

# SPOTLIGHT EAST

Newsletter for Members of The East of England Area of NAFAS

Welcome to the Winter edition of our Area newsletter. So much has changed since September, when we reported on our members' involvement with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Now we have acknowledged the passing of our much loved Queen Elizabeth II with the placing of flowers in public places to celebrate her life & achievements.



**Flowers for Her Majesty in the Lady Chapel, Ely Cathedral**

Some members chose to make a personal tribute. Linda Allen (Mildenhall Flower Club) made a simple memorial wreath for her own front door using recycled mechanics (which I'm sure the Queen would have appreciated) & garden foliage, incorporating the traditional sprigs of Rosemary. The design was posted on Facebook with Linda's simple caption:

**"Thank You Ma'am"**



The simple arrangement of foliage & flowers on the coffin, arranged without floral foam in a structure of oak branches & moss, will no doubt have inspired many arrangers to consider using environmentally friendly mechanics.



## Norwich Flower Club also celebrated their Platinum Anniversary this year

Jennifer Salman writes:

It was a lovely joyous afternoon for our Platinum Anniversary year Open Meeting where we welcomed National Demonstrator, Tracey Griffin - the Title being 'Not Your Usual Flower Fix'. Tracey has a wealth of floristry expertise, nationally and globally and a string of qualifications. She has seen incredible success and won multiple awards - one of only two gold medals in the Chelsea florist of the year competition at the world famous RHS Chelsea Flower Show. We were not to be disappointed.

Her first design showed great use of lentils in the form of bowls, for *Leucospermum*, and *Strelitzia* native to South Africa.



Tracey also showed how Holland is now using hydration bags. The audience was captivated as stories evolved along with striking displays. Tracey worked effortlessly explaining she had seen firsthand the changes and challenges within the florist industry. Her second wired design had a focal point of a polyclay sphere with some elegant pink snow berries and brassicas (ornamental cabbages) whilst orchids added to the enchanted look.

The Third design featured lilies, no foliage and a heightened linear design with contorted willow. The fourth design aptly titled "Through The Window" using test tubes and wire all cleverly hidden by more stunning flowers and my favourite Moët Gerberas, also known as the African daisy.

Finally our piece-de-resistance: the fifth display was a traditional design using an urn with oasis. This drew gasps of breath as it was so beautiful; magnolias and cascading branches, picking up the gladioli colour. As we watched Tracey filling in she explained she always uses a knife instead of floristry's secateurs to avoid pressure on the stems.



A million claps later, after all the inventiveness and displays of richness and variety, we finished this amazing and fantastic journey of floral discovery.

This was one audience at the Assembly Rooms who had been truly wowed.

We had two raffles one for flowers the other to celebrate 70 years included Champagne, a D&G bag, chocolates, wine, plants, a garden voucher. and a voucher for tea at The Ivy.

Our president Carol Hipperson gave the vote of thanks.



Area President, Sue Brinton with Club Chairman, Joyce Youngman (centre) & Carole Hipperson, Club President (left)

**Brenda Eyers writes about her recent visit to Fleuramour**

David Thomson, Pat South and I were delighted to be invited by The Vanguard Contemporary Club (Kent Area) to join them in September on a three-day visit to Belgium and to visit Alden Biesen Castle and the fabulous event Fleuramour.



Jacqui Arnold had produced an exciting itinerary visiting beautiful botanical gardens and retail therapy, in addition of course to a full day at the castle. Every exhibit was a masterpiece and everyone had different views on what was the best part. For me it was definitely walking through the maze created in the beautiful chapel said to feature 25,000 blooms. The perfume was amazing and coupled with the beauty of the flowers and the religious decorations, many visitors were reduced to tears.



**Tribute to Alan Smith** who died in September

In 1991 as an inexperienced young man I entered the Suffolk Show and met Alan for the first time, dressed in his lime green track suit, and from that time my life would be changed completely.

Alan encouraged me and others to be Demonstrators and I owe him a great deal for his encouragement and support through my training and beyond.

His cheeky smile and charismatic personality were well known to us all throughout the Area, and you never knew quite what he might say or do especially when on stage. He was guaranteed to make you laugh with his abundance of jokes and tales.

Jointly we took part in many memorable flower festivals and competitions, a highlight of which were our award winning exhibits for NAFAS at Hampton Court and Chelsea Flower Show, when we were joined by friends from the Area. As you can imagine a lot of fun was had by all because of Alans participation.

