**Balsall & District Horticultural Society**

**Annual General Meeting held on Zoom**

**Thursday 26 November 2020**

**Introduction**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions we were unable to hold our AGM in the Village Hall. The committee agreed that the only method of holding an AGM with members able to participate was on-line using the Zoom platform.

Prior to the meeting all reports were circulated to members along with voting slips to approve the Reports, the Accounts and for the Election of Officers and Committee members.

Any questions members had about the reports were to be sent into the committee prior to the meeting to be collated and answered in the meeting.

David Ashcroft opened the meeting by explaining how the meeting would proceed. He said there would be an open session at the end of the meeting for discussion. Ne had not received any questions from members. David then handed over to Ivor Stansfield to chair the meeting.

**Minutes**

Chairman, Ivor Stansfield, opened the meeting by welcoming members to this unusual AGM. He said that he was a complete novice to Zoom and apologised in advance if things went wrong.

**Apologies were received from** Laura Eden, David Hickson, Ruth Hickson and Sue Edwards

**Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 30th November 2019**: Approval of the minutes was proposed by Mary Cotterrell and seconded by Sue Timmis. All 26 members who submitted voting sheets by 4th December were in agreement.

Ivor then invited Helen Jones to present her Treasurer’s report.

**Treasurer’s report and accounts:** (see attached)

Helen began by thanking Mary Cotterrell for auditing the accounts. She referred members to her report and the financial report and highlighted a number of points. Compared to last year there appears to be a lot of money in the account, this is due to money held from the cancelled annual dinner and the holiday deposits. The dinner has been rebooked for 18 March 2021, covid-19 permitting. Expenses were down this year as the village hall bookings were not paid. She thanked members for receiving their newsletters by email which saved printing costs. We held a couple of meetings at the beginning of the year but income was down as there have not been any plant stalls. We are however hoping to have a plant sale in the spring and Gill Stansfield is still selling sundries.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Val Cotterrell, seconded by Ken Shaw and approved by all 26 members who submitted voting sheets by 4th December.

**Chairman’s report:** (see attached)

Ivor summarised his report. He thanked Sue Edwards and Alison Watson for organising the distribution of the daffodils for the annual dinner competition. He mentioned the nightmare Alison had had with rearranging speakers and organising them on Zoom for the first 3 in 2021. He thanked Helen for keeping members updated on the society and for entertaining us with her witticisms. He also congratulated her on being awarded the Banksian medal by the committee for her contribution to the club this year. David Ashcroft also received a big thank you for his guidance and tuition on Zoom. He thanked the rest of the committee for keeping in touch. He also reminded members that our new website was launched this year and hopes that it will attract new members. He thanked members for sending in their photographs. Subscriptions for next year have been suspended for existing members. Finally, Ivor mentioned the sad loss of a number of members this year; Brian Hitchens and Ann Clowes both of whom contributed a great deal to the club over the years and will be greatly missed, as will Nancy Felthouse and Melva Brown.

He concluded by expressing the hope that we get back to normality next year. Many people have told him how much they have missed the club.

**Election of Officers**

Chair: Ivor Stansfield

Treasurer: Helen Jones

Secretary: Angela Shaw

Internal Auditor: Mary Cotterrell

Proposed by Jan Ashcroft, seconded by Margaret Sears and approved by all 26 members who submitted voting sheets by 4th December.

**Election of Committee members**

Alison Watson Speakers

Barbara Money

David Ashcroft Show Secretary

David Cotterrell

Doug Timmis

Edward Cotterrell

Marion Keeley Newsletter

Pet Hawley

Sue Edwards

Proposed by Ken Shaw, seconded by Gill Stansfield and approved by all 26 members who submitted voting sheets by 4th December.

**Presidents closing remarks**

Ivor summarised Jackie Tomnie’s report (see attached) in which she expressed the hope that with the arrival of the vaccine things will get back to normal. She also thanked the committee for their work this year.

Ivor brought the meeting to a close.

Points raised in the open meeting following main agenda:

* Jennifer and Robert Leeming said they were grateful to Helen Jones for keeping in touch with members.
* Wendy Jenkinson said she thought the society is well organised but asked why the committee needed to be voted in each year. Angela explained that our constitution sets this out. Wendy offered to join the committee. She was proposed by David Cotterrell and seconded by Edward Cotterrell. Everyone on the Zoom platform approved it.
* Alison has organised for the first 3 meetings of 2021 to be on Zoom. Members will be sent the necessary link nearer the time.

33 members joined online for the meeting.

