RAYLEIGH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
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www.rayleighhorticulturalsociety.co.uk
Newsletter NOVEMBER 2024

from the Chairman

Hi All,

It's hard to believe that another year is nearly at an end. I hope you have all managed to stay well and have enjoyed 2024 in your gardens or on your allotments. Despite our very unpredictable summer weather, I was amazed at the abundance of carrots, sweetcorn, courgettes and soft fruit, which all excelled themselves.

I would like to thank new Show Manager, Shaun Cox, ably assisted by Peter Collier, for the brilliant job they did arranging the 2024 Shows and look forward to more successful Shows in 2025.

It is now time to renew your membership (see form on page 3 if you want to pay by cheque in the post), or you can renew at the Store or Club Meetings.

Ann has been busy sorting out the schedule of speakers for next year's Club Meetings, so have a look on page 2 for a taster of what's coming. I should also like to show my appreciation for all the hard work both David and Ann have put in, both running the Store and our very successful Club Meetings.

As usual, the Trading Store will be closing for Christmas and New Year – see dates in advert below.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking all our volunteers, whether you work in the Store or deliver Newsletters, the Society really appreciates all your efforts and couldn't do without you.

Finally, (with my Editor's hat on), I should also like to thank all the contributors to your Newsletter: Pat Hill, Ann & David Baughen, Peter Noble, Mark Wilson and others – without whom we wouldn't have a Newsletter!

With all Best Wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Healthy 2025,

Colin Andrews

Wow what an event!
The Autumn Show 2024

The Society has had more people and exhibits in the past, but it was a well-attended event – the Horticultural Autumn Event in 2024. We had 2 special ladies attend. The first was, Madam Chair Councillor Sarah-Jane Page from Rochford and another lady, Chair Marianne Vernon, who represented Rayleigh. By 8.25am there was already 6 people hard at work setting up the tables, laying out the pieces of white painted cane to separate the exhibits, then the cards with the name of the exhibit for that space, some large, some not quite so. Next, we had people bring in the items that can be purchased in the shop, obviously not all of it, but a wide selection for people to see. Then the ladies turned up who write very clearly, the cards for all the exhibitors and their exhibits. Some brought 2, others brought many more up to 20. One particular lady always gets there early to help and then put her stuff out, lots of it! What else went on? By 1.30pm it was really busy, with photographs being taken of all the exhibits and the cards that said if they had won or not, it does not sound much, but we tried to photograph most of the exhibits – we took over 100 photos of most, but not all. I then helped with the folding of raffle tickets and, as I like to do, mingled with people to help or advise. Then came the time to call out the raffle tickets – we did that plus with help from assistant Delilah Noble (aged 8) and we also asked the two ladies that were mentioned earlier. Once that was done it was out with the cameras to photograph the winners of the different sections, vegetables, handicrafts, etc. that were called out by the Show Manager, Shaun Cox and the ladies presented the prizes while we took photos. With that done it was time to pack everything away. Now that was really something, everyone knew what to do. How many people helped at the Show in all? We counted at least 16 people and the day, as far as I am aware, went off without a hitch. We all look forward to next year and more Shows, who knows, there may be another Marrow at least three feet long! (See photograph on the website).

Mark Wilson, Hospitality.

STORE CLOSURE DATES FOR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

The store will close from

12.30 Saturday 14th December 2024

and will re-open at

10.00 a.m. Tuesday 7th January 2025



2025 SHOW DATES

Spring Show
SUNDAY APRIL 6th 2025
Autumn Show
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 7th 2025

The show book with the class details will be available from mid January 2025 from following :

the store / club meetings,

on line at www.rayleighhorticulturalsociety.co.uk,

post RHS 339 Eastwood Road, Rayleigh SS6 7LH,

or phone: 07 572 360 795

STORE NEWS



I will start by apologising to members for the short blip we had a few weeks ago in taking payment by debit/credit card. The technology just wouldn't work in the store due to all sorts of reasons I won't bore you with. HOWEVER, we are now back up and running and can take your money via cards/cash/cheques as per normal. ***Please come and spend some!***

We still have spring flowering bulbs in stock –
hyacinths, crocus, daffodils, tulips etc. A lovely choice this year.

