

Weston Village Gardening Club - Annual General Meeting 2013

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on the Weston Village Gardening Club held on Thursday 14 March 2013 in the All Saints Church, Weston, Bath.

In Attendance - Bernard Rymer, Chairman, and 54 members.

Chairman's Report - The Chairman commenced his report by reminding members about the club's activities during 2012. The year had started with Roy Burden giving an in depth talk on Penstemons. In February, Dr Chris Lovell gave an address on bulbs and his bulb collecting activities throughout the world. March brought Mike Paddock to the lectern for a lively talk about Bath's Parks and Gardens. Felicity Down, Cleeve Nursery, came in April and captivated us with a lecture on Gardening in Containers, and in May Tony Russell, paying a second visit, gave an enthralling talk on garden trees. During the autumn, we had a wonderful address on the wildflower meadow at Riddleys Cheer by Antony Young. Charles Dowding, another speaker paying a return visit, gave an absorbing talk on Winter Vegetables, and Margaret Morris came from the Isle of Wight to talk about Sissinghurst. We ended the year with our Christmas Social during which Geoff White, Richard Newman and Mary White serenaded us with songs from the Shows.

We had two coach trips. The first, on a very wet and windy morning in June, took the club to the Botanic Garden of Wales. The afternoon, which was much drier, saw us visiting the delightful gardens at Aberglasney. For our second coach trip we headed to London on a glorious day for a visit to the Hampton Court Flower Show. Our local garden visit was to Tormarton Court.

We had good weather for our Open Garden event. We had 15 gardens open in the village and five more at the Royal United Hospital. The attendance was excellent with over 200 people going through some of the gardens. The Flower Show was a delight and the feedback excellent. We had a record number of people through the door and entries were up again. It was gratifying to see some new names displaying their produce, flowers and craft items. The surplus profits (£2,900) from the show and open gardens were donated to the Friends of the Royal United Hospital and eight local voluntary groups. To commemorate the Jubilee we planted three Jubilee Oaks at Primrose Hill Woodland and paid for the provision of two mature trees, planted by the Mayor, on the Recreation Ground Jubilee, and another tree went into the Archery Field.

The club had a stand at West Fest and the Southlands Open day. Working parties helped maintain the gardens in the All Saints Centre, and Christine Weston and Steve Brook stocked and maintained the Village Fountain Planters and the planter at the bottom of Trafalgar Road. For its various community initiatives, the club was given an outstanding achievement award by the South West in Bloom Committee.

The members were reminded that three talks from the 2013 programme had already been held. Helen Schofield gave an excellent talk about Westonbirt in January. In February, Mary Payne spoke about grasses and perennials, and Giles Courtis showed us 'How to Stay Healthy in the Garden' at the meeting just before the AGM. Moving onto the remainder of 2013 Programme, the Chair pointed out that Graham Nichol will give a talk about Alpines in April and Penny Jones is lined up to give a Propagation Masterclass in May. Keith Ferguson is due to come from Cheltenham to discuss Growing and Storing Vegetables and Rebecca Pow, formerly on BBC Radio 4 and HTV, is coming to tell us about Wildlife Gardening.

Four trips are planned for 2013. The Cardiff Flower Show in April, Waterperry Gardens in Oxfordshire and Oxford City for a visit to the Botanic Gardens and the city centre in June. In July we head to Mountain Bower to visit Ridley's Cheer, and in August we go to Rodmarton Manor to see the garden and William Morris house. Our Christmas Social will be a Barn Dance at the Ex-servicemen's club. The Flower Show is on 7 September in the All Saints Centre. The Committee has decided to rest the Open Garden event in 2013.

Membership - The Chairman was pleased to report that membership remains strong with 155 members registered at the end of December. At the time of the meeting more than 130 people had either recently joined the club or renewed their membership. The Chairman thanked the membership for their support of the club. It was noted that the membership fee would remain at £12.

Finance - Graham Leigh presented the club accounts. He stated that the financial position was very healthy with a balance on the Flower Show Account of £1,035 (2011: £1,288), the Open Gardens account £510 (2011: £383) and that the Club account stands at £3,144 (2011: £3,153). The Chairman thanked Graham for his diligence in maintaining the club's accounts and, as he stands down from the post, for his work over the previous three years. It was noted that Jo Smith would take over as Treasurer.

Committee - The following were elected to the Committee unopposed - Beryl Leigh, Jo Smith, Pearl Shaw, Peter Redfern, Catherine Bright, John Beaven, Peter Merchant, Jane Rymer and Steve Brook.

Thank You's - The Chair concluded the meeting by saying thank you to the many people who help run the club's activities - Beryl Leigh, Membership Secretary, Graham Leigh Treasurer, Catherine Bright, Brenda Cumberlidge and Vera Podger-Refreshments and Christmas Social, Steve Brook and Christine Weston-Stocking and maintaining the High Street Plants, Pat Coley-PA, Jeremy Tinkler - Projectionist, Beryl Leigh and Christine Weston Membership and Welcome Desk, John Beaven-Roving microphone, Peter Merchant and John Beaven-Advertising in the Flower Show Schedule, Jill Lake Coach Trips and, of course, all the Committee members for the range of duties they undertake. Finally, a special word of thanks went to Jane Rymer for the work she does in support of the Chairman and for a whole range of club's activities. Thanks also went to the innumerable people who helped organise the Open Garden event and the Flower Show. Beryl Leigh came forward and gave a vote of thanks to Club Chairman Bernard Rymer.

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.