



Berkhamsted and District Branch

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August 2012

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British Cactus and Succulent Society

Editor's Comments

Welcome to the August 2012 Branch newsletter. 2012 will go down in the annals as one of the worst summers in many years. April, part of May, part of June and most of July having been cold, wet and dull for so many days. A friend in Northern Ireland reckons they have only had 25 days of sunshine this year so far. Many of the plants in our greenhouses have been several weeks late in waking up and many are still showing the effects of the awful weather. In the garden sweet peas have been up to five weeks later than usual and many early vegetables have suffered, only 25% of the peas we put in survived. To make matters even worse, we have not been able to get out in the garden as much as we would wish so we are now busily trying to make up for lost time.

Sadly, in June Lawrie Norton passed away. Our thoughts go out to Lawrie's family.

My thanks to Rodney for his article on the recent Zone 6 Show, held at Milton Keynes. There will also be additional reports on the Luton and Harrow branch shows. If anyone else is

willing to provide an article for inclusion in the newsletter it will be gratefully received.

This year our Branch Mini-Show is being held at our August meeting and will be judged by Richard Bleay, who will lead a discussion about the plants after the judging.

Attendances at meetings have been the highest we have had for a number of years and we welcomed Graham Swannell to the Branch in May.

The Branch said hello to two new speakers: Alasdair Glen, the Society Chairman in May and Rob Stevenson in June. Alasdair invited us to 'Meet the Mamms' and Rob introduced us to 'The Genus Turbinicarpus'. They proved to be two excellent and entertaining speakers.

Sadly the days are starting to get shorter and there is still so much to do. Before then however, I hope to see many of you at the National Show. Happy growing.

David

Hon. Secretary

National Show

18 August 2012

**Wood Green Animal
Centre**

Godmanchester

Near Huntingdon

Many Trade Stands

**Your chance to see
some outstanding
plants**



Lawrie Norton



It is with great sadness that we learned Lawrie Norton passed away towards the end of June. As members will be aware, Lawrie had to go into full-time care at the beginning of December and the Branch Committee were involved in clearing his cactus and succulent plants from his greenhouse. In June 2011 Branch members celebrated Lawrie's 90th birthday with him at the Branch meeting, with a special cake provided by the Branch.



Lawrie had been a Branch member on and off for a great many years and at one time, served on the Branch Committee. In recent years he had been a regular attendee at Branch meetings and we last saw him at the Branch Mini-Show in July 2011. His passing leaves a gap in our ranks.



The Branch offers it's condolences to his family at this sad time.

Around the Shows

Luton Branch Show

by David Wilson

On a cold morning on the first Saturday in June, Gill and I loaded up the car and made the journey from Amersham to Luton.

Much effort had gone in the previous night by the Luton members to



der of the day in the afternoon. Copious cups of tea and home made cakes helped everyone to overcome the cold.

Barry Tibbetts judged the show and overall it was an excellent, well balanced event. All classes were well supported except for the San-



get the hall ready for the show. Exhibitor numbers held up well against the previous year and there was a danger the tabling would not be sufficient. Despite there being one less exhibitor, class entries were up.



severia class.



Peter Clayton had the most points in the show (111), followed by Nora Arnold (101) and Martin Hyams (97).

It was not a particularly warm day, sweaters and fleeces being the or-

Zone 6 Show by Rodney Sims

The first principle of showing is to prepare your plants in good time. So it was that finishing my last shift at Gardeners' World Live on the society stand (Friday 15th June), I made haste to the car park and attempted to exit the NEC site. In the evening one follows the crowd, but at lunch time all traffic is IN not OUT.



Photo Rodney Sims

the venue in good time and checked out the hall before attempting to move in plants. I joined the staging scrum!

When staging was completed, the judges began their unenviable task. Although the tables were covered a few more entries would have made the show better. I did notice that several entries had not been seen

on the show bench in UK before. Just how does one acquire these novelties? It was disappointing not to see branch members there, with the exception of Linda and her daughter who had come by train! Dedication!

There were plenty of old friends from the other Zone branches to



Photo Linda Fuller

chat about the plants and that perennial the judging. Much fat was chewed. But on the whole exhibitors appreciated the decisions. Thanks to Ian and John for their efforts and we hope they enjoyed the day, to the ladies for the excellent refreshments and the branch for their slick organisation.



Photo Linda Fuller

More by luck than judgement I got onto the motorway and sped home without hitting the major delays experienced by others. I arrived home around 2 pm. and set about loading the car ready for the coming morn. Thank goodness for long summer days!

After setting off fairly early I got to



Photo Linda Fuller

Harrow Show By David Wilson

On Saturday 21 July several members of the Branch made their way to Hatch End, in Middlesex, for the Harrow Branch annual show. Gill and I, plus Ian Sharpe accompanied by Liz his wife, exhibited in the show. Everything



was ready for the exhibitors so all we had to do was pick up our entry cards and place our plants on the show bench. The show was well supported, with many classes having sizeable numbers of en-

tries and all classes contained well grown plants.



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Harrow Show

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We were joined by Linda Fuller and her daughter Emily and Julian Cooke who came as visitors to the show.



All exhibitors did well in the show, obtaining several prize cards between them and putting down a good marker for Berkhamsted Branch.

The Best Cactus in the show went to Richard Bleay.



September 2012 Meeting

Once again we will be welcoming David Porter to the Branch when he will be talking on the 'Crassula Group'. David is an excellent and amusing speaker with a wide knowledge of our favourite plants.

October 2012 Meeting

We are fortunate to have a new speaker to the Branch in the shape of Rick Gillman. Rick has travelled widely in South America and this will be reflected in his talk on 'Brazilian Highlights'.

November 2012 Meeting

Brings back Stuart Riley to talk about those 'Aloe and Gasteria Hybrids'. This is similar to a talk Stuart gave at the Haworthia Convention in 2011 and 'a must hear' for Aloe and Gasteria fans.

More dates for your diary

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|-----------------|---|
| 18 August 2012 | National Show, Godmanchester, nr Huntingdon |
| 20 October 2012 | Zone 6 Convention—Capel Manor |

Stop Press... Stop Press... Stop Press...

Please make a note in your diaries for **Saturday 20 April 2013**, when we will be hosting the **2013 Zone 6 Convention**.

There will be two speakers (one from overseas and one from the UK), giving three talks and trade stands. Watch this space for more information.

Stop Press... Stop Press... Stop Press...