26 members submitted voting sheets either by post or electronically

Angela Shaw

Secretary

Dec 4 2020

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| **BALSALL & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY** |
| **Annual General Meeting November 26th 2020** |
| **Financial Report 1st November 2019 - 31st October 2020**  |
| **General Fund** | **2020.00** |  | *2019* |
| **Balance Previous Nov 1st** |  **£ 8,340.59**  |  |  *£7,923.02*  |
| **Income over Expenditure** |  **£ 3,022.25**  |  |  *£ 417.57*  |
| **Total funds at 31st October** |  **£ 11,362.84**  |  |  *£8,340.59*  |
| Represented by:  |  |  |  |
|  Bank Business Account  |  **£ 6,034.79**  |  |  *£6,025.81*  |
|  Bank Current Account |  **£ 5,197.77**  |  |  *£2,287.40*  |
|  Cash in Hand |  **£ 130.28**  |  |  *£ 27.38*  |
| **Income** |  |  |  |
| AGM  |  **£ 425.00**  |   |  *£ 350.00*  |
| Social Evenings ( includes raffle takings)  |  **£ -**  |  |  *£ 115.00*  |
| Annual Dinner (includes raffle takings) |  **£ 1,365.00**  |  |  *£1,899.50*  |
| Summer Show (includes raffle takings) |  **£ -**  |  |  *£ 733.69*  |
| Coach Trips |  **£ 850.00**  |  |  *£1,720.00*  |
| Monthly Raffles |  **£ 231.00**  |  |  *£ 746.50*  |
| Subscriptions & Visitors |  **£ 1,878.00**  |  |  *£1,954.00*  |
| Plant Sales |  **£ 34.00**  |  |  *£ 289.95*  |
| Bank Interest |  **£ 8.98**  |  |  *£ 12.00*  |
| Garden Sundries |  **£ 146.00**  |  |  *£ 290.80*  |
| Miscellaneous |  |  |  *£ 1.00*  |
| **Total Income** |  **£ 4,937.98**  |  |  *£8,112.44*  |
| **Expenditure** |  |  |  |
| AGM  |  **£ 374.00**  |  |  *£ 344.06*  |
| Spring/Summer Social Eves  |  **£ -**  |  |  *£ 103.40*  |
| Annual Dinner |  **£ 187.59**  |  |  *£1,808.92*  |
| Summer Show |  **£ 118.14**  |  |  *£ 715.54*  |
| Coach Trips  |  **£ 220.00**  |  |  *£1,687.00*  |
| Monthly Raffles  |  **£ 53.00**  |  |  *£ 241.94*  |
| Speakers |  **£ 346.00**  |  |  *£1,249.50*  |
| Hire of Village Hall |  **£ 80.00**  |  |  *£ 400.00*  |
| Refreshments |  **£ 20.00**  |  |  *£ 75.00*  |
| Postage & Stationery |  **£ 68.00**  |  |  *£ 178.00*  |
| Printing |  **£ 125.00**  |  |  *£ 275.00*  |
| RHS Public Liability Ins |  **£ 86.00**  |  |  *£ 86.00*  |
| RHS Affiliation |  **£ 39.00**  |  |  *£ 39.00*  |
| Donations to Charity |  **£ -**  |  |  *£ 100.00*  |
| Garden Sundries |  **£ 139.00**  |  |  *£ 276.51*  |
| Miscellaneous |  **£ 60.00**  |  |  *£ 115.00*  |
| **Total Expenditure** |  **£ 1,915.73**  |  |  *£7,694.87*  |
| **Total Income** |  **£ 4,937.98**  |  |  *£8,112.44*  |
| **Income over Expenditure** |  **£ 3,022.25**  |  |  *£ 417.57*  |
| Helen Jones 31.10.20 |  |  |  |

*Treasures Report BDHS AGM 26th November 2020*

*Well not quite the year we had planned for the society..*

*The year began well with 134 members paying their subs for the year. Slightly down on last year as we always lose a few at the beginning of each year, then normally gather a few new members throughout the year. With their being nothing normal about this year we haven't had the opportunity to interest new members, though saying that we have one new member Henry Plumptre who we look forward to meeting and Ann Dymond who is just about to sign up.*

*At the moment we are holding quite a bit of the members money, dinner tickets were sold before the dinner was sadly cancelled. 65 lots of ticket money is still being held by the society; members have asked us to hold on to the money in anticipation for next year’s dinner on March 18th fingers crossed this will go ahead.*

*Also, a holiday to Cornwall was organised, we had lots of interest and we are still holding 17 deposits. I also had more deposits in the form of cheques that weren't banked before the lock down, I decided not to bank these in case I had to refund the monies. I will be in touch with these people as soon as we get the go ahead to rebook the holiday. Don't worry your place is safe on the list.*

*The expenses incurred on trips are deposits for coaches and 1 garden all these can be carried forward.*