I will miss his fountain of knowledge about past events and people. He seemed to be able to recall things I had long forgotten about, and he loved a good gossip.

Now we are left to remember our own personal memories of times spent with Alan throughout the years with great affection and love.

**Roger Woolnough**, Area Demonstrators' Representative, Chairman Aldeburgh Flower Club



Alan Smith

## Area Day October 2022

The Community Hall at Needham Market was absolutely buzzing that Saturday as we met up with friends to enjoy the Autumn Area Day. Chairman Barbara Collins commented on how good it was to hear us all chatting again like we used to, pre-covid. As we arrived we were welcomed by Pat South's magnificent pedestal whilst Pat herself promoted sales of The Flower Arranger magazine. In the morning, we listened enthralled to Jenny Gibbs' story of how in 1993 she went, on her own, to Turkey. From the airport she took the first bus she saw, to wherever it would take her .... It changed her life forever!



Lunchtime provided plenty of shopping opportunities – Kathy from “Tomfoolery” in Huntingdon did a roaring trade with her irresistible jewellery. Mustafa Paz provided gorgeous silk scarves, throws & pashminas, whilst Norwich Group manned the Christmas goodies stall (provided by Savin wholesalers and magically transported to the venue by Barbara)



In the afternoon we enjoyed Emily Broomhead's stunning demonstration "Kaleidoscope of Colour". Like her arrangements, Emily is full of exuberance and enthusiasm, delighting us with tales of competing against her mother (also a talented arranger) in the WAFA Qualifying Round at Blackpool and ultimately representing NAFAS in Barbados. Her designs included innovative foam-free mechanics alongside huge designs using "the green stuff". As she told us, it's her job to create enormous designs and our job to work out how we will get them out of the door and into the car. Emily asked us not to share her designs on social media, so that they will be fresh for other audiences to see. But she was delighted to pose for the photograph wearing the traditional Ukrainian headdress she created as part of her finale and is happy for us to share it. (see photo previous page) She also agreed that we could use the action photos of her working on stage in this online newsletter.



Words & photos Lindi Carrington



Back in lockdown, **Herts & Essex Boundary member Beverly Moore** watched many workshops on Facebook with Francine Thomas in New Zealand.

Inspired by a canvas design Francine created, Beverly passed on the techniques of this design to club members at a workshop in September.

All components were supplied, giving a good selection of paints/ serviettes/flowers & trimmings. Beverly also displayed a few other ways of using decoupage onto polystyrene bowls/rings and as a backdrop for a metal stand.

Now came the choice of which paints & which serviettes to use - Thankfully enough for everyone to choose from.

It was a sunny day and members were able to spray safely outside.

Torn up serviettes were then attached using a mix of PVA glue and water.



Club members hard at work

A bit of a waiting game for the canvas to dry but everyone had brought a lunch box so it was nice to chat among friends.

With the outside sunshine and the use of a hair dryer it wasn't long before the finishes touches could be made,

Attaching the tubes was a bit fiddly but everyone was patient and mastered it.

Trimmings of choice, foliage, flowers and contorted hazel added and the design were completed.

Everyone had enjoyed the day and hoped to create more canvas designs in future.



### **New Creations Floral Design Club**

Our Autumn workshop was held at the end of September when Moira Neville demonstrated foliage manipulation techniques - plaiting equisetum (snake grass) to form 3D structures & wrapping/folding/spraying aspidistra leaves. She then showed us a wide variety of designs incorporating these core techniques with other interesting elements such as small branches, ornamental grasses, decorative wire & single headed, statement flowers. Once we had mastered these techniques, we were encouraged to experiment on how to use them within a design. At the end of the day there was an amazing array of arrangements, and we went home determined to perfect our foliage manipulation and try out more ideas. All in all, a challenging day!

(photos next page)



Designs incorporating plaited equisetum



Moira's demonstration designs



Manipulated aspidistra techniques

**Cringleford & Hethersett Flower Club** were also pleased to welcome Moira Neville to their club for one of her imaginative & popular demonstrations.

“Moira brought her own sound system and her intro saw her dressed as a flapper in a vintage pink dress, whilst she played 'Second Hand Rose' and did a flapper type dance! She played two other pieces of music during her demo (Forever in Blue Jeans & Raindance). She focused on how to create designs at minimal cost by using supermarket and garden flowers, drying garden flowers and leaves, plant manipulation to make different forms and picking up props and containers from charity shops. All very on trend!! A very entertaining and informative evening and with lots of input from the audience!

