

## HPS Champion – Sandra Hartley

Sandra was born and brought up in South Africa. She studied Latin at the University of Cape Town where she met her husband. Trevor's studies brought them to England, then his work took them first to London Ontario, then back to the UK when he became a professor at the London School of Economics. During this period they had three children so Sandra had little time for plants and gardens. That was to change when they moved to Epsom and their home and garden on the chalky slope of the North Downs. Her interest piqued, Sandra soon joined the RHS and in 1982 the HPS.

The list of Sandra's involvement in the HPS, both nationally and locally, is encyclopaedic: it would almost be easier to say what she *hasn't* done.

A few examples are her three stints as Trustee, the Events Panel and the Publications Sub-Committee, Shows Coordinator, and 6 years assembling the Newsletter. If you've attended a national event you will probably have seen her there, as she has travelled the length and breadth of the country to attend most of them!

Sandra's Latin studies have made her a whizz on plant nomenclature, and her keen eye for detail and wide-ranging knowledge of all things horticultural have made her a much valued proofreader of this journal for 15 years and of a number of HPS booklets.

Southern Counties Group has been lucky to have Sandra as a member since the late 80s; she soon joined the committee and has been Group Secretary since 2004. She has organised garden visits, set up exhibits at RHS Wisley, and been responsible for the Group's sound system, which I believe lives under the spare bed.

The committee was nervous when Sandra suggested that we (she) organise the 2010 HPS Autumn Weekend; we should have had no fears, given that she'd been involved in the Group's hosting of a number of national events, not to mention coordinating the Group's Chelsea exhibit in 2003.

Sandra is also an active member of several Special Interest and other Local Groups. In everything, she is totally reliable and efficient and, if she doesn't know the answer, someone in her wide network certainly does.

In the early 1990s the Society designed and planted a perennial garden at Pershore College, maintained by volunteers. Sandra was recruited to acquire the plants chosen for the garden and, though in 2006 the Society handed it over to the College and withdrew formal support, she continues to work there regularly.

Sandra is a true champion of all that the HPS stands for.



Sandra at Stone House Cottage Garden, 2017.

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Cathy Rollinson