



Her Majesty The Queen visits Chelsea Flower Show stand of Sticklepath's Bowden Hostas

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A GROUND-breaking week at the Chelsea Flower Show for Sticklepath firm Bowden Hostas was capped by a visit from Her Majesty the Queen.

After exhibiting the largest ever display in the Grand Pavilion at the famous show, Bowden's chief executive Tim Penrose was presented to the Queen.

Tim and Ruth Penrose had been planning their ground-breaking stand for almost four years.

It involved taking a 1920s British Pullman train carriage on a seven-hour journey across London to become the centrepiece of a display recounting a plant hunter's travels around the world.



The train stood in the middle of a time-travel journey ranging from beautiful neat hostas on Platform 1 to rare jungle ferns on Platform 2.

The exhibit incorporated a vintage plant hunter's cabin, a gentleman's glasshouse, masses of jungle ferns and striking hostas - and the oldest fern book in the world, dating from 1705.

The display, a first for the RHS, which won a silver medal, was visited by almost 30,000 guests throughout the week, among them Brendan Cole, Dame Judi Dench and Lord and Lady Heseltine.

During the event, Bowden's plant experts were on hand including award-winning hosta photographer and author Mike Shadrack, disguised as Alfred Hitchcock, Dick Hayward, the oldest exhibitor at this year's Chelsea at 80 and working with the youngest, Hope Sharp, at 16), fern expert Martin Rickard and a host of others.

The display was launched by a 16-strong cast from the Italia Conti stage school playing a wealthy family who alighted from the carriage during their trip back from the Orient.

A senior figure at the RHS told the firm they had 'raised the game.'

Pictured below is the Queen being introduced to Tim Penrose, chief executive of Bowden's..