*(Editor's note: They didn't say what form the audience input took – perhaps it was a spontaneous Charleston)*



There have been a number of Annual General Meetings held since September, each in its different way providing opportunities, after the business part of the meeting, for socialising and having fun with flowers.

**Julie Head wrote to tell us about the AGM Stowmarket & District Flower Club** held in October. Apart from the formal business and cakes, Frances Boscowan gave an interesting talk about her flower growing business at Moat Farm Flowers in Dennington. Julie also shared photos of members' stunning designs for the AGM competition. The title was "A Song from A Show" Their interpretations were spot on! Can you guess the song titles ?





Scroll down to page 15 for the answers.....

**Council/AGM Mildenhall, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Gloria Godley, Area Vice Chairman writes:**

On a bright sunny Wednesday morning members started to arrive for the meeting. A plant stall full of interesting plants, kindly donated by our members; everything thing from Physalis to Succulents, Packets of Seeds, Gardening Books and Bramley Apples. There's going to be freezers full of delicious Apple Pies through the coming dark winter months.

Once again it was uplifting to hear the room buzzing with chatter and laughter. Meeting up with friends that we only see at Area meetings, there never seems enough time in the day to catch up with each other's news before the meeting is under way.

The chairman Barbara welcomed everyone and before the start of business asked for a minute's silence for the members who had recently passed.

Three newly qualified demonstrators received their completion certificates and badges, from Area President Sue Brinton; we look forward to welcoming them to our clubs. Finally, Sue presented Jean Crane with her Past Presidents Badge. Lionel Clarke was unable to attend this meeting and will be presented with his Past Presidents Badge at the Cambridge open Meeting.

Main picture: Newly qualified demonstrators receiving their certificates; from left to right Doreen Robinson, Elizabeth Robertson, (Area President) Sue Brinton & Maddy Bradley.

Top right: Jean Crane receives her Past President's badge from Sue Brinton

Bottom right: Cambridge Group committee doing a sterling sales job.



### Answers to “Guess the Song Titles on Page 14

Kate Ager – The Greatest Showman 1<sup>st</sup> Novice class  
Pauline Squirrel Masquerade from Phantom of the Opera – 1<sup>st</sup> Advanced  
Julie Head -These are a few of my Favourite Things from Mary Poppins 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Ann Brunker “I’m getting married in the Morning” from My Fair Lady 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Rosie Black – Climb Every Mountain from The Sound of Music  
Vicki Hease – Mein Herr from Cabaret  
Claire Ames - Circle of Life from The Lion King

**Carol Giffen, Chairman Cambridge Group** writes: "On Saturday 29th October 2022, the Cambridge Group held a very successful AGM hosted by Mildenhall Flower Club, who put on a fabulous day for us all. Our special guests were Sue Brinton, Area President and Gloria Goodley, Area Vice Chairman.

In the morning Simone Squire told us a little bit about her country of origin, Belgium and Belgian chocolate, which was very interesting, We then had a lovely lunch organised by some of the Mildenhall ladies and their husbands. In the afternoon we were entertained by Gill McGregor who put on a fabulous demonstration for us to enjoy. A very happy day.



### **"Christmas is Coming"**

East Suffolk Group held their AGM at Wickham Market at the end of October. After the "boring bits" we enjoyed a Christmas workshop with Jenni Baker, who showed us designs and techniques which could be used to make inexpensive Christmas gifts, or items for the club sales table – we're all fundraising at the moment to keep our clubs thriving. Not all the designs looked Christmassy as the availability of inexpensive flowers was limited (focussing on Halloween) but the ideas were there, and members went away to tweak and develop their work in the run-up to Christmas.

(Photos next page)





Details from Jenni's designs



East Suffolk Group Christmas Workshop, October 2022

**Tricia Loades** sent us an **Update from Lodden Flower Club,**

Members have been really busy this year with arranging flowers for weddings and flower festivals. Our members have arranged flowers for Harvest Festival's at Framingham Earl and Loddon churches. In November a group of us went to Norwich Cathedral to arrange the poppies for Remembrance Day. We produced two pedestals, which this year were arranged by our Chairman Tricia G and Janet under the tuition of Vice-Chairman Tricia L. They were ably assisted by new Committee members Jean and Jenny. Our President Diane arranged a pedestal near the entrance desk. Mary Jane arranged a pedestal in St Saviours Chapel and Secretary Alex arranged the poppies on top of the Parsley Tomb assisted by Tricia L. Again this year all the arrangements were made without the use of floral foam and I think we all did very well!



