



Kew Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2010

Dear Members

First, a warm welcome to these new members – Jonquil Barr, Vanessa Labern, Richard Radmore and Bridget Wait. We are sad to lose Ann Cowper through ill health and Carol Hirst, our past Treasurer, who has moved away.

AGM 11th March 2010

Approximately 70 people attended this year's AGM (a record turn-out), and many of you will already know the proceedings. First and foremost our Chairman, Mike Kidd, gave a tribute to John Smith, who died in January. Over the years John has been Treasurer, Chairman and Vice-President of KHS. We all have memories of John's friendliness and his willingness to make sure things went smoothly - whether it was the tea tent, marquee, auction or barbeque – together with anything else that cropped up. He will be sorely missed

Ross Randall, summing up his first year as Treasurer, reported that the Annual Show last August gave a healthy surplus from which to make a distribution to selected charities – which KHS aims to do each year. This consisted of £200 to each of the following: Garden Organic (preserving heritage seeds); The Twickenham Bee Keepers, the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place; the Shooting Star Children's Hospice the Kew Community Trust (Avenue Club) and Friends of Kew Pond.

As usual the mention of bees aroused concern and it was suggested that a future KHS talk might be on bees. Meanwhile the KHS voted to join the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust. If you are interested in plants that attract bees visit www.basingstoke-beekeepers.org.uk/plants.html

During further discussion concerning the donation to Kew Pond we were alerted to the recent Council work on Kew Pond, which, intended to clear the invasive reeds, had given cause for alarm about the procedures used. Since the AGM, the council has been made aware of the concerns of the Friends of Kew Pond and is working towards an amicable solution.

Under AOB David Collison explained the distribution of heritage seeds, which is linked with KHS membership of Garden Organic at Ryton in Warwickshire. KHS members were also reminded of the availability of compost, fertilisers, seeds and young vegetables at Manor Road Allotments on Saturday and Sunday mornings. However there is an annual membership charge

of £3. On the other hand, Chiswick Horticultural Society makes no surcharge on those arriving at its Trading Hut in Staveley Road (turn off second left after Chiswick Bridge, the allotment gates and approach path are just past the cemetery). There is a good selection available at bargain prices, open Sundays 10-12.

‘The Other Kew Gardens’

After the completion of the AGM and some much needed refreshments, David Blomfield gave an excellent talk on the market gardens which covered much of Kew and Mortlake during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries - until the coming of the railway made the land too tempting for property developers. From a succession of maps we learnt what previously grew where our houses now stand – osier beds by the river (for wicker to make basketry); arable meadows for restoring the fat to animals that had been walked all the way from Wales and the West Country for the London market; and in the hinterland the most successful and lucrative crop was asparagus. This was liberally fertilised with manure derived from both horses and humans (before the Victorian sewage system reduced supplies of the latter), brought from London on the dung barges and dumped where the new Riverside Development now stands. Another crop was strawberries, which were transported (to avoid damage) in huge baskets weighing up to 40lbs, carried on the heads of women walking to Covent Garden twice daily, or nightly – mercifully they got lifts back to Kew in the empty asparagus carts. Eventually the heavy monocropping caused the land to lose its goodness and in the mid-nineteenth century orchards replaced the asparagus – the aged trees still remain in a few gardens.

Forthcoming Events

Three KHS summer outings were announced at the AGM

1. **Borde Hill**; on Tuesday 13th July there will be a coach trip organised by Mike Kidd to Borde Hill in Sussex (just north of Haywards Heath). All those who enjoyed the outing to Loseley last year will also love this, because here too there is a Tudor mansion surrounded by extensive and beautiful grounds, including the formal gardens packed with flowers, then parkland, woodland and lakes, commanding beautiful views of the surrounding countryside, all this with a restaurant offering coffee on arrival, homemade lunches and cream teas (or you can bring your own sandwiches if you prefer). There is also a tempting plant nursery.
2. **Great Dixter**; on 21st September, there will be a coach trip organised by Gareth James to Great Dixter, the famous garden in Kent/Sussex created by Christopher Lloyd and Fergus Garrett – at that time of year the exciting colour combinations of dahlias, cannas and other vibrant plants should be at their best. A visit inside the historic house, which is full of atmosphere and artifacts, will also be on offer. Since Great Dixter opens at 2.0pm, this allows time to stop on the way at Merriments, a very extensive plant nursery attached to a skillfully designed garden and a restaurant.

The cost for each of these trips will be £25 per person to include the coach, a tour of the house and of the garden. The coach will start from Kew Green at 9.30 and return about 5.30. There is a form attached to this newsletter for you to return with a deposit of £5 per trip if you are interested.

3. **Royal College of Physicians**; for our local London excursion, arrangements are in progress for a visit later this year to the Royal College of Physicians. The garden is tiny but packed with medicinal plants, and there will be an explanatory talk by the Curator, which has been highly recommended by a KHS member.

Another trip suggested at the AGM is a visit to the Manoir aux Quatre Saisons in Oxfordshire, to see the garden and sample the menu of Raymond Blanc.

The winter season of talks is in planning and will begin on 11 November with a talk by Chris Sumner of the London Parks and Gardens Trust on Garden Squares

www.londongardensonline.org.uk We hope also to invite Dr Paul Smith of the Millennium Seed bank and Dr Nigel Taylor of the RBG to talk to us.

We would welcome a KHS member to help us with organising events – so if anyone out there enjoys organising events please contact Carole Brougham!

THE ANNUAL SHOW Saturday 28 August 2010.

