





NEWSLETTER

 yeovil.dahlia.chrysanthemum@gmail.com

 <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064819863773>

 <https://somersetgardening.wixsite.com/ydcds>

No.3 December 2023

WELCOME!

In this Newsletter, Karen Forrester (Show Secretary) starts with reports on the 2023 Early and Late shows. Photos from the shows and details of our shows are on our Facebook page and our Website (links/details at the top of the page). We've also included a dahlia variety analysis for our early show. Neal Hatch then discusses the new dahlia varieties he tried in 2023. If you would like to contribute to a future Newsletter then please get in touch!

EARLY SHOW REPORT by Karen Forrester

Yeovil & District Chrysanthemum and Dahlia Society held their open early show the weekend of 16th & 17th September. A late venue change to Marston Magna Village Hall, near Yeovil, was well supported by exhibitors and members of the public alike. Although the weather had been somewhat unkind to exhibitors, it was good to see a decent entry in both the dahlia and chrysanthemum classes. Both had increased entries on the 2022 show. The society would like to thank all the exhibitors and judges that made this a successful show.

DAHLIA RESULTS

The Len Allen Memorial Trophy for the Southwest of England Dahlia Championship was supported by 2 entries. The judges awarded the 1st prize to Roger Downting from Yeovil for his entry of *Roger's Choice*, *Alf's Mascot* and *Kenora Valentine*.

Roger Downting was also awarded the NDS Silver for this exhibit and the NDS Bronze Medal for his *Kenora Valentine* in the two-vase red challenge class.

The Shaston Pompon Cup for 3 vases of pompon, 3 distinct varieties, was awarded to Graham Edwards from Cullompton for his entry of *Leslie's Willo*, *Willo's Borealis* and *Moor Place*.

CHRYSANTHEMUM RESULTS

The Rous Cup was presented to Fred Swabey for his entry in the Southwest of England Championship. Fred's entry was *Billy Bell* and *Yellow Billy Bell*. The judges also awarded the NCS silver and bronze medal for this entry.



Jim Searle was the winner of the Supreme Championship for the Anne & Mike Stephens Trophy. Jim's entry of 3 vases of 3 large blooms was made up of *Primrose Billy Bell* and *Billy Bell*.

Jim also went on to be awarded the Lionel Park Trophy for the best vase of incurved in the show, along with the Hart Cup for gaining the most points in the chrysanthemum classes.

The Westland Trophy for the best exhibit of sprays was won by Harry Godden for his entry of *Flora Chivers, Sheba & Pat Baune*.



YEovil EARLY SHOW 2023 DAHLIA VARIETY ANALYSIS

A table of dahlia varieties at our early show scoring at least 2 points. (3 points for a win, 2 for second and 1 for third.)

Variety	Classification	1st	2nd	3rd	Points	Variety	Classification	1st	2nd	3rd	Points
1 Kenora Valentine	Unc L/G Dec	5			15	25 Trelyn Kiwi	SmCac	1			3
2 Roger's Choice	Unc SmDec	3	1		11	26 Clayts Candy	MedSC	1			3
3 Mary's Jomanda	MinBall	3		1	10	27 Coral Jupiter	GSC	1			3
4 White Charlie 2/Alf's Mascot	Meddec	3			9	28 Tracy Diane	SmDec		1		2
5 Dikarra Superb	MinDec	1	3		9	29 Winholme Diane	SmDec			2	2
6 Moor Place	Pom	2	1		8	30 Skelmersdale Jayne	MinDec		1		2
7 Taratahi Ruby	Wat	2	1		8	31 Blyton Red Ace	MinBall		1		2
8 Josudi Hercules	MinCac	1	2		7	32 Blyton Lady in Red	MinBall		1		2
9 Gurtla Twilight	Pom	1	1	2	7	33 Irish Glow	Pom		1		2
10 Polventon Krystobel	MinDec	2			6	34 Fred Swabey	Unc MinB		1		2
11 Blyton Softer Gleam	SB		2	1	5	35 Ruskin Andrea	SmSC		1		2
12 Sheval Megan	SmDec	1		1	4	36 Weston Pirate	MinCac		1		2
13 Eastwood Essex	MedSC			1	3	37 Westerton Folly	SmBall		1		2
14 Minley Carol	Pom		1	1	3	38 Jomanda	MinBall		1		2
15 Blyton Everest	SmBall	1			3	39 Asphire Fancy	Col		1		2
16 Westerton Pearl	SmBall	1			3	40 Pineland's Princess	MedFim		1		2
17 Pooh	Col	1			3	41 Bohemian Sparticus	Unc		1		2
18 Hapet Champagne	MedFim	1			3	42 Amy Cave	SmBall		1		2
19 Berger's Record	Unc	1			3	43 Pearl of Heemsted	Wat		1		2
20 High Fidelity	Unc	1			3	44 Midnight Star	Star		1		2
21 Rosendale Jo-Jo	SmDec	1			3	45 Charlie two	MedDec		1		2
22 Ms Kennedy	LPom	1			3	46 Ryecroft Helen	MedSC		1		2
23 Willo's Borealis	Pom	1			3	47 Hamari Girl	GDec		1		2
24 Leslie's Will	Pom	1			3	48 Jocondo	GDec		1		2

