



NEWSLETTER

July 2021

Dear Members,

We hope that this finds you safe and well, and enjoying your gardens.

Until very recently the Society had been hoping to hold our late-summer **Annual Show** as normal. It has been – and still is – very difficult to judge what the pandemic situation will be by early September, and eventually we took the decision not to risk a ‘real live’ Show this year but to hold another **Virtual Show** instead. The Show is always a rather crowded event in a fairly confined space; we considered options such as reducing the number of classes to create more room for people to circulate in, but in the end we felt that too many members would feel uncomfortable in that situation and that the risk of rising infections by September was too great to go ahead with our usual Show. We hope that this is not too much of a disappointment to you.

Our ‘Virtual Show’ in 2020 was very successful (it won plaudits from one of our judges who has been involved in other online Shows), and we hope that this year’s will be just as well received. The Schedule of classes should reach you with this newsletter, and you will see that the classes are mostly similar to last year’s. As a reminder, and for the benefit of those who didn’t experience last year’s Show: exhibitors take photographs of their exhibits and email them to us; we upload them to the online folders and the judges judge the exhibits, as best they can, from the photos. Then, from the afternoon of the day of the Show (**Saturday 4th September**) you will be able to pay a ‘visit’ to the Show to view photographs of the exhibits online.

The Schedule contains all the information you need to take part; in addition to receiving one with this newsletter, you can find it on our webpage (go to www.brimpsfieldvillage.org and look for the Garden Society tab at the top of the page), and a pile of paper copies will be left in both the Brimpsfield phone box and the Birdlip bus shelter for you to pick up as you need to. As last year, **the Show is open to all**, whether you have been a member in the past or not; there are no entry fees, and we won’t be awarding trophies or prize money, given that the judging necessarily cannot be to the usual standards, but those of you who win First Prizes will be able to download a certificate recording the fact.

Although there are fewer classes than we have for a ‘real’ Show, there should be something for nearly everyone, including the ‘My Garden’ section which was so popular last year. Just to be clear: in the case of the Photography section, obviously it’s the photos themselves that you will send us and that will be judged, but for the other classes it won’t be your photography skills but the exhibits themselves (your fruit, veg, flowers, cakes, crafts etc) that the judges will assess. Your photos must show all the features asked for in the Schedule, for example, in the ‘tray of vegetables’ classes all the types of vegetable must be visible; and in the ‘Tea-time’ class the label of your jam-jar must be readable. We have asked for some exhibits to be staged so that the judge has an opportunity to see details such as the inside of your Victoria sponge or the texture of your jam, so take note of exactly what the class says. This year we are asking for some additional explanation to help the judges in some classes, so take note of that and send in the necessary details in your email with the photo; we will ensure that they are displayed alongside

the photo in the 'Show'. The same goes for the caption in the 'humorous caption' class in the Photography section; it doesn't have to be on the photo itself.

For new exhibitors: note that the Cakes & Preserves and Flower Arranging classes are not a test of your gardening skills; you can use bought flowers to arrange, and your jam does not have to be made with your own fruit (the jam in the Victoria sandwich can also be bought in), though obviously it's cheaper, and more fun, if you can use some of your own flowers / produce!

There has been a sad decline in entries in the **Children's section** in recent years; we are hoping that the increase in young families in Brimpsfield will reverse that trend, and we are keeping the 'under-5s' class with that in mind. (Remember to include the age of the child when you send in the exhibit.)

The entry process is set out in the Schedule, but in brief, you should send photos to a dedicated Show email address (brimpsfieldmcgardensociety@gmail.com – please note that this is very similar to, but slightly different from, the Society's official email address). There is **no entry form**; just send us as many emails, with the photos attached, as you need to, provided that they arrive **between 14th and 28th August**; we **will not accept late entries** as there will be a lot of 'behind the scenes' work to get the photos prepared for judging. Remember to make clear in your emails the name of the exhibitor, the class to which each photo refers, any additional explanation specified for the class and, for entries in the Children's section, their age. If you have any questions, please ask me; my contact details are on the Schedule. It's part of the Show Secretary's job!

On the afternoon of 4th September we will email out, to exhibitors and members whose email addresses we hold, a link to the online folders where the exhibitors' photos, and the prizewinners' names, can be found, so that you can 'visit' the Show! The link will also be posted on the Society's webpage.

As it happens, during the late afternoon and evening of 4th September the ever-popular Fish and Chip van will be visiting Brimpsfield Village Hall and the bar will be open; we hope to display prints of some of the exhibits in the hall and hope that some of you will come and see them (and enjoy the fish and chips and the bar, obviously!).

On the subject of Brimpsfield Village Hall: the Garden Society is responsible for the upkeep of the garden area outside the hall, which was planted in memory of our founding members. It is currently in a state that does not reflect well on our gardening skills! On the morning of **Sunday 8th August**, from around 11am and weather permitting, I intend to do some weeding there; if any others would care to join me they would be most welcome!

Over the summer we shall be considering when we might be able to resume holding meetings again, and we shall let you know when that might be. It might prove possible to arrange some sort of ad-hoc meeting, perhaps a coffee morning with outdoor seating, and a simple bring-and-buy plant stall; this would be dependent on the weather forecast, which might mean that it would be announced at fairly short notice and therefore by email rather than by newsletter (so please ensure that we have an up-to-date email address for you). I'm sure that many of you will be looking forward to meeting up again after so many months!

The email version of this newsletter will be accompanied by a list of Gloucestershire gardens open for the National Gardens Scheme in August; there are several locally, including Highnam, Charlton Kings and Sheepscombe. You no longer necessarily have to book in advance; check www.ngs.org.uk/gloucestershire for information. And Prestbury, on the edge of Cheltenham, is holding an open gardens event on the afternoons of 4th and 5th September, with plant sales and cream teas; full details can be found at www.prestburyopengardens.org.

Happy gardening and exhibiting!

Frances Ellery