

LINDFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

www.lindfieldhorts.org.uk

Winter Newsletter 2014

Editorial

Welcome to the winter edition of the newsletter which contains the formal notice of the AGM, your agenda and relevant papers. So if you are thinking of attending, and I hope that you are, please remember to print them off **as copies will not be available on the night**, and remember that the meeting starts at **7.30pm**, with the talk (“A Celebration of Wild Flowers”) following on shortly afterwards.

Also to be found at the end of the newsletter is a nomination form to use if you would like to join the committee or undertake one of the officer’s roles. We have vacancies on the committee and the post of show superintendent is also vacant. So please give serious consideration to putting yourself forward to join us. If you do not know anyone to propose and/or second you, do not worry just contact me (Martin Higgins, 484120 or martin.lindfield@btinternet.com) and I will sort it out. We also need someone to organise the raffle for us as Sally McBirney is giving up this role as from the AGM. You do not need to be on the committee to undertake this role although you would be very welcome to serve on it if you would like to.

What a lovely summer and early autumn we have been able to enjoy. Some flowers have come and gone very early as a consequence but others have basked in the dry warm conditions My salvias have been very good with *Salvia “Jezebel”* really showing off her cherry red blooms, but then with a name like that so she should! To contrast with their cherry red I have planted in front of them that relatively low growing (20cm x 30cm) euphorbia, *Euphorbia hypericifolia* 'Diamond Frost'. This has clouds of tiny white flowers which first appear in the spring and keep going, rather like the salvia, through any early frosts so long as they are not too severe.

Another plant I am particularly pleased to have been able to enjoy this year is *Nicotiana mutabilis*. This has branching stems which throughout the summer and early autumn have a mass of one inch flowers. These start out as pure white, and then progressively change through a palette of shades passing through pale pink on their way to being magenta; and soon after it starts flowering the full range of colours are displayed all at the same time. The floral display gradually builds up like the best orchestral crescendos until you are able to enjoy a billowing mass of blooms. Best planted in full sun it grows to 100cm to 150cm tall and is half hardy. It is difficult to find them to buy as plants, so it is best to grow it from seed. I bought the latter from Great Dixter, but it can be found in most good seed merchants catalogues. But one word of caution, do not be impatient if it takes a

little while to germinate, for I have found that sometimes it is reasonably quick, but at other times it refuses to be hurried.

Rosemary reports on the Autumn Show below, so all I will do is congratulate all our exhibitors. There were certainly a lot of visitors; it must have been one, if not the, busiest show ever.

Autumn Show Report

This was a diverse show with entries in a wide range of classes, showing how versatile our gardeners are. We expect dahlias to be the most dramatic exhibits at this time of year and they lived up to expectations. There was a variety of traditional colours but the almost black varieties shown by Gill Jones and Debbie Anscombe attracted comment too. Michael Figg won the Dahlia Members' cup and was the only entrant in the Dahlia Championship cup with three cultivars.

Fuchsias also figured strongly with a new class for fuchsia blooms floating in a bowl proving very popular. The special class for cuttings of fuchsia Paul Pini purchased at the Spring Show was won by Martin Higgins. This did not seem as popular as last year's Celia Smedley. Last year's plants had obviously done well as there were plenty of Celia Smedley blooms to be seen in the single flower classes. Ann Higgins won the Harry Tester cup for a flowering pot plant with a perfect white orchid while Christine Naested won first prize in the foliage plant class with a really frilly heuchera.

It wouldn't be an autumn show without pumpkins. Ian Cooper's had the largest circumference – even if the weather this year had produced a rather wrinkled skin. The squash category is proving very popular, with 11 entries but once again Chris Gurr's Italian Marina di Chioggia caught the judge's eye over all those ordinary butternuts.

Other vegetables did not disappoint. Alan Smith's collection, including some outstanding carrots and leeks, won him the Massey-Dawson cup while Tim Richardson's long parsnips contributed to his success for the Helena Hall cup. Along with the more traditional vegetables, chillies are now a regular feature of the autumn show, along with peppers and aubergines. All of these were shown both as plants and individual exhibits.

