

SPOTLIGHT EAST

Newsletter for Members of The East of England Area of NAFAS

Welcome to the Spring 2024 edition of Spotlight East. We start with an update about the Area Media Team. We are delighted to announce that the

Area website is under new management

Hello, we'd like to introduce ourselves... we're the ladies from Dereham & District flower club in Norfolk currently managing the NAFAS-East.com website for the East of England Area. We've just taken over from Linda Knights, who had previously managed the site for many years – our grateful thanks to Linda for not only the website design she created but also helping to ensure the transition to us was smooth and reasonably stress free

We're still getting to grips with some of the website processes and our aim is to ensure the website is always fresh and up to date. We want it to be an information repository for news and events that flower club members can use when they need to, whether it's information about the Area's 70th Anniversary celebrations or details about the next Area Day.

Without going into too much technical detail, we're now managing the site for things like Gloria's Chairman's Chat, Front Page news, Contact Us page, information on the Area's groups, adding the Spotlight magazine once each edition is ready and upcoming Club, Area and Group events etc. We appreciate that many of us access the site via our mobile devices, so we'll make sure the mobile version is continually refreshed too.



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We've made a few cosmetic improvements to the look and feel of the website recently and will make further improvements and additions to the Demonstrators page, more information on the Area's Groups once it's available and much more.

We will be looking at the website structure and design in the near future and checking out best practice designs that other Areas use for their websites. So, watch this space!

We look forward to working with other members of the Area's media team, such as Lindi Carrington, the Spotlight Editor and Beverley Moore who manages the Facebook and Instagram accounts and Brenda Eyres who looks after these when Beverley's on holiday. We're backed up by Linda in case we need her (but we try not to disturb her, as she's busy with Education) and a brilliant IT guy called Phil Bean, who lives close by and helps us with the techie stuff and is happy to explain things in layman's terms, so we get it.

If you want to let us know about something coming up for your Club or Group, or indeed anything you'd like to see on the website in future, please email us at web.nafaseast@gmail.com.

Lavinia Pirret and Helen Evans
Area Website Administrator



It seems only a moment ago that it was Christmas! Hopefully you received some wonderful flower inspired gifts; The Flower Arranger calendar perhaps.... How delightful to see Sue Tonkin's February arrangement of hellebores & lichen twigs while I'm working on this newsletter; and be able to look forward to Leoni Braz in March and Barbara Collins in May.



Or perhaps you were gifted a subscription to The Flower Arranger Magazine... It's a delightful surprise to find that the Spring edition has yet more designs by our talented arrangers from Cambridge Group. **Carol Giffen Herts & Essex Flower Club/Cambridge Group** told us that it was a lovely surprise for them too to have more of their designs in the Flower Arranger. "They were all from the photo shoot three years ago and at the time I remember Chloe saying she would use every photo that was taken. Whether there are any more photos left for future editions I don't know.

It was a fabulous day; we all worked hard and helped one another and had to produce three designs each. There were six of us so that's why there's so many: plus, we pitched in and created a few more with what was left over." You will find Carol's design "Diagonal Lines" on page 32, Nicky Thompson's "Twister" on page 37, and on page 51 a joint design by Nicky & Leoni Braz – "Narcissus in a Nest".

In the previous edition of Spotlight, with its late November copy date, we were only able to share the festive activities of a handful of clubs, as many continue to meet well into December. So here, on the next few pages, is the Christmas Catchup:

Colchester Group Christmas Meeting

On Saturday 2nd December members were treated to afternoon tea followed the most amazing demonstration by Coral Gardener who had travelled all the way from Somerset to entertain us. Her demonstration was entitled "Treemendous" and she kept everyone in awe of her skills at both flower arranging but also as an outstanding performer. Her wit had everyone in fits.

Our thanks and congratulations go to our Colchester Group Chairman Dianne Leggett and her amazing committee who worked so hard.

Words & photos -Patricia Robinson



David Thomson worked very hard prior to the dem helping Coral get everything set up back stage.



Dianne Leggett, Colchester Group

David, as the Colchester Group President, gave the vote of thanks to Coral following a standing ovation ; Group Chairman Dianne Leggett wished guests a very Merry Christmas. Photo centre - Coral's amazing hand tie which was worked on a handmade frame of apple branches; photo left – a fabulous arrangement which may not go into the winner's car!

Members and guests of **Cringleford & Hethersett Flower Club** thoroughly enjoyed a superb evening of flower designs on 27th November depicting the theme 'Festive Floral Fabulousness' from national demonstrator Jonathan Moseley.



