**Balsall & District Horticultural Society**

**7.30pm Thursday 30th November 2023**

**AGM Minutes**

Our President Jackie Tomnie opened the meeting and welcomed members.

**Apologies** were received from Jennifer and Robert Leeming, Jane Lynch, Val Martin and Julia Greensall

**The Minutes** of AGM held on Thursday 24 November 2022 had previously been circulated to members. Wendy Jenkinson proposed they be accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Alison Watson. All were in favour. There were no matters arising.

**Treasurer's report presented by Helen Jones**

Copies of the financial report for 1 November 2022 to 31 October were distributed to members. Helen said that the club had had a good year having recovered financially from the Covid problems. Members’ generosity in buying raffle tickets, plants and supporting the plant sale ensured that there was money to pay for good speakers. It also enabled us to support charities like FastAid and the Air Ambulance and a donation to the Lady Katherine Leveson School for gardening equipment. Helen thanked Mary Cotterrell our auditor for her continued support.

Proposer for acceptance of report Marion Keeley, seconded by Ken Shaw and all were in favour.

**Chairman's report: Wendy Jenkinson**

Wendy said that the good attendance at our meetings and events shows that we have a thriving society. The weather this year has brought many challenges to gardeners. This though has not deterred members entering the monthly competitions in the hall, at the annual Show and donating plants for our Sale in May. She noted the wide variety of superb speakers we have listened to this year.

Besides our monthly meetings, the Committee organised a plant sale in May which was very well supported, a day trip to Waterperry and Adwell Gardens in Oxfordshire on a very hot June day, our social evening at Newlands Bishop Farm, Catherine de Barnes and an excellent Annual show in July.

Behind every successful Society is a hardworking and dedicated Committee and Wendy thanked them all for all their support this year:-

Helen Jones – for her enthusiasm, commitment and positive attitude, her continuing generosity such as offering the ‘party barn’ for flower arranging class in the summer and Christmas wreath making next week, growing seeds for the May sale as well as managing our finances and helping Ann with the Show this year.

Alison Watson – for searching out our excellent speakers by visiting shows, events and other garden groups and coming up trumps with such interesting people from different horticultural backgrounds. Also for the seasonal plant displays, photos and information at our monthly meetings. Alison also sources the spring bulbs for us to grow ready for the March competition,

Ann Fenton – for being a very efficient Show Secretary, full of enthusiasm and bringing new ideas. Ann also produces our Newsletter which is full of gardening tips, reports of garden visits, recipes and garden related facts.

Angela Shaw – for finding out about gardens for us to visit, planning and organising our trips, taking minutes and supporting the Committee without being asked.

Doug Timmins – for giving guidance and advice and especially starting the 'ball rolling' with communicating with the BBC over many months this year regarding Gardeners Question Time. I can now confirm that through his sheer determination on Doug’s part, this is confirmed for February 2024.

Marion Keeley – for her constant support, advice and becoming the link with Lady Katherine School in Temple Balsall. We look forward to the children from the school entering the art competition at our Show next year.

Pet Hawley – for her commitment and help with the catering at our events and serving refreshments at our monthly meetings and creative ideas and suggestions.

Edward Cotterrell – for giving his constant support and advice and sourcing the plug plants for our Annual Show.

David Cotterrell who has retired from the Committee this year and is already missed.

Maggie Smith – our newest recruit on the Committee, who is on hand to support and help whatever the occasion.

There were also some special 'Thank yous’:

- Jackie Tomnie for being our President for the past 4 years – for her help and support. Jackie was presented with flowers and a Garden gift token.

-Gill Stansfield for coming to all our monthly meetings selling garden sundries. Gill was presented with flowers as she is handing over the role to Maggie Smith.

-Margaret Sears – who is always on hand to help and give support at our events and selling our raffle tickets.

-Mary Cotterrell – our internal auditor for our accounts.

- A special thank you to Helen Moore and Helen Jones for preparing the delicious buffet.

Wendy is already looking forward to 2024 and anticipating more excellent speakers, our 75th Annual Show in July, a trip to visit gardens in the summer and hosting Gardeners Question Time on Tuesday 13 February. She asked members to come and support these events and bring friends along too.

She finished by saying thank you to the members for their support this past year and looks forward a positive and Happy New Year.

