa Rigden** **FB**
Leverstock Green Village Hall, HP3 8QG just off M1, J8
9.30 for 10.15 am start to 3.30 pm
Enquiries: email daphne.grant20@gmail.com Visitors £35
- 16 April** South Stevenage Flower Club 7 for 7.30 pm **WS**
Nick Grounds: Stems and Stuff
Stevenage Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, Stevenage, SG1 1XN
For more information, email: southstevenageflowerclub@yahoo.com
<https://southstevenageflowerclub.org/>
- 17th April** Hitchin Floral Art Group 7 for 7.30 pm Enquiries 01438 313082 **FB**
Linda Kingcott: Dancing with Flowers
Church House, Hitchin SG5 1HP www.facebook.com/hitchinflowerclub
- 25th April** Hertford Flower Club. 2 for 2.15 **Barbara Collins: The Joys of Spring**
Hertford Heath Village Hall, 121 London Rd, Hertford Heath, SG13 7RH
Enquiries: franwallis@hotmail.co.uk
- 1st May** Welwyn FG. Details as April
Lorena Dyer (N): Lipstick, Powder and Paint
- 8th May** Hatch End FAG. Details as April
Andrew Lloyd: Around the World the Floral Way
- 10th May** Thorpe Bay FAG. Details as April. **Gill McGregor: Flowers with Flair**
- 15th May** Hitchin FAG. Details as April
Bindu Turner and Becky Rump: Spring Wreath
- 21st May:** South Stevenage FC. Details as April **Doug Howard: Nature's Angels**
- 23rd May** Hertford FC. Details as April. **Gill McGregor: Floral Delight**
- 4th June** Bedford FAS. Details as April **Andrew Kay: May to September**
- 5th June** Welwyn FG. Details as April **Rekha Naidoo: Inspirations of India**
- 12th June** Hatch End FAG. Details as April **Lucy Ellis (N): Limelight**
- 14th June** Thorpe Bay FAG. Details as April. **David Wright: Wheels in Motion**
- 18 June** South Stevenage FC. Details as April
Barbara Collins: The World of Flowers
- 19th June** Hitchin FAG. Details as April **Doreen Robinson: Fenscape**
- 27th June** Hertford FC. Details as April. **Lee Berrill: Back to the Future**
- 20th June** 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. £20
Contact daphne.grant20@gmail.com or suzanne.boet@ntlworld.com
- 2nd July** Bedford FAS. Details as April
Christine Long: Loosely Round the Solar System
- 3rd July** Welwyn FG. Details as April **Jennifer Thompson: A Good Read**

4 th July	President's Day Details to follow
6 th July	Designer 3 Group. Details as April. Workshop with Chris Brown FB
10 th July	Hatch End FAG. Details as April. Jennifer Thompson: A Good Read
12 th July	Thorpe Bay FAG. Details as April. Sylvia Kittle: My Life in Flowers
17 th July	Hitchin FAG. Details as April Doug Howard: Colourful Creations
7 th August	Welwyn FG. Details as April. Robin White: Looking Back
21 st August	Hitchin FAG. Details as April. Jane Ellis: Shed Shuffle
3 rd September	Bedford FAS. Details as April. Jackie Page: Connections
11 th September	Hatch End FAG. Details as April. Stephanie Cornell: A View from my Window
13 th September	Thorpe Bay FAG. Details as April. Helen Hare: TBA
18 th September	Hitchin FAG. Details as April Workshop: Jenny Stutley
19 th September	South Stevenage FC. Details as April Catherine Holness: TBA
19 th to 22 nd September	Home Counties Flower Festival St Mary's Church, Hitchin
26 th September	Hertford FC. Details as April. Madeleine Bradley: The Colours of India

Area Council Meetings: 17th June at Whitehill Centre, Ottway Walk Welwyn AL6 9AS and 9th September at The Pavilion, Ottway Walk, Welwyn AL6 9AS

* * * * *

WHAT'S ON in 2024

30th and 31st October Pre-National Assessment and National Demonstrators Test
10am to 4.30pm at Frodsham Community Centre, Fluin Lane, Frodsham,
Cheshire WA6 7QN. Trading Stands and Raffle. Ticket only
Tickets £15 contact Vanessa Keys vanessa@nafas.org.uk or call 020 7247 5567

17th to 19th May - National Flower Show, Hylands House, CM2 8WQ

5th to 8th June - Chichester Cathedral Festival of Flowers

15th and 16th June
East of England 70th Anniversary Area Show and Competition
The Green, Hunstanton, Norfolk PE36 6BQ

2025

19th and 20th September
National Show at Gloucester Cathedral

**Féerie Florale Flower Show,
Alden Biesen
27th—29th September 2024**

The Grand Commandry of Alden Biesen will once again be the setting for magnificent floral displays in this new event created by BefloristBe. Féerie Florale promises to be a visual spectacle as the castle and grounds are transformed into a floral wonderland filled with displays by leading European Floral Designers.



Accommodation is at the Holiday Inn Hasselt 4*. This contemporary hotel is located just 200 metres from the shops, bars and restaurants of Hasselt city centre. The stylish bedrooms have all modern conveniences and the recently renovated Brasserie De Boulevard is a comfortable place to relax with a Belgian beer, or a enjoy a regional dish.



You will be among the first to visit this brand new flower show and be inspired by the spectacular floral creations on display. You will spend a full day and morning at the show itself and have the opportunity to explore the city of Hasselt, home to boutique shops, tempting cafes, pretty gardens and fascinating museums too.



Hasselt is a modern city and the hotel is perfectly placed for exploring. The 17th century building next door is home to the Mode Museum and its collection of 18,000 garments and accessories. Also within an easy stroll are the Z33 House for Contemporary Art, Design and Architecture, and the Japanese Garden. Designed in traditional 17th century style, this is the largest Japanese garden in Europe.

Flights are with Brussels Airlines are from London Heathrow and Manchester on the Friday morning. You will be met by an ECT representative at the airport before transfer to the hotel. Return flights are on the Sunday evening.



For further information please contact: sales@ecttravel.com or call 01225 333747