



*The
Magic
of
Chelsea*

*A Flower Show
Like No Other*

Christine Thompson-Wells

*YOUR FREE SAMPLE DOWNLOAD OF OUR
LATEST BOOK RELEASE,
THE MAGIC OF CHELSEA*

Thank you to my husband Ross, for his love and support in helping me to collect the necessary photographs, in a one-day marathon at Chelsea; thank you also to Brooke, our graphic designer, who works her magic in making the books ready for printing, and to Paul, our web technician who also works his magic in keeping the websites active and responsive.



It's 2023 and there we were, waiting at the station to catch the train into Paddington, London, and then, we travelled on the underground train to Sloane Street, Station...

The excitement was mounting as many people started to leave the train for the walk to the Chelsea Flower Show.

There he was, a man in a brightly coloured shirt offering lifts in his rikshaw, the opportunity to ride through London in this way was too great to pass up and the ride was excellent, seeing sights often taken for granted when in the car...!

At the gate, where many people patiently waited, the day had begun and what a day we had in the beautiful spring sun...

Please see the following pages to follow our journey and the beauty of a magnificent flower show –

The Magic of Chelsea

The Respect They Deserve...

Isn't about time we gave the respect back to our native insects, their environments, and homes?

For well over two hundred years our insects have been in their personal fight to survive. They don't have a voice, they cannot shout, scream, and make a noise when their homes are destroyed, the only sign they give, is when they no longer exist...!

The emphasis for the 2023 Chelsea Flower Show was on native fields and meadow flowers and grasses, and how refreshing to see the abundance of differently coloured flowers, their shape, form, texture, and vibrancy; some petals glistened as the rays of sunshine caught their movement in the soft spring breeze, and what a treat for any human being to enjoy the moments of this year's Chelsea Flower Show...!



They Want to Survive...



The butterfly you see, has many jobs to do, not only the will to survive but to pollenate the flowers it visits but to make babies for next year too...!

Its time spent is only a few, with so many jobs, and soon, this beautiful creature will need to support the new...

So fragile its wings and glorious too, but delicate as fairy dust, and now too often, too few...!

The butterfly has many messages to give, for it is the story, the story to live...!

Like mothers, from nature we find, the will to produce their babies each year, and to do just that, they need to know the earth will be kind...!

For once the babies are new, the mum's job is done, its short life is lived, for its legacy it leaves, its babies for next year, the flowers it pollinates and the beauty it gives...!

When you see your next butterfly, please take the time to ponder, and then wonder, not only at the joy of the sight, but at the work it does with all its might....!

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10% of the sale of each book helps to support Diabetes Type One and Cancer Research.

THE BACK STORY

Six O'clock on the dot, the taxi arrives! The early autumn morning in Australia is beautiful in April with a slight change in the colour of the leaves on the trees, as they turn from green to slight gold. From the drop off at the station in Bowral, New South Wales, and as we sit on the train on the way to Sydney Airport, it's time to inhale, take a deep breath, and the time to think about the journey we've just begun...

With so many kilometres to travel, there is no time to stop, the hustle and bustle of the time, keeps us alert and ready to go at a 'drop of a hat!' Trains, airports, rental cars, all with many people making their way to different worldwide destinations!

Most faces are concerning with the look, 'I hope this is the right way to go, or is this the flight we take...?' And so it is, the long-haul from one side of the planet to the other...! Regardless of lengthy waits, airport crowds and long-distance travel, how many generations have had the privilege of flying across the oceans, barren areas of land below, and still be served food on the flight and a glass or two of wine or a coffee when needed...?

The technology needed to bring our books to our readers is mesmerizing and yet, we use it without much thought. Once my brain accepts, we are living in the here and now, the flight journey has come to an end, and we are there in the Baggage Hall at Heathrow Airport...

It's amazing how the scramble, each person goes through, to collect their bags and it never seems to change! We have waited for bags, that don't appear because they have been left at an airport in Australia...! We have also been fortunate enough to have the bags come around on the first baggage carousel to circulate...! The bags collected; we make our way to the hire car. and what a relief to finally sit in the passenger seat and, at last, to see the different greens on the forming leaf buds as they show their many different greens. Just one sunny day was needed to bring the trees of the South of England into magnificent colour. Alas, it was too cold to allow that to happen...!

