



Our 2009 Show Season Highlights

This month we reflect on what has been a challenging but highly enjoyable show season for us. We kick off with Hampton Court Flower Show.

Hampton Court Flower Show

This year we should have been involved in the Daily Mail Pavilion, an exciting but daunting prospect, but one we had geared up to undertake. Unfortunately, the Daily Mail pulled out of its sponsoring relationship with the show, so we asked the RHS to consider us for any cancelled space in the Floral marquee and they came up trumps with an excellent spot.

The photograph shows Robin and Mel together with her son, Andrew, on his work experience fortnight, sampling the delights of nursery work and exhibiting. The photo shows us sporting our fabulous waistcoats made for us by Sue Taylor - friend and fellow gardening nut. You see us standing in front of our Floral Marquee display featuring our chinese pergola, made by Mel's brother Roy, our resident model maker and secondary haulier. Mel's hubby David was also involved in the show so it was a real family affair.

We enjoyed ourselves so much we might just do it all over again next year.



Harrogate Spring Flower Show

The idea for the chinese style pergola arose from our involvement in the Harrogate Spring Flower Show, which held an Innovative Exhibit competition entitled 'Wish You Were Here?' We decided to feature China as it is the country of origin for several species of hosta. Coincidentally, Mel and David were celebrating their china wedding anniversary (20 years) during the show.

The stand was awarded a Gold medal and the pergola went on to feature at Hampton Court and Tatton Park.

A challenging year

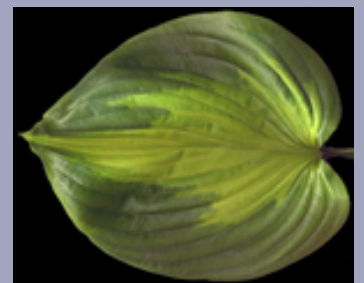
Despite the doom and gloom merchants, we have had a good season and it proved that people are still willing to spend money on their gardens.

2009 plant hits

This year the following cultivars have proved very popular:



H. 'American Sweetheart'



H. 'Cathedral Windows'

Gardener's World Live

The highlight for us was receiving the 'Best Exhibit in the Plant Mall' award but overall the show was disappointing. It has shrunk considerably over the past couple of years and many visitors voiced their concerns that the show no longer packs a punch. It is a fact that the NEC struggles as a gardening show venue and exhibitors struggle to create inspiring displays surrounded by concrete and glass. However, many gardeners deal with exactly this type of urban environment, and designers love to show how planting can soften challenging architecture. Perhaps the RHS and Haymarket need to design something much more contemporary? Gardener's World Live could then become much more of a cutting edge show that visitors come to for ideas that take gardening to another level.

On the subject of change, a regular little gem of a show had a face-lift this year:

Wisley Flower Show A late highlight of our season



This year the RHS decided to stage the show around the gardens at Wisley and each exhibitor created a small display in front of their own mini-marquees.

The logistics and running of the show were exemplary and everyone we spoke to said how much they enjoyed the atmosphere and layout. We couldn't help thinking how effective this approach could be at Hampton Court and Tatton Park.



As always our best highlight was seeing so many of our regular customers and meeting lots of new customers for the first time. Thank you for your support.

Mail order sales

This year we are extending our mail order season to the end of November. To order simply call 01449 711576 or [email us](#) - for more details [see here](#).

Next month: We update you on our Plant Heritage National Collection

The advice and opinions contained within this monthly newsletter have been formed over more than 30 years of experience with the Hosta genus. We are constantly learning and refining that knowledge and would welcome any suggestions that readers of this newsletter would like to make so please [contact us](#).

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H. 'Chickadee'



H. 'Frosted Mouse Ears'



H. 'Holy Mouse Ears'



H. 'Love Pat'



H. 'Reversed'

We wonder which cultivars will top the charts in 2010.