

ROEHAMPTON GARDEN SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1873

MONTHLY BULLETIN

November 2019

www.roehamptonallotments.co.uk

AGM

The AGM took place on the 14th November. It was a very jolly and successful evening enhanced by the venue, The Roehampton Cricket Clubhouse. The business of the AGM was to some extent contracted by having fewer reports given at the meeting but having papers from various committee members on our website. Minutes of the meeting will be posted on our website in draft form as soon as they have been written up; you will be notified once they are in place. Just two committee members stood down, Mariangela Renshaw and Janis Humberstone. Mariangela has been joint site secretary for site 2 with Liz Smart and this role will be continued by Liz jointly with Catherine Maunsell-Bower joining her. Mariangela will remain in her role with Carol Martinez as joint Show Chair. Janis has been doing a sterling job as Treasurer for four years but has now handed over to Elaine Barnwell who will continue this important role. More detail of the committee will be available in The Minutes once published.

The high point of the evening was a showing of a TV programme that was made in 2007 of our allotments featuring some of our well know allotmenters. We also had some very tasty refreshments provided by the committee. Many thanks to Elaine Barnwell for making the event work at the Cricket Club as well as her husband, Marc who ran the bar and to all those who brought along delicious bites to eat.

This will be the last Bulletin before Christmas so even if it is a bit early, I hope you all have a merry Christmas and happy New Year. Here's to a successful 2020 growing season!

Helen Finch, Chair



Cups from the shows were presented at the AGM by Sheila Konig, Vice President of RGS

Special Awards for the Summer Show

The Roehampton Estate Challenge Cup (presented by Douglas Overall) – The best vegetable in the summer show – **Shan Karwatowski (Globe Artichokes)**



The Hugh & Lady Linstead Centenary Cup– The best display of sweet peas – **Georgina O'Reilly**

The Davis Memorial Cup – The best exhibit for 1 vegetable/1 fruit/1 flower – **Vivian Fowler**

The Lady Hudson Cup - The best rose in the summer show – **Shirley Gilbe**

The Dr Howard Coulthard Cup - The best bowl of roses arranged for all round effect – **Mariangela Renshaw**

The Lady Corry Cup - The best vase of multiflora roses – **Mariangela Renshaw**

The A Norman Rogers Challenge Cup - The best vase of cut flowers, 3 or more kinds – **Mariangela Renshaw**

The Barbara Dacie Cup - The best flower display in a goblet – **Mariangela Renshaw**

The Summer Cookery Cup – The winning cake in the best decorated cake competition – **Ruth Barnwell**



Special Awards for the Autumn Show

The Reta Challenge / Leslie Harvey Memorial Cup – The best vegetable in the autumn show – **Sally Harvey, Capsicum plant**



The Hugh & Marie Jenkins Trophy – The most points for vegetables in autumn show – **Carol Martinez**

The Autumn Vegetable Cup – This year for winner of the best aubergines – **Georgina O'Reilly** –



Dr Miguel Lacroze Cup – The best Harvest Collection – B19 – **Artan Delialissi**



The Tommie Noon Cup – The best exhibit in class C54 – 5 different vegetables/fruit – **Carol Martinez**

The Barnes & Mortlake Herald / Derrick Ratcliffe Challenge Cup – The best exhibit of roses – **Pip Melotte**



The Jack Hawkins Challenge Cup – The best vase of 4 different types of flower (A10) – **Mariangela Renshaw**

The Ben Dandey Memorial Cup – The best exhibit of dahlias – **Helen Finch**

The Autumn Cookery Cup (Ladies Cup) – The exhibitor gaining the highest number of points in Section G – **Jackie Savage**

The Percy Barnes Memorial Cup – The novice with most points in the autumn show – **Alan Strowger**

The Rita Noon Cup – The most points in the children’s classes– **Callum & Angus Lodge**



The Banksian Medal – The exhibitor with most prize money in horticultural sections of both shows – (This cannot be won by the same person within 3 years) – **Vince Cottam**



Annual Awards

The Reverend PG Wallis Cup – The most points for fruit in both shows – **Catherine Mansell-Bower**

The JHP Higgins Cup – The exhibitor gaining the most points in horticultural classes but not successful in winning a major horticultural award – **Raj Patel**

Challenge/Paula Alderson Memorial Cup – For the best kept allotment – **Vivien Fowler**

The WTF Iles Memorial Cup– The best newcomer, having had a plot for less than 18 months – **Bernadette Brewster and Clare Wright (Plot Holder Partner)** (below)



SOME SEEDS TO SOW THIS WINTER

Sow these seeds in **January / February** under cover in an ideal temperature of 21°C.
A sunny window sill is perfect – see article on growing chillies for tips and advice.