Jonathan Moseley
Cringleford & Hethersett
Flower Club

Feering Flower Club, Sylvie Cooper writes:

We drew a close to our floral year on Tuesday evening 12th December - the hall was filled with members and visitors from neighbouring clubs, which created a lovely festive atmosphere.

Everyone was greeted with the Celebrations tub (other choccies are available)

The fit to bursting Tombola table soon sold out, and everyone was busy chatting and opening their prizes, pre the demonstration.

We welcomed Jackie Page to the club for the first time, with her dem 'It's Christmas' (that always reminds of Noddy Holder - rather apt really as Jackie complimented each design with a festive song from her iPad)

Her flowers were beautiful, and she further entertained us with endearing stories of her granddaughter, dogs, her time as a florist and her NAFAS career.

Everyone then tucked into the famous Feering buffet, the hall resounded with lots of cheerful chat and laughter - helped along I'm sure with a festive glass ... or two!

The members competition 'Waxing Lyrical' looked fabulous - well done to all.

Then it was time to say our goodbyes, and Christmas best wishes; lots of happy winners taking home Jackie's designs.



Seasonal report from Loddon Flower Club

In December we were busy in the lead up to Christmas. We had our Open meeting when Julie Woods came along with her demonstration entitled 'Let the Festivities Begin'. There was a lovely buffet to enjoy that was made up by members and our Treasurer Penny's non-alcoholic punch. We had lots of stalls for visitors to browse, two raffles and 'Guess the Square' where the winner won a Christmas cake and pick a present. This got us all into the Christmas spirit.

Then the next Saturday we had our Christmas workshop where we could make a Christmas cracker or a parallel arrangement or even both. This was led by our President Diane. We all went home with something for the dining table.

Also, in December members were decorating for Chedgrave and Loddon churches as well as Norwich Cathedral. So, in January we had a well-earned rest with our New Year lunch.

February saw us have a slide show from Gail Harland entitled 'Creating a Cottage Garden'. Gail told us about how she has made a cutting garden within her front garden.



Sadly, in February we lost our former Chairman, Margaret Turner. Margaret had been Chairman for a number of years until 2019 and she would take part in flower workshops, decorating the local churches and also arranging for our flower festivals. She will be much missed by all as she was involved with lots of local organisations.

We now look forward to the Spring and the start of our flower arranging demonstrations. For more details of events and meetings and photos from our meetings take a look at our website at www.loddonflowerclub.co.uk. Tricia Loades, Loddon Flower Club



Margaret Turner 2019

Clacton Flower Club, Demonstrator Vicki Hease writes:

“My last demonstration for this year was to Clacton Flower club, which very sadly was their final meeting after 70 years . So sad. They treated us all to a special cream tea, before I demonstrated “Christmas is Here” to their fabulous chairman and great committee. They also managed their last competition, which I was very happy to judge. It was a huge pleasure and privilege for me to share your last club meeting. All the very best to you lovely, friendly ladies and gents. The only foam design is my final one with the enormous Anthurium “Pistache”, (detail next page) all the rest are foam free.”





Charity Fundraising

In early December a festive event was held and enjoyed by all who attended Swanton Morley Village Hall today for the charities **EACH & Keeping Abreast organised by Jacquie Aldous , Chairman Norwich Group**. The ladies Brenda Tubbs, Trish Barton, Carole Read and trainee demonstrator, Klara provided superb flower designs to be raffled off and a delicious selection of savoury and mixed cakes with tea was provided. The total of £1,700 was raised which will be divided for EACH to receive £1,200 and Keeping Abreast, £500. A date for the diary next year to remember is 6th December 2024.



Stowmarket & District Flower Club

Our Club Christmas Competition was held at Hitcham Church over the last weekend of November and was entitled "These are the Colours of Christmas ". The church looked glorious. What a fantastic turnout and well done to everyone who took part and to everyone who made this event happen, especially Pauline Squirrell and the ladies who manned the church, provided tea and cakes and gave demonstrations on Saturday - Pauline Squirrell, Vicki Hease, Ann Ross and myself. Many thanks to Helen Bird who judged the various classes. It was a really good few days; we are lucky to have so much talent in the club. It looks as if we raised in excess of £600 for Hitcham Church as well as some funds for the club with "The People's Choice."



Julie Head (left) with the Rose Bowl for Best in Show. Vicki Hease (centre) with the Croxton Rose Bowl and Pauline Squirrell (right) with the Chelsworth cup. Unfortunately Shirley Brooks was unable to receive the President's Salver.



Class 2 “The Colours of Christmas “ A pedestal Exhibit . First place went to our club Chairperson Petrina Miles, Second place to Ann Ross & third place to Julie Head



Class 4 “Silver Sparkle or Golden Glitter”. First prize Vicki Hease, Second prize Rosy Black and Third prize Ann Ross. This was a contemporary class and foam free too.

