



Epsom Garden Society: October 2024

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Dear Member, if you have any news or garden related small ads that you would like to be included in the Newsletter, please phone me, 07761 976764, or email me, margarethaslam6@gmail.com

On Saturday 31st August we held our annual **Garden and Craft Show** at St Martin's Junior School. Our Show Secretary, **Cathy Flitter**, reports: Firstly, can I start by offering my heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make this Show possible. I was really concerned a fortnight before that we would have no entries and no helpers. But yet again, Epsom Garden Society members turned up trumps!

Congratulations to everyone who put in an entry, many for the first time ever. Huge thanks to the amazing support team, too many to mention, but I hope you know who you are, everyone who helped set up on the Friday, steward on the Saturday morning, take on raffle {special thanks to **Barb Warwick**, who has kindly offered to take on this really important fundraising part of the Show moving on}, the refreshments, plant sales, and generally keeping the whole Show running smoothly. The Show would not happen without so much support.

For the first time ever, I was not the last person to leave {thank you **Steve and Brian!**}

Now on to the best bit. Some familiar faces scooped trophies, but wonderful to see some new juniors, entered in the adult section and more than keeping up. **Sophia Frost** even won '**Best in Show**' aged 9 in the Craft category, for a wonderfully inventive Woodland scene.

Margaret Haslam again won the **Henry J Roll rose trophy** for some truly beautiful roses. **Jill Double** took the **highest points in Flowers** and **Heather Martindale** won the **Presidents Cup** for the highest points in the **Flower Section**. **The Ron Wing Trophy** for the best pot plant went to **Jane Hoddle**. **Sue Glover** produced some lovely exhibits in the **Fruit section**, {at a very difficult time of year, more on this to follow} to take the **Lindley Fruit Trophy**. **The Humphries Vegetable trophy** went to **yours truly** {particularly thrilling given I have not had anywhere to grow anything for the majority of the year!}. **Vicky Holmes** had a particularly excellent Show winning three trophies for her magnificent and original flower arrangements. **Felicity Peatfield** took the **Judges Choice**, and **Marian Oliver** has obviously taken lots of hints from our workshops with **Margaret Trepant**, our judge, and took home the **Phyllis Dunbar Novice Trophy**. **Jo Farnham** deservedly won the **Norman Fisher Photography** cup and '**Best in Show**' for some glorious photos. **Kim Shrosbree** snatched the Cookery Trophy as retribution for my beating her in the marmalade wars last year! **Carolyn Page** and **Jo Farnham** shared the **Epsom Garden Society Challenge Cup** for **Homecraft** with some beautiful and innovative works of art. Aside from those that won trophies, there really were some beautiful individual entries and I very much hope we will see even more next year, as plans are afoot to move our Show to a 'glorious June' affair, with lots of summer colour.

In July a group of members enjoyed an excellent visit to **Heathside** in Cobham. This was very different from the previous NGS gardens visited earlier in the year as it took place in the evening with wine and canapes included in the entrance fee. It was a very warm evening but we were able to sit in a shady spot and enjoy sipping our wine and eating some very tasty morsels after our walk round **Margaret Arnott's** exceptional garden. Not a weed in sight, but many of us felt relieved that even experts suffer some slug damage nowadays. **Margaret** frequently changes the look of her garden as she revamps some of her borders every three years. Her husband, with a little help from a builder, had constructed a beautiful paved area at the far end of the garden this year. Many of us stared in amazement at her giant pots as they were not only very large but stunningly planted too. As well as lovely shrubs, hostas, flowers and tubs **Margaret** has a large collection of cacti and other succulents in her greenhouse. Her garden was made up of small separate areas with some interesting arrangements of plants, which encouraged many of us to take photos to inspire our developments in our own gardens.

This was the last visit in this year's programme. If anyone would like to suggest some gardens for next year please contact **Sue Glover** suegreenfingers51@gmail.com Thanks Sue for arranging this lovely visit.