CAPSICUM ANNUUM:

HOT /CHILLIES (Longum Group) and **SWEET PEPPERS** (Grossum group)



2020 RGS YEAR OF THE CHILLI PEPPER!

SPECIAL CUP for the best 5 CHILLI PEPPERS in Autumn Show

In Store we have many varieties of **CHILLI PEPPER** seeds, some more fiery than others!
e.g. Apache, Early Jalapeno, Habanero Orange, Hungarian Black, Hungarian Hot Wax, Long Slim, Scotch Bonnet Red and Tabasco.



Try sowing some **SWEET PEPPER** seeds too: e.g. New Ace, Astor and Long Red Marconi.



The most popular **TOMATOES** are the **INDETERMINATE TYPES** (which grow on a single stem and you remove the side shoots). In store we have many varieties to choose from some of which are bred to be disease resistant e.g. Mountain Magic, Fandango, Sungold and Black Opal.

We also have large tomatoes like Gigantomo and the all-time favourite small tomato Gardeners Delight.

We have a couple of the **DETERMINATE** bushy types (do not remove side shoots) e.g. the blight tolerant Lizzano and the large fruited Marmande.

Love Mexican food? Then why not give these a try in your salsa verde?

Grow like a tomato. We have the tangy **TOMATILLO VERDE** in stock.



In 2019 our Special Cup Competition was for **AUBERGINES** and many members grew them successfully for the first time. They can be grown easily outdoors in a sunny spot on our allotments. Just grow as you would tomatoes.

2 of the most popular varieties are Black Beauty and Long Purple.

2020 RGS YEAR OF THE CHILLI PEPPER

SPECIAL CUP TO BE AWARDED FOR THE BEST 5 CHILLI PEPPERS AT THE AUTUMN SHOW IN SEPTEMBER.

GET STARTED NOW!!!

Some tips on growing chillies with or without a greenhouse

Chillies need to be sown from January and by the end of February at the latest, as germination can take up to 3 weeks. Sow seeds in 4" pots or trays on top of good seed compost flattened down to a level surface. Cover with a fine layer of vermiculite and water. A heated propagator is ideal with the temperature at 27-32c, but good results can be had by placing pots on a warm window sill and covering with clear plastic freezer bags held tight with elastic bands.

When seedlings are 1" tall or showing 2 well-formed leaves prick them out and move to individual 3 or 4" pots making sure the roots are well covered and the leaves just above the compost surface. Water, but do not overwater, and place in a warm place with plenty of sunlight. They can stay in these pots until they are 3-6" tall. When the plants have 5 pairs of leaves, they should be potted on into general purpose compost in 9-12" pots, depending on the variety. When plants are 12" tall, pinch out the tops to encourage bushier plants. Taller varieties will need to be staked.

Make sure they are watered regularly, especially in hot weather. When the first flowers appear, (usually when the plants are still indoors) feed with a general-purpose fertilizer* every 2 weeks until fruits are harvested. Once all chance of frost has passed, plants can be planted outside in a sunny position. Some growers recommend planting on a ridge to prevent water-logging when wet. Continue to keep an eye on night time temperatures and cover with cloches or fleece if temperatures drop below 5 degrees c.

In the store we sell several varieties of good seed compost, as well as vermiculite, perlite and seed trays. Free pots are available from the pot box next to The Store. Also available in store is the general-purpose fertiliser, liquid seaweed*.

Plot Jobs advice for November / December can be found on our website at <http://www.roehamptonallotments.co.uk/category/plotjobsbymonth/>

Store Report

Now is the time to tend to your fruit trees. The Store has grease bands that will protract your trees from winter moth. Spraying trees with Winter Tree Wash will help control pests and diseases by eliminating overwintering eggs, removing debris and reducing fungal spores.

We also have a selection of items that would make good Christmas presents. There are hand trowels and forks, kneelers and a variety of gardening gloves in different sizes.

The potatoes have been ordered and it is hoped that they will arrive by early January. As these come from Scotland, delivery is at the mercy of the weather. We will let you know when they arrive and the varieties that will be stocked.

The Store will close for 3 weeks over the Christmas period. The last opening date is 8 December. It reopens on 5 January.

Gill Tamsett
Trading Secretary

New RGS Plot Signs



Over the coming winter every plot will receive a new numbered sign, as pictured below, placed in a visible location.

They are durable and sustainable, and will replace the existing plastic signs we have been using. Please do not move the sign and please look after it.

Seed Swap

We now have a date for the **Seed Swap event – Sunday 19th January, in the store on site 2 after it has closed for shopping.**

We are delighted to say that we will be organising a SEED SWAP in the Store on Sunday 19th January. This will start at 12 noon (after the Store closes) and run for about an hour.

We are hoping that you will bring your own harvested seeds to share or you will bring some surplus seeds that you have bought in the store or elsewhere and you just have too many of them.

