

THE SPADE

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS

WINTER 2019 - ISSUE 47 - MINI VERSION

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

15th February Mansion House Banquet. The highlight of the Company's year. International lyric soprano Charlotte de Rothschild, Liveryman, will sing a selection of songs for our entertainment. (Company, partners and guests)

22nd-24th February Gardens and Orchids Weekend in Jersey. Includes a reception at Government House followed by a dinner attended by Lieut Governor Sir Stephen and Lady Dalton. We will be joined by members of other Liveries living in the Channel Islands. (Livery, partners and guests)

22nd-27th March Gardens and Cultural Tour of Galicia. A four-day tour staying in beautiful paradises in Pontevedra and Santiago de Compostela whilst exploring the gardens, cities and historical sites of Galicia. (Company, partners and guests)

4th April Spring Court Dinner, Apothecaries' Hall, Black Friars' Lane, London EC4V 6EJ. The Apothecaries are one of the largest Livery companies in the City and rank 58th in order of precedence. Apothecaries' Hall is the oldest extant livery hall in the City of London, with the first-floor structure and arrangement of the Great Hall, Court Room and Parlour remaining as rebuilt (after the Great Fire of 1666) between 1668 and 1670. The Prince Edward Award for Horticultural Excellence will be presented at this dinner. (Livery and guests)

30th April Reception in Leathersellers' Hall, 7 St Helen's Place, London EC3A 6AB. A chance for Liverymen, their partners and guests to catch up with old friends and make new ones. The Leathersellers are now in their seventh hall which was officially opened by our own Past Master HRH the Earl of Wessex in May 2017. (Livery, partners and guests)

11th May Visit to Exbury Gardens and Lunch, Exbury, Southampton SO45 1AZ. Lunch for Court and partners in Exbury House, thanks to the generosity of Liveryman Charlotte de Rothschild. Exbury Gardens is celebrating its 100th anniversary. (Court and partners)

11th May Visit to Exbury Gardens and Tea, Exbury, Southampton SO45 1AZ. Liverymen, Freemen, Apprentices, students, partners and friends are invited to join the lunch party to enjoy the sights and smells of beautiful Exbury during the afternoon. There will be guided tours followed by a delicious tea. (Company, partners and guests)

16th-19th May Chantilly Flower Show. The Master will present the Gardeners' Company trophy at this unique French event. (invited guests only)

21st May Chelsea Supper, Farmers' Club, 3 Whitehall Court SW1A 2EL. For those of the Company associated with the Chelsea Flower Show.

4th June The Fairchild Lecture, St Giles' Cripplegate Church, Fore Street EC2Y 8DA followed by supper at the Osteria, Barbican. (Company, partners and guests)

21st June Hampshire Day. A tour of gardens, a pub lunch, a guided tour of a beautiful garden in Crawley near Winchester, followed by tea with the Master's daughter Liveryman Tara Holland Prior. (Company, partners and guests)

4th July Installation Court Dinner. Venue to be confirmed. The start of the Gardeners' year with the installation of a new Master. (Livery, partners and guests)





Capel Manor student Oliver Berney receives his prize from the Master and Sir Stephen Dalton, Lieutenant Governor of Jersey.

AUTUMN COURT GLADDENS THE SPIRIT

The Autumn Court Dinner on 8th November took place in Vintners' Hall, home to The Worshipful Company of Vintners, one of the 12 great Livery companies and home of the international wine trade. The Master and Wardens welcomed some 140 Freemen, Liverymen and their guests in the traditional manner before the start of the formal proceedings of the evening.

As dinner was served the Master had the pleasure of welcoming six new Liverymen: Mrs Elizabeth Cassidy, Mrs Rosalind Edwards, Miss Debbie Latimer, Mr Robert Player, Mrs Veronica Simmons and myself, Miss Barbara Segall, and one new Freeman, Mr Barry Barrett-Mold.

The delicious dinner accompanied by memorable wines reinforced the apt words of the Vintners' Company motto "wine gladdens the spirit". With a light and twinkling mischievous touch Assistant Jeremy Storey-Walker welcomed the many guests, including His Excellency Sir Stephen Dalton GCB, Dr Sir Anthony Parmley (Master Vintner), Anthony Behrens (Master Cooper), Anthony de Lacey BA FCA (Master Needlemaker), Peter Wilkinson (Master Tinsplate Worker), Dr Richard Harrison, Dr Nikki Harrison, Neil Stublely and Colonel Mike Vacher OBE.

