

Slimbridge Horticultural Society

Minutes of the A.G.M. held at the Village Hall, 11 January 2011

Present: N. Griffiths (Chairlady); D. Hatcliffe (Secretary); L. Dibley (Treasurer) and 21 members:

G. Baker; P. Ballard; V. Blitz; M. Clark; M. Dibley; G. Edwards; R. Geissler; S. Gibson; A. Griffiths; D. Hall; S. Hatcliffe; C. Jeffes; A. Jones; P. Lewis; D. & L. Porter; P. Sealey; D. & P. Tarr; M. Weeks.

There was 1 visitor: S. Ward

1. Apologies

A. & S. Carter; P. Cox ; D. & G. Hobbs; C. Howarth; B. & P. Howell; S & E. James; J. Russell-Yarde; T. Standing; B. Wherrett.

2. Minutes of A.G.M 12 January 2010

The minutes for 2010 were signed as correct.

Proposed – S. Hatcliffe Seconded – G. Baker

3. Matters Arising

The chairlady advised that consequent on the changes to the committee, George Baker would be taking back the spare Spring Show schedules from the Post Office for amendment.

4. Correspondence etc.

The chairlady had received a telephone call from John Terry resigning his post on the committee due to other commitments.

Alan Carter had advised that due to ill health he was unable to join the committee just yet, but he and Sue hoped to be able to help at the Spring Show.

The chairlady had received emails regarding grow2eat – more details on our website.

5. Chairlady's Report

The chairlady prefaced her report with the sad news of Phyll Smith's recent death and of Eira James' heart attack.

The chairlady reported a successful year with very good show exhibits despite a severe winter, dry spring and wet summer. Members' evenings were well attended and covered some interesting topics, including the apple orchard talk held jointly with the Historical Society. She thanked Sylvia and David Hatcliffe for organising a very enjoyable trip to Westonbury Mill and Hergest Croft gardens. This year's trip will be to Wisley in early September.

The programme for 2011 contains a wide range of interesting talks and there will be a visit to Camers garden in Old Sodbury on 31st July. This will be organised on a car sharing basis.

She requested suggestions for future talks and visits – a suggestions box will be provided at meetings in future. She also suggested a members' plant sale table be set up at each meeting.

Two years ago, she had taken on the role as chairlady in order to keep the Society going and now that a potential new candidate for the post had appeared, she was standing down. With Linda and Martin Dibley and Pam Lewis all not standing for election and with David and Sylvia Hatcliffe retiring at the 2012 AGM, she appealed for new committee members and potential officers to come forward.

She concluded by thanking everyone in the Society for their support during her time in office.

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6. Treasurer's Report

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| Funds at 1 December 2009 | 1638.79 |
| Surplus 2009 | 12.50 |
| Funds at 30 November 2010 | 1651.29 |

The Treasurer reported that the surplus for 2010 of £12.50 compared with a surplus for 2009 of £131.80.

Membership was down marginally by 3 at 51 members of whom 7 were new. The Society received £143 in donations, including £100 from Vera Macaulay's estate and made a donation of £50 to SARA as agreed at the 2010 AGM. Bulb sales including commission from Simply Tulips netted £58.57 and the Treasurer congratulated Norma Griffiths on her sales efforts.

The plant sale made £19.60 against £30.50 in 2009, but still comfortably paid for the hall hire.

Net costs for Members' meetings amounted to £411.59, off set by £139.50 from the raffles organised by Dave and Prim Tarr.

The main loss making areas were the spring and summer shows, which lost £71.30 and £72.94 respectively. A major factor here was the increasing cost of judges' fees and expenses.

As in previous years, the accounts had been audited by Mr Gordon Tudor and the Treasurer expressed her thanks on behalf of the Society.

She concluded by observing that the main challenge in the future was to maintain the existing membership and to attract new members whilst coping with increasing costs.

She then invited questions.

George Baker queried the status of the Vera Macaulay donation and the Treasurer confirmed that this sum was included in the general accounts total as the memorial cup has not yet been purchased.

Peter Ballard advised that a Federation resolution last spring that all judges should receive fees and expenses had been lost. The Federation had a list of those judges who were not looking for anything other than petrol money. The Treasurer confirmed that the moneys paid to the various judges in 2010 totalled £110 against £60 in 2009.

7. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair – Dave Porter

Proposed – G. Baker Seconded – D. Tarr Elected unanimously.

Vice-Chair – Sue Gibson

Proposed – P. Lewis Seconded – P. Ballard Elected unanimously.

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8. Election of Officers and Committee

The following officers, holders of other posts and general committee were elected unanimously.

Treasurer – Diana Hall is unable to take on this role at present due to family commitments. Linda Dibley agreed to stay on for a few months until Diana is able to take over. This arrangement was proposed by D. Porter and seconded by G. Baker.

Secretary – David Hatcliffe

Proposed – S. Gibson Seconded – D. Porter

Social Secretary – Sylvia Hatcliffe

Proposed – M. Clark Seconded – P. Lewis

Programme Secretary – Carole Jeffes

Proposed – D. Porter Seconded – N. Griffiths

Show Secretary – Norma Griffiths

Proposed – D. Porter Seconded – S. Gibson

General Committee –

Tina Lees Proposed – S. Gibson Seconded – N. Griffiths

Phil Sealey Proposed – C. Jeffes Seconded – D. Porter

Plus one new member:

Lynne Porter Proposed – G. Baker Seconded – P. Ballard

Alan Carter will be co-opted when he feels well enough.

Slimbridge Village Hall Representative – Beryl Howell

Gloucestershire Federation of Garden societies (GFGS) Representative – Sue Gibson

Slimbridge Horse Show Representative – Sue Gibson

9. Propositions

There was considerable discussion as to the merits of the proposed increase in membership fees to £8 - effective 2012. Points made in favour included the necessity to allow for future cost increases; the desirability of maintaining our capital in case of need and the relative good value considering the number of meetings and the discount schemes. Points made against included the negative effect on membership levels, bearing in mind the effect of the last increase and the legitimacy of increasing the fees whilst maintaining a balance of £886 in our savings account.

In response to a query regarding single and dual membership, David Hatcliffe commented that the committee had considered this question at great length in 2009 and had concluded that the practical difficulties of changing our membership policy outweighed any advantages.

Following comments from the floor, the proposition wording was amended slightly to:

"With effect from January 2012, the household membership subscription rate shall be £8 per year."

The revised proposition was carried by 20 votes for to 3 against.

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10. Members' Pot Plant Competition

Prizes were awarded to:

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| 1 st | George Baker | 25 points |
| 2 nd | Carole Jeffes | 18 points |
| 3 rd | Norma Griffiths | 15 points |

11. Any Other Business

- a. David Hatcliffe proposed that item 19 of the Society's Constitution be amended slightly, allowing the Show Secretary to be included in the list of authorised bank signatories. This would help with the current situation where two of the existing officers had resigned their positions. Peter Ballard seconded the proposition, commenting that most Societies now had an any-two from four signatory arrangement and with the Society membership being more widespread, it was a very practical step.

The proposition was carried unanimously.

It was also noted that in view of the closure of the HSBC Dursley branch, it may be sensible to change the Society's bankers – possibly to Lloyds TSB. This decision would be a matter for the committee and Auditor and will not require AGM approval.

- b. Peter Ballard advised that the Sweet Pea Show, sponsored by the Gloucestershire Federation would take place at The Social Centre, Church Lane, Shurdington, Cheltenham on Saturday 9th July from Noon to 4.00 pm.
- c. P. Ballard advised that there were four entries to the table top competition at the 2010 Berkeley Show and Slimbridge came third. He congratulated Carole Jeffes on her efforts in organising our entry. The competition will continue in 2012 with prize monies of £100.
- d. Dave Porter queried the financial arrangements for the proposed plant sale table at the members' meetings. It was left to the committee to decide how this should be organised and whether some part or all of the takings should go to Society funds.
- e. The chairlady advised that the next members' meeting would be held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 8th February at 7.30pm. "21st Century Smallholding", will highlight anecdotes by Jules Moore about learning the art of smallholding the hard way.
- f. George Baker proposed a vote of thanks, endorsed by all, to Norma Griffiths for taking on the chair for the past two years.

There being no further business, the Chairlady declared the meeting closed at 8.35pm and refreshments were served.

Signed as a correct record..... Dated.....