

LINDFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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Winter Newsletter 2015

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 (“An Annual Challenge {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. I am pleased to be able to report that someone will be standing for the post of chairman, but the following are still urgently in need of being filled:

Vice Chairman
Secretary
Show Superintendent
Show Steward
Sundries Centre Supervisor

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 still need someone to help organise the raffle for us and although you do not need to be on the committee to undertake this role, you would be very welcome to serve on it if you would like to.

The committee have started to review our activities to help ensure that the Society is attractive to a modern membership. It is very easy to just carry on year after year doing the same things, but is this what you want, is this why many local residents do not join us? We are not seeking change for changes sake, and it may well be that our core activities do remain unchanged. But we want to be sure that the reason why our membership numbers have started to drift down is not because we do not offer residents what they want.

Attached to the newsletter is a simple questionnaire which we hope that most of you will take the time to complete and return. We want to have a good response as the views of our members about what we do, how we do it, and what we might do in the future are very important to us.

Financial Future of the Society

Unfortunately we cannot publish this year's accounts with the notice of meeting as they have not, as yet, been passed by the Examiner; but you will be pleased to know that we have made another few hundred pounds surplus in the year. However cost's, especially printing are rising and our membership is falling and we will not be able to attract good speakers without increasing the fee which we are prepared to offer. It is therefore my opinion, as your Treasurer, that we should plan for the future. There is no need for any immediate action as we have more than £10,000 in reserve and are still of course in surplus. I would however like to discuss at the AGM increasing the entry charge to talks from January 2016 and increasing the annual subscription from the 1st October 2016. I would also be grateful to receive any suggestions for fund raising or increasing membership. You will be aware from the editorial above that the committee is actively looking at ways of achieving the latter.

Michael Elliott

Autumn Show Report

The Autumn Show is in many ways a celebration of the horticultural year, and with so many fine and varied entries you might think it was difficult to pick a star exhibit. But this year it was not, because Ian Cooper's pumpkin, in the pumpkin with the largest circumference class, was so large that the judge could not get a tape round it! In fact it took four tough men to lift it out of the wheelbarrow in which it was delivered to the Kind Edward Hall, which is not surprising as it weighed 159lbs (72.2 kgs)! David Adams and Richard Watson had entered pumpkins which were huge and came second and third respectively, but Ian's looked as if it had literally dropped in from another planet and caused many gasps of amazement from our visitors.

Another large exhibit was Jacqui Essen's pepper plant which needed a step ladder if you wanted to inspect the top of it. And I am not sure what it is about Lindfield, but our members do provide some surprises, as a previously undiscovered Henry Moore was unveiled at the show. On closer examination it turned out to be Betty Page's winning potato entered in the most misshapen or humorous vegetable class, accompanied by Neal McNamara's runner bean shaped like a question mark and Chris Gurr's line of three "duck" potatoes which looked as if they had just come off Lindfield Pond.

Michael Fig displayed two pots of statuesque begonias and Richard Hilson showed five very superior looking, perfectly matched, purple pompom dahlias. Janis Dyer had five very symmetrical cooking apples, and not to be out done, Peter and Liz Hinze had five matching dessert apples. Joyce Gladwell showed a

dish of very autumnal looking *Physalis “franchetii”* (Chinese Lanterns) which with a light inside them would adorn any Christmas tree.

In the grasses class, Sue Stockwell had a very balletic and graceful looking display which provided an apt contrast to Jocasta Fearn’s spectacular sky reaching one. George Adams displayed a pot of the rarely seen orchid *Gongora galeata* (apparently it has flowers which only last two days) but the class winner was a lovely more traditional orchid shown by Alison and Michael Elliott. Debbie Anscombe had some wonderful dahlias for us all to admire and it was no surprise that she won two cups for them.

Who would be a judge when you have to decide between Jim Stockwell’s wonderful bunch of *Black Hamburg* grapes, and nine beautifully balanced *Loch Ness* blackberries – the grapes won. In complete contrast, Colin Brunt had the heaviest marrow which was not only extremely heavy but as straight as a ramrod. Andrea Fall had created a winning trug which was a visual and culinary delight. Lorelei Hilson showed a knitted scarf and hat for a child in the handicraft section, which would not have looked out of place in a certain Knightsbridge store. In the juniors section Daniel Blackstock’s winning photograph of my favourite vegetable told us all that he likes potatoes, and it won him the Junior Cup. Four delicious looking gingerbread squares won Margaret Wells the “Best in Cookery” award; and Joyce Gladwell’s jar of crab apple jelly was a winner amongst the jams. Lindfield’s shows always produce some amazing floral art, and this show was no exception. Jacque Essen won “Best in Floral Art” with her representation of “fireworks” which really gave us the pyrotechnical works. Then just along the floral art show bench Jeff Essen, wanting to keep things in the family, stunned us with his display depicting “a jewel”, the best floral art miniature I have ever seen.

