RAYLEIGH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
Newsletter AUGUST 2025 www.rayleighhorticulturalsociety.co.uk e-mail peskypixie@supanet.com Tel: 07 572 360 795

from the Chairman

Hi All,
Hope you have been managing to keep well and cool during our heat waves this year – we are certainly not used to such weather and I'm sure most of the plants aren't either! However, despite this extreme of weather, the crops have so far been very good – I've been amazed at the Dwarf Beans, Courgettes, Cucumbers, Onions, Carrots and Potatoes so far and the soft fruit and Tomatoes are doing really well.
If you have not yet sent in your email address to us, then please do so as soon as possible to: **peskypixie@supanet.com.** However, if you do not have email, please ring: **07 572 360 795** quoting your membership number and name and we will make sure you get a photocopy of the newsletter from January 2026.
There are still several Club Afternoons left till the end of the year – see Ann's bit on page 2 – so do go along if you can.
Finally, if you are hoping to enter some classes in the Autumn Show, go to the Store and ask for a Show Book, (as these are only available for members wishing to enter in a Show).
Hope you are all enjoying your allotments and gardens this year,

Colin Andrews (Chairman)

from the Show Manager

A big thanks to all those members who attended the spring show and particularly every one of you who helped with setting up and running the event.

I was pleased to see we received 17 entries in the floral art classes which was drastically up from only 2 entries at last year's Autumn show.

However there were very few entries in the children's classes.

I look forward to meeting you all again at this year's Autumn Show

Regards Shaun Cox *(Show Manager)*

New range of bird feed items in the store.

We now sell a range of products in addition to our bestselling wild bird seed and sunflower hearts.
These include **peanuts (shelled and unshelled), mealworms, calciworms, suet pellets, half coconut suet mix, fat balls, suet blocks and all related feeders.**
Come in and have a look on your next visit.

Les Cooper *(Deputy Store Manager RHS)*

SUNDAY 7th SEPT
AUTUMN SHOW
Mill Hall, Rayleigh

Open to the public from 2 p.m.

Every member welcome to exhibit Flowers, Fruit, Vegetables, Craft & Cakes

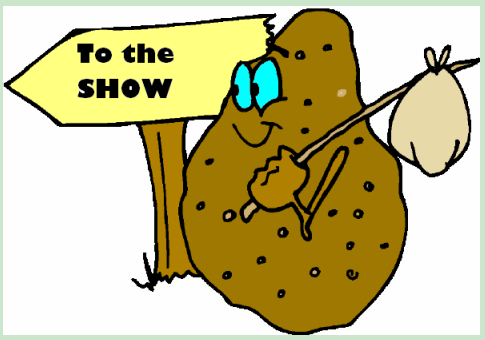
(Not shown before? — now is the time, if you need help phone a committee member, call in the store or just turn up on show day, we are only too pleased to help)

2025 SHOW BOOK AVAILABLE AT THE STORE

Children's Competition
POTATO CHALLENGE

See page 9 of the SHOW BOOK

ALL AGES UP TO 16 YEARS
Bring them along to Mill Hall on the morning of the show before 11.30



Volunteer Secretary Needed

Are you one of those people who miss life at "the office"? Would you like to be part of a team, using your note-taking and other office skills working with Rayleigh Horticultural Society? If the answer to the above is "yes" then read on.

We are looking for a secretary to join our Team. To take notes at our Committee Meetings – usually 4 or 5 per year, and to send out occasional correspondence. Some key-board skills would be useful, but you don't have to be a computer wizard.

If you are interested and would like to find out more about the role, please contact: Ann Baughen, on 01702 527456.

STORE NEWS

See our new larger collection of

DARLAC TOOLS

PLUS

Our *NEW RANGE* of

BIRD FEED & related items

PEANUTS (shelled & unshelled, MEALWORMS, CALCIWORMS, SUET PELLETS, HALF COCONUT SUET MIX, FAT BALLS, SUET BLOCKS

and BIRD FEEDERS

Social News

Hi Readers. As I write this we are in the middle of the second heatwave to hit us this year. I say 'hit us' as that is what it feels like to me. I'm not built for this weather but my one comfort is, I know it is only temporary – in just a few days it will be windy, cold and maybe damp – all conditions that I am more used to, and more comfortable with.

However, I have been good and along with David, we have been looking after our allotment and garden, as you would expect. Probably like many of you a good deal of our time has been taken up in recent weeks with watering and trying to give shade to some of our more delicate, shade-loving plants. Time will tell whether we have been successful.