*Our running expenses for the year are down as you would expect. Thank you to Jackie for refunding our hire fee for the village hall and as we have not been sending out a paper newsletter, we haven't had the expense of printing and postage. The newsletter will resume with the meetings.*

*Gill has managed to sell quite a few pairs of gloves if you need any please contact her on 01676 533934*

*As we have decided to let existing members have 2 years for the price of one on their membership, we are planning to hold plant sales at the village hall if we can't have physical meetings to help raise funds for the society. Please pot up any spare plants you have to help with these sales.*

*I expect next year’s accounts to show a big loss which should balance out what looks like a big profit this year.*

*CHAIRMAN’S REPORT*

*2020 AGM*

*First of all, welcome to everyone who has joined us for the AGM Meeting via Zoom.*

*There is a saying “You don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone” and the few members I have met this year have said how much they miss the Club meetings. It is said that gardening is good for health and wellbeing and I’m sure everyone would agree our gardens and allotments have been our saviour this year more than ever.*

*Although the Club has been inactive this year your committee has been keeping the Club ticking over. Thank you to Sue Edwards, Alison Watson for giving out the daffodils for next year’s dinner competition.*

*Particular thanks to: -*

*Alison Watson – for the nightmare of cancelling and re-booking the speakers for next year.*

*Helen Jones – for keeping us entertained with her gardening reports and all the work she put in arranging a holiday for us, which I hope can go ahead next year.*

*David Ashcroft – for guiding us all through using Zoom and all his support.*

*All the rest of the Committee – thank you for keeping in touch via email.*

*A couple of things I can report on is the launch of our excellent new website, so thank you to Judy Lambourne who set it up for us. Also, a big thank you to all the members who sent photos in of their gardens. The Committee have decided to suspend subscriptions for 2021 due to the inactivity of the Club this year but of course any new members will be required to pay.*

*Finally, it is with great sadness I have to report the deaths of three keen members this year; Nancy Felthouse, Melva Brown, and Ann Clowes, Ann was still on the society committee after many years, her knowledge of plants encyclopaedic, her beautiful garden we visited for social evenings and the trips she organised inspiring. As for Nancy's flowers... This year has bought much heartache and loss. And on behalf of the Club, may I say we will miss them greatly.*

*To everyone, if we get back to normality next year, I think the Club will be appreciated by our members even more and will become more popular than ever.*

*Thank you*

*Ivor*

 *13th. November 2020.*

*President’s Report*

*First of all, my apologies to the committee and all our members for not presiding over this*

*Meeting tonight. Although I have used computers for over 25 years, I did not feel my tech*

*Expertise was enough to tackle presiding over this meeting via Zoom, without making a complete hash of it.*

*My thanks to Ivor for standing in for me. I shall be watching and learning!*

*It goes without saying that the last year has been the most challenging any of us can ever remember,*

*And we are lucky that our committee have risen to the challenges in keeping in touch with members*

*Despite the lockdowns and the severe limitations imposed on our freedoms to meet and socialise.*

*Sadly, we have lost several longstanding members this year – Brian Hitchens whose impact on shaping the Society is still in evidence; Ann Clowes a dedicated committee member whose extensive knowledge of all things horticultural will be missed by many; Nancy Felthouse who regularly entered our monthly competitions; and longstanding members Pam Ellis and Melva Brown.*

*So, we now need to look forward to the coming year, and hope that the worst of the Covid 19 impact*

*Is over and that gradually over the next six months life will gradually get back to pre Covid normal.*

*As with all challenging times, there are little glimpses of upsides, and surely one of the biggest upsides for all horticultural societies is the huge increase in the numbers of people discovering for the first time the attraction of gardening. With garden centres closed during the first lockdown,*

*Gardeners turned to online buying with one online plant store reporting a 500% increase in its sales*

*During the first lockdown. Demand for allotments reached an all-time high, and the RHS reported a 500% increase in the younger generation accessing its website. This is a big opportunity for all horticultural societies to consider how they can take advantage of this surge in interest to bolster their membership, and ultimately their committees.*

*The early part of next year will continue to be challenging, as it will take some time for all of the current rules to be relaxed, to enable our society to fully get back to its monthly meetings, coach trips, and dare I say the holiday that had to be cancelled. The successful introduction of vaccines will*

*Hasten our path to exiting the Covid restrictions and I personally will welcome the abolishing of the 30 people maximum in the Village Hall, which will be the first step back to normal. I am sure we all look forward to that.*

*On behalf of all the members, I thank the current committee for all their hard work over the last eight months in steering our horticultural ship though these turbulent times, and we all look forward*

*To stepping out into the light at the end of this Covid tunnel in 2021.*