

'GROW YOUR OWN':  
THE NEW ORNAMENTALS

# Ornamentals News



Growing together™

May 2010

## Chelsea Show 2010

BPOA growers have been once again helping showcase the very best of home-grown plants and flowers on the NFU display at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show (25 - 29 May). The NFU display highlights the diverse, highly professional and dynamic horticultural industry to visitors, while encouraging them to buy home-grown produce and plants whenever they can.

While the NFU is actively seeking sponsors for future years, this year, like last year, the NFU and its grower members will be the sole supporters of the display.



As a result, and in keeping with the economic climate, we're at Chelsea on a tight budget but the quality and range of home-grown produce available.

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## Home Grown!

Home Grown was created by two South East Growers; Bill Godfrey and Morris May to distinguish British grown plants from imported finished plants and it was free and available to be used by HDC levy payers. BPOA is preparing to take on Home Grown and host a web presence for



Home Grown, not only for growers but to lead on to the next

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## Save our Science; who's next?

Following the recent turmoil in research institutions and the outcome of the General Election, I have been waiting to see if anything is going to be resolved in the short term but it appears that it's not.

Currently we are awaiting decisions from the Warwick Senate regarding applied research and watched two of our key scientists leave despite our best efforts.

We also have a new Government



who are going to make some cost savings and the view is that RDA's in the South will be cut. We don't know how Jim Paice (Agriculture Minister) views Horticulture now he is in power and we haven't got anything from Caroline Spellman from DEFRA yet. The HDC ornamentals chairmen are negotiating with interested parties to find a way to increase our potential for funding about which I'm reasonably optimistic. It is unfortunate that there is not much to report as it is,

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## Chairman's Notes

Hello! I'm hoping you are all in the throes of a busy and successful season as this newsletter goes out. Although the weather has been a little "difficult" to say the least, the quality of British plants going in to garden centres and multiples has again been second to none. We are in the process of developing part of the BPOA website to encompass the Home Grown label, so watch this space and we will keep you up to date as this progresses.

I mentioned some time ago about BPOA maintaining and establishing links with other associations, and I believe that this is still vital for our association. We have representatives on relevant BOPP, LANTRA and Institute of Horticulture committees, have been invited to be part of the West Sussex Growers Association Executive, and have recently had a very constructive meeting with HTA and will ensure that we have a liaison meeting with them at least once a year as well as maintaining communication links

with the HTA and the other associations. Of

course we still have our very strong and vital link with the NFU which lets us feed in to political lobbying consultations and use the might of the NFU team!

Some of you may have noticed that BPOA will not have a display at this year's Tatton Park Flower Show. This was a difficult decision that was not taken lightly, and as chairman of the association I take full responsibility for this. We realised that we did not have the time to get a display up and running that would be of a good enough quality to showcase British growers. Hindsight is a wonderful thing and it makes you realise how much we depended on Derek and his team from the North West BPOA group. Rest assured we will be back in 2011!

Sarah Fairhurst



## BOPP AGM and Technical Seminar



The theme of the Technical Seminar will be growing media and plant nutrition with speakers covering the following subjects:

**'A place to take root - managing media, nutrition and soils'.**

**8 July 2010 Sutton Bonington, Nottingham**

**'The future of peat and peat alternative materials: a summary of recent Defra funded projects'** Susie Holmes Consulting Ltd

**'Practical Management of peat alternative materials'** Bill Carlile, Bord na Mona

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## AGM 2010 - February 9th/10th Hellidon Lakes Report

The 2010 BPOA AGM and Technical Seminar two day event was held at the Hellidon Lakes Hotel, Daventry. The hotels extensive facilities gave us the opportunity to conduct several meetings at the same time and provide us with all we needed for an enjoyable and lively social evening.

The AGM had an upbeat feel about it with many members contributing to the discussions. Reports from the various committees; treasurer; Chairman and NFU update were distributed

before the start of the meeting. A brief overview was presented for each of the reports. The election process was dealt with to a precise, brisk manner with no shortage of willing electors.