Words & photos Jule Head, Stowmarket & District Flower Club

Recycling at its best... the journey of a beautiful harp

Following a 'free to good home' post on the Norwich Group of Flower Club's Facebook page late last year, I became the proud new owner of a lovely wooden imitation harp.

The harp had been used by **Loddon Flower Club** in a Club class competition at the Norfolk Show in 1991 – with a title of 'Norfolk Life'. The beautiful exhibit (shown here prior to judging) was created by **Diane Blyth, Jane DuBrow, Janet Woodcock and Dr Joan Bellamy**. Their arrangement was depicting the Norwich Music Festival and they received a placing. The harp had been made for them by a Loddon gentlemen.



Photo credits: Dr Joan Bellamy, Loddon Flower Club

I duly collected the harp from **Diane Blyth, President of Loddon Flower Club**... My husband thought I'd gone mad but I was super excited... I could see the potential of either using it in a future Club class competition for our Club (**Dereham & District**) or in our local Church for celebrating special occasions.



The harp needed some renovation – over the years it had lost its base structures and a few strings along the way. A local charity, Dereham Men's Shed, helped renovate it for me, making new bases to give it stability and rubbing it down ready for spray painting. My husband restrung it for me and I got out the gold spray paint.

With helping to decorate the St Nicholas Church in Dereham ready for Christmas in mind, we made sure it was ready in time.

With the help of my husband to transport it and a friend, Jenny Affleck, to help decorate it, we created this arrangement at the front of the nave ready for various carol and Christmas services.

It had lots of admiring glances and comments from the Team Rector, Church wardens, the congregation and fellow church flower-arrangers. **I'm very proud of the harp I hope to use it many times in the future.**



Helen Evans (left) & Jenny Affleck

Helen Evans, Chairman, Dereham Flower Club

***We'd love to hear about your recycling projects to create amazing new floral mechanics..
newsletter.nafaseast@gmail.com***

Stowmarket & District Flower Club

It was lovely to see such a good turnout for our January lunchtime meeting. A fun time was had by all! Arranging a supermarket bunch of flowers in a foam free arrangement using mesh/pin holder or twig supports. We all managed to produce something different with our flowers and sundries and showed it was still possible to create something pleasing without using foam. Thanks to Petrina Miles, Pauline Squirrell and Julie Head for demonstrating and a special thanks to the Di, Margaret and Kate who made soup and refreshments for us all.



The early months of the year are a popular time for clubs to hold their AGM's but there is great variety in the way clubs choose to organise the event – from “Get it over with so that we can get on with the flowers” to “Eat, drink & relax “ and everything in between. Here is a selection of the latest meetings:

Members and guests of **Dereham & District Flower Club** enjoyed an Annual General Meeting at Wensum Valley Hotel, Taverham, Norfolk, on Thursday 25th January. The AGM itself included annual reports, election of the Committee and presentation of the Annual Competition trophies and certificates to the winners and runners-up in both classes. The presentations were made by President, Corinne Steward and Competition Committee Member, Beverley Broad. The Salver for Open Class was presented to Lavinia Pirret and the Novice award went to Sandra Carman. Runner up for the Open Class was awarded to Jan Lawler and runner up for the Novice competition was awarded to Lisa Turner.



President Corinne Steward (left) & Competitions organiser Beverley Broad (right) make the presentations.



After an excellent lunch, Simon White, Sales Manager at Peter Beales Roses Ltd gave us an entertaining journey into the show gardens and exhibits of the RHS Chelsea and Hampton Court Flower Shows, as well as exclusive insights. Simon also brought along plants and sundries for some retail therapy!



Feering Flower Club

The Club met on 20th February for the first of our 2024 season; we had a good mix of members and visitors. We held our AGM first and then we welcomed Deb Hart from Braintree, who is a very experienced willow weaver.

Deb gave a presentation on the types, cultivation, weaving techniques - she has been commissioned for numerous horticultural shows, public & private gardens and community projects; the photographs of her work were stunning and often on an unimaginable scale.

For those who want to work on a more modest scale, she runs regular workshops - it was one of her workshop pieces she demonstrated for us. She created a beautiful obelisk, which was part of our raffle - we all knew the first ticket drawn would opt for that (sadly it wasn't me)She also brought along a vast array of woven items for display - the different patterns and weaves was amazing.

Also amazing was the bumper entry for the members competition Well done to all who took part.