It was the 14th of April, we were there, at the 15th Century Notley Abbey, and to see our beautiful Goddaughter married. The weather was cold and wet, but the bride was radiant and gorgeous. Many weeks pass and we are on the train heading to The Chelsea Flower Show. Memories rush into my head, how the time has flown since I did my training in London to become a florist, and yet my heart and mind long for the colours, textures, and vibrancy of the flowers I will later see that day!

I'm jolted into the current moment, we are there, at Sloane Street, Station, and the crowds start to stand up from their train seats and want to step out onto the platform. Though there are many people, order is a priority for the excited crowd. No grim faces could be seen, just people happy to enjoy the moments of the day!



Emerging into the bright sunlight from the darkness of the station, my eyes were transfixed on a man wearing a brightly coloured floral shirt; he was the rickshaw driver and I was determined to make the most of the day, I persuaded my husband to part with, what was meant to be a fifteen-pound ride into a twenty-pound ride..., at the end of the trip...!

It was wonderful to see these parts of London, not normally seen when we are looking for parking or on a busy London bus!

As we travelled on our short journey to the flower show, I couldn't help thinking about my own studies, not only as a florist in London, but one amazing year spent at the Canberra School of Art where I studied 20th century art history and sculpting. These studies have brought together the knowledge I now have in the ability to make meaningful comments about the exhibits on display in 2023.



Now, to our readers, please enjoy this lovely new edition of 'The Magic of Chelsea'.



Christine

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The Reason Why...?

Since 1804, the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, has been an annual event. Originally it was called The Great Spring Show.

In 1913, it was moved to its present location at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

It's the glamour and excitement that makes the flower show such an exciting event. It is the event in many people's calendars each year that allows the show to be the success it is in the twenty-first century.

The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, is home to about three hundred

British Army veterans, which include both men and women, all of which call the hospital, 'Home'.

Many of the veterans have served in Cyprus, Northern Ireland, the Falklands War, and the Second World War, from (1939-1945).

Originally, and the precursor to the establishment of the hospital in 1677, it was established for officers of disbanded regiments, soldiers with injuries, which was the original force by Sir Stephen Fox (1627-1716). Royal patronage was added to the establishment by King Charles II in 1682. The purpose of the hospital was to establish a retreat for war veterans.



The Reason Why...?

So many times, we see, the people that have served...
To keep our lands free...!

Through years of battle, we are here, not by chance you know, but by
dedication of the people we cannot see...!

The numbers too great to count, but sometimes we may reflect, on those past
lives that allow us to live our daily lives...
Though they may be humble, we are at least free...!

With the tradition we hold, those lives once lived, and may we not forget
the enormous price they paid...!

To allow us to make the choices we freely make as from day to day
We learn....

The wonders of the moments, some of the past veterans did not
have time to yearn...!

For this is the reason, that so many can enjoy, the wonders of the
Chelsea Show that so many have not had the time
to know...!

Many people want to see the wonders of the show, and
yet, it's time to stop, reflect, and the Reason Why
we know....!

In Remembrance.

People on the Move

The Enjoyment of the day...



With so much to see and such a short window of time to see the stands and exhibits, each moment was a special moment



spent at the show. And from the crowd numbers, many other visitors may have felt also, that way...!



The Clematis as it Grows

The clematis is such an extraordinary flower; it has a delicate and petal combination that holds your vision as you look deeply into the flower's centre.

In this beautiful photograph, the gentle pink hue, with a slight hint of deep maroon towards the ovary of the flower shows this beauty.

Gentle petals shown, show soft the white outer petals leading the eye through the deeper pink and veins of the petal, which all lead to the magnificent centre of filaments and anthers, such a beautiful combination of colour it also makes one think of the porcelain china once used for afternoon teas and of years gone by...!



This new cultivar named the Duchess of Wessex displayed a magnificent show of such fine flowers.

This variety had a soft, but delicious scent and created a soothing combination within such a busy location.

Clematis come in many colours from purples to soft pinks and stunning whites. Most develop a woody type of stem as they mature.

Clematis

She holds her head in wonder as she flirts within the show...!

With many colours she flaunts, and just to let us know...!
Many single flowers to display, and hold our vision so, and as we gasp and
say 'show some more...'
Our hearts will gently soar...!

The mischief she holds so dear, is part of her lasting charm...
For within such beauty, there cannot be any harm....!

As new petals unfurl and old flowers wither in the sun...
The short and beauty of the day is speckled with great fun...!