A number of points were raised under any other business such as Payment -30 day's credit and Levy on fresh produce to fund R&D. These points stimulated a long and far reaching discussion and the AGM closed with several members commenting how productive the meeting had been.

The following morning approximately 100 members attended the Technical Seminar entitled 'Taking Control: controlling the most important pests of the protected ornamentals industry'. The speakers gave some informative presentations relating to Bemisia; Thrips; Broad Mite; microbial control and a number of other related topics.

The Technical Seminar has proved to gain in popularity year on year and we plan to enhance the next seminar by incorporat-

ing presentations on marketing.

The 2011 AGM and Technical seminar will be held on Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 16th February.

**David Fox**

*Executive Officer*

*(Minutes of the meeting are available on the website.)*

## AGM Presentations



Alan Hendy Award - Dawn Smith

Pictured left to right there is Dawn Smith recipient of the Alan Hendy Award in recognition of her long and faithful service to the association in the position of Executive Officer; Robert Sinton who was given the Trumpet Blower prize for his consistent support for the promotion of the bedding industry and Derf Paton who was presented with the Sil-



Trumpet Blower - Robert Sinton

ver Kentia for his tireless efforts to further the cause of pot and bedding plant growers, particularly through the technical committee and political initiatives.

The annual awards ceremony, at the Chairman's Dinner, passed off without too many tears and overwrought speeches.



Silver Kentia - Derf Paton

Sarah Fairhurst paid tribute to the three award recipients and to their individual efforts on behalf of the association.

**Simon Davenport**

*Treasurer*

## Home Grown!

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stage and make it more consumer facing so that consumers know what Home Grown means.

As there has been some scepticism about the appropriateness of the Red Tractor, despite its undeniable size and presence in the fresh produce market, it is believed that the plant market will respond positively to this grower-inspired initiative to recognise the authentic local nature of the ornamentals products that the members of the association are marketing.

of his eighteen handicap. It would have been a fantastic score in the summer but with snow building up on your shoes and the greens resembling the winter games it was nothing more than a superb game. His accurate driving off the tee and beautiful controlled approach shots into the greens also earned him the nearest the pin competition on the difficult eighteenth.

Our past Chairman Phil Austen brought along two guests who also disregarded the winter conditions to shoot very low scores. Disappointingly for Phil, with the players being of an uneven number his plans for a team victory went by the way.

Paul Dixon picked up for the prize for the longest drive on the long par 5.

**An historical note...**

It was unfortunate that so few

## BPOA GOLF DAY 2010

The Hellidon Lakes Golf course was the venue for the associations golf day on February 9<sup>th</sup>. For the seven that participated it meant an early start only to arrive and find a covering of snow across this beautiful undulating course close to Daventry.

After we had stocked up from the pro shop with a good supply of orange balls we clothed ourselves in the woolliest hat we could find and a good warm jacket.

The temperature never seemed to rise much above three degrees, but the competition was played in good humour and was as competitive as ever.



Not the British Open but a previous golf day—guess when (answer p.4)

Keith Ball from Lovania Nurseries in Preston lifted the converted

trophy for the first time scoring a very high 42 Stapleford points

## Syngenta join the BPOA

Syngenta are delighted to have joined the well-established *British Protected Ornamentals Association (BPOA)*.

It is clear that the BPOA plays an important role in promoting bedding plants, supporting its members and the industry at large. I personally have been impressed with marketing schemes such as 'Plant Colour Now' which can only bring many benefits to growers, retailers, councils and horticultural suppliers alike.

I have worked within the horticultural industry for 30 years, six of which have been spent working for a Trade Association which supported Independent Garden Centre members with their purchasing and marketing. My experience has led me to believe that by sharing ideas, much more can be achieved. This was also

apparent whilst working at Far-plants, a large and successful nursery co-operative on the south coast.