A lovely evening with lots of chat, cheer, yummy refreshments and a look forward to more of the same next month

Sylvie Cooper

(Competition photos next page)



Members competition "Three Little Pots "; members vote for their favourite at the AGM and prizes/cups are awarded



Display by Deb Hart

Members of **Harleston Flower Club** enjoyed afternoon tea after their AGM at the beginning of February. A cheque was presented to Guide Dogs, and members were entertained by a talk, this was accompanied by Vinney, an ambassador dog, and Rhonda who is soon going into big school training. Also attending was Burton, 4-month-old guide dog puppy who is being raised by Jenni and Dave Baker.



(Dogs from left to right) Vinney, Burton & Rhonda with Jenni Baker in the centre

Norwich Flower Club had our AGM on 20th February, chaired by our President Joyce Youngman. Afterwards, we were treated to a very interesting and informative talk by Julie Smith about the Royal Windsor Rose Horticultural Society (RWRHS) and the Royal Windsor Show. The Society was founded by Queen Victoria in 1892 and is actually older than the Chelsea Flower Show which was established in 1913 - who knew!

In very limited time, aided by Perdy Jeffrey, a beautiful and elegant arrangement was produced which represented the willow work at the Show in 2023.
Gill Allen , Norwich Flower Club

(photo next page)



Photos Lavinia Pirret

Herts & Essex Boundary Flower Club

February 6th was our first meeting of 2024. The weather could have been kinder, the rain just didn't stop so the turn out by members was lower than usual.

Well done to all those who did come along for our AGM - Reports were given by our President, Chairman & Treasurer. Thanks were given to the hardworking committee and of course our very supportive members.

This year we celebrate our 65th Anniversary & the new programme will be available at our March meeting.

Competition cups were awarded to Lorraine Gagen (Novice) Naomi Wells (Intermediate) & Leoni Braz (Advanced)



Two of our members, Lorraine Gagen & Naomi Wells, are training to become Nafas demonstrators and we were delighted that they had agreed to give us a demonstration after the business of the AGM was finished.. Quite a daunting task in front of fellow members but they did brilliantly, creating 2 designs each with the theme of Hearts (For "Herts" & Essex Boundary Flower Club.)

Lorraine's used a posy pad fixed to a circular framework for her first design and her second design a hand tie using a heart shaped framework handmade by Lorraine.



Naomi's first design was without floral foam, a spring design using a willow & birch frame created by Naomi. The second design a hand tie with one yarn covered and one birch twig heart shaped frame.



The "Hearts" & Essex report brings us (almost) seamlessly to our next topic – Valentines Day. Sometimes this event doesn't seem to inspire us, but this year romance was in the air....

Stanway Flower Club

On Friday 9th February Stanway Flower Club held their first meeting of 2024 - they welcomed the talented demonstrator Susan Horne who led a fantastic workshop for our members. The club provided the metal heart and test tubes and members were asked to bring a bunch of flowers of their choice along with some foliage. Supplies of ribbons, wires were available and every one of the 49 members attending produced a stunning Valentine Heart. Sue made one sample much larger so everyone could see how it was constructed and also a smaller one which she then featured in a vase. It would make a beautiful gift. Words & photos Brenda Eysers



Wroxham Flower Club

We enjoyed a fabulous demonstration entitled 'Love is in the Air' from Roger Woolnough, Area Vice Chairman, last night 14th February. It was very well attended by members and guests.

We gained so much inspiration from Roger's stunning arrangements and creative ways to disguise containers and reduce our use of foam.

Afterwards tea & cake of course and the lucky winners of the raffle took away the wonderful arrangements. A thoroughly lovely evening as always..



Roger Woolnough at Wroxham Flower Club

Linda Knights, Education Representative, has an interesting day planned



Are you aware of the flower arranging opportunities available in East of England Area?

As a member of JDS&E committee, and with our area executive, we are all available to help the clubs in our Area in any way we can.

We are offering a free 'Get Together' May 11th for all teachers/sharers/helpers at clubs. Numbers are limited, so please book your place now. Your chance to have your say and for us to see how we can help and share our ideas with you.

Emails with further information have been sent to all clubs, but not all have replied.

Did you receive the emails?

Details are now available on the Area website nafas-east.com



We hope to see you there...

We would also like to remind you to email posters for your future events so that they can be uploaded to the Area website. web.nafaseast@gmail.com This gives you the opportunity to publicise the details for a considerable time beforehand (and they don't disappear like they do on Facebook) until after the event.

We look forward to hearing about your events and seeing all your photos for publication in the June edition of Spotlight. Please email your news to newsletter.nafaseast@gmail.com as a Word attachment with the photographs separately in JPEG format (rather than displayed alongside the text) Don't forget to tell us who the people in the photographs are! The deadline for copy is the 27th May.

Enjoy your flower arranging as Spring slowly arrives,

Lindi Carrington.
Editor