

Country Notes for July 2020

This is the month of the Summer Show of the Leeds Castle and Hollingbourne Garden Society, and for those with even more lofty aspirations, the Kent County Show. This is the month when Kent's farmers and gardeners get the chance to show others their very best, whether it be the best onion, the most perfect dahlia, the best prepared sheep, the best feathered chicken or most delicious jam. Those of us who take part really do not mind whether we win or not – it is the pride involved in showing others the very best that we can produce that matters. Mind you, it is nice to win a prize too, especially if it is a prized red ticket, or even better a piece of silverware for the mantelpiece!

So much to look forward to in this the first full month of summer, when hopefully the sun is shining and all seems well with the world.

Not so this year however. The current pandemic means that, sadly, none of these events are able to take place. It is such a shame that these occasions which showcase the very best of the British countryside, which reflect months of careful preparation and which are produced with such love and pride will not happen for the first time in living memory.

However, as always, there are compensations. For us gardeners it is likely that our gardens have never looked so good, so tended and so perfect. Lockdown in our villages has given us the extra time to keep really on top of our precious plots. At the moment it is likely that we have not really had the chance to show these off to others, but how glorious will be the moment when we can open our gates again and show others what we have achieved!

So keep gardening, keep tending, keep stock rearing, for the time will come when we will once again be able to showcase the very best that we gardeners and farmers can do – and when that time does come it will be even more glorious than ever!

Andrew G Snowdon