It was great to see two new entrants, even better to see them winning prizes. Andrea Fall won a number of categories and her plate of cherry tomatoes was judged Best Vegetable while Alex Armstrong's enormous raspberries were awarded Best Fruit.

Michael Elliott won the LHS Runner Bean Race with his five beans making the longest line. Visitors were admiring the length of the beans in this class, but commenting less favourably on whether or not they would like to eat them! Andrew Harding won the Ron Pickett trophy for the most points over the year in the trug class, his entry this time was a large trug packed with flowers and veg –

from roses to beetroots.

The chocolate Victoria sponge class produced plenty of entries – is this the “Bake Off effect”? The judge said it was a difficult decision but the very flat top and delicious filling gave first prize and Best in Show to Jocasta Fearn. Only one entry for the lemon tart but Glenise Buck’s elegant creation drew a lot of comments. There were few handicraft entries – maybe everyone is too busy gardening in the summer. Maureen Manly’s elegant knitted snood was awarded Best in Show.

The special flower arranging class to link with the Arts Festival, for a design based on Peter Voigt’s violin shop, was won by Barbara Hoy. She produced an ingenious design incorporating a violin, a bow and packets of violin strings. Clare Wilson’s All Hallows Eve display included a pumpkin with flashing lights.

The children’s colourful piñatas were admired and their photographs of a garden ‘B’. Most chose butterflies apart from Florence Fearn-Hughes, who had a bee. ‘Endangered species’ ranged from a red squirrel to a black and white lemur! The judges commented on the high quality of the exhibits while the visitors did the same for the cakes in the tea room!

Rosemary Humphreys

Autumn Show Results

The Bob Lacy Salver	Jocasta Fearn
The Massey-Dawson Cup	Alan Smith
The Helena Hall Cup	Tim Richardson
The Dahlia Members Cup	Michael Figg
The Huddart Cup	Richard Hilson
The Dahlia Cup	Michael Figg
The Penney Cup	Barbara Hoy
The Harry Tester Cup	Ann Higgins
Kieron James Toys Shield	Florence Fearn-Hughes
The Junior Shield	Emily Sutlow
The LHS Pumpkin Cup	Ian Cooper

Best in Show

Vegetable	Andrea Fall
Fruit	Alex Armstrong
Pot Plant	Martin Higgins
Cookery	Jocasta Fearn
Handicraft	Maureen Manly

LHS Annual Cups and Awards 2014

The Lady Wilkinson Silver Tray	Lorelei Hilson
The Morecombe White Cup	Annette Page
The Proctor Cup	Michael Elliott
The Shepherd Cup	Michael Elliott

The Ron Pickett Trophy
The LHS Perpetual Shield
The Shepherd Perpetual Shield
Pat Whetstone

Andrew Harding
Liam Jolly
Emily Sutlow

Wittypitts Dahlias in Turners Hill

I am grateful to Brian Tester for drawing my attention to the recent article in Sussex Life about Wittypitts Dahlias in Turners Hill, and I have to admit never having heard of them before. Their main business is selling cut flowers and they devote one and a half acres to doing so. Here is what they say about themselves on their website (www.withypitts-dahlias.co.uk):

“Following 2 full seasons of marketing our cut flowers at New Covent Garden Flower Market we have gained a reputation for growing top quality, exhibition standard premium blooms that are highly sought after. They are used by the top UK flower designers in their work for corporate clients, big events and in the Historic Royal Palaces. We also send these blooms to florists country wide using a specialist courier.

We take great care raising our plants using top quality - and locally sourced - John Innes composts. These provide the young dahlias with well drained compost with the balance of nutrients that young, tender plants require. We do not use multi-purpose or all-purpose composts and strongly advise our customers not to use them. This is because they contain materials that we believe are harmful to our young, tender, recently rooted cuttings.

We do not sell mini plants beyond the middle of April as a general rule as we do not believe it provides enough time for the plant to reach sufficient size by the time they should be planted out. Planting too small a plant will result in late blooming. Our cut flowers are from the same stock as the plants which we sell to our customers. It is encouraging that there are now many florists actively seeking British grown flowers, it is now up to consumers to be demanding the same from their florist!”

