

## Annual General Meeting

Held in St Lawrence Church Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> February at 7-30pm

- 1. Apologies:** Margaret McIntosh sent her apologies due to being ill. Warren Reeves ran through Margaret's programmed slide presentation giving captions where he was able. He then took the chair for the AGM proper. Other apologies were from Terry Whitley, Avril Thornton, and Tony and Jim.
- 2. Approval of 2018 Minutes:** These were approved and signed by Warren.
- 3. Matters Arising from 2018 Minutes:** There were none.
- 4. Chair's Report:** Warren read Margaret's report which was as follows:

It has been another challenging year for us gardeners, the seasons appear to have merged. RCHS held successful flower shows in spring, summer and autumn despite the unpredictable weather. They attract many visitors and guests enabling us to enrol new members. The autumn show was held on a Sunday. This worked quite well but made it a long day for our show manager and secretary. This year we are back to Saturdays, but the autumn show is a week earlier than usual. We have ordered new Feather Banners to help promote our show sat the barn. *At this point Warren demonstrated the Feather Banners.*

The society continues to support local schools and their gardening groups, now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year. We have provided bulbs and compost sponsored by Ducks Hill Nursery and Jacques Amand. This year's title is "Bill & Ben the flower pot men". We look forward to seeing their displays at the Spring Show on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. My thanks to Patricia for coordinating this project. Our talks featured a good range of speakers and topics again last year. We must improve the attendance to ensure the society continues to flourish or otherwise we cut back on meetings. We have reluctantly removed the November talk as being the least well attended. I realise that I am talking to the converted here and that members who don't support monthly meetings won't come to an AGM. On a brighter note, our main ticketed talk by Nick Bailey attracted a good audience. His "365 Days of Colour" was well received. To keep monthly talks in our programme we need a member to coordinate them for 2020.

Membership increased last year thanks to the enthusiasm of Penny our membership secretary. Cost remains at £5 in order to be competitive with

neighbouring societies. In 2018 we had 140 households 31 of which were new members. This was an impressive increase of 28%. We need to keep our membership numbers stable, so, please encourage your friends to join / renew. We now need to encourage our new members to attend talks and enter shows.

Our website [www.ruisliphorticultural.org.uk](http://www.ruisliphorticultural.org.uk) remains the first point of contact for members and public and daily receives many hits. I hope you agree that it is a huge asset thanks to Warren's expertise. Warren has introduced internet payments for both membership and events. He will explain more during his report.

### **SOCIAL EVENTS**

Last year we ran 2 successful coach trips. Suggestions for this year are welcomed.

Our May coach trip to Highgrove and Brockworth Court Garden was a success. Thanks to Warren for a great day out.

As an affiliated society we are able to take 1 group visit per year. 43 members and friends went to "Christmas Glow" at RHS Garden Wisley on December 6<sup>th</sup>. (Spectacular light displays and installations throughout the gardens and glasshouses.) A great outing, we were very lucky with both the weather and M25 traffic. We may repeat this visit on Sunday December 1<sup>st</sup>. Let me know if this interests you.

The annual quiz in October was our best supported event. Zoe and Ellie our catering duo, cooked a delicious hot supper: Patricia and John were our question masters. My thanks to all the helpers, a great team effort.

The Christmas Workshop on December 4<sup>th</sup> was a creative afternoon. Everyone took home a table decoration or wreath. I was pleased to see one still looking fresh in January at our committee meeting at Graham's. Our continuing Success is in a large part due to the hard work of your committee members, also helpers and the ongoing support of active members. Thank you one and all

### **LOOKING FORWARD**

1. All evening events now start at 7-30pm with doors open at 7pm. This has worked well. All talks are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Talk entry remains at £3. All our events are discounted for members.
2. The 2019 flyer placed on your chair is hot off the press. These will be distributed to local outlets and be available at all our events. Please let us know if you can pass some out to another interested group.

3. Ducks Hill have once again offered the 20% discount voucher. We are aware that by using it you lose part of the calendar. Please take a spare copy.
4. We need your views on how to make the talks viable and ways to increase members. Please give feedback during our cheese and wine which follows shortly.
5. **Committee:** Last year we asked for a publicity officer and we were pleased to welcome Lyn Sutherland. This is one of our less visible roles but so necessary in this day and age. We need more help. Tony and Jim have retired from running the raffles at our talks but will still cover the shows. Can someone volunteer to do the raffle at our 4 talks – please come forward. The other important role we need to fill is Talks Coordinator. If no one offers we will be forced to phase out the monthly talks. You don't need to be an expert gardener, just someone keen to keep the society on track.

#### **AOB**

The catering team will be passing round for a rota for volunteers to bake cakes and serve teas at the shows. Please sign up if you can help us.

5. **Cactus Section Report:** Presented by David Minnion. The Cactus Section is in good health at the moment with attendances at meetings improved over the last number of years. In the last twelve months we held nine meetings in The Manor Farm Hall (which the Council has downgraded to be called the Community Hut) and two on Sunday afternoons, run-in conjunction with Harrow Branch of the British Cactus & Succulent Society, to visit members' collections.

Our speakers from March 2018 to January 2019 entertained us with programmes on plants in habitat in Baja California, Caribbean Islands, Madagascar, South Africa, Haiti and California. We also had a programme on growing the smaller Opuntias and another on Succulents growing in Mediterranean Gardens.

The Cactus Section would like to welcome more of the RCHS members to its meetings. In March we have a programme which will give a somewhat different look at growing cacti and succulents. "Succulents on a Shoestring" will look at how to keep the costs of our hobby to a minimum. In April we will have a programme on Mexico. Dates for all our meetings are posted on the Society 2019 brochure.

**6. Treasurer's Report & Approval of Statement of Accounts:** Warren presented the documents distributed on seats. He reminded those present that the Society is a non-profit making society and in consequence it can invest in items for the societies use such as flags, pull up banners and a sound system. Warren demonstrated the new feather banners. The Statement of Income and expenditure together with the Independent Auditors Report were accepted by the members.

**7. Election of Committee Members:**

The committee members standing for re-election were:-

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chair                | Margaret McIntosh              |
| Treasurer            | Warren Reeves                  |
| Secretary            | Graham Goode                   |
| Show Secretary       | David Minnion                  |
| Show Manager         | Patricia Swindells             |
| Membership Secretary | Penny Newman                   |
| Refreshments         | Zoe Bulkeley & Ellie Wilkerson |
| Publicity            | Lyn Sutherland                 |
| Talks                | Vacant                         |

The re-election of these committee members was agreed proposed by Bronwyn Britchfield and seconded by Sally River.

At this point our President John Ormshaw addressed the meeting thanking the committee for its efforts during the year and making a strong plea to those who do not enter the 3 flower shows to have a go and not be put off by worrying about meeting the standard we have. He stressed that the bigger the entry the better the show.

**8. Any Other Business:** It was pointed out that there was a session in the Ruislip Manor Library on a Wednesday on "Spring Flowers On A Budget".

**The AGM closed at 8-30pm and was followed by a cheese and wine social.**