LATE SHOW REPORT by Karen Forrester

Yeovil & District Chrysanthemum and Dahlia Society held their open late show the weekend of 18th & 19th November. Although the entries were lower than in previous years, the quality of the blooms was exceptional. The Supreme Championship was won by Harry Godden with his entry of Charles Tandy, Mancetta Symbol & Fairweather.

Harry was awarded the NCS Bronze medal for his vase of *Fairweather* in the championship class



Ivor Mace won the Aldon Cup for his wonderful entry of 6 large exhibition. The entry was made up of *Cream Duke of Kent, Peggy Ann, William Sydney, Yellow Duke of Kent, Duke of Kent & Pink Duke of Kent*. The judges awarded Ivor with the NCS Silver medal and the Hamblet Trophy for best vase in show for his entry of *Yellow Duke of Kent*.

Harry Godden went on to receive 4 further trophies. The Diment Rose bowl for 3 vases with 3 blooms of incurved in which Harry exhibited 2 vases of *Fairweather* and 1 vase of *Peach Fairweather*. The Brigham Cup is awarded for the best entry of 5 blooms incurved. This entry contained 5 *Cream Fairweather*. *Fairweather* & *Charles Tandy* were awarded the Arthur Bicknell Memorial Trophy. Harry was also awarded the Show Committee Cup for the most points gained in the show.

Chris & Jill Bond won the O.A, Wiles Builders Trophy for their entry of 3 vases of small / medium singles. The entry was *Chesswood Beauty*. The Joyce Trophy for the best vase of singles in the show was also awarded to Chris & Jill Bond.

Unfortunately, we did not have any spray or anemone entries, but we did have a superb entry of Fantasies from Dave & Val Thorrington. Dave & Val were awarded the Derick Hooper Memorial Trophy for their 6 blooms of fantasies containing *Salhouse Joy*, *Yellow Chesapeake*, *Downpour* & *Primrose Chesapeake*. The judges awarded the NCS Certificate of Merit for this entry to Dave & Val.

The society would like to thank all the exhibitors and the judges that made this a successful show.



NEW DAHLIAS GROWN FOR THE 2023 SEASON by Neal Hatch

Roger's Choice (Unc. Small Dec) is an orange sport of *Sheval Megan*, secured by Roger Downting. (All photos taken in the garden.) It has turned into my 'banker' variety this year appearing at all 10 shows where I've exhibited dahlias. It has the same habit as *Sheval* and has a good size and form for the small decorative class. It throws up the odd red petal – whereas *Sheval Megan* throws the odd orange petals. Often these can be removed without much trouble. It has now had 18 outings for me either on its own or as part of a mixed display – helping secure 4 NDS silver medals and taking 12 class wins. I grew *Ryecroft Gold* (also orange) successfully in 2021, but it was retired to the reserve bench for the 2023 season.



Fred Swabey (Unc. Min Ball) was bred by our own Roger Downting, and I bought tubers at our fantastic tuber sale last November. They overwintered well and were easy to take cuttings from. I grew about 18 plants this year. It has a similar growing habit to *Twilight Boy*, in that it wants to produce a succession of blooms rather than a large flush all at once. It also tends to have asymmetric leaf joints, so the stems are less tidy than some varieties. It benefits from a double stop. It also gains from being under some cover, given its dark red colour. There seems no doubt about its miniature ball status – the petals are nicely rounded. The blooms have been a bit flatter and less ball-shaped when put up against a vase of *Blyton Lady in Red*, and it has been pipped by my own vases of *Jomanda* on a couple of occasions. But I certainly love it and aim to grow it again in 2024.