- Seeds must be in envelopes or packets
- They must be clearly labelled with some information as to variety and date collected (or sown by date)

- Some details of height, spread, colour, spacing (the sort of info you find on a seed packet)
- They must be dry

We look forward to seeing you there!

Seed envelopes will soon be on sale in the store for 5p each.

Welcome to new plot-holders:

Site 2

Anne-Marie Ng

Site 3

Laura Polglase

Aneal Patpatia

Wei Wei Cui

Save our earthworms

Dr Tom Stott of Cranfield University has recently found in research that using cover crops to protect soil and introducing organic matter increases earthworm numbers.



The earthworm population was three times greater after the cover crop compared to a treatment without any vegetation from cover crops. Reduced tillage and cultivation also improved numbers.

“Earthworm populations can be negatively affected by soil tillage, so by reducing the depth and intensity of tillage we can promote their communities to aid soil structure, water infiltration and nutrient availability.

“The benefits of the cover crop were particularly notable when they were grown for a longer period. “The continuous vegetation provided by the cover crop combined with reduced tillage, resulted in a huge increase of earthworms – a key indicator of soil quality.”

The research also found that the frost sensitive cover crops improved nitrogen levels in the spring and increased soil microbial biomass

So, the moral of the story is – dig less and plant green manure crops over the winter.



Ciaran Carr – a personal reflection

Digging deep, muddy trenches to receive my chitted potatoes one dreich winter's morning in early 2013, my attention was sharply arrested by the haunting, ethereal, airborne notes of a violin. Recognising the unmistakable lyricism of "The Lark Ascending" by Vaughan Williams depicting a coincidental pastoral scene, I was propelled towards the adjoining allotment just as the orchestra shifted the focus from the skyward, unaccompanied violin imitating the titular songbird, to ground level and human activity.

Introducing myself to a middle-aged, dark curly haired man, I asked if he wouldn't mind turning up the volume. In a somewhat taciturn manner, he told me his name was Ciaran and added "So you like The Lark Ascending and the communion with nature". Occasionally, over the years since that day, the strains of various cantata and serenata, often carrying imagery of pastoral or folk themes, have reached my ears over Ciaran's grapevine. Weeding or harvesting my crops had rarely seemed so pleasant an occupation.

Formerly from Santry, Dublin, Ciaran relocated to London where, through sheer hard work, he built his own very successful IT business. Although Ciaran may have decided to live his life in this country, it would become immediately apparent from the many miniature emblems, mostly from the Book of Kells, that could be found languishing in various locations around his allotment, that he never forgot his Irish roots. Each of these artefacts served as a remembrance of homeland but, more than that, they demonstrated Ciaran's immense pride in his Irish heritage.

Ciaran was a man of quiet, gentle, inoffensive disposition who did not enjoy conflict. As would appear to be so often the case with men in particular,

he did enjoy the many pleasures of pottering in his shed, making a brew, sorting his seeds and sheltering from the rain whenever the weather was inclement. His allotment was an oasis of calm to which he would retreat at the end of his stressful working day. Often, I would glimpse him seated in his beloved grape arbour surveying his plot or planting seeds in the many pots that were arranged on his potting table. He cut a serene, solitary figure, relaxing in quiet contemplation while enjoying the gloaming prior to the advancing darkness. Yet, Ciaran was not lonely. He would often spend the remains of an evening enjoying a pint or two in local hostelrys in the company of some of his friends and acquaintances from neighbouring allotments who were unanimous in describing the pleasure of his company.

Ciaran became a familiar face at the RGS store on Sunday mornings enjoying an exchange of allotmenting anecdotes over a mug of tea or coffee with a slice of home-made cake. As those of us familiar with Ciaran's approach to allotmenting, it would probably be best described as individualistic. Weeding consisted of great mounds of earth being turned over into clumps. Seeds would then be deposited, not necessarily in serried ranks but with a random scatter gun approach into gaps between the clumps. Following a sprinkling of loose soil over the seeds, the waiting would begin to see the end product. Nevertheless, everything he planted seemed finally to make an appearance in some shape or form. Adopting the same unique approach to his viticulture method, on his potting table, he pressed by hand his Gamay noir grapes through a plastic colander into a large plastic vat adding nothing else to the resulting grape juice. His sheer joy was infectious as he marvelled at the simplicity of the procedure, later confounding his most sceptical neighbouring allotmenters when he managed to produce a very palatable Beaujolais.

Sadly, almost five months ago, following approximately two months in an induced coma, Ciaran woke up in Fairfield hospital to discover his heart had been removed. Yet, in his first post coma email, he reported to the RGS that he was attached to a mechanical heart and he faced many months of recovery. His final comment was "I look forward to Sunday morning home-made cake". Right up to the end, the cards received from his many RGS well-wishers adorned his bedside table giving him hope and encouragement to regain the life he had once enjoyed and to return to his cherished allotment. Regrettably, although he had made very steady progress, Ciaran's light was finally extinguished on the 14th October 2019. He would never again enjoy a slice of Sunday morning home-made cake.

