



## November 2020: Special Edition 29

Dear Members,

I hope that you are all surviving another round of lockdown and all keeping well and safe.

As we decided against holding a physical AGM, the next newsletter will contain the various reports and accounts. If you have any questions on the reports or suggestions for next year, then please do contact me. I am pleased to say that the wonderful Committee has agreed to continue and we hope that this next year will be a little more "normal".

I hope you enjoyed my Kew Garden ramblings. This edition I have a section on garden art, as well as some suggestions on what to do with your pumpkins and squashes now that Halloween has passed.



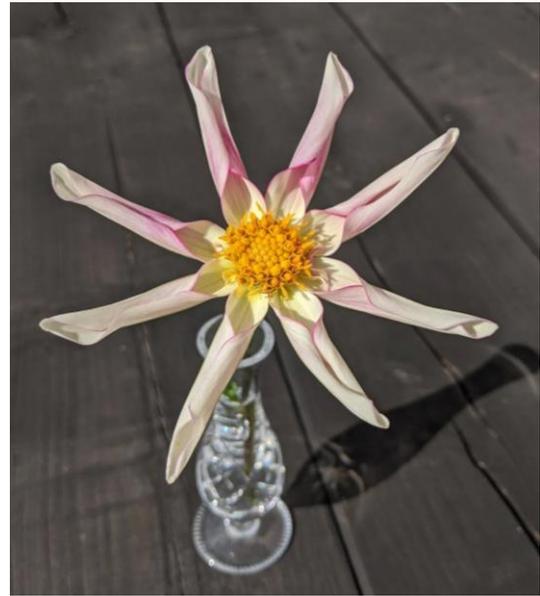
As ever, please share any photos of your garden, or gardens you have visited, and any festive creations you are working on - decorations, Christmas wreaths, table decorations, decorating cakes or making nativity scenes.

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Best wishes,

**Kate Anthony Wilkinson** (Chair)  
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## MEMBERS GARDENS



Thanks to Julia for sharing a photo of her Dahlia Willie Willie - lovely late summer display, so good they named it twice! This orchid type dahlia has unique curled petals and wonderful colourings.





Margaret shares her “Jack Frost” – such lovely leaves – but something is enjoying eating them!



Deryl has been very busy growing squashes – an impressive trio.



## What to do with my pumpkin or squash?

There is an amazing variety of pumpkins and squashes (as you can see from my photo top opposite from Kew Gardens) and more and more people are growing them. They are fast growing and can look very impressive. Other than making Halloween pumpkins and the American favourite of pumpkin pie, how are these vegetables used? Here are some ideas but do let me know how you use your pumpkins and squashes.



Roasted Pumpkin Seeds – Supermarket bought pumpkin seeds are the green insides from the seeds. But you can roast the full seed with the outer white shell. They are high in fibre and taste quite nutty. Spoon out of the pumpkin and wash off the flesh in a sieve. Spread out on a shallow baking tray, drizzle with olive oil and add salt and pepper, or paprika, or other spices. Toss to ensure all covered and then roast for 40 minutes at 180°C, turning occasionally, until the seeds are crisp. Allow to cool and then use as a snack or sprinkle on soup, add to top of bread dough before baking or add to your cereal.

Pumpkin/squash curry – One of my favourites. Cut the pumpkin or squash flesh into cubes and add to any curry ingredients – I use onion, squash and chickpeas - fried in the wok with whatever curry spices I fancy using, often with a tin of chopped tomatoes or carton of passata. Cook until soft. I sometimes add spinach leaves just before the end.

Mexican squash enchiladas – One of my son's favourites. Chop up the pumpkin or squash and cook until soft. This can be done in a wok, or in a pan of water, or by roasting in the oven. Once cooked, mash with a potato masher (you can add a bit of butter!). Then add cooked red kidney beans and some spice – chilli, paprika or whatever takes your fancy, and roll into a tortilla. Place in an oven proof dish and sprinkle with grated cheese. Bake in the oven for a Mexican enchilada and serve with sour cream or guacamole.



## INSTALLATION ART IN GARDENS

As I have said before I like public art and am a fan of installation art in gardens. The large open spaces of public parks or stately homes gardens are a great place to see installation art, where the piece can be viewed from different sides and from both near and far away. Nature is also a huge inspiration for artists of all descriptions. I mentioned earlier this year Richard Long's stone path installation which was at Hestercombe Gardens (Taunton) – he needs plenty of space for his installations.