Our potato order for this year should be delivered mid-to-end January and includes –
First Earlies – Casablanca, Foremost, Lady Christl, Pentland Javalin, Rocket and Winston.
Second Earlies are – Estima, Kestrel, Nadine, Sagitta, Charlotte (salad) and Caledonian Pearl (salad).
Main Crop – Cara, Desiree, King Edward, Maris Piper, Picasso and Setanta.

Onions will be coming into store at the same time and these include – Stuttgarter Giant, Turbo and Rumba.

Shallots – Golden Gourmet, Yellow Moon and Topper.

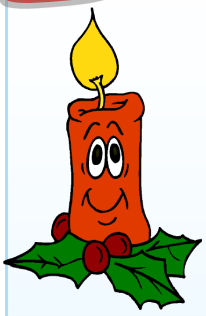
Garlic – Vigour White (soft neck).

Quite a choice of produce both edible and 'pretty'. Of course there will also be the products that you will need to plant, feed and de-weed.

I would like to say a big 'THANK YOU' to all our volunteers for the work they have done this year both in the store and at the Shows. We could definitely not do it without them. If you would like to volunteer a few hours a month either in the store, or when we have the shows please let me or one of the store volunteers know and we can have a chat.
Keep warm and safe. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
David Baughen

JUST A REMINDER
The store opening times are:
TUESDAY — THURSDAY
SATURDAY
10.00 a.m. till 12.30

Social News



Afternoon Club Meetings For 2025

Hello Members

By the time you read this we will be well into the Christmas Season so may I start by wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year.

At the minute I am busy working on our Speaker Calendar for 2025. I am hoping to find us some interesting new speakers as well as including a couple of 'old' favourites – I hope they forgive me for calling them that! You will see how far I have come –

7th February	-TBC
7th March	**Jane Piper** *Victorian Fashions to Die For,* literally women (and men) dying to look good.
4th April	**David Williams** David is one of RHS 'old friends' and we haven't yet chosen a topic for his talk but we know it will be enjoyable.
2nd May	**Peter Jones** This talk is entitled *Zeppelins Over Essex* and evokes wartime aerial stories.
6th June	**Bobbie Derbyshire** Bobbie is a writer and her talk takes us through her journey when writing, *A Beginning, A Muddle and an End* with plenty of laughs along the way.
4th July	**Andy Malcolm** Andy will be talking about *The Fisherman's Mission* and the work they do throughout the country.
1st August	**Adam Tregoning** This is a talk about *Porter's*, Southend Mayor's official residence. as Adam is a JP and Mayor's Officer an Macebearer

I still have some gaps to fill for 2025 so if you have any bright ideas or know of an interesting speaker, please let me know (01702 527456 or email me annbaughen@yahoo.co.uk). *Ann Baughen*

Everybody welcome -
Members £2.50 - Visitors £3
On the first Friday of the month
@ 2p.m. Main Hall
Holy Trinity Church, Rayleigh SS6 8BB

Club Meeting reports by Pat Hill

'good news '



August Club Afternoon coincided with one of our 'heatwave' days so thanks to all the members who came. We kept the doors open to get a through draft and it wasn't too bad. Jacqueline Aviolet has talked to us before but this time the subject was 'Chocolate' - not very appropriate for nearly 30° However we learned that chocolate plants normal growing areas are the tropics, South America, Africa and Indonesia. Kew Gardens are growing their own plants in their tropical greenhouses and apparently getting a good crop. Jacqueline stressed the health benefits of dark chocolate, which was good news to us all. She also brought some plants from her nursery for sale which was appreciated by members.



'not on the way to anywhere'

The subject 'Not the Norfolk Broads' sounded interesting, and it was a well put together and enjoyable talk. The speaker showed slides and told us about various places to visit in Norfolk including gardens, houses, interesting villages, the coast, heritage railways and anywhere else to enjoy on a weekend (or longer) in the county. One of the gardens mentioned, the Old Vicarage Garden at East Ruston coincidentally featured on Gardener's World that evening. He said Norfolk is a generally quiet county as it is 'not on the way to anywhere' but has so much to see. It also has the benefit of not involving the Dartford Crossing on a few days away, a big bonus in my eyes.