At our Annual General Meeting in August, we presented trophies to members who had the most points in the competitions. Well done to Jean who received the Novice trophy, Penny who received the Intermediate trophy and Tricia L who received the Advance trophy. We started this year's competition in October with one entitled 'Floral Cocktail'.

We had originally invited Crystal Dyball along to our meeting that night, but unfortunately she couldn't make it. So, the lovely Jenni Baker very kindly stepped in and brought along her demonstration entitled 'Memories of India'. Jenni told us of her journey to compete in the WFAA show in India in 2019. She also judged our competition which would have been the title of Crystal's demonstration. We all had a lovely evening and welcomed lots of guests who we hope will join our club!



At the Norfolk and Norwich Horticultural Society's Late Autumn show in November, our member Tricia Loades came first in the flower arranging class 'White Christmas' which was one of the classes in the Show Title 'Let me entertain you'.



**“Do you listen to a piece of music and visualise a flower arrangement?”** asks” Spotlight East” Editor, Lindi Carrington.

This was the theme of an on-line virtual competition **“Synaesthesia: A Blurring of Floral Art & Music”** which took place earlier this year. It was the brainchild of Kim Zimmerman, Floral Designer, Judge & Administrator of the Facebook page “Floral ART Re- Imagined” The show was open to all floral art designers from anywhere in the world who wished to participate and was judged by Wafa rules. Most of the classes were judged by more than one panel of judges, sometimes from different continents, so that there was a truly worldwide perspective on the designs. This meant that the time between submitting our entries, mid-April, and the announcement of the results in early September was much longer than the organisers had anticipated.

There was an amazing choice of class titles (36 in all) ranging from interpretations of musical terminology like “Allegro” or “Staccato”. Then there were musical genres – “Punk Rock”, “Lullaby” “Reggae.” Or the opportunity to interpret song titles : “A Whiter Shade of Pale”, or maybe the lyrics of Dylan’s “Mr. Tambourine Man” or Coldplay’s “Yellow”. I opted for the “Inspired by Listening to Music” section and eventually chose Class 34 – ‘Gymnopedia no.1’ – Erik Satie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-Xm7s9eGxU>

I find it is a strangely repetitive, wandering, piece of music. It has those dreamlike qualities where familiar items appear in unusual contexts; calm, happy but rather odd. The judges’ comments were very constructive, pointing out minor technical defects whilst being wholehearted about my interpretation. I was delighted to be placed Second.



Lindi Carrington

Members of **Little Hallingbury Flower Club**, along with other local flower arrangers, were delighted to support the Tudor Festival at St Giles church Great Hallingbury on 1st & 2nd Oct. The church was beautifully decorated for the festival which celebrated the local royal links in the Tudor period. Other events for the Tudor Weekend included a Tudor themed fete, a concert of Period Music, a service of Choral Matins from the 1549 & a lecture about Jane Boleyn.



### **“A Celebration of Flowers” - Peterborough Cathedral , 29<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October.**

The celebratory exhibition, co-ordinated by Peterborough Floral Decoration Society, produced a stunning array of traditional & contemporary flower arrangements, bringing a splash of Autumn colour to the beautiful fan-vaulted New Building at the east end of the Cathedral. Area Chairman, Barbara Collins, who is on the Committee of the Society and one of the Cathedral’s volunteer flower arrangers, said:

“We had planned this exhibition for 2020 when it was the 65th anniversary of our Society, but the pandemic had other ideas. We are delighted that at last we can showcase the skills and artistry, not just of our own members but those of neighbouring clubs too. We hope that people will really enjoy seeing these uplifting displays and that we can also raise some money for the Cathedral. Many people find flower arranging a relaxing pastime which can benefit your mental health.”



Peace & Tranquility  
Barbara Collins  
Photo: Beverly Moore

Green & Pleasant Land  
Bourne Flower Club  
Photo: Beverly Moore

Participating Flower Clubs included Bourne, Brampton, Peterborough, Stamford, Werrington & Yaxley. The exhibition showed a contrasting array of traditional and contemporary floral designs & techniques, with the participants choosing how to depict their titles and show off the glorious autumn blooms to their best advantage.



Autumn Harvest Scarecrow  
Werrington Flower Club

Photo: Beverly Moore

Autumn Garden  
Brampton Flower Club

Photo: Beverly Moore

Photo: Beverly Moore



As visitors headed towards the exhibition area they saw a display of poppies falling from the upper level of the Cathedral. This artwork remained in place until Remembrance Sunday on 13th November.