**Election of Officers**

President: Edward Cotterrell Proposer: Alison Watson

 Seconded by: Maggie Smith All in favour

Chair: Wendy JenkinsonProposer: David Cotterrell

 Seconded by: Marion Keeley All in favour

Treasurer: Helen Jones Proposer: Celia Davis

 Seconded by: Pet Hawley All in favour

Secretary: Angela ShawProposer: Doug Timmis

 Seconded by: Felicity Hill All in favour

Internal Auditor: Mary CotterrellProposer: Helen Jones

 Seconded by: Pet Hawley All in favour

**Election of Committee members**. Standing for re-election are:

 Ann Fenton Alison Watson Marion Keeley

 Pet Hawley Maggie Smith Doug Timmis Proposer: Marlene Jolley

Seconded by: Val Cotterrell All in favour

**Jackie and Wendy presented certificates to winners of the cups at 2023 Members' Show**:

Deeley Challenge Cup Edward Cotterrell

Maisy Challenge Cup Helen Jones

David Ashcroft Award Margaret Sears

Pot plant Cup Edward Cotterrell

Society Cup Alison Watson

Heart of England Trophy David Cotterrell

Balsall Trophy Don Lawrence

Wilkins Challenge Cup Alison Watson

Southfield Geranium Cup Edward Cotterrell

Novice Award Jane Bostock

RHS Banksian Medal Barry Clarke

Balsall Challenge Cup Pet Hawley

Challenge Cup Edward Cotterrell

**Presentation of Recognition Award by Ann Fenton**

David and Val have been members of BDHS since about 1996 and David has been on the committee for many years and is one of our past chairmen. A very active member, he has rarely missed a meeting or outing and is a lively, experienced and valued contributor to all of our ventures.

David’s involvement with horticulture started at an early age, he grew up on a farm and has spent much of his working life on farms – so you could say that agriculture and horticulture are in his blood.

Over the years David has expanded on his naturally acquired knowledge, attending classes, visiting many gardens (those with tea and cake on offer are especially appealing!) and supporting local societies and events - in Fillongley, Meriden and Wroxall as well as in Balsall Common

David has long been one of the stewards at our Annual Show, a role he enjoys even if he doesn’t always agree with the judges’ decisions! He has recently become one of the judges at the Wroxall Show.

Of course when it comes to our Annual Show, David is also an active exhibitor and there is certainly some element of sibling rivalry at work here as he and Edward spur each other on to enter as many vegetable and pot plant classes as possible to see who will triumph.

David’s love of all things horticulture is evident to all who meet him. He has an extensive and comprehensive knowledge which encompasses almost everything you would want to know about the flowers, shrubs, fruit and vegetables that we can tend in our gardens. His own garden and allotment are an inspiration and many a visitor has been welcomed with tea and left with a beautiful addition for their own garden.

He may do less nowadays but there is no such thing as a retired gardener…and in David’s case we wouldn’t want there to be.

When we were considering this year’s RHS Recognition Award, a common theme in the feedback we got was just how much help and advice he has given to his fellow horticulturalists – gardeners, show exhibitors and allotmenteers alike.

So, from all of us – thankyou David.

**President's closing remarks: Jackie**

2023 saw a return to the pre Covid normality of our meetings, with a full house of members to our

Meetings, our coach trip and coffee evening and we look forward to continuing this for our 2024 programme.

 Again the weather over the last year has been challenging with cool temperatures and drought followed by hot sunshine and monsoon rains which brought an explosion of weeds never before witnessed. Conditions were not good in the run up to our Flower Show in July, but once again we had a magnificent show despite quite a lot of rain on the day. So well done to everyone who entered and congratulations to all those who won prize cards.

Alison has once again worked very hard to put together a wide range of speakers for 2024, but if there is a topic that you would like addressed then do have a chat to Alison or one of the other committee members.

The Society is fortunate in having a very hard working committee – a lot of work goes on behind the scenes and additional pairs of hands are always necessary especially for our Flower Show in July, and our coffee evening in the summer. And in February 2024 we are once against hosting the BBC Programme GARDENERS’ QUESTION TIME and if you are able I would like to encourage you to volunteer for the many jobs that will need doing for this evening to be a great success. Thanks go to Doug Timmis for all the time he has put in in dealing with the BBC over quite a long period of time to finally get this evening into our programme.

If joining the committee is a step too far for you at the moment, then do think about offering to help on an Ad hoc basis – your input will be greatly appreciated. So, many thanks to our hard working committee members for all the effort they have put in over the last year.

And as we look forward to 2024, on behalf of the committee I would like to thank all of you - the members – for all of your support during the year - the success of the club at the end of the day is down to the members themselves. So thank you very much for all your support.

**Date of next AGM**: 28th November 2024