

Balsall &  
District



Horticultural  
Society

January 2020

# Newsletter

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Dear Members,

Welcome to 2020 with Balsall & District Horticultural Society. Your Committee looks forward to seeing all of you again at events during the coming year. Subscriptions are now due and once again there is NO increase in the annual fee of £14. You should receive a membership renewal form with this newsletter (which will be an attachment if you have an electronic copy). ALL members should complete a form as we require your signature in respect of Data Protection. Your 2020 membership card will list all the speakers for the year - see page 3 to whet your appetite!

The form also has a section regarding the Annual Dinner on 19<sup>th</sup> March. This is a delicious three course sit down meal in the Village Hall, catered for by the excellent Sue Dalby and her team. Should you be uncertain as to your commitments in March, Annual Dinner tickets (£21) can usually be purchased separately a little nearer the event too. If you have any queries regarding the membership form, please contact Helen, our Treasurer, whose telephone number is at the top of this page.

The winter edition of the local Bugle magazine will have updated you on the progress of the library's community garden, as an entry for RHS Britain in Bloom 2020. **Should you have any surplus garden tools, I am collecting them to pass on to this project.**

It is with sadness that I must report the death of member Hanne Briggs, who passed away at the end of the 2019 following a long illness. Her husband Nigel was with us at our Social Evening in July, where he sold cards for Save the Children and raised £150 for this charity during the event. Our thoughts go to Nigel and his family.

Wishing all the very best for 2020,

Marion

## 75<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019

Over 80 members attended this popular event on 28<sup>th</sup> November, which was chaired by our President, Robert Leeming. The minutes of the 2018 meeting, (having been sent out previously with the November newsletter), were approved and signed, with no matters arising.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Helen Jones and she thanked Mary Cotterrell, our Internal Auditor, for her help and support in overseeing our accounts. Members were provided with copies of the Financial Report 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. 2018 – 31<sup>st</sup> Oct. 2019 on each table. Our total income was £417.57 greater than our total expenditure and Helen praised members for their support of our events, raffles, sales tables and the prompt paying of subscriptions. Even this year's Annual Show was unusually in profit! We have a strong membership, currently standing at 138 members, and which impresses visiting speakers. Consequently, there will be no increase in subscriptions again this year. We usually make donations to several charities with some of our surplus. However, as a very regular user of the Village Hall, it was agreed that the Society would offer a donation towards the ailing hearing loop system in the building, and

## January

### **From 26th Jan. 10am - 7pm**

Winter Snowdrops at Cerney House Gardens, North Cerney, Cirencester, GL7 7BX  
[www.cerneygardens.com](http://www.cerneygardens.com)

### **Sat 25<sup>th</sup> – Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Jan.**

RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch  
[www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch)

### **Sats & Suns from Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Jan – Sun 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1pm – 4.30 pm**

Snowdrop Weekends at Colesbourne Park Gardens, Colesbourne, GL53 9NP (halfway between Cirencester & Cheltenham on the A435)  
Tel. 01242 870264  
Admission £8.50

### **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> Jan. at 8pm**

Our monthly meeting in the Village Hall  
'Hidden Gardens of Herefordshire'  
By Alun & Jill Whitehead from Aulden Farm Nursery

## February

### **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb. at 7.30pm**

Committee Meeting in the Westlake Room

### **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2 – 5.30pm**

Snowdrops, Aconites & Hellebores at Temple Balsall Church, B93 0AN  
Free entry, donations welcome  
Teas & snowdrop sales

### **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. 11am – 2pm (4pm for gardens)**

Snowdrop Fair at Kingston Bagpuize House, Nr Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX13 5AX  
Admission £6, children free  
Tel. 01865 820259 email: [info@kbhevents.uk](mailto:info@kbhevents.uk)

Helen will follow this up with the Village Hall Committee. Having been checked by our Internal Auditor and gone through the Society's Committee, members present voted that the Treasurer's Report should be adopted.