There was a piano recital at the cathedral on the Saturday evening, by the internationally renowned pianist, Janusz Piotrowicz, giving the audience the opportunity to view the floral exhibition during the interval, and perhaps introduce more members of the public to the delights of flower arranging.

## **Bryan Stammers**

Bryan and Pat have been both friendly and familiar faces throughout the East of England for some 40 years. The announcement of Bryan's sudden death was a huge shock to their many friends and all the clubs that knew them so well and welcomed them both to their meetings over so many years.



Bryan was undoubtedly “Mr Sound” – he was always at Council Meetings and Area days making sure that the sound system was perfect for the meetings and often helped clubs when they had special events and felt they needed someone with expertise to ensure their meeting was a big success.





Indeed, their efforts for the Area were recognised when they were both made Life Members – both of them being surprised when the then Area President presented them with their badges.



Many years ago, Bryan and Pat were heavily involved in the annual flower show held in Ipswich and of course Bryan worked tirelessly at the Suffolk Show each year helping with the erection of the floral marquee and the staging. He was always a great help to exhibitors assisting with the moving of heavy boxes and accessories. Of course, Pat was a prolific competitor at the Suffolk Show and Bryan took immense prize in her many awards over the years. Similarly, Bryan was always there to help the Area with any unusual projects – and who can possibly forget him in his fishing waders in the pond when we were staging a shoot for The Flower Arranger Magazine? Only Bryan could possibly have thought to bring his waders!



Indeed, there appeared to be nothing that Bryan could not fix. The Area were invited to stage a huge exhibit at the famous Southport Flower Show back in the early 2000's. Bryan and Pat arrived in his van ready for every possible need whilst the rest of the team arrived via the Nine Elms flower market with all the flowers and foliage – including a 5-foot stem of bananas. They had no idea how it was going to be used or staged but within no time at all Bryan had sorted the problem and it stood proud in the midst of the Gold Award exhibit – and was actually featured on the local television and radio.

Bryan is irreplaceable in the Area and can never be replaced in our hearts – or Pat's. He is sorely missed but will be long remembered by everyone in the East of England.

**Brenda Eyers, Chairman National Speakers Committee**

### **Holbrook & District 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The planned celebration was delayed following the deaths of both Bryan & Alan, who were both much loved members. The cake cutting ceremony was carried out at this November's AGM.



Retiring Chairman Sheila Cooper (left) with Jo Crapnell, President surrounded by committee members. Pat Stammers (back row, left) was elected as incoming Chairman.

**Jayne Lawson, Chairman Feering Flower Club** thinks the photo of the paint pot and glue gun might give you a few clues as to the theme of the evening's workshop!



**Sylvie Cooper (Facebook admin) writes:**

“The Feering ‘Florus Line’ was back in production at our workshop on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November Led by Sue Bunting and Jayne Lawson, the work shoppers had the choice of 1 of 2 designs - the wonderful Christmas Star, that Helen Hare originally inspired many of us to make in 2019 ... ..and a pinned design inspired by Janet Wardens design in the Autumn Flower Arranger. As you can see from the photos a lot of twirling of wool, and pinning of leaves took place (plus of course lots of chatting, laughter and a lovely cuppa and buffet) - creating beautiful festive designs; everyone enjoyed the evening, and loved the designs they created.”



**It's beginning to look a lot like ..... David Wright**

David has been busy recently, in the runup to Christmas - 4 demonstrations in 5 days and it's still November at the time of writing this.

Aside from Flower Club Christmas demonstrations, David has recently demonstrated at Whittington's, the floral wholesalers, just outside Norwich, where this year he showed half the designs as moss based. He says that it was good to be back after a 3 year absence and to see lots of familiar faces.



The 4th dem in 5 days was a MacMillan Charity afternoon tea, which was a sell-out , raising £3,200 for the charity. The 12 arrangements and lots of cakes were enjoyed by all . David is especially grateful to retired demonstrator Judy Barham for all her help .





**And finally .... Merry Christmas from the Media Team...**

Enjoy these hectic weeks of flower arranging which lead up to Christmas – don't forget to tell Spotlight what you've been doing in your Christmas workshops, your fundraising events & your Seasonal get-togethers. There will be a Christmas "round-up" in the Spring edition. And remember: you don't need to be asked! Just email your news , by February 19<sup>th</sup> 2023, to [newsletter.nafaseast@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.nafaseast@gmail.com)