I hope you are enjoying your Summer but don't forget our Social Afternoons, the first Friday of every month. You will find a list of future speakers in your newsletter. Hope to see you at one of these meetings.

Keep cool.

Ann Baughen

Afternoon Club Meetings

1st August Adam Tregoning 'Porters'

Adam is a JP and Macebearer/Mayor's Officer and he works for the Mayor's office in Southend. His talk is about the history of Porters and the work that goes on there.

5th September Mary &Graham Brace
A Walk on the Wild Side

Mary & Graham are hunters - photograph hunters of animals in their natural habitat. This talk shows us big cats in India as you may never have seen them before, close up and personal.

3rd October Ron Coutts Update from Plantsman Ron

Ron holds several roles with Essex Group Plant Heritage and holds the national collection for plant genus Arisaema. He is also involved in a project at Marks Hall.

7th Nov Andrew Wiltshire Humorous Hassle

Andrew shares some funny stories about his working life spanning thirty years across forty countries including with governments and commercial 'giants'.

We do hope you can make some of the meetings and look forward to seeing you at Holy Trinity Church @ 2pm. on the first Friday of each month.
Check our website regularly for updates and information on the society

www.rayleighhorticulturalsociety.co.uk

***Everybody welcome* -Members £2.50 - Visitors £3**

On the first Friday of the month
@ 2p.m. Main Hall
Holy Trinity Church, Rayleigh SS6 8BB



plus ***ALL YOUR USUAL GARDENING NEEDS-***

HUMAX COMPOST - GROW BAGS - POTTING GRIT - BARK - FARMYARD MANURE - CANES - BIRD FOOD - FERTILISERS - POTS - NETTING - FLEECE - LABELS - LAWN SEED - 6X - CAPILLARY MATTING - CLOCHES - ROCK DUST -SPADES - FORKS - PRUNING KNIVES - VEGETABLE SEEDS - FLOWER SEEDS - HAND TOOLS

Club Meeting reports by Pat Hill

Corona lorry

The planned speaker was unwell so Ann contacted one of our 'regulars' and going by the laughter during Brian Carline's talk no one was disappointed. Basically he spoke about his childhood and what we all did (in varying degrees) before Health & Safety was invented. This took in home remedies such as Dolly Blue bags for stings and how to ease chilblains (don't ask). We continued down memory lane with Penny for the Guy, Bob-a-job week and even straps on train windows, all long gone. The height of fine dining at home was probably tinned peaches and Ideal Milk, and just think about the vegetables we take for granted but were unheard of in the 1950's - broccoli, courgettes, baby sweetcorn don't raise an eyebrow now. Brian asked who remembered the Corona lorry delivering soft drinks (cream soda, anyone?), but I think the biggest response from the audience was to his question 'who remembers the Flower Pot Men? It was a loud, resounding 'yes'! A really enjoyable afternoon.

Pudding lane

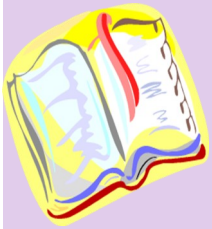


Our April talk was by one of our regular speakers, David Williams - this time on The Great Fire of London. He said although everyone knows about this event in 1666 it was actually just one of a long line of fires which affected the crowded, dirty city of London. Buildings were made mainly of wood and were so close together with overhanging eves a catastrophic event was long overdue. We all know the basics - the fire started at Thomas Farriner's bakery in Pudding Lane, probably due to the coals which had been raked from the oven not being properly extinguished. The fire was fanned by an easterly wind and burned for 6 days until it was finally brought under controll in Giltspur Street - today about a 30 minute walk away. There was no practical way of using water to fight the fire so it was controlled by using fire hooks to pull down buildings to create fire breaks. The death toll was around 100,000 out of a population of 375,000. There were plans to rebuild the city on a grid system with straight roads and open spaces but in the event it was much more haphazard with 21 'Fire Judges' deciding who owned various plots of land and this accounts for the layout to this day.



'just 6 weeks'

We had a talk about Beekeeping last year but this was a replacement talk to the one previously advertised. Stuart & Helen are 'Leigh Bees' and they are into all things Bee related. They stressed the importance of gardeners to Bumble Bees - and Bumble Bees to gardeners - we need each other! Bumble bees don't sting - unless you really annoy one - but they are the pollinators for our flowers, fruit and veg. Each bee tends to visit the same plants, following the same route each time. We hear a lot about the importance of wild flower meadows as many of our modern plants such as geraniums, begonias and Bizzy Lizzies have no pollen. Each bumble bee's life span is just 6 weeks and the early ones often die if there is an early warm spell followed by a cold snap. Stuart & Helen brought a list of plants which are good for bees and we have copies available at the store.