For porcelain the petals seem on appearance as you look, but beyond the
delicate structure is the story within the book...!

Like so many flowers before her grew...
and so beautiful, and alas, only now, it is too few...!

The clematis, as we see it in the show, and what a sight...
for those simple petals will fade throughout the night...!

And it is with memories we linger of a spectacle once seen...
The clematis is recharging for the show she was so keen...!

And for next year she flowers again and the beauty to behold
for the beauty within this flower is magnificent and bold...!

Sculpture

With many creative displays in this year's show, it is difficult to identify a favourite! We apologise, if we have missed your designs, but we can only offer so much space within our book.

The ideas within the sculptures that follow, were major talking points, and points of inspiration, not only for the show visitors, but we are sure, for the creators of the masterpieces.



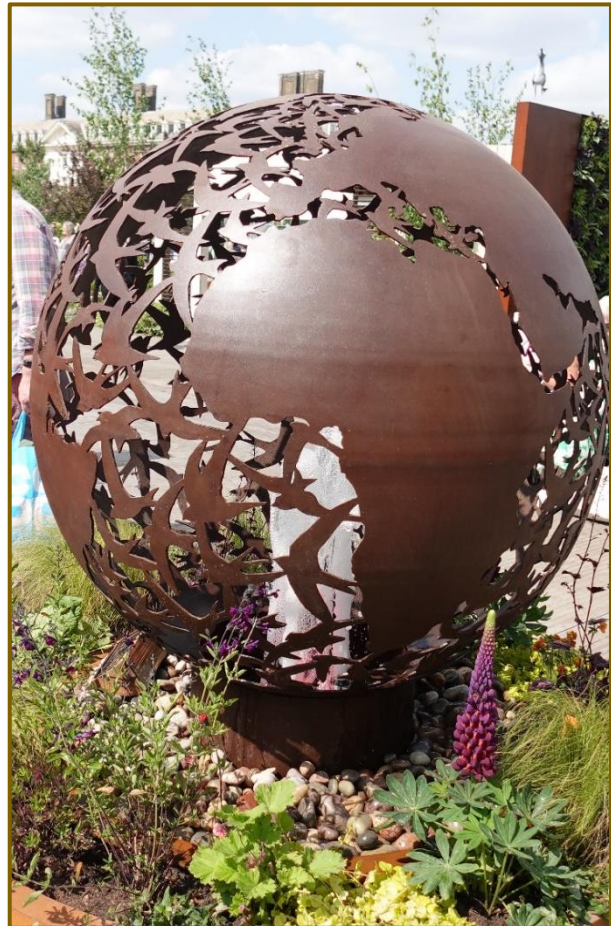
Sculpture – Mezmerising Creations

The show did not miss out on presenting many amazing sculptures this year, with many representations, show the beauty of the planet and the birds that fly the skies.

Opposite, mesmerising shapes, all giving their own version of our planet and the flight of the swallows.

Swallows travel many thousands of miles and arrive in the United Kingdom, from Africa, in April each year. They are ready to make their return journey by about September.

A delightful sculpture gives us the story of the swallows' flight...!



Considering we had a luggage weight we needed to think about, it would be nice to just slip one of these magnificent sculptures into the handbag, but alas, too big for such a thought or consideration...!

Opposite, the aqua colour of cut leaf shapes allows you to wonder and yet the softness of the colour, is, restful for the eye...!

To keep the orb or globe shape so perfectly balanced, round, and yet, to give the appearance of almost a

The Art of Floristry Design...

Abundance and celebration are the only categories we can describe the flower designs at this year's show.



From the Hogarth Curve seen in the opposite photograph using contrasting colours of different tonal values of whites and creams to lavenders and purples, with a slight intermission of straw stalks.

To create the Hogarth Curve, one needs to have a firm background in fixed mass floral design and the experience of the artist is seen by the construction and placements within the work. A pleasure and delight to

see.

Opposite, the contrasting colours of lemon to yellow and then pinks to lavenders in the two designs opposite is again seen in the Hogarth Curve shapes.

The shapes, not clearly seen in the photograph, are a combination of a pair of reflecting shapes is both visually pleasing and creative.

The unique combination of four designs to form one design, rightfully so, wins a Silver Medal.





Opposite, with so much emphasis on renewable and recycling, this drum has been put to good use.