I intend to play an active role in the BPOA and as a member of the marketing committee in helping to support and contribute to new initiatives. As I understand it, the technical workshops are particularly well supported with record numbers of members attending.

I will also be actively encouraging new members to join; the more members, the more influential the organisation can become which is our ultimate goal.

During conversations with customers over the years, many have mentioned they do not believe bedding plants get the publicity that they merit. The BPOA campaigns are directly targeted to create awareness and raise the profile and value of these products that contribute to £500 million to our industry at retail. I very much look forward to working within the marketing commit-

tee to support these campaigns.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform members that Syngenta has decided to separate its flowers wholesale and distribution activities in Europe, Africa and Middle East (EAME) to best serve each of the distinct customer groups. As part of the distribution business in the UK, we now have a new name - FloriPro Services™ (although our logo remains Syngenta). We offer services and a broad variety of products from various suppliers including Syngenta Flowers (now the wholesale arm of the business) to professional flower growers across the country.

Some of the existing members of the BPOA I already know and I look forward to meeting some new faces and working with all you in the future.

*Pete Gillman*

*Area Manager*

*FloriPro Services™*

**S.O.S.**



**—who's next?**

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except to say that we are all doing our best to secure a stable applied research platform for the future but there will be some tough times ahead.

*Alan Davis*

*Chairman TC*



Technical committee in session recently at NFU offices, Stoneleigh.

## Golf continued

were able to make the day in what turned out to be the lowest turnout in the golf tournament's twenty five year history. I was recently given this old picture of the associations past golf day. You will see we have had good attendance in the past. Can anybody put a year and venue to the picture? Having had the wonderful task of organising our golf day for many years I thought this would be a good opportunity to step down and allow a new face to take this great competition to the next stage and some new courses in the North of England. After playing alongside him today and seeing his performance, I was very pleased that Keith Ball accepted the position of your golf captain.

For the evening after the dinner, the entertainment was once again my responsibility: given to me by our lovely chairwoman, Sarah. Last year we gambled on the roulette table and dealt the black jack cards. This was not going to be an easy event to follow, but in true association light hearted competitiveness, we decided to play ten pin bowling this year.

In the first round matches four players stood head and shoulders above all other teams.

Phil, Chris, Neil and Robert Sinton

who personally totalled a first round winning score of 129, put the other teams in the shade just like his Fuchsias.

With the teams being drawn at random, no one could complain, I think. In true spirit we had experts and beginners alike paired for battle. The final game was heralded as another BPOA evening to remember, but unfortunately the hotel had other ideas. Probably not realising no one could possibly still be in their converted cellar at this time, the lights went out precisely half way through the games. This left us with no alternative than to repair to another bar to discuss what might have been.

Congratulations to all those teams that made the final, it was quickly decided to share the prizes in order to avert a brawl, (not really!). In great style, all the participants were winners and everybody thoroughly enjoyed the evening once again, thank heavens!

*Nigel Wait*

*Golf Captain (ret'd)*

## UKCGA meeting at Double H

25 growers and interested parties of the chrysanthemum study group visited the nurseries at Double H, on Thursday 25th March, to see the progress of the 'pot mum' crops so far this spring.

After a fascinating tour of the nursery taking in the Begonia and Phalaenopsis production as well as the detailed look at the 'pot mums', the study group settled down to lunch and a stimulating discussion on pest control with the emphasis on biological methods which are working well at Double H.

### Biological

Obviously this is being much more successful with pot growers than cut flower producers where the difficulties of maintaining economic control in the face of pesticide resistance and reduction of active ingredient availability are ever more intense. Naturally, this would indicate the increasing need for appropriate biological methods but the problems with chrysanthemums and the range of potential pests mean that it has been, so far, an impossible task.

The group also heard the latest



f.l.t.r.: John Phillips, Martyn Scott, Colin Frampton & Andy Cook discuss the crop with Mike Holmes of Double H (not in white coat)

developments in the situation at HRI and discussed the CCL and Renewable Heat Incentives before closing and expressing the wish to hold a similar meeting in September.