The biggest KHS event of the year is of course the Annual Show on Saturday 28th August and schedules etc will be in the next newsletter. Meanwhile keep an eye on the KHS website www.kewhorticulturalsociety.org, and anyone interested in helping in any way would be most welcome - please contact Philippa Hurman. Help is particularly needed on the day itself. Even if you can only help for an hour, preparing for the Auction of Exhibits late in the afternoon, it will be appreciated. Also Jenny Kidd will be ready to accept your cakes for the Tea Tent on the day. Those interested in having a stall should contact Francis Brown. Philippa, Jenny and Francis can be contacted on kew.show@yahoo.co.uk

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Twickenham and Thames Valley Beekeepers Association annual Open Day Saturday 5 June at the Apiary 41 Whitton Road Twickenham – all welcome.

Open Squares Weekend Sat/Sun 12/13 June. www.opensquares.org This is the one weekend in the year when you can visit 200 gardens in London; some not usually open to the public.

National Gardens Scheme

Several KHS members are opening their gardens for the National Gardens Scheme this year:-

Sunday 23 May, 2-6pm - 65, 69, 71 and 73 Kew Green. £6 joint admission

Sunday 30 and Monday 31 May, 2-5pm - Fiveways, 31 and 38 Leyborne Park (31 is opening for the first time). Joint admission to all three is £5 and tickets will be available only from 38.

Sunday 20 June, 2-5pm - 355, Sandycombe Road, admission £3.

Trips to Italy

Max Calligola, who gave KHS a fascinating talk last year about the alpine flowers of the Dolomites has now given an idea of the dates of the trips he plans this year, which are:

- Early June (or Late June, failing the Liguria tour): "Classic" Botanical Tour in the Dolomites;

- Late June or Early July: Botanical Tour of Liguria;

- Early September: Botanical Tour of Emilia Romagna and the Po Delta.

The costs have not yet been finalised (they depend partly on numbers) but will be in the region of £700 to include the hotel and breakfast, travel in Italy and entrance fees. The air fare is not included in this. Anyone interested should contact mcalligola@yahoo.it

Pensford Field Events;

26 June – annual summer picnic. Take your own picnic and enjoy the acoustic music from various local entertainers professional and amateur. Gates open 5pm, music 7pm to dusk.

Tickets £5 - children free. For details see www.pensfordfield.co.uk

Also Girls Art & Nature Project Sat mornings. Contact Pam Ibrahima on 07500 178589 for more details.

Macmillan Cancer Research Plan Fair Thursday 13 May 70 Grove Park Road Chiswick W4 3QA 10.00-17.00 entry £1. All proceeds to Macmillan Cancer Support. Plants, books, home-made teas etc

Notes from the Membership Secretary, Jenny Wakefield - March 2010

Email addresses: A PLEA FOR YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES.

If you have an email address which KHS may use in sending you newsletters, or information in between newsletters, please send a brief note to jenniferwakefield@tiscali.co.uk. She will then thank you in reply, copy the address into the KHS database and pass your email address to Carole who sends the emails out (blindcopy), both newsletters and additional emails of interest in-between newsletters.

Subscriptions: Thank you to those members who have already paid their subscriptions (still only £5 a year) for 2010, and in some cases, paid arrears too. Nobody has yet paid for this year a second time by mistake, but do please remember that at the 2007 AGM it was agreed that a mistaken second payment should not be returned, but kept for KHS as a donation, to save work and help to keep the sub at its current low level. If you are not sure how up-to-date you are with your sub, just email Jenny Wakefield or phone her on 020 8940 5141.

Several KHS members have already set up a standing order for their subscriptions, a forget-proof option! Such an arrangement allows your subscriptions to be paid automatically from your own bank to the KHS "community" account at Barclays. Unfortunately, Barclays will not accept direct debits into community accounts and do not allow us to have any other type of account. If you would like to pay by standing order, you could complete the form attached to this newsletter, Jenny will get it to your bank for you, or you will need to go to your own bank or building society, to complete their standing order form with the following payee details:

KHS Account at	Barclays Bank, 8 George Street, Richmond TW9 1JU,
Bank branch sortcode	20 72 17
Payee:	Kew Horticultural Society, account number 13756440
Payment amount	£5.00
Date due	first payment immediately (unless you've already paid for this year) then January 5 th annually

Carole Brougham Editor KHS Newsletter
www.kewhorticulturalsociety.org

COACH TRIP TO BORDE HILL, TUESDAY 13 JULY 2010

Please complete the slip and return to Mike Kidd, 14 Clarence Road, Kew TW9 3NL (8948 1184) with your £5.00 nonreturnable deposit per person and a stamped address envelope.

I would like to reserve _____ places on the coach. I enclose _____ deposit and a sae.

Name: _____ Tel No. _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

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COACH TRIP TO GREAT DIXTER, TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2010

Please complete the slip and return to Gareth James, 14 Bushwood Road, Kew TW9 3BQ (8948 1153) with your £5.00 nonreturnable deposit per person and a stamped address envelope.

I would like to reserve _____ places on the coach. I enclose _____ deposit and a sae.

Name: _____ Tel No. _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

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SUBSCRIPTIONS — please complete and return this slip to Jenny Wakefield, 77 Gloucester Road, Kew TW9 3BT (Tel. 8940 5141) (Annual membership £5.00 per person/family)

I enclose _____ in payment for my 2010 KHS membership plus any arrears I may owe.

Name _____ Tel. No. _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you would like a receipt