<u>L.H.S. AUTUMN SHOW CUPS AND AWARDS 2015</u>	
THE BOB LACEY SALVER	COLIN BRUNT
THE MASSEY-DAWSON CUP	IAN COOPER
THE HELENA HALL CUP	MICHAEL & ALISON ELLIOTT
THE DAHLIA MEMBERS CUP	DEBBIE ANSCOMBE
THE HUDDART CUP	RICHARD HILSON
THE PRESIDENTS SALVER	ROLF LLOYD-WILLIAMS
THE DAHLIA OPEN CUP	DEBBIE ANSCOMBE
THE PENNEY CUP	JACQUI ESSEN
THE HARRY TESTER CUP	MICHAEL & ALISON ELLIOTT
KIERON JAMES TOYS SHIELD	FLORENCE FEARN-HUGHES
THE JUNIOR SHIELD	LIAM JOLLY
LHS JUNIOR CUP	DANIEL BLACKSTOCK
THE LHS PUMPKIN CUP	IAN COOPER

<u>BEST IN SHOW</u>	
VEGETABLE	IAN COOPER
FRUIT	JANIS DYER
POT PLANT	JIM STOCKWELL
COOKERY	MARGARET WELLS
HANDICRAFT	SUE STOCKWELL
<u>L.H.S. ANNUAL CUPS AND AWARDS 2015</u>	
THE LADY WILKINSON SILVER TRAY	MARGARET WELLS
THE MORECOMBE WHITE CUP	SUE STOCKWELL
THE PROCTOR CUP	GEORGE ADAMS
THE SHEPHERD CUP	MICHAEL & ALISON ELLIOTT
THE RON PICKETT TROPHY	ANDREA FALL
THE LHS PERPETUAL SHIELD	FLORENCE FEARN-HUGHES
THE SHEPHERD PERPETUAL SHIELD	LIAM JOLLY

The Future of the Sundries Centre

Those of you who came to the Autumn Show will know that Noreen and Alan Smith, who have run the Sundries Centre brilliantly for a number of years, are moving away. Unfortunately there has not been time to find a successor before the decision had to be made as to whether we opened again in 2016. The committee has decided that the Centre will be stocked and operated for another season and are now looking for volunteers to help cover the various openings. If we cannot find sufficient help, or if we cannot find someone to take over the running of the Centre, it will have to close at the end of 2016.

We also need to encourage more members to use the Sundries Centre, some of the items: canes, rose food, root trainers, growmore etc. are half the price that they are in the local Garden Centres. If there is anyone interested in operating the centre or who can give up a few Saturday or Sunday mornings during 2016 would they please contact me (483039 or michaelelliott6@googlemail.com).

Michael Elliott

Suttons and Dobies Seed Offer

The Suttons and Dobies Catalogues for the 2016 season are now available at our events. Members of the Society ordering their seeds and plants through the Society will receive a 25% discount on seeds and a 10% discount on other items. It does not matter how much you order, it all adds to the total on which the Society itself gets a commission. So if you purchase Sutton's or Dobie's seeds please do it through the Society. Contact Alison or Michael Elliott for a catalogue (contact details as above).

Alison and Michael Elliott

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 2015

Notice is hereby given that the **Annual General Meeting** of the above named Society will be held on Wednesday the 11th November 2015 at 7.30pm in the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

AGENDA

- 1) Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence
- 2) Minutes of the 2014 AGM (attached below)
- 3) Matters arising
- 4) To consider the Chairman's report for the year 2014/2015 (attached below)
- 5) To adopt the Statement of Accounts for the Year ending the 30th September 2015 (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) To consider a possible increase in fees
- 11) Suggestions about the future programme of events
- 12) 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 Acting Honorary Secretary by Wednesday 4th November 2015

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NOMINATION FORM

I propose the appointment of:

.....