Catherine Maunsell-Bower



November RECIPE – Squash, kale and feta filo pies

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for greasing
- 300g butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into 2cm pieces
- 1 leek, white part only (about 50g), sliced (see tip)
- 2 tbsp grated parmesan or vegetarian alternative
- 125g feta, crumbled
- ½ tsp paprika
- 4 large filo pastry sheets, cut into 16 x 14cm squares, kept in a folded damp tea towel in the fridge

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan180°C/gas 6 and grease 4 x 12cm individual tart tins. Put the squash on a baking tray, season well and drizzle with 1 tbsp of the olive oil. Toss, then roast in the oven for 20 minutes or until tender. Remove from the oven and reduce the oven temperature to 180°C/fan160°C/gas 4.
2. Meanwhile cook the leek in a pan of simmering salted water for 3 minutes. Add the kale leaves and cook for 2 minutes or until softened. Drain well and, when cool, squeeze out any excess liquid with your hands.
3. Beat the eggs, milk, grated parmesan, feta and paprika in a bowl and season well. Brush the filo sheets with the remaining 1 tbsp olive oil, then stack 4 in each tin, pressing them in well and

layering each piece at a slight angle to the previous one to create a star-shaped case. Divide the roasted squash, kale and leek among the pastry cases, then pour over the egg mixture. Bake for 25-30 minutes until set and golden. Garnish with pumpkin seeds and cress or alternatively fry the green parts of the leeks in olive oil until crisp, drain on kitchen paper, then sprinkle on top of the tarts.

NOTICES

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Seed Swap – 12.00-13.00 on Sunday 19th January in the store on site 2

RHS CONTACTS

Committee Chair: Helen Finch.

Site 2 Joint Allotment Secretaries Mariangela Renshaw & Catherine Maunsell-Bower.

Site 3 Joint Allotment Secretaries: Vivian Fowler & Alison Linton.

Site Manager: Charles Gilbe

Comments or questions for Chair and/or Committee via website:
rgs.sw15@gmail.com

All policies and procedures are on our website.

www.roehamptonallotments.co.uk

BASIC RULES FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL COHESION ON OUR ALLOTMENT SITES

- Respect the rights and belongings of other plot-holders.
- No dogs without leads.
- No unsupervised children.
- Lock the gate behind you.
- Dispose of your own rubbish.
- No structures to be erected or trees to be planted without permission of your Site Secretary.

If you think someone is breaking the rules contact a committee member or me, Helen Finch, rather than confront another plot holder.

Helen.finch2@btinternet.com

07736 422373

RGS email

As you know the email system was changed last year. Those of you on email should all have been receiving emails from rgs.sw15@gmail.com. If you have not been receiving any, then please check your spam/junk folders. In order to be sure to get them in future please set up rgs.sw15@gmail.com as a known contact.

THE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION TOOL SHED

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www.conservationfoundation.co.uk

DISCOUNTS

If you haven't picked up your membership card yet don't forget to ask next time you are in the store on site 2.

Adrian Hall, East Sheen

On presentation of your RGS membership card you will receive 10% discount on horticultural goods that you take away with you, not on delivered items.

Neal's, Heathfield Road, SW18 3HR (opposite Wandsworth Prison)

Register for their loyalty card, as an RGS member by showing your membership card, giving your name, email address, post-code. A 7% retrospective discount on goods purchased is applied and can be redeemed at the time of the next purchase (like a Nectar card). The amount of discount is recorded as 'points' on the card and shown on each till receipt. £5.00 worth of points is put on your card as a thank you when you register. If you are over 50, and a loyalty card member, you will receive 10% discount on Wednesdays.

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SECURITY

If you see someone trespassing or causing damage on the Sites, or in an emergency phone 999 or text phone 18000.

NEW DAWN GARDENS

Artan Deliallisi, one of our plot holders, offers regular or casual maintenance for gardens. He will repair or build fences, gates, sheds, paving, walls and arches. 07411 288485
artandeliallisi@gmail.com

MANTRA LANDSCAPES

Grounds maintenance specialists'
www.mantralandscapes.com
Alexander Barrington Thompson- Byer. 07985 463 283

The store is open on Sunday mornings between 10 -12.00 noon.

Closed between 15th and 29th December, re-opens on 5th Jan

Café, serving teas, coffee and homemade cake.

NEXT BULLETIN

January 2020. Editor Carol Martinez.

Email stories and photos to carolmartinez@hotmail.co.uk by 6th January 2020.

Recipe suggestions always welcome.