

# THE SPADE

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS

SPRING / SUMMER 2019 - ISSUE 48 - MINI

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**4th June** The Fairchild Lecture, St Giles' Cripplegate, Fore Street, London EC2Y 8DA.

**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.

**4th July** Installation Court Dinner. The Stationers' Hall, Ave Maria Lane London EC4M 7DD. The start of the Gardeners' year with the installation of a new Master and presentation of The Prince of Wales Trophy.

**11th July** Milton's Cottage and Garden (Chalfont Saint Giles HP8 4JH) and Chenies Manor. Guided tour. Lunch at Chenies Manor (Rickmansworth WD3 6ER).

**16th September** Guided tour of the World Garden by Tom Hart-Dyke. The world garden at Lullingstone has, perhaps, one of the most unusual stories behind it of any garden. In 2000 its creator, Tom Hart Dyke, was held captive in the Columbian jungle, and began to plan in his mind a garden to contain plants from around the world planted in their respective continents, echoing and paying tribute to the plant hunters of old. Light tea included.

**29th September** Sheep Drive over London Bridge. Come and enjoy seeing this ancient Privilege of being a Freeman of The City of London enacted. The Master and nine Freemen will take part.

**8th October** Tour of East Malling Research Institute, Kent ME19 6BH with our Nuffield Scholar. The Research Institute has a significant international reputation for strategic and applied research, development and innovation in horticulture, with particular emphasis on perennial and clonally-propagated crops. Includes lunch.

**10th October** Harvest Festival and lunch at St. Michael Paternoster Royal, College Hill, London EC4R 2RL. Speaker: Dr Henry Oakeley, FRCP, FLS, Garden Fellow, Royal College of Physicians, London. Lunch at The Little Ship Club, Bell Wharf Lane, London EC4 R 3TB.

**6th November** Autumn Court Dinner, Ironmongers' Hall, Shaftesbury Place, off Aldersgate Street, Barbican, London EC2Y 8AA. Our annual awards to horticultural students will be presented. Speaker: Prof Owen Doyle.

**13th November** Linnean Society, Lecture and optional Supper. Visit to the Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BF. Tour of the Linnean archive plus lecture by Mike Gunton, Executive Director, BBC Natural History Unit, including works such as 'Planet Earth' and 'Dynasties'. Plus optional supper.

**16th November** Red Cross Fair Workshop (venue tba). An opportunity to help make articles to be sold as part of our contribution to the Red Cross Fair – a biannual event opening on the 25th November in the Guildhall.

**4th December** Christmas at Kew. Kew in winter with the dramatic lighting of the trees. Followed by supper. Kew Gardens, Richmond, London, TW9 3AE.

**19th December** Carol Service at St Stephen, Walbrook, London EC4N 8BN. Join us for our annual Carol Service in this beautiful candle-lit church, in the late afternoon. Light refreshments after the service. Children very welcome.

## 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

**14th March** Woodland Archaeology, Piggots Wood, Piggots Hill North Dean, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP14 4NF. John Morris of the Chilterns Woodland Project will guide us round this ancient woodland to show us the clues that tell of the past use of the woodland.

**3rd April** Chelsea Physic Garden, 66 Royal Hospital Rd, Chelsea, London SW3 4HS. Coffee followed by an introduction from Liveryman Sue Medway, the Director of the garden, and a guided tour. Lunch in the restaurant and then an option to cross the river and visit the Thrive gardens in the afternoon.

**15th April** Buckingham Palace Garden. A guided tour by Liveryman Mark Lane, Gardens Manager for the Royal Family's London gardens.

**20th - 24th April** Florence trip. Tour of gardens and more.

**8-12th June** York and Yorkshire. Tour of gardens and more. Staying in York.

**18th June** Visit to Hatfield House.

## SEABROOK DELIGHTS AT SPRING COURT

It is a rare pleasure to visit a hall for the first time and I was delighted to spend the evening in this ancient home to one of the largest liveries, with over 1,600 mainly medical members. Apothecaries' Hall claims to be the oldest extant livery hall in the City, with the first-floor remaining as rebuilt between 1668 and 1670.

We were treated to a most amusing speech from our principal guest, the broadcaster and writer Peter Seabrook. He talked of his lifetime in our industry after being presented by the Master with our prestigious Prince Edward Award for Excellence in Horticultural Career Development for 2019.