'a bit too rowdy'



Mike Davies had a large audience at October Club Meeting, and his talk about Rayleigh Museum was very well received. I have been to the Museum, and also read books about Rayleigh but there was plenty of information I hadn't heard before. I had never heard of Roman remains being found next to the Paul Pry, and near Hockley Road and Rawreth Lane. Rayleigh Mount used to be privately owned by a Mr Edward Francis until he gave it to the National Trust in 1923. Nowadays we all know his name as the Infants and Junior School. He was born in Clements Hall - which still exists as a rather run down house in Hawkwell. The railway came to Rayleigh in 1889, when the population was around 1500. This sparked the house building boom which unfortunately still continues, with the population now around 35,000. A market charter was granted to the town in 1181 and this developed into the Trinity Fair, a two day event with day one devoted to the buying and selling of livestock and goods and day two for the participants to let their hair down. Day two got a bit too rowdy so it was cancelled in 1881 and replaced by a carnival in 1900, and this in turn was cancelled in 1957. The Trinity Fair was reintroduced in 2017 and is now a regular in the town's calendar. As a final fact, if you stand on Rayleigh Mount, at 240ft above sea level, you are on one of the highest spots in Essex. I can confidently say we all learnt quite a lot about our town.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL POSTAL FORM for 2025



Name……

Address……

……

Post Code……

Telephone number……

MEMBERSHIP FEE £8.00

Per household per annum.

Send this form with a cheque made payable to "Rayleigh Horticultural Society"

To: The membership secretary,

Rayleigh Horticultural Society,

Mr. & Mrs. C. Andrews, 339 Eastwood Road, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 7LH

IMPORTANT

Rayleigh Horticultural Society works hard to keep your personal data secure. As a membership organisation we do not and will not share your data with any other organisation or individual who is not a member of our Committee.

PLEASE SIGN HERE to agree to the society contacting you, i.e. Sending newsletters etc.

Signed……

As well as by post, membership may also be renewed at the store or club meetings, or if you would like to set up a standing order, please phone the membership secretary first on 07 572 360 795 to obtain a reference number for setting up with your bank.



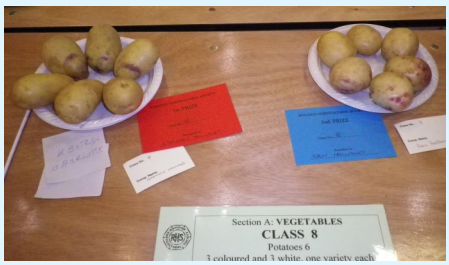
How does YOUR garden grow?

About 10 years ago Rayleigh Town Council asked if our Society would judge the Front and Back Garden section of the Rayleigh in Bloom events. At our next committee meeting our chairman asked for 'any volunteers'.There was a long silence so eventually I said I would do it if I had someone to help. Our Store Manager offered, and when he retired Peter Noble took over, with my hastily co-opted husband when Peter hasn't been available. We all enjoy the judging, it is nice to look round people's gardens and this year is the first when it has rained on judging day so I can't complain at that. There are categories of front and back gardens, with lawn or paved, and a prize of a voucher to spend at our store and a handsome certificate to keep. Some people have entered for several years and each year there are 'newbies'. Our judging sheets have been improved over the years to take into account various aspects of the gardens, water conservation and use, if they're wildlife friendly as well as the usual criteria of variety and health of plants, use of available space, and of course tidiness and absence of weeds. It really is a case of 'size doesn't matter'; our winners are sometimes small, sometimes very neat and sometimes more natural and 'free flowing'. However, I would like more gardens to look round. I often see lovely front gardens when driving around Rayleigh (I don't peer over fences into back gardens!) and think 'why don't they enter, their garden is really nice'. The Council gives entrants several weeks notice of when we will be judging so there is time for final tweeks and tidying. I enjoy a quick chat with the owners (if they're in, sometimes a side gate is left open for us to close when we've finished) although we do need to look round and discuss on our own! Please ask Karen or Jay at the Council Offices, probably around March, for details of next year's competition- judging is around the end of June, beginning of July. I hope to visit you then. *Pat Hill*

2024 AUTUMN SHOW PHOTOS

















More photos will be on the website shortly

Photos courtesy of David Baughen and Mark Wilson

The editors would welcome members to send in their own stories, tips and experiences for the forum page, just email photos and text to details ⇨

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