

# **RUISLIP CENTRAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Held on Zoom on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7pm**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

None received.

### **2. APPROVE 2020 MINUTES**

These were approved by John Ormshaw and seconded by Patricia Swindells.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

At the end of the minutes it was reported that Penny Newman planned to move away from the area. This did not happen and we were lucky to have Penny's great input as membership secretary for a further year. Thank you Penny.

### **4. THE FUTURE OF THE RCHS AND THE EFFECTS OF PANDEMIC COVID 19 from warren Reeves**

The Committee has done the best it can to keep the Society running for members. We are as a result down on the balance of our accounts as we cannot operate as we normally do to raise income from the sale of produce and refreshments at shows and raffles etc. We have lost the income from our Quiz Night and other events. This will not change for the foreseeable future. Unlike other societies we do not have a trading hut where sales can continue in a Covid safe manner to raise income. It is unlikely that this will change any time soon and therefore the change to Zoom talks has been our only course way of providing members with any sort of event.

At this point thanked Warren for his technical expertise and hard work in getting these events going.

### **5. CHAIR'S REPORT 2021 from Margaret McIntosh**

2020 was an extraordinary year for everyone. If there has been a positive it is that we all had more time to spend gardening, and going to the allotment is classed as 'exercise'. The society suffered with cancelled events and no Flower Shows. It should have been a year of celebrations for our 80yr Anniversary. Instead, after the last A.G.M, our planned programme was postponed until the situation improves.

To make amends, In the Autumn we launched our ZOOM meetings.

OCTOBER- John Amand gave an excellent talk on BULBS, his renowned nursery and staging his stand at Chelsea Flower Show. Our first trial run, it met with very encouraging positive feedback.

NOVEMBER- A return of Mathew Biggs well known for GQT. He gave us insights into THE SECRETS OF GREAT BOTANISTS, plant explorers responsible for many of our garden plants.

DECEMBER- Dan Hinkley, zoomed from the West Coast of America, PEOPLE, PLANTS AND GARDENS. An internationally renowned plantsman, he described making his gardens at Heronswood and Windcliff and his exotic travels collecting seeds for his nursery. This talk created a wealth of interest, it was a real treat to end the year.

JANUARY- Alan Down gave a talk on growing and propagating HELLEBORES in all their varieties. His particular interest was the hybrid anemone form and heavily-spotted Lenten roses.

The first 2 talks were free to view, funded by the society.

By December it was clear that we would be on zoom for the foreseeable future so we introduced a 'one off' payment of £15/ household, to cover 7 talks until June 2021. This represents very good value and may cover the speaker's fees, 45 members paid. However, we are aware that not all our members are zooming, so plan to return to meeting in person when it is safe. Others have said they prefer Zoom and it has shown us how we can deliver talks through the long winter months.

A HUGE THANK YOU to Warren for all his work setting up the Zoom platform, and arranging the speakers.

**\*\*\* We need someone to take on this role in 2021. \*\*\***

## **MEMBERSHIP 2020**

Our membership base was 111 households which is a decrease on 2019 (154) with no meetings or shows at which to renew or attract new members, this is a great testament to the service we now offer and have done in previous years.

**\*\*\* All memberships are extended to December 2021 FREE of charge.\*\*\***

## **COMMITTEE 2021**

The 2 catering ladies have not been active this year and are not standing again. We thank Zoe and Ellie for all their help especially the delicious hot suppers before our quizzes and buffet at the AGM.

My report would not be complete without sincere thanks to the committee, who have all pulled together to maintain the ethos of our society as we have moved with the times and addressed the challenges of 2020.

## **6. TREASURERS REPORT & APPROVAL OF STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS from Warren Reeves**

Warren drew the attention of members to the statement of accounts sent out with the agenda. He pointed out that if the Society did close the committee would take legal advice on what should happen to the balance of the Society's funds. The auditor's report was shown on screen and Warren ran through the expenditure pointing out that Website Management costs were up which includes the use of a Zoom account and the use of mail chimp which provides the membership database conforming to GDPR rules. The website cost for the year was £330. The Wisley Christmas coach trip was not brought to account until January 2020 and as such fell into the 2021 accounting year. There is a deficit of £850 for the financial year. A major outlay was for a new sound system as promised to the membership which unfortunately was delivered just before lockdown and has not yet been used. Despite this the current balance is £6,104. Fund raising for the coming year looks to be impossible. A question from the floor asked how was the money held. The reply being that it was in a Barclay's online current account.

The treasurers report was approved by Terry Whitley and seconded by Elizabeth Freestone.

## **7. CACTUS SECTION REPORT from David Minnion**

This time last year the Cactus Section had just held its own AGM and was looking forward to another season of meetings in the Manor Farm Hall. On the Horizon though, was a new disease, Covid 19 which was about to change everything. Lockdown regulations were soon to take effect and the last real

meeting we were able to hold was on 16th March 2020 when we enjoyed a programme on succulent plants in South Africa presented by Eddie Harris, a regular speaker at our section. Unfortunately Covid 19 was already a serious worry at this time and reflected in the low attendance at this last meeting, only nine.

Since then we have been lucky to be invited to join the “Zoom” meetings arranged by Derek Tribble for the Harrow branch of British Cactus and Succulent Society. Derek is Chairman of BCSS Harrow and a member of RCHS Cactus Section. A significant number of Cactus Section members belong to both groups but this invitation has given those not in BCSS the opportunity to stay in touch and enjoy some excellent programmes during the year.

The only other event that we were able to enjoy, again, jointly with Harrow BCSS, was a visit to member Martin Edwards to see his greenhouse and excellent collection of cacti and succulents. This took place in July during the summer easing of lockdown but had to be arranged in two sessions so that the “rule of six” wasn’t broken.

The Cactus Section is seventy years old this year having been inaugurated at a meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1951 chaired by Ruislip Allotments and Garden Society (the name of the society back then) member Arthur Boarder. Whether or not we are able to meet to celebrate this anniversary will remain to be seen.

Normally I would now be reminding all members present at the Society AGM that they are automatically also members of the Cactus Section and will be welcome at meetings. At this point however, let us just hope that later this year it will be possible to arrange meetings for members to attend.

## **8. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**

### **COMMITTEE STANDING FOR RE- ELECTION TONIGHT**

CHAIRMAN & JUDGES	Margaret McIntosh
TREASURER, TALKS & WEBSITE	Warren Reeves
MEMBERSHIP	Penny Newman
SECRETARY	Graham Goode
SHOW MANAGER & WEBSITE	Patricia Swindells
SHOW SECRETARY & CACTI	David Minnion

There have been no new nominations so your committee is now 6.

NB 3 of those 6 had planned to step down this year. This is not an immediate problem BUT when we resume our full range of events more help will be needed.

Margaret proposed that those standing for re-election should be voted for as a group and put this to the members

**\*\*\* If the society is to survive we need your help. \*\***

**VACANCIES for PUBLICITY, TALKS, CATERING must be filled or the society will CLOSE IN 2022**

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Our President John Ormshaw gave a vote of thanks to members in attendance for the AGM and for keeping the society going. He thanked the committee for introducing Zoom as a remedy for these uncertain times.

Warren pointed out that the 2020 membership card is still valid for 2021 and the discount at Duck's Hill Garden Centre is still available.

**The AGM part of the proceedings was closed by Margaret and a five minute break taken before the following talk "THE CHURCH GARDENS HAREFIELD" by Kay McHugh.**