He read out several hilarious letters which he had received from his audience over the years, including one from Truro:

*Dear Mr Seabrook, in your programme on Friday you were saying how to save plants by covering them with something, but just as you said what, the doorbell rang and I missed it. Would you be so kind as to tell me how to go about it?*

He also said how he was asked for assistance in finding a Mr Fitch who appeared in the background of his Chelsea Flower Show broadcast and how to cultivate a round piece of ground 7ft x 6ft. He recounted the offer he received to holiday in a flat in Southsea and look after the garden whilst the owner was away, including what rent he would have to pay. Between the laughs, there were moments of reflection including a letter which finished:

*PS I hope that you can read this. I have a lot of arthritis. It's funny, you don't feel it so much in the garden because you are happy there. It's when you go back indoors....*

He told us about the Big Brown Teapot purchased in anticipation of a soldier's return from the First World War that was never used. This and 80 other teapots were planted with mint by primary school children and dementia patients, who in spite of their condition, were able to enjoy the memory at least three days later. He finished by asking us to give time to young people and the elderly which he advised would be "unbelievably rewarding".



Liveryman Dame Marion Roe and PM Nick Evans enjoy the reception before the Spring Court Dinner.



The Master presents Peter Seabrook with our Prince Edward Award.

In her last speech at a formal dinner, the Master replied by warning us that we would be featured in forthcoming editions of *The Sun* and *Country Life*. She said how earlier in the day, guests who visited the Mayor's Big Curry Lunch saw the garden in Guildhall Yard created by the Company, with the help of Future Gardeners trainees, which was designed to draw attention to the mental health issues faced by our veterans.

She reported on the Court's approval to link with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and how we look forward to welcoming David Richardson, the Horticultural Director, to the Livery at Installation Court.

She thanked Stephen Crisp for his wonderful floral arrangements which this time included herbs, frogs, fruits and other ingredients that would have been used by Apothecaries in years gone by.

Earlier, Assistant Tyrone McGlinchey introduced our guests: Mrs Cheryl Roux, the Master Fruiterer; Professor and Alderman Michael Mainelli who is a management consultant as well as representing the Broad Street Ward and Mr Peter Seabrook. He also reminded us how the Apothecaries established the Chelsea Physic Garden in 1673, whose current Director is Liveryman Sue Medway.

We welcomed and identified four new Liverymen at the dinner: Mr Andrew Babicz, who has spent a lifetime in the Horticultural Industry and is now Secretary of the London Gardens Society; Mrs Doreen Robinson who has a keen interest in hellebores and fruit growing; Mr Malcolm Goodwin, Principal of Capel Manor College and Mrs Angela Evans, Secretary of the Institute of Horticulture and Chair of the South East Branch.

Before and at the conclusion of dinner, as well as during the Loving Cup, guests were entertained by the Honourable Almoner, Senior Past Master Tom Gough's inspired rendition of horticultural, First World War and apothecarial inspired tunes on the piano, played with much gusto and to great amusement.

**Report by Miles Watson-Smyth.**  
**Photographs by Michael Warren and Darren Fletcher**

## COMPANY SUPPORT GROWS NEW GARDENER

Launched in 2016 in partnership with London-based charity **Bankside Open Spaces Trust**, our **Future Gardeners project goes from strength to strength.** Here Project Manager **Louisa Mansfield reports on the impressive progress of Sara Barnes, one of its first graduates.**

Future Gardeners works hard to get new people into the horticultural sector and is seeing fantastic results. The Gardeners' Company has gone on to further support one of the first Future Gardeners, who is now well on her way to forging a rewarding career.

Sara Barnes sailed through the course. Before she'd even completed it Sara had secured a traineeship at Organiclea Community Growers, a 12-acre community market garden in Chingford. This then led to an apprenticeship at the same garden, match funded by the Worshipful Company of Gardeners.

Now working through her apprenticeship, Sara reflects on Future Gardeners and the support the Company has given her. Talking about the course she said: "Finances had been a real barrier for me when I decided I wanted to go into gardening. I simply wasn't earning enough to pay for a course and I didn't have the confidence to go straight into paid gardening work without one.

"Future Gardeners was fantastic, it really built my confidence and has given me a network of support that ranges from my peers on the course to experienced horticulturalists and members of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners".

Prior to Future Gardeners Sara was searching for permanent roles and undertaking volunteering with the hope of breaking into the horticultural sector. Future Gardeners opened that door for her. She adds: "I heard about Future Gardeners via the community garden I was volunteering with, Growing Communities in Hackney. The course was attractive because it was a free opportunity to build skills in the sector I wanted to find work in".

As part of the course the students undertake work experience to give them an idea of the realities of working in horticulture and show them the variety of roles available. Sara however went one step further. She identified a nine-month training programme and together we decided that that would form her work experience.

The traineeship led to her apprenticeship. "I was invited to apply for the apprenticeship with the same garden. I then approached the Worshipful Company of Gardeners with an application to match fund the post, which they generously did. It is an 18-month four days a week paid role with a City and Guilds supported learning component. So far I have completed a Level 2 extended certificate in horticulture, with distinction".

Sara has now begun a Level 3 teacher training qualification which will equip her to teach horticulture in the adult learning sector.