The hydrangea is an old-fashioned flower and is greatly



appreciated by most floral artists, whether working within the commercial floristry industry, or in the local floral art clubs and organisations.

With colour blocking now seen in many floral designs, it's a relief from the coloured speckling that used to be so popular.

By mass colour-blocking, we not only enhance the floral designs, but add visual impact to each design we create.

Succulents and Cacti

Some people love them and some not so...!



I must admit, it has taken me many years to like these plants. I think the reason being, there are so many different and colourful types now, that they may even fit into the 'Cute' category of plants.

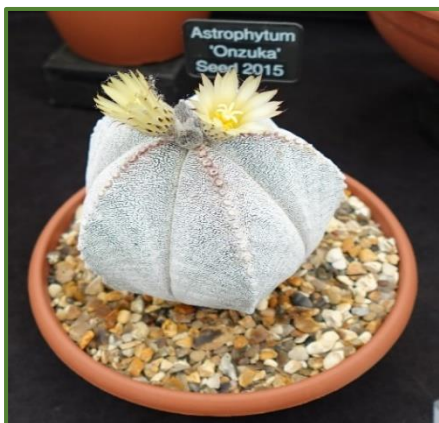
Most definitely, when these little gems start to

show their flowers at different times of the year, they are very pleasing to have as indoor plants.



While in my training in floristry, one of my principal jobs was to look after the cacti...!

After their careful nurturing, I would spend the next week taking the small, barb-like hairs from my very sore fingers! Only to start the following week doing the same job...!



From those beginnings, the cacti and succulent families have come a long way. Now, such decorative plants, they make a talking point in many venues.

Oh, and Then There Were Tulips...!

Tulips were originally found in Asia, where they were first cultivated by the people of Turkey as early as twelve hundred years ago.

The origin of the name is also Turkish and originated from the word 'turban'.

Like so many different species of plants, tulips were introduced to Europe in the 16th Century.



They then became popular in the Netherlands, where they are associated to today.



It is not only the colour and shape that attracts people to these popular flowers, but they are also edible, this is unlike the daffodil, which is not edible...!

Tulips are a member of the onion and garlic family, having said that, if eaten, the bulbs may cause gastrointestinal distress, nausea, and vomiting.

Like the bulbs, it is not advisable to eat either the stem or the leaves of the plant.

Sunshine and Lilies – Who Could Ask for More...?



How majestic these flowers have become; they are used as single flower stems in a bud vase or in great profusion in large hotel foyers. They do not only create a grand entrance but give the feeling of opulence, luxury, and wellbeing.

Not only do they give us visual excitement, but the perfume can send our senses into confusion, almost intoxicating us to the point of feeling 'heady, and happy'...

Harts Nursery had a breath-taking collection of colours and both single and double flowering lilies at this year's show.

With Love We Bring This Beautiful Book To You.

We are delighted to bring to you our next and latest book on the 'Magic of Chelsea'.

With just one day on our schedule to collect our information before the flight back to Australia, it was a busy day spent, but a beautiful day as you will see by the photographs and information we have put into this book.



We, my husband, and I, are members of the Royal Horticultural Society, and we both look forward to the show each year. We find the stands informative, and this information keeps us up to date with horticultural, industry and new trends in the development of new varieties of plants, and indeed, the ornamental aspects in the creative arts that the show represents.

Having this information allows us to take, those people, who would love to attend the show, but for some reason cannot; the book allows those people to enjoy the benefits the show commits to. As one reader of our last year's book has said, '...the text and photography gave me some insights into the Show that I didn't have before...!' It is these little insights into how the words and pictures within the books we produce can give our readers a knowledge and benefit, they may not have had before, that keeps me writing and my team happy; we do our work with purpose and that is very gratifying and important.

And to this year's edition of 'The Magic of Chelsea,' it has been so amazing to look and search through the information held within this book. There have been many 'light bulb' moments, when I think, and may speak to myself, 'Yes, I remember that...!' or 'Oh, I'd forgotten about that, that was funny...!' And so it is that the memories come tumbling back and into my thinking. It is always the flowers that seem to create the excitement in me as I search through the photographs on the computer. I think this year, it was the flag iris; they were magnificent as you will see within the pages. Also, the clean and satisfying forms of different art forms and the cleverness that some people have within the thinking and the skills they have developed and many over their lifetime.

It is now with great pleasure and excitement that we at How2Books bring to you this latest book of 'The Magic of Chelsea'.

Christine

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