Jeremy wittily wove together the threads that linked the guests – Jersey, wine, barrel-making, tinsplate workers, horticulture and farming, as well as exceptional turf at the All England Lawn Tennis Club (part of Neil Stublely's remit) – and proposed the Toast to the Guests.

Dr Richard Harrison, our first joint Nuffield Scholar responded, giving a clear insight into the history of the Nuffield Scholarship and its founder William Morris, later Viscount Nuffield. In 1947 the first farming scholars were briefed and Richard's is the first jointly sponsored scholarship with the Gardeners and the Fruiterers as co-sponsors.

Richard is Head of the Department for Genetics, Genomics and Breeding at the National Institute of Agricultural Botany's East Malling Research station. It was a delight that Sir Stephen Dalton, also a Fruiterer, was of the company at the Autumn Dinner.



Dr Richard Harrison, our first Nuffield Scholar, describes his work at East Malling.

Richard was also supported by his wife Dr Nikki Harrison, Crop Production Systems Senior Scientist at the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board and by Mike Vacher, Director of the Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust.

Richard outlined his academic route to East Malling and why his work was of relevance to the two Worshipful companies. He moved from studying yeasts to plants and alongside his and Nikki's analytical work in plant taxonomy and genetics, they developed an enthusiasm for gardening, with traditional techniques of grafting and cultivation of fruit trees taking centre stage. His own particular interest led him to consider how plant domestication occurs, and specifically, how the cultivated apple *Malus x domestica* arose.

The title for his research scholarship is "Where next for soft fruit in the UK? Addressing the yield gap and providing a path to 500 t/ha". Richard plans to update us on his travels and findings, and hopes to welcome Company members to East Malling for a visit in 2019.

The Master responded to Richard's toast and presented the awards for this year to outstanding students in horticulture. Students from Capel Manor College, RHS Wisley, Writtle University College, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Royal Parks and City & Guilds were represented and supported by their tutors.

The recipients were:

Capel Manor College: Mr Oliver Berney, Tom Wheatcroft (tutor)

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: Mrs Olivia Steed-Mundin and Miss Julia Andersson; Lara Jewitt (tutor)

Royal Horticultural Society Garden Wisley: Caroline Brookes and Sheri Whiting; Franzisca Wittenstein (tutor)

Royal Parks and City & Guilds: Mr Ross Gildea, Matt Highham (tutor)

Writtle University College: Mr Carlos Estada Moedano and Mr Elliot Gibbs; James Syrett (tutor)

The evening concluded with the Master offering thanks to Stephen Crisp and Ron Froud for the bright and zingy flowers in containers proudly proclaiming the delights of Jersey, the Master's home and the destination for a Company visit in February 2019. The Master also invited the assembled company to join her in a Stirrup Cup before departing.

Report by Barbara Segall, photographs by Michael Warren



Chelsea Pensioners and Isle of Wight schoolchildren prepare the ground for the wildflower meadow at Brompton Cemetery.

SEEDS OF REMEMBRANCE AT BROMPTON

Chelsea Pensioners and children from Sandown Bay C of E School in the Isle of Wight got stuck into sowing the 'Battlefields to Butterflies' wildflower meadow at Brompton Cemetery in November last year.

The seed-sowing was part of a special day commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War and honouring the 24 Royal Parks staff who gave their lives in the conflict. The children had helped create a similar wildflower meadow on the same theme at Osborne House where one of the 24 worked.

A new memorial stone, sited in the Colonnades and paying tribute to the 2,065 Pensioners buried in the newly-restored cemetery, was unveiled and dedicated in a service led by Royal Hospital Chelsea Chaplain the Rev. Steven Brookes.

A poem written specially for the occasion by David Thornton was read and a Welsh Guards bugler sounded the Last Post and, after a minute's silence, Reveille. Toby Beasley, the Head Gardener at Osborne House, read the immortal stanza from Laurence Binyon's poem 'For the Fallen':

**"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."**

At the end of the ceremony Royal Parks Guild Achievement Awards were presented to Royal Parks apprentices.

'Battlefields to Butterflies' is a commemorative project led by the Royal Parks Guild and based on a concept developed by Liveryman and Chairman of the Guild, Mike Fitt.