More about it from **Margaret Haslam**, so many Margarets!: I was so surprised to see a Monkey Puzzle tree in fruit! They were like a football sized round fir cone, definitely not good to be standing underneath if one should fall. I was also intrigued by a tiny seed tray of 25 small succulents arranged very neatly in a grid pattern, looking like little green rosebuds with a pink tinge round every leaf. I asked what they were, and if sown how had **Margaret** got such good germination, and was told they had come from a plant that made daughter plants all round the edge of each leaf, **Margaret** had picked them off and planted them in the tray to see what would happen! We were wondering why the top of the garden had been changed, and were told it was because trees had been planted to provide privacy when the neighbours built their towering extension, but this made the grass suffer, so the paved area seemed a good idea. Of course the new building has still not happened!

Also the canapes were so beautiful that one lady took a photo of her plate so that she could produce something similar when the occasion arose!

We have been invited to the **Jassy Dean Waiheke Garden Festival** on 9 – 10 November, where we can explore 10 gorgeous gardens, local art, plant sales market stalls, delectable food and local live music while soaking up springtime on Waiheke Island. Tickets and packages available to purchase at fullers.co.nz.

It turns out that there is another Epsom in New Zealand, but if anyone from here finds themselves nearby at the time it certainly sounds lovely.

Kim's report on our 21st August meeting when we very much enjoyed a fascinating talk entitled '**Homes and Gardens**' given by **Paul Whittle**, which he introduced as a colourful and wide-ranging look at some of our most magnificent stately homes and the gardens that surround them. We were very grateful to **Paul** for standing in at only three days notice due to the publicised speaker pulling out at the last minute.

Paul had a professional career in banking and served in the Territorial Army, Royal Signals, but has since been a travel lecturer for over twenty years and has presented all over the world from cruise ships to local WIs raising money for charity – he is currently supporting the displaced people of Myanmar {formerly Burma} where currently over three million people are homeless.

Paul admitted he is not a gardener but is very appreciative of beautiful gardens, and his talk, accompanied by lovely photos, covered many well-known, and not so well-known homes and gardens. You will probably be familiar with **Leonardslee**, and some of you will have been with us when we enjoyed a visit to **Munstead Wood**, **Gertrude Jekyll's** house which was designed by **Lutyens** and which has recently been bought by the National Trust who have been hosting some trial openings whilst restoring it to her original designs.

There were some other places on the list that I have visited: **Abbotsbury Subtropical Garden** in Dorset, mixture of formal and informal flowers and world famous for its camellia groves and magnolias, and **Exbury Gardens** in Hampshire, which was the inspiration of **Lionel Nathan de Rothschild** and holds a huge collection of rhododendrons – both of these gardens are wonderful and I can highly recommend them, especially their tea rooms!

I haven't visited **Bressingham Gardens** in Norfolk {owned by the Bloom Family of famous horticulturalists} or some of the Royal gardens, although I have been to **Blenheim Palace** which **Paul** mentioned had been a hospital for troops in WW2 and the gardens have now been restored to a Victorian style of bedding. The last time I was there it was for a celebration of 50 years of MG Cars, and it poured with rain the entire day!

Others are firmly on my bucket list, top of which is **Keukenhof** in Holland which **Paul** told us was really not that busy despite the number of people who visited and that they plant multiple bulbs in the same position, so that the display is kept at top-quality during their opening. **Audley End** gardens are also on my list, not least because of the miniature railway. **Paul** admitted during the talk that railways are also a passion of his and you can find either miniature or steam railways at **Exbury**, **Bressingham** and **Audley End** and, in my opinion, would give another very good reason for visiting all of them! If anyone would like a full list of the gardens **Paul** talked about, drop me an email at kimshros@gmail.com and I'll happily send it over to you, I hope to be ticking them all off now I am retired!

Thanks Kim!

Best wishes Margaret

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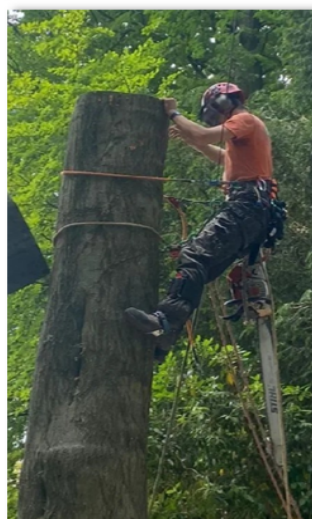
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