

FEDAGA Show 2023 Report by John Grace

The 2023 show was held on 2nd/3rd September at Saughton Park, in association with the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society ('the Caley'). The event was called *Show and Grow Together* and was supported by a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund. The aim was to combine a traditional show with community engagement, especially to encourage 'would-be-gardeners' by providing advice and inspiration. With this in mind, a leaflet campaign was conducted with a focus on the streets surrounding the park.

The show was held in a 9m x 18m marquee hired from Green Field Marquees, Edinburgh (£2,160). The Caley's flower section was in the adjacent McHattie Room. The poster boards were from Pegasus, Canongate, Edinburgh (£564).

Entries for the Show included 10 from the Caley and two from schools. Sideshows included: *tomato tasting, which jams are best?, any questions about seeds, growing in containers.*

	2012	2013-15	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020-22	2023
Exhibitors	43	no show	26	66	65	51	no show	52
Entries	343	no show	162	354	464	320	no show	249

Trends

There were 52 exhibitors and 249 entries. Entries were down from 2019 (the last time we had a Show). However, the number of exhibitors was one more than in 2019. A remarkable feature this year was the dominance of female exhibitors: 8 were male, 38 were female and 6 were of unknown gender. The most exhibitors were from the Caley (10, mainly flowers), Stenhouse (7), Lady Road (5) and Saughton (5).

Judging and trophies

Judging was by Colin Ainsworth (President of the Caley 2021 – 2023) and Colin Wren (NTS) and trophies were awarded by George Anderson. Trophy winners are listed below.

Notes on Public Engagement

We circulated a leaflet to 1,400 households around Saughton and a few in other parts of the City. We think at least 1,200 people came, often in family groups, and many of them were 'would be growers' who were keen to look at the produce and to speak to growers from both FEDAGA and the Caley. Some attended the sideshows. On the Sunday, *Beechgrove Garden's* George Anderson was on hand, mingling with the crowds to deal with gardening questions.

Survey

We updated our growing skills survey at the Autumn Show. 85% of those interviewed were already growing some of their own food- mainly vegetables. The remainder would like to grow some of their own food.

42% of those interviewed had an allotment and 77% had a garden of their own. A further 19% had access to a shared garden. 8% of those interviewed were on the allotment waiting list.

People were asked if they would like to improve their growing skills in a number of areas. The most popular were: controlling pests (69%), pruning (65%), improving the soil, and sowing seeds and transplanting seedlings were each of interest to 50% of respondents. Most people (85%) preferred hands on practical courses and 31% also liked to learn online.

Collaboration with the Caley

Planning meetings were from April 23rd, but the award was not until 24th July, leaving little time to prepare. The Show classes in the vegetable and plot-to-plate section were unchanged but the flower section was adjusted to accommodate the Caley's flower classes. All stationery was reprinted to include the logos of FEDAGA, the Caley and the Lottery Community Fund. The Caley provided excellent support, providing the chip-board staging and their volunteers fetched the boards from the store to the site. The FEDAGA team assembled the staging within 3 hours. We ordered black fabric to cover the board. For future reference, the layout is shown below.

Appendix 1 Trophy Winners

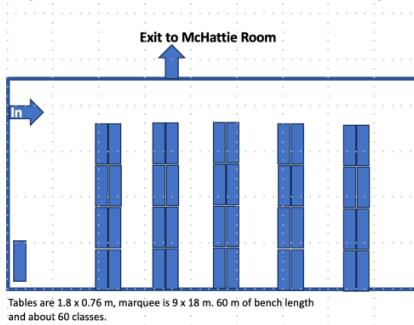
Trophy	description	Winner	Winner name
Murphy Cup	Onions classes (109-113)	41	Jan Bradbury
William Nichol Cup	Best Onion Exhibit		In abeyance
Garden News Shield	Potatoes (126-129)	31	Lai Fun Russell
St Vincent Cup 3	Vegetables (100-137)	31	Lai Fun Russell
Horsburgh Trophy	Individual vegetable collection (200)	2	Brian Horsburgh
GM Stuart Memorial Cup	Site veg collection (201)		Lady Road
Lady Road Fruit Bowl	Fruit (400-406)	9	Janet Martindale
St Vincent Plate (plot-to-plate)	Plot-to-plate (500-508)	13	E&A Wilson
Organic Cup	Organic vegetables (100-137)	31	Lai Fun Russell
Evening News trophy	Roses	14	Sandy Corlett
Andrew Judge Memorial Cup	Dahlias	17	Sarah Cran
St Vincent Cup 2	Gladioli	25&43 tie	Ros Marshall & Lucie McKenzie
Bill Nichol Memorial Cup	Sweet Peas (Caley)	27	Peter Sandwell ¹
Bill Nichol Memorial Cup	Sweet Peas (FEDAGA)	14	Sandy Corlett
St Vincent Cup 1	Overall flowers (Caley)	27	Peter Sandwell ¹
St Vincent Cup 1	Overall flowers (FEDAGA)	14	Sandy Corlett
Watson Junior Trophy	Best in Young Person's section	42	Wilson & I Martinez
NVS Medal ²	Best entry in vegetables	2	Brian Horsburgh

¹not eligible for trophy

2winner keeps the medal

Appendix 2 Layout of benches in the marquee

Layout of benches at the 2023 FEDAGA Show in a marquee



Reflections on the Show

Meeting Notes 29th September 2023. Present: John Grace, Elizabeth Grace, Pam Whittle, Margaret Williamson

What went well?

- The marquee and display board suppliers. Pam warned that prices were likely to be higher next year
- The judging by Colin Ainsworth and Colin Wren although John wondered if an hour was sufficient time for judging
- George Anderson of the Beechgrove Garden. Joh wondered if we could get more of the Beechgrove Team next year
- Jam tasting and tomato tasting. We need someone to usher people into the courtyard. Some people were reluctant to venture into the building
- Seed collecting with Mike Turner. He has offered to do a talk later in the year and we may use his services on the Allotment Growing Skills programme.

What should we do more of?

- More Beechgrove Garden team
- Encourage more ploholders to contribute exhibits
- Rename 'plot to plate' or provide some detail of what it is about – there was only 1 exhibit
- Awareness of other shows on at the same time
- Have the Lord Provost to open the show or a well-known politician
- Start now to plan the next show
- Start publicity early, particularly amongst the site reps. We had a short time from when our funding was confirmed.
- The reception area needs to be improved – this might be helped by giving people an exhibitor number when they enter the park and separate tables to complete the forms
- Tables outside to prepare the exhibits. The Caley already does this for flower exhibitors
- Create more of a party atmosphere which will be helped when the café is open. John suggested music next time
- Start a search now for sponsorship: supermarkets bags for life scheme, Kings Seeds, Dobie Seeds, Franchi Seeds. Margaret will ask The Caley President for other suggestions
- Have a conversation with Colin Ainsworth about how the Dundee Show was funded

- More of a sustainability theme. Have a sustainability award for growing groups (allotments and community gardens). Involve Garden Organic. Possibly a poster display and an award for the best poster
- Engaging people in local communities (use a survey to collect postcodes)