Eastwood Essex (Med S-C) was new from Hall's for the 2023 season. I grew 6 plants this year to see how it compared with *Ryecroft Helen*. I would say that it shows promise, holding up well against *Ryecroft Helen* in the early part of the season. I may well grow relatively more of *Eastwood Essex* next year. My *White Val's Candy* marked up terribly in the wet weather conditions of late August, so both *Ryecroft Helen* and, particularly, *Eastwood Essex* seem to hold up better in poor weather. One downside is that it hasn't produced good tubers, so it remains to be seen whether it will survive the winter.



I've been struggling with my small semi-cactus & cactus dahlias for a couple of seasons. My stock of *Ryecroft Zoe* and *Greenways Zoe* broke down. My *Oakwood Goldcrest* stock has also not been vigorous this year. Last year I had mixed

results with the new variety *Eastwood Jane* (2022) in the small semi-cactus class. But it didn't like the hot conditions. This year, given wet conditions and some shading, it has performed better. A potash feed may also have helped check its tendency towards weaker stems, particularly later in the year. It has meant I've been able to field a few small cactus vases this year.

I decided to have more of a push with miniature cactus varieties. After success with *Josudi Hercules* in 2022, I decided to add *Josudi Andromeda* (2014) and *Josudi Aurora* (2014) this year (in small numbers). I typically use these in mixed displays, and they would also be excellent in the garden or for cut flower use. I'd recommend both, but Hercules remains my choice for exhibition use, and it has now eclipsed my old favourite *Weston Pirate*.

Twilight Boy (Min Dec) has disappointed this year. Cuttings were hard to secure and the resulting few plants have been variable in quality. Its failure is in marked contrast to *Skelmersdale Jayne* (Min Dec) which has been consistently good.

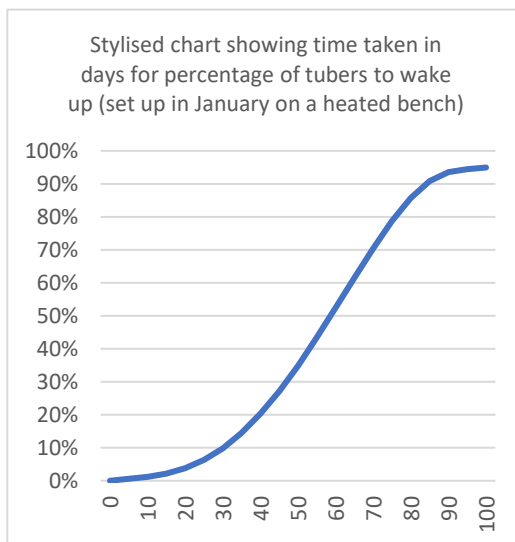
Westerton Lillian (LD) is not a new dahlia (2013). I grew it a few years ago, liked it, and then lost it. I got some new stock at our tuber 2022 sale thanks to Roger. It is very tall, but grown under cover has done well for me mid-season. *Shirwell Greta* (Unc G/L Dec) is also worth a mention. I had a couple of lovely blooms on 2 plants, sadly the timing wasn't right to make it to a show.

INTERESTING DAHLIA FACTS by Neal Hatch

One question people often ask is how long it takes for tubers to 'wake up' from storage in the spring— by which we mean visible shoots appearing around the crown of the tuber. Typically, 95% of my tubers are awake after three months.

It depends on how they are 'put to bed' and stored, and what facilities you have available to help wake them up – or whether you just wait for them to wake up naturally. I took a few notes of what happened to my tubers in the 2021 & 2022 seasons, which I used to produce this chart. I set my dahlias up on benches with compost around them in early January. I use some gentle bottom heat so that I can generate plenty of cuttings. Most people don't need to start that early!

It usually takes about a month (30 days) for the first 10% of tubers to wake, thereafter the pace picks up, and by the end of the second month (60 days) around half (50%) are awake. I usually expect around 95% of the tubers to be awake after three months (90 days). Even then, the odd recalcitrant tubers may still wake up, so don't give up hope! Often, my tuber failures are where I have benched up a tuber that is not in good condition to start with, or where I over/under watered in a difficult spot to reach. Some varieties are also harder to wake up than others – *Oakwood Goldcrest* is a particularly troublesome variety. So, this chart is only a rough guide.



NEW 'HOW TO' LEAFLETS

We produced a leaflet on '**How to store your dahlia tubers**' that we made available at our November Tuber Sale. This has now been joined by a companion leaflet on '**How to take cuttings**'. These are aimed at those new to the hobby. This link takes you to the relevant web page where the leaflets can be downloaded.

<https://somersetgardening.wixsite.com/ydcads/LEAFLETS & NEWSLETTER>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Early Show:	21-22 September	2024
Late Show:	16-17 November	2024