Sara says: "The experience has been absolutely mind-blowing; I look forward to going to work every day and am



Summer trip to Kew – Sara on a day study trip to Kew Gardens.

deep in the world of plant propagation and care. I feel that I am building the foundations for a career in horticulture. I couldn't have got where I am today without Louisa and the Future Gardeners course or the generous support of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners and I would like to take the opportunity to express heartfelt thanks".

## CARING FOR THE LANDSCAPE OF WAR

**Simon Itkin reports on our annual RHS Lecture which last autumn took the form of two complementary talks on the subject of the use of decimated land and war grave conservation**

Dr James Wearn, Strategic Operations Manager at Kew Gardens, leads a diverse role within the Senior Science Team. In an article 'Seeds of Change' 2016 he writes: "Botanic gardens and natural history museums are widely perceived as unrelated to war yet there resides in these organisations an 'alternative' legacy to war".

Through his research into military activity and its use of plants (Paleobotany) Dr Wearn develops this theme. Before the First World War fields with Larkspur and Cornflowers around the Somme were described by Arthur Hill, the famous Kew director, as making for 'vibrancy of scenery'. Where it was possible to work delicate ecosystems a variety of wild, managed and planted landscapes was achieved.

Andrew Fetherston of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission spoke of thousands of sites over 150 countries where 1.7m grave stones are attended to preserve them for families of fallen soldiers.

In early years these were often managed by ex-servicemen with gardening skills. Sometimes they were sent with their families and lived in campsites or in basic accommodation. They managed the cemeteries and would often help needy visitors and next of kin arriving to find gravestones of fallen soldiers. King George V visited a cemetery in 1925 and brought a memento from a UK widow.

Even now about 60 new finds of remains are discovered every year. It is an urgent function of the Commission to secure them before the arrival of booty seekers who may remove items, thus frustrating identification.

## SENIOR PAST MASTER IAN FLANAGAN OBE

It was with the greatest sadness that the Company learnt that Senior Past Master Ian Flanagan had passed away on Boxing Day at the age of 81.

Ian was a proud native of the Isle of Man and followed a distinguished career as a Chartered Surveyor, over a period spanning almost 45 years.

He became a Liveryman in 1972 and was Master in 1996. He was totally devoted to the affairs of the Company, could always be relied upon to provide wise counsel and was ever a pleasure to be with.

Ian was always open to innovation. He introduced an earlier commencement to Court meetings and reduced the number of speeches at Court dinners, thereby providing more time for informal conversation afterwards. He initiated the idea of Court Admission Luncheons, being concerned that the custom of holding such ceremonies at the end of Court proceedings sometimes resulted in them being unduly hurried.

He demonstrated his diplomatic skills through his enhancement of the Company, both in the City of London and within the horticultural arena. In particular, he worked hard to foster the Company's relations with the Royal Horticultural Society and was instrumental in our involvement with the Florales Ghentoise in the year 2000.

During a busy and fulfilling year as Master, Ian led highly successful Company visits to the Lake District and Jersey, in addition to arranging several more local horticultural excursions.

A strong supporter of the Flowers in the City Campaign, he encouraged the introduction of new Autumn and Spring classes, increased the number of judging areas and set up a sub-committee to regulate the organising of floral displays at Company functions and on special occasions.

Ian was devoted to charitable causes and was involved in setting up the Charities Property Fund, serving as the first chair of its advisory board. He chaired an informal Committee of Masters, charged to raise sponsorship for the Lord Mayor's team bicycle ride from John O'Groats to Land's End. On his 60th birthday, he played 60 holes of golf, raising over £4,000 towards the Lord Mayor's Appeal for the Cancer Research Campaign. He also gave freely of his time to other good causes, which included Christ's Hospital, Woldingham School and the Royal Veterinary College, of which he was a trustee.

In 1998, Ian was appointed Chairman of the Gardeners Royal Benevolent Society. His energy, determination and skill in



SPM Ian Flanagan.

drawing out the talents of others were crucial in establishing a reinvigorated charity, culminating in the unveiling of a new charity name, Perennial, in 2003.

Thereafter, he worked tirelessly to develop better relationships and partnerships with other horticultural organisations, as the reputation and reach of Perennial grew. On standing down as Chairman in 2006, Ian continued his active support of Perennial until his death. For this and his 'Services to Horticulture', Ian was awarded the OBE in 2008 - a tribute to the creativity, energy, passion and care which this special man brought to his charitable work in the service of others.

In the years following his period as Master, Ian maintained a close and active involvement with Company and right up to the time of his death chaired its Protocol and Court Elections Committee.

In everything he did, Ian was supported by his wonderful wife Paddy, to whom we express our affection, gratitude and sincerest condolences.

Ian is greatly missed by us all.

**SPM Vivian Robinson and Assistant Richard Capewell (former CEO Perennial)**

### THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS



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