Ivor Stansfield presented the Chairman's Report, remarking how good it was to be chair of such a longstanding & thriving Society, now 75 years old. On average, our monthly meetings attract 70 – 80 members at each and most months new members join us. Ivor drew members' attention to the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary booklet produced by the late John Webb and informed those present that Jackie Tommie will be working on an update. The Committee, along with others from our membership, were thanked for all the work they do behind the scenes and not necessarily associated with a specific role. This included setting up and clearing away at monthly meetings, the AGM, the Annual Dinner, the Social Evening, buying raffle prizes, obtaining plug plants, and bulbs for competitions. David C. had stepped in when Ivor had been unavailable for meetings and stewards the monthly flower stem and pot plant competitions. He and brother Edward source and distribute the plug plants for our Annual Show. Secretary Angela had kept AGM & Committee Meeting agendas, minutes and correspondence on track, as had Helen & Mary with the finances. Alison had arranged an excellent programme of speakers in 2019, produced a photographic record of society activities, and ran the Plant Sales table with Angela. Marion and husband Andrew had produced 10 newsletters during the year. David A., with support from Jude Blakeman, had arranged another successful Annual Show with the biggest number of entries this year. Pet had continued to provide the refreshments at our monthly meetings and at the Show, with support from Pat Ford and Sue Edwards. The latter catered for the AGM, with help from Pet, Pat and Barbara Money. Doug had looked after the signing—in register at meetings to comply with fire regulations and has maintained firm links with Balsall Primary School, with this being the 10<sup>th</sup> year of their participation in our Show's Art Competition. He also maintains the link with Springfield House School. Ann had organised the coach trip, including the weather, to the 2 gardens in Nottinghamshire & Lincolnshire, with Helen organising the Wisley trip. Barbara Money bravely joined the Committee last year and assists wherever she can. Non-Committee members Val Cotterrell and Margaret Sears have sold copious amounts of raffle tickets at our events. Jennifer Leeming has continued to co-ordinate the distribution of the paper newsletters, ably assisted by the members who do the deliveries. Jennifer has also managed our very popular Garden Sundries Table but is stepping down this year. Ivor was pleased to announce that his wife Gill is to take over this role. Robert Leeming has come to the end of his 3 year tenure as President and was thanked for his long service to our Society. Member Gill Westlake was thanked for kindly opening her garden for the Social Evening back on a very hot summer's evening in July. Gill's chosen charity, Zoe's Place Children's Hospice, benefitted by £100 as a result. Any offers of a garden for next year? Ivor finished by running through the list of speakers for next year and announcing that Helen Jones is looking to organise a 4 day BDHS holiday to Cornwall next year, dates to be confirmed.

The next item was the election of officers, followed by the committee. Our new President is Jackie Tommie, previously a longstanding chair of this Society. Ivor Stansfield was re-elected Chair, with David Cotterrell as Vice – Chair. Angela Shaw was re-elected as Secretary and Helen Jones as Treasurer, with Mary Cotterrell as Internal Auditor. There were no new nominations for the Committee and the current members were re-elected en masse with the same 'jobs' as before. Note: anyone who would like to try life on the Committee is warmly invited to get in touch with us!!

The presentation of certificates to this year's Annual Show trophy winners then followed:

- \* Barry Clarke (most points in vegetable & fruit sections A & B - The Deeley Cup)
- \* Mary Cotterrell (most points in flowers & foliage section C - The Maisey Cup)
- \* David Cotterrell (most points in pot plants section D - The Pot Plant Cup)
- \* Jean Wood (best exhibit in flower arrangement section E - The Society Cup)
- \* Alison Watson (most points in the produce section F - The Produce Cup)
- \* Doug Timmis (best exhibit in the photography section G - The Heart of England Trophy)
- \* Don Lawrence (best exhibit in the art & craft section H - The Balsall Trophy)
- \* Steve Ghent (best exhibit in the plug plant section K - The Wilkins Trophy)
- \* Pat Richards (best pelargonium in the show - The Southfield Cup)
- \* David Hickson (the novice gaining the most points in the show - The Novice Trophy)
- \* David Cotterrell (the highest total of points in all horticultural classes - Banksian Medal)
- \* David Cotterrell (the 2nd highest total of points across all classes - The Balsall Cup)
- \* Edward Cotterrell (the highest total of points across all classes - The Challenge Cup)

Our out-going President, Robert Leeming, drew business to a close with some final remarks. Robert has been a member for more years than he cared to remember, spending some of that time on the committee and holding the roles of treasurer and chairman. The role of President is largely honorary, commonly presenting awards and chairing the AGM because the committee has stood down pending the election. Presidents are also useful if there is a crisis, but Robert was pleased to report that he did not suffer this unfortunate experience! One of his legacies is the design of the society logo as seen on the newsletters, banners etc. He thanked Ivor for all his work as Chairman, conducting business with a light yet firm touch.

In recognition of their long service to our Society, Ivor presented Robert and Jennifer with an engraved trowel and flowers and we are sure that we shall continue to see them at our events.

The AGM was declared closed at 20.05 hrs and members then enjoyed Sue's excellent buffet, plus special 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary cupcakes, and lots of conversation.