During the flowering season they are open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday for the sale of cut flower from 10 o' clock to 12:30 and 2:30 until 5 o' clock, and at other times by arrangement. They also hold open days which this year were on Saturday 23rd August and Saturday 13th September. Although these dates have now passed it might be worth bearing in mind next year for if you like Dahlias one and a half acres of them in full flower should be rather spectacular.

Lindfield Horticultural Society

(Affiliated to the R.H.S.)

Please reply to: -
39 Dukes Road
Lindfield
West Sussex RH16 2JQ

Tel: 01444 484120

Email: martin.lindfield@btinternet.com

October 2014

Notice is hereby given that the **Annual General Meeting** of the above named Society will be held on Wednesday the 12th November 2014 at 7.30pm in the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

AGENDA

- 1) Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence
- 2) Minutes of the 2013 AGM (attached below)
- 3) Matters arising
- 4) To consider the Chairman's report for the year 2013/2014 (attached below)
- 5) To adopt the Statement of Accounts for the Year ending the 30th September 2014 (to be laid round)
- 6) Election of Chairman
- 7) Election of Officers: -
Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer
Show Superintendent, Show Secretary
Flower Arranging Steward, Catering
Supervisor, Sundries Centre Supervisor
- 8) Election of a Committee of not more than nine members
- 9) Appointment of an Examiner
- 10) Appointment of Vice-President
The Committee are recommending to the meeting that Mrs Alison Elliott be appointed as a Vice-President of the Society in recognition of her lengthy and distinguished service
- 11) Any Other Business

Martin Higgins
Acting Honorary Secretary

N.B. - Nominations for Chairman, Officers or Membership of the Committee should be made on the following form and must reach the Honorary Secretary by Wednesday 6th November 2013

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NOMINATION FORM

I propose the appointment of:

.....

as..... of the Society for the
forthcoming Year.

Signature.....Address.....

.....

.....

I second the proposal

Signature.....Address.....

.....

.....

If appointed I am willing to serve as.....

Signature.....Address.....

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Lindfield Horticultural Society

(Affiliated to the R.H.S.)

Minutes of the AGM of the Society held on the 13th November 2013 in the King Edward Hall.

- 1) The Chairman, Martin Higgins opened the meeting and welcomed the Members attending.
Apologies for Absence were received from Glenise Buck, Ralph and Betty Lloyd Williams, Richard and Lorelei Hilson, Chris Gurr, Malcom Springall, Judith and Mike Eggers and Phyllis Leen.
- 2) **Minutes of the meeting of the 2011 AGM** were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by John Stephens and seconded by Neal McNamara.
- 3) **Matters Arising.** There were no matters arising.
- 4) **The Chairman's Report** Martins' report had been circulated with the other papers for the AGM so he did not go over it again but he added his special thanks to Joyce Gladwell and Anne Peters for their work with the membership. He also thanked Sandra Huggett who had taken over maintaining the database of members and the sending out of e-mails which had made his life easier. The report was accepted by the meeting proposed by Pat Hardman and seconded by Audrey Kite
- 5) **The Treasurer** Michael presented the accounts for the year to 30th September which showed a surplus of £167 but an improvement over 2011/12 of £1044. There were two main reasons, the increase in entry fees at all events and the reduction in the costs of engraving, cup purchase and repair which had been exceptionally high in the previous year. The Society was still in a healthy position with over £8000 in the bank and over £5000 of stock. The Accounts had again been examined by Malcolm Springall and were found to be acceptable, although he wished it pointed out that our fixed assets, which were still in use would at some stage in the future need to be replaced and therefore that a substantial bank balance was essential. The financial statement was accepted by the meeting proposed by Neal McNamara and seconded by Neville Humphreys
- 6) **Election of Chairman** David Hobbs then took the Chair. He thanked everybody for coming and apologised for his absence last year due to ill health however he was very pleased to be back in good health and working on the farm again. He praised the nurses at the PRH and his family for all they had done for him. He then mentioned that Alison Elliott was standing down as Secretary and he thanked her for all her work. There being no other Nominees for Chairman Martin Higgins was reappointed.
- 7) **Election of Officers.** The following Officers were elected on block proposed by Ann Higgins and seconded by Wendy Dumbleton:

Vice-Chairman	Rosemary Humphreys
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Michael Elliott
Show Secretary	Pat Whetstone
Sundries Centre Supervisor	Noreen Smith

The position of Catering Supervisor would be filled by Debbie Anscombe assisted by Audrey Kite. The positions of Flower Arranging Steward and Show Superintendent also remained vacant. (Although Richard Hilson covered Shows whenever he was able)

- 8) **Election of the Committee.** The following Committee were elected: Sheila Hobbs, Anne Marsden, Sally McBirney (Raffles), Tracey Adams and Heather Martin proposed by Gill Jones and seconded by Carolyn Nurse. It was also noted that Wendy Dumbleton (Talks) and Rose Mortenson (outings) would assist the Society but would not be on the Committee.
- 9) **Appointment of Examiner.** The Treasurer thanked Malcolm Springall for his work as examiner and agreeing to undertake the job again, he was duly elected proposed by Michael Elliott and seconded by Neal McNamara.
- 10) **Any Other Business**

The Chairman then thanked Rose and Wendy who had both worked extremely hard for the Society this year. He also thanked Audrey Kite and stated how grateful the Committee were for all the help they received without which it would be extremely difficult to run the Society. Alison Elliott was presented with a bouquet of flowers to thank her for her work on the Committee for the past 13 years, and Martin thanked her for all her hard work.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 7.43pm.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT for 2013/14

Once again the LHS has had a diverse programme of well supported activities.

Wendy Dumbleton seems to provide us with a never ending rota of excellent speakers for our talk's programme. I sometimes wonder if she grows them in her garden, but if she is she is not telling me. Although it is difficult and unfair to try and pick highlights, I and many others were surprised at how interesting Clive Gravett was when telling us all about Heucheras. It was also reassuring to hear him say that there is more than one "accepted" way of pronouncing their name. Many members also enjoyed the talk on the important work of the Camelia Botnar Foundation, and it seemed as if more questions were asked of the speaker afterwards than for all the other talks put together. Another talk which resulted in many favourable comments was our own Richard Hilson's on Growing and Showing Dahlias, and judging by the number of fine dahlia exhibits in our recent Autumn Show members put his advice to good use.

Rose Mortenson's coach trips were very popular and she organised four for us, although the last one to see the autumn colour at Winkworth Arboretum falls outside the period covered by this report. However I very much enjoyed the trip linking Clandon Park with Ramster Gardens, the latter was a real discovery for many members, your chairman included. Next up was a trip to Marle Place and Great Dixter, which provided an interesting contrast in which the former more than held its own, and was a good contrast to its justly famous big brother. The third outing was a joint one with the Lindfield Club to the Hampton Court Flower Show. For this Rose managed to defy the weather forecasters and kept the rain away.

The Sundries Centre continued to offer high quality products at very competitive prices thanks to Noreen Smith and her team. There were the usual coffee morning and plant sales which are always enjoyable occasions and the plants stand on Village Day was well supported. The Christmas Social is regarded by many as the highlight of Lindfield's social calendar; its success being securely based on Alison Elliott's guiding hand and her ever willing band of helpers.

Our own three shows continue to be the centre of our activities and were very well supported. Bearing in mind the extremely wet winter and early spring that we experienced I was amazed at the number and quality of the exhibits in the Spring Show. The King Edward Hall was a sea of yellow with all the daffodils, not to mention all the other fine exhibits. Debbie Anscombe this year took over the overall responsibility for all our catering activities with the exception of the Christmas Social. If I say that she maintained her predecessor's (Audrey Kite) high standards, no higher praise can be given.

Being able to deliver such a large and diverse programme of activities is only possible due to the support and hard work of the committee and our band of helpers. To you all I say a heartfelt thank you. In addition to those named above I

would like to particularly thank our Treasurer, Michael Elliott. It may say Treasurer “on the label” but Michael is very much more than that; he is the very heart of the Society and he is unsparing in giving his time to the LHS. So a big thank you from us all Michael. I would also like to thank Sally McBirney for her service on the committee and for having run the raffle so successfully for us.

Martin Higgins