

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at Cobham Village Hall on 6th December 2021.

In the absence of the President and the Chairman, Mr Cooper took the Chair and welcomed members.

Apologies for absence: - Mr T Pierce, Mr A Moody, Mr D Everest, Mr K Hine, Mr N + Mrs J Clark

The Secretary read the notice convening the meeting

Chairman's Address

Mr Cooper advised that there would be no Chairman's report this year, the reason would be given in the Secretary's report.

Minutes of the 2019 AGM and matters arising

The Minutes had been circulated with the February 2021 Newsletter. As there were no matters arising that would not be covered during the meeting and the content was unanimously accepted. The minutes would be signed as a true record once a Chairman has been appointed, proposed by Mr M Dixon, seconded by Mr B Everest.

Secretary's Report

Let me start by saying that Alan Moody, very recently out of the blue, decided for personal reasons to sever his connection with the Society. He asks that the background for his decision remain in house and therefore to meet this request please refrain from further enquiries. It leaves me to thank him for his long service which started when he joined the Committee in 1990 and became Vice Chairman in 1992 until finally stepping up as Chairman in 2007 a post he held to the present date. He took on a wide-ranging roll including the preparation of the old Surrey Scene annual booklet, now no longer issued, and of the regular supply of Newsletters with Show information and other relevant details all very time consuming and will be a hard act to follow.

In the summer Alan Bridger, again for health and personal reasons, resigned from the Committee but fortunately for us he kindly agreed to continue keeping an eye on the storage facility and help set up the shows in various ways, as far as he is able.

These circumstances now leave 4 on the Committee to carry the burden of voluntary work compared to the original 9 of 5 years ago. You will, I feel sure, see that if any of us left falls by the wayside, without additional support, the Society will cease to exist. The 4 of us are determined to pull together, with a little bit of internal reorganisation, and with the patience of the Membership during the transitional period to keep the Society afloat.

The pandemic has a lot to answer for, but we have tried to get back on track as one of very few societies that still holds 5 shows a year with our Show Secretary Kevin leading the team. Plant sales were somewhat stunted but Kevin, Howard Cooper and the Treasurer being heavily involved managed to achieve limited success given the circumstances prevailing at the time. Jean Clark, whilst not a committee member, very kindly runs the Ton-Up prize draw system very efficiently. To you all a big thank you.

The Society Web Site is controlled by Howard Cooper with regular updates posted and the handling of the many enquiries he receives via that source. Here again it's been a large learning curve and a lot of effort for Howard which he has handled exceptionally well on our behalf.

With our ageing Membership our numbers are dwindling with 45 out of 70 having paid to date which means extra cost to ask nonpayers if they wish to renew so we can have a more current listing for issuing of future literature.

Committee meetings continue to be held at either the Treasurers or my home dependant on availability.

I now conclude my somewhat disturbing report with a thank you to the Members who have supported us during these troubled times and emphasise the fact that, please be patient with us as we go through the throes of reorganisation. Proposed by Mr B Everest, seconded by Mrs J Bridger.

Treasurer's Report

After a difficult period 20/21 the Society has been able to have three of their five shows. This resulted in a small deficit in the year of £100.

Many thanks to Alan Moody for paying for Society postage over the last several years. Hence this year postage has increased, we hope that next year we are able to get more and more members receiving Newsletters etc. by email.

The committee is continually trying to reduce costs and increase income. Plant sales will continue to be our main source income. Any member who could help please contact any Committee Member.

Many thanks to the Cooper Family for the sale of blooms at our Main Show. If any Members have new ideas about raising money please get in touch. We intend to continue to hold five shows per year, but with rising costs any financial help would be appreciated.

The Committee recommend that subscriptions remain the same for 2022.

The accounts at present have not been examined, due to illness, this will happen in the New Year. Proposed by Mr B Everest, seconded by Mr A Bridger.

Show Secretary's Report

Unfortunately, the Society were unable to hold any shows in 2020 due to the pandemic so no comparisons can be made to last year. During the current year the Society managed to put on 4 shows

with the Spring Show unfortunately not being able to be held as the Committee were not sure if the Covid rules would be relaxed by then.

With a cold wet Spring we were uncertain what the shows would bring as growers were struggling to root cuttings due to the low light levels. Fortunately, the weather improved and plants grew strongly. The Committee was also uncertain if exhibitors would be confident enough to return to showing.

We continued with the Premier League across all the shows and later in the agenda the results will be announced.

All of the shows were held at Abinger Hammer Village Hall with the exception of the Main Show. Starting with the August Members Show we had 9 dahlia exhibitors who put in 41 entries compared to 12 exhibitors who put in 72 entries in 2019. This year we had 2 chrysanth exhibitors who put in 4 entries compared to 4 exhibitors who put in 10 exhibits in 2019.

