



Robert Myers' Cadogan Estates Garden was based on an urban square

Turf Professional visits Chelsea Flower Show to find sport mingling with The Beatles. MIKE BEARDALL reports on the big event in the RHS calendar

CARDIFF City Council put on a silver medal-winning rugby theme at Chelsea Flower Show with green plants mimicking grass lines on a rugby pitch and a flowered player scoring a conversion. They were celebrating being Welsh Capital for Sport - hosting the Ashes in 2009, the

Ryder Cup in 2010 (at Celtic Manor) and Olympic football in 2012. And Leeds City Council got a Silver Gilt medal with their garden to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the end of the First World War - based on the garden at Talbot House in Poperinghe, Belgium, found-

ed in 1915 by two priests as a rest place where all army ranks could recuperate as equals. The Leeds Pals Brigade were in the first wave to perish under machine-gun fire on the first day of the Battle of the Somme on July 1, 1916.

Relaxation and recuperation were the aim of box hedges, symmetrical shapes and water which dominated the show - with muted colours and pastel schemes giving a relaxed feel. Cottage garden plants were in profusion and there were less strange objects floating



Cardiff City Council's silver medal winning rugby theme



Martin Clunes in front of Cancer Research UK's 'thought wall'

“Chelsea should have more London in it”

Monty Don, TV Gardener

about - although one gold medal winner, the Cancer Research UK garden by Andy Sturgeon, had a look of metal toilet roll tubes about it against one wall.

Apparently this was called a “thought wall” - it certainly set observers thinking! Including Martin Clunes, of *Men Behaving Badly* and *Doc Martin* fame.

Ringo Starr arrived in the late George Harrison’s Sixties Mini, driven by Damon Hill, to join Olivia Harrison on her silver gilt-winning garden ‘Life to Life, a Garden for George’ - a mass of English

flowers, plus a giant star, and a long and winding stream with a shadowy image of George in a mirror.

The Telegraph garden by Lady Arabella Lennox Boyd won a gold medal with water playing the focal role and restful zen planting of peace and simplicity, including water-lilies and box hedges.

Another gold winner was that of Cadogan Estates by Robert Myers - his box hedges based on an urban square with overhanging trees and a shallow canal - and wonderfully relaxing to be in.

A development becoming popular in this ‘green age’ was the sedum-covered roofs of several exhibits - which will no doubt please Stephen Fell of Lindum Turf who can supply rolls of natural growing material for garden sheds and other garden buildings needing to blend in with surroundings.

Chelsea locals are campaigning for the show to be moved. It has been at

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the Royal Hospital since 1913 but residents say it has outgrown the site and is noisy during build-up and break-down (supervised by ‘Mr. Saltex’, the IOG’s former chairman Derek Walder).

TV gardener Monty Don, recovering from a stroke, said that Tatton Park and Hampton Court were rivalling Chelsea as venues. “Chelsea should have more London in

it,” he said. “It’s a great show but not the best - Malvern, Tatton and Hampton Court have a sense of identity”

But a Chelsea medal still carries massive weight for growers and designers.

Sedum-covered roofs were popular



Lady Arabella Lennox Boyd’s Telegraph garden won a gold medal with water playing the focal role



Ringo Starr and Olivia Harrison on her silver gilt-winning garden, ‘Life to Life, a Garden for George’