*Simon Davenport*

## Chelsea 2010

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able will enable us to create a spectacular display that is price-less.

The show is a great opportunity to tell the thousands of visitors about the benefits of British produce. Many of the visitors simply do not realize the diversity of quality flowers, herbs, plants, fruit and vegetables grown in the UK. The produce on display ranges from exotic orchids to oriental mushrooms, and includes all the favourites you'd expect to see - like piles of fresh sweet-smelling strawberries.

Visitors are also amazed to hear none of the produce is grown specifically for the show - it is simply what is available and being grown at that time for stores and markets around the country. I believe this makes our display unique at Chelsea.



Penny Riley

I am absolutely thrilled that we have once again been awarded a gold medal by the RHS judging team. To win a medal of any colour at Chelsea is an honour but to pick up 14 gold medals in a row is an outstanding achievement. I would like to pay tribute to Penny Riley, her partnership with growers and her dedicated team for all their hard work. I would also like to thank all our grower members who have donated their time and produce, which was all destined for supermarket shelves, for free.

*Chris Hartfield*

NFU Horticulture Advisor



## BOPP AGM & Conference

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**'The need for growing media specifications: matching the media to the need of the crop'** Elaine Gotts, Scotts

Lunch

**'Optimising crop nutrition: available options and correcting problems'** Bill Riley, Hortifeeds.

**'Soil sterilisation- biological alternatives to methyl bromide?'** Sue Hockland, FERA

Booking forms may be downloaded from the BOPP Website [www.bopp.org.uk](http://www.bopp.org.uk) or by contacting Jeanette Soer on 01954 268205 or by email [jeanette.soer@adas.co.uk](mailto:jeanette.soer@adas.co.uk).

*Jill England*

BOPP Technical Secretary

## Grow your own

With the Queen reported as digging for victory in Buckingham Palace joined by the late occupants of No10 and many thousands of others in their homes and gardens, it is clear that the home grown vegetable is a significant and rising market for plant producers. Concerns about quality food and food miles together with the weak economy have all had an effect.

It's now possible to order online

all the requirements for the aspiring veg. gardener including guide books, equipment, seed & plants as well as an iphone app. Obviously good advice and guidance are most important to avoid the examples such as a friend who asked me recently about transplanting carrots. This is where the garden centre and nursery can help and in doing so help themselves to gain more customers

Total spending on gardens is re-

## YHOY

One of the organisations with which BPOA is affiliated is the Institute of Horticulture (IoH), via the Hortecce committee which works on issues related to horticulture education. As a result, we were invited to attend the **Young Horticulturist of the Year** competition final which was held this year at Kew Gardens, Jodrell Laboratory on Saturday 15th May. The eight



The stage is set for the horticulture quiz.

finalists from a pool of 1500 from all over the country battled it out over approximately 100 questions on all aspects of horticulture.

ported as £4bn and still growing at 10% p.a. As seed sales for vegetables seem to be twice as large as flowers with no figures available for the sales of veg. plants; the sector is growing fast.

Some armchair analysts have calculated that there is little payback in raising staple foods which can be cheaply and easily obtained in the supermarket. However there is an increasing interest in the science and art of plant raising as



The winners and sponsors.

The winner, Faye Steer, said that she would like to spend her prize of a travel bursary on a trip to the Yunnan area of China well known for its wide diversity of plant life.



The winner, Faye Steer and Percy Thrower's daughter Susan with IoH president Dr Heather Barrett-Mold.

well as a fascination with the production of rare and expensive ingredients of modern recipes. Together with a healthy interest in the beneficial effects of very fresh vegetables on their nutritional value we can clearly rely on this trend continuing and the decline to plant raisers should not decline for some time to come providing that we are able to respond to the needs of the market for information and new products.



BPOA is a specialist producer group within the NFU

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Golf Day answers: 20th July 1995; just look at the turnout!