The first First World War garden linked to the project was launched at Guildhall Yard on 14th March last year, in collaboration with the Army Benevolent Fund and the

Gardeners' Company. Featured in the Spring Spade, it marked the occasion of the ABF's annual fund-raising event, 'The Big Curry Lunch'.

The next stage was the very striking 'Battlefields to Butterflies' show garden at Hampton Court Flower Show in July, reported in the Autumn Spade.

After the Brompton event Andrew Scattergood, Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Parks, said: "It felt very fitting that we should reflect on the lives lost in the devastation of the Great War within the tranquil setting of the cemetery grounds.

"The event itself was very touching – from seeing the Chelsea Pensioners and children sowing the wildflower meadow to hearing the bugle playing the Last Post. Also, it was lovely to look forward and finish with the apprentices getting their achievement awards".

Report and photograph by John Gilbert

HELP NEEDED FOR RED CROSS FAIR

Upper Warden presumptive Peter Waine calls for volunteers: "Again we have been invited to have a major presence at the legendary Christmas Fair at the Guildhall in aid of the British Red Cross.

Our stand invariably makes a spectacular impact and that is entirely due to the generosity of my fellow Gardeners. Ideally, I am asking for help in the setting up on Sunday 24th November and help staffing the stall throughout the day of Tuesday 26th November.

In addition, if any of you are happy to donate plants - or even jams or chutneys - then that would also be much appreciated. Meanwhile, I ask that we all make a note of the dates and that some might indicate that they hope to be available to assist on one or both days.



The steps up into the church sported a colourful welcome.



Peter's Agapanthus, grown from seed in his Surrey garden.

A THOUGHT-PROVOKING CAROL SERVICE

The Gardeners' annual Carol Service took place on 19th December at the familiar church venue of St Stephen Walbrook.

Led by the Hon Chaplain, the Ven. Peter Delaney, and the Rev Jonathan Evens, the current Priest-in-charge, the service included rousing carols, a thought-provoking Christmas Welcome from Archdeacon Peter Delaney and the traditional competitive carol singing between the different sections of the congregation.

Music before, during and after the service was provided by organist Andrew Carter and the evening concluded with mulled wine and minced pies.

The floral decorations, both inside and outside the church, by Stephen Crisp, Ron Froud and their team were much admired.

THE LATE IAN FLANAGAN OBE

The dearly loved husband of Paddy for 55 years and father to Kate and Paul died at home on Boxing Day 2018. His cherished family were with him. A cremation service for the immediate family was held at the Surrey and Sussex Crematorium on 9th January.

Ian's life and achievements will be celebrated with a Thanksgiving Service at 2pm on Friday 12th April 2019 at the Sanderstead United Reformed Church, Sanderstead Hill, South Croydon, CR2 0HB. Should you wish to make a donation in Ian's memory, the Charity for Horticulturalists was very close to his heart: www.perennial.org.uk.

After the service there will be a gathering at Tandridge Golf Club. An obituary will appear in the next edition of the Spade and on the website in due course.

AGAPANTHUS 'PETER FRANKLIN' AGM

As readers of the Spade will know, Senior Past Master Peter Franklin has a very fine Agapanthus named after him. We ran a photograph of the white-flowered plant in the Autumn 2014 issue to mark the honour.

Agapanthus 'Peter Franklin' has now received the ultimate RHS accolade, the Award of Garden Merit.

According to the RHS, the AGM is designed to help gardeners make good choices from the vast number of plants available from nurseries and garden centres and is awarded only to plants which are "excellent for ordinary use in appropriate conditions; widely available; of good constitution; essentially stable in form and colour and reasonably resistant to pests and diseases".

Trialled at Wisley, the evergreen Agapanthus is described in the AGM judges' report as "Fabulous. Statement plant. Good clean white. Bud colour complements the white flowers. Lovely pot plant. Love how the golden anthers poke out".

Peter has been growing Agapanthus for more than 40 years. He passed on some 'promising' seedlings some years ago to his friend Dick Pulcher of Pine Cottage Plants in Devon. He grew them on, named the new cultivar 'Peter Franklin' and introduced it to great interest at Wisley Flower Show.

"Building up stock was a problem initially", said Peter, "but modern tissue culture allows hundreds of identical plants to be raised and *Agapanthus* 'Peter Franklin' is now widely available on the internet".

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS



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