Moving onto the Main Show, the show was held at the Arbor Centre in Pyrford near Ripley. This was our 2nd year at the venue and the layout took some sorting out as we had had the year's break. In 2019 Dahlias had 112 entries staged by 16 exhibitors and compares to this year of 106 entries staged by 21 exhibitors. Chrysanths had 38 entries from 6 exhibitors in 2019 compared to 2021 of 37 entries from 6 exhibitors. The committee reintroduced novice classes this year in both dahlias and chrysanths and these were well supported.

This show is a lot of hard work for a few people and I would like to thank in particular Clare Cooper who provided lunches and refreshments and the Cooper family for all the help they gave at the show especially selling blooms and raffle and the outstanding results can be seen in the accounts.

Moving onto the September Members Show we had a good amount of both dahlias and chrysanths with the dahlia exhibitors who were 6 in number putting in 36 entries compared to 2019 of 74 entries from 11 exhibitors. Chrysanths had 18 entries from 5 exhibitors compared to 30 entries from 6 exhibitors in 2019.

The Late Show had to move a week earlier than usual because the hall was already booked.

Unfortunately, the change meant that we lost one top exhibitor. Nevertheless we still managed to hold a Late Show. This year we had 29 entries from 9 exhibitors compared to 57 entries from 10 exhibitors in 2019.

Finally, I would like to thank a few people. A big thank you to all the exhibitors who travelled many miles to put up an array of excellent blooms. Thanks also to the judges who also travelled many miles for doing such a good job. I would also like to thank Brenda Taitt for giving the exhibitors that welcome cup of tea. At the end of the shows we had a lot of help breaking down the shows and many thanks to those who helped. Thanks also to Tony Field who produces the schedule and to his son Nigel who prints it for us. Thank you also to exhibitors who cooperated with us by taking the flowers out of the hall and emptying the vases.

We have been encouraged by new growers entering the shows so we have introduced novice classes in both flowers at both members shows for 2022. We have also reviewed the schedule for next year and made very few changes but we have made sure that the schedule in the printed form and on the website are exactly the same as we did have one or two problems this year.

This year the Committee also took the decision not to hold any tombolas at the shows due to the pandemic but hopefully we can next year as this is a good source of income to the Society.

Let's hope 2022 will be a successful growing season for growers and the Society. Proposed by Mr M Dixon, Seconded by Mr B Everest.

Election of President

Mr Austin informed the Members present that Mr A Moody had spoken with Mr T Pierce who advised Mr Moody that he was no longer able to drive and therefore had no objection if he were to step down in his role of President. It was therefore proposed by the committee that Mr T Pierce should become President Emeritus and Mr B Everest President. Mr B Everest said he would be honoured, and these were unanimously passed.

Election of Vice Presidents

Mr M Dixon and Mr N Flint were unanimously re-elected.

Election of Officers, Committee & Auditor

Mr Taitt explained that following the resignation of Mr A Moody as Chairman, whilst the remaining four Committee members were still happy to stand for re-election, the rolls of a couple of them would change. Mr F Austin would move to Chairman and Mr Cooper would become Secretary. The position of Vice Chairman would be done away. Proposed by Mr M Dixon and seconded by Mr A Bridger

Determine subscription rate for 2022

The Committee recommended that this remain at the current level of £5 per member. This was passed unanimously.

John Woolman Medal

There had been no nominations so there would be no presentation this year.

John Court Trophy – Most points Members Classes

The Show Secretary advised that in Third place with 93 points was Darren Everest, in Second place with 99 points Alan Moody and in first place Bryan Everest with 136 points. Congratulations were offered all round.

Premier League classes Award

The Show Secretary announced that the winner was Howard Cooper with 35 points and Bryan Everest second with 27 points. Congratulations to the winner.

Any Other Business

Mr A Bridger asked if the person who donated some money at the Late Chrysanthemum Show held at Abinger Hammer could either be made a Member or sent a Show Schedule to enable the person to know when our shows are on. The Treasurer advised that this had already been actioned and the donor would be made a Member.

Just prior to the AGM a letter had been received from Mr J Carter asking if it was possible to bring the opening and closing times of the Main Show forward by half an hour as his journey home took twice as long as usual due to traffic on the M25. By closing 30 minutes earlier he hoped to avoid the worst of the traffic. The Committee advised that they would review this request at the next Committee meeting.

The Chairman thanked Karyl, Lyn and Brenda for laying on the buffet which would follow the AGM.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.53 p.m.