Kew Garden has an interesting and unique immersive installation experience that is both artistic and scientific – the Hive.



The Hive stands 17m tall and weighs 40 tonnes. It consists of nearly 170,000 pieces of aluminium and nearly 1,000 LED lights. It is designed to mimic a real hive; it contains an accelerometer which is a vibration sensor and picks up vibrations made by the activity of bees which are then sent in real-time to the Hive. You can walk round and into the Hive at two levels and experience the sound and light.

The Hive was designed by British artist Wolfgang Buttress, inspired by the research of physicist and bee expert Dr Martin Bencsik and was originally created for the 2015 Milan Expo to draw attention to the issues of food security and biodiversity.



The Hive includes changing lights and noise, reflecting the fact that bees tend to return to their hive before bad weather. The audio included in the Hive also features unusual bee noises, after research discovered that bees hum in the key of C!

Another artist who has taken advantage of Kew Gardens to display his art is Dale Chihuly whose amazing glass installations could be seen in Kew in 2019. For Dale, his mother's passion for gardening inspired his work. Nature is a dynamic setting in which to display his art, as he says: "I love the juxtaposition between my installations and the natural elements and how the work can be both complementary and striking in natural environments". My thoughts entirely! Thanks to Mary for the photo below, taken last year.



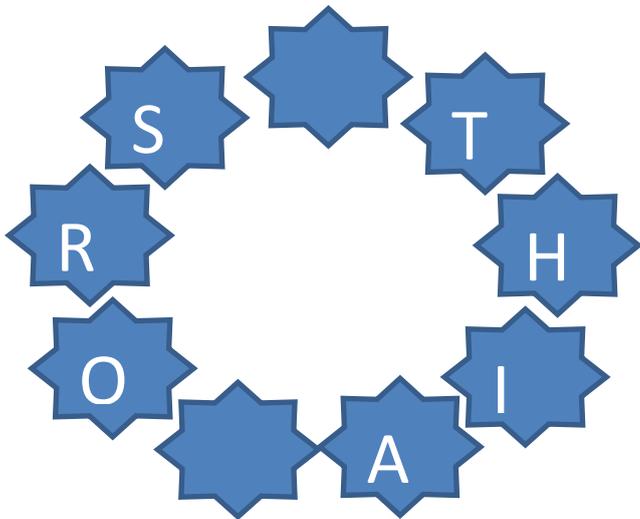


## LAST WEEK'S QUIZ : ANTIQUE GARDEN TOOLS – Answers

1. Potato planter;
2. Pitchfork;
3. Gardeners thinning rake;
4. Daisy grubber;
5. Long arm pruner;
6. Orchid pots;
7. Wasp trap;

## THIS WEEKS QUIZ: WORD WHEEL

Can you name the 9 letter plant in the wheel below?



## PLANTS TO NOTE IN LONG ASHTON

One of the most important discoveries in the plant world during the last century was that of the deciduous conifer, the Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*). Back in 1941, in Japan, Shigeru Miki thought he had discovered the fossils of a tree long since extinct. Then in 1944 a forester with China's National Central University, stumbled upon a small group of redwoods in the rice paddies of China's Szechwan Province, but did not recognise their type. In 1946, Professor Cheng of the National Central University, Chicago, who had heard the rumours of unidentified trees and seen some of the material from them, sent an expedition to the remote village of Mo-tao-chi near the Yangtze river in China to collect a complete set of specimens. After consultation with Dr Hu, China's

leading dendrologist, it became obviously that the trees belonged to the genus *Metasequoia*, previously only known from fossil evidence dating back 100 million years and thought to have been extinct for 5 million years. There were found to be around 1,000 of these previously considered extinct trees in the area.

Following its discovery, seeds were distributed to plant trial establishments around the world including The Long Ashton Research Station. This tree was planted sometime shortly after WW2 and can be seen on Pear Tree Avenue.



The Dawn Redwood is a large deciduous conifer with reddish-brown fibrous bark and soft, pale green linear leaves arranged in two ranks on the shoots, colouring beautifully in autumn. It is a vigorous grower, making a large narrowly conical tree to 25m and 8m wide, with flat sprays of narrow pale green leaves that turn brownish-pink and yellow in autumn. Although it does produce both flowers and cones, they are insignificant! The World Conservation Union has declared it "critically endangered" due to human encroachment – so look out for it in LA. (Thanks to Mary for the photo above)