'only 2 people'

Your committee members were getting a bit worried as ten minutes before starting time for the June Club Afternoon there were only 2 people in the audience. Then lots of people turned up all together and we started on time. The talk by Bobbie Derbyshire prompted a lot of questions at the end- and everyone seemed reluctant to leave! Bobbie is an author and she talked about the process of writing a novel; the way some authors work out all details of the story before putting pen to paper (metaphorically speaking) and others start with a vague idea and basically work the plot out as they go along. She told how she couldn't think of a convincing ending to her most recent book and pondered for 6 months until finally she settled on an ending which satisfied her. I'm not sure if there were any budding authors among us but everyone seemed to go away very happy.

'dangerous jobs'

Andy Malcolm was the speaker at our Club Meeting on a hot July afternoon. He is the East Anglian Fund Raising Manager for The Fishermen's Mission - and a very good speaker. He told us deep sea fishing is one of the most dangerous jobs in peacetime and because their working pattern is so tide and weather dependent healthcare appointments are often difficult to make or keep leading to various health problems. The Fishermen's Mission does not get involved in rescues at sea but the emergency services always inform them when a boat is in trouble and they are the onshore help afterwards - offering practical, financial and often emotional support. Andy's talk touched on sad stories, including the Leigh on Sea fisherman who lost his life in a storm when his boat overturned just a short distance from the safety of Southend Pier. However it wasn't just sad tales and we all seemed to spend a lot of time laughing.

What a great event! The Spring Show 2025 @ the Mill Hall, Rayleigh.

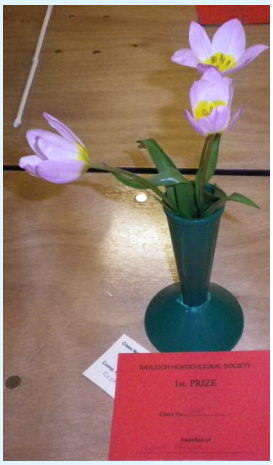


For my part the Spring show on the 6th of April. I am not a numbers man, but here goes. There were 41 exhibitors, not a lot you're thinking, but the hall & tables were very full! There were 358 entries, 2 people spring to mind who ought to be congratulated for bringing their entries are Nicola Calder she brought 46 exhibits & not far behind was Lawrence Chapman with 34 entries. I helped running around like a headless chicken doing all sorts of odd things to help with the running of the show, from putting out cards etc. That does not take into account all these people who did what they could to help with the smooth running of the event, without them where would we be? So, thanks to in no particular order, Ron Coutts, Peter Collier, Peter Noble, Alan Ball, Philip Jones, Viv Irvine, Marlene Bates, Pat Hill, John, Les Cooper & the show manager Shaun Cox. We did have some special help when I thought I would call out the raffle ticket numbers, we had the Councillor Marianne Vernon & a very young helper, the mayor held the microphone down for our young helper Anna, age 6 to speak into after pulling out a fresh ticket our young lady called out the ticket number & then the mayor said it again a bit louder, I really didn't do much, but they did a good job. At the end it was a hive of activity getting all the items off the tables which looked so beautiful a few hours before, until we do it next time on the 7th of September. I look forward to that, hope to see you all there,









Mark Wilson, Hospitality.

April show photos by Mark Wilson

NATIONAL VEGETABLE SOCIETY NVS FOUNDED 1960

OCTOBER

Sunday 12th October, 2.00pm
Main Hall, Hatfield Peverel Village Hall, CM3 2HP
Balaji Manoharan from Coco & Coir speaks on "Using coir compost"
Coco & Coir make a range of coir products, garden accessories and 100% peat-free coir compost using the by-products of the coconut industry, which would otherwise be destroyed.
Light refreshments. Entry: Members free, Non-members: £2.00
Competition: one dish of vegetables, numbers per Mini Show schedule. More than entry per exhibitor allowed.



Society's Archives

Are you good at ... *Filing...Keeping Records?*

The society is looking for a keen member to keep the clubs records up to date from about 1900
Would suit someone who is not able to get out much but would be interested in research and history

Contact Viv Irvine 01268 747418 Email vivienirvine688@gmail.com

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