## PROGRAMME FOR 2020

30 <sup>th</sup> January	Alun & Jill Whitehead – Hidden Gardens of Herefordshire
27 <sup>th</sup> February	Dr Andrew Ward – Plants that Excite
19 <sup>th</sup> March	Annual Dinner
26 <sup>th</sup> March	Kate MacRae – ‘Wildife Kate’
30 <sup>th</sup> April	Howard Drury – Buttercups in our Gardens?
28 <sup>th</sup> May	David Wood – A Master Thatcher
25 <sup>th</sup> June	Glyn Jones – Shakespeare’s Gardens
July	Annual Show Social Evening
August	No meeting
24 <sup>th</sup> September	Timothy Walker – The History of Oxford Botanic Garden
29 <sup>th</sup> October	Peter Dowle – Acers & Garden Design
26 <sup>th</sup> November	AGM & Buffet Supper
December	No meeting

## TOPICAL TIPS

### JANUARY

- Plan flower and vegetable borders for the forthcoming growing season.
- Seed catalogues are now available so that seeds can be ordered.
- Keep an eye on the greenhouse for blocked guttering, cracked glass, problems with any heating systems, and rodents.
- Get your mower and other mechanical garden equipment serviced. Continue to clean / oil other garden tools.
- Check stored fruit, vegetables and summer bulbs for rot.
- Spring flowering bulbs in pots can be encouraged into flowering by moving them into a cold frame, cold greenhouse or unheated conservatory or porch.
- Force rhubarb for young stalks in 6-8 weeks’ time, or plant new rhubarb crowns / divide old ones in open ground.
- Winter prune apple and pear trees, currant and gooseberry bushes, but leave plums and cherries to avoid silver leaf fungal infections.
- Plant bare root deciduous hedging plants and trees whilst the soil is damp, but not waterlogged or frozen.
- Dig over heavy soils and leave in clods for the frost to break down. Other finer soils can be mulched with compost to lock in moisture.
- Sow sweet pea seeds under heat. Those sown in the autumn may be pricked out into separate pots.
- Summer bedding seeds such as antirrhinums, petunias, violas may be sown under glass.
- Keep an eye on the welfare of garden birds and other wildlife in your garden.

## COMPETITIONS PAGE

### Guess the Birdie!

The RSPB run its annual Big Garden Birdwatch at the end of this month.  
To get you in the mood I have thought up some clues for 15 birds who may visit your garden.

Eg. Home is where my heart (nest!) is. (5, 7)      HOUSE SPARROW

1. A great favourite on Christmas cards. (5)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
2. Sometimes affectionately called 'Jenny'. (4)      \_ \_ \_ \_
3. A combination of celestial twinkling & another name for common heather. (8)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
4. 'One for sorrow, two for joy', so the theme tune of a 1970s children's TV Programme went. (6)  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
5. An old seaman, 'Jolly Jack Tar', at the door? (7)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
6. Am I fond of mistletoe? (6, 6)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
7. Apart from its beak, the male of this species is the colour of coal. (9)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
8. This little bird could be the colour of a clear summer sky. (4, 3)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
9. I hammer on wood. (10)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
10. This Lieutenant reached Number 1 singing 'Mouldy Old Dough' in 1972. (6)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
11. A melodic cousin of number 6. (4, 6)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
12. This crowd has lost its 'd'! (4)      \_ \_ \_ \_
13. Does this bird wear 'Five Gold Rings'? (9)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
14. My name suggests I spend time in the hedgerow. (5, 7)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
15. I begin with what is left after removing the grain from an ear of corn. (9)      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Don't forget to bring any outstanding answers for the November / December puzzle, as well as the above one, to the January meeting.

Please note that the Plant Pot plus Flower Stem competitions will resume at the January meeting, along with the Garden Sundries and Plant Sales tables.

## JAN 2020—SEASONAL RECIPE

This is a recipe to use up stored cooking apples and was kindly supplied by Barbara Money.

### Lise's Granny's Apple Pudding (serves 4 – 5)

1lb Cooking Apples

3oz Butter

2oz Ground Almonds

4oz Castor Sugar

1½ oz Breadcrumbs

1 Egg

Flaked Almonds to decorate top

1. Grease a 2pt ovenproof pudding dish.
2. Peel & slice apples thinly.
3. Cook apples or microwave with 1 tbsp. water until soft, then beat to a pulp.
4. Cream butter and sugar.
5. Mix in ground almonds, followed by the egg.
6. Mix in the breadcrumbs and apple pulp.
7. Place in the greased pudding dish.
8. Sprinkle top with flaked almonds.
9. Bake for 45mins in a moderate oven, 180 degrees centigrade or gas mark 4