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

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

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I second the proposal

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

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

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

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Lindfield Horticultural Society

(Affiliated to the RHS)

Minutes of the AGM of the Society held on the 12th November 2014 in the King Edward Hall

1. Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman, Martin Higgins, welcomed everybody and said that visitors could stay during the meeting so long as they did not vote. Apologies for absence had been received from: Mr & Mrs Lloyd-Williams, Tracy Adams, Debbie Anscombe, Joyce Gladwell, Brian Fitzgerald, Janet & Peter Buck, Malcolm Springall, Pat Whetstone, Diana Legatt, Graham & Glenise Buck.

2. Minutes of the 2013 AGM

Neal McNamara pointed out that the date in the heading at 2) should be 2012 not 2011. It was proposed and seconded that subject to this amendment the minutes be signed as a true record.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. The Chairman's report for the year 2013/2014

As the Chairman's report had been circulated with the agenda it was agreed to take it as read. Martin said that he would like to reiterate his appreciation to all those who had helped the Society. Having said that, there were some key vacancies which need filling; the Society urgently needed someone to organise the raffles for us as this is the last time on which Sally will be doing so. In addition we still needed a Show Superintendent and a Flower Arranging Steward. There were also several vacancies on the committee, and he urged members to consider whether they might be able to help.

Having been proposed and seconded, the Chairman's report was approved.

5. Statement of Accounts for the Year ending the 30th September 2014

The Treasurer advised the meeting that the accounts had again been examined by Malcolm Springall and found to be acceptable. Michael said that the Society was in a sound financial position with a surplus for the year of £789, which had been helped by the large reduction in depreciation due to the shed no longer needing this provision to be made, and the larger than normal number of visitors at the Autumn Show, the latter having coincided with the Lindfield Arts Festival. The level of income from subscriptions had more or less stood still

and he would like to give his personal thanks for the support given by Joyce Gladwell, Anne Peters and Sandra Huggett.

Although at first sight it looks as if there is more money in the bank this year, this is offset by the increase in payments in advance which had been inflated by the sale of tickets for Fergus Garrett's talk and the trip to Winkworth Arboretum. Michael thanked Malcolm Springall for undertaking the role of Examiner.

The acceptance of the accounts having been duly proposed and seconded was approved unanimously.

6. Election of Chairman

David Hobbs then took the Chair and on behalf of the members thanked the Chairman and all the Committee for the work they do. There being no other nominee for Chairman Martin Higgins was reappointed.

7. Election of Officers

The following Officers having been duly proposed and seconded were elected on block:

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

The other positions remained vacant

8. Election of a Committee of not more than nine members

The following were elected to the Committee:

Sheila Hobbs, Anne Marsden, Tracey Adams and Heather Martin

It was noted that Wendy Dumbleton (Talks) and Rose Mortenson (Outings) would assist the Society but would not be on the Committee.

9. Appointment of an Examiner

Michael Elliott advised the meeting that Malcolm Springhall was prepared to continue in the role of Examiner, and he was duly reappointed.

10. Appointment of Vice-President

The meeting had much pleasure in unanimously agreeing to the Committee's recommendation that in recognition of her lengthy and distinguished service Mrs Alison Elliott is appointed as a Vice-President of the Society.

11. Any Other Business

The Chairman said that the AGM marked the occasion on which Sally McBirney stands down from the committee and from being the Raffle Supervisor. On behalf of the Society he thanked her for her contribution which had been far wider than just her official roles. It had been a pleasure to have been able to work with her; Alison Elliott then presented Sally with a bouquet.

Brian Tester said that on behalf of the membership he would like to express their appreciation to the committee for all that they do.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.52pm

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT for 2014/15

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

Rose Mortenson organised a stimulating range of trips for us. There were three coach trips: Chartwell, Walmer Castle and the Secret Gardens of Sandwich, and Kew Gardens. Walmer Castle in particular was a revelation having a beautiful and interesting interior, stunning gardens and a lovely setting. It is somewhere that many of us on the trip would be happy to visit again. There were also two local visits to: Orchard House, Cuckfield and Ham Cottage, Ardingly; it was a reflection on the quality of the latter two, that they held their own when compared with their larger "relations". It was also interesting that the local visits proved to be so popular.

The topics covered in Wendy Dumbleton talks' programme ranged far and wide. For example Margaret Pilkington's talk about Wild Flowers showed why there has been a welcome increase in appreciation both of their ecological importance as well as their intrinsic beauty. Phil Fenech, Firle's Head Gardener, gave us a fascinating talk about the evolution of that estate's formal and informal gardens. As a result I took advantage of one of his garden tours which he offers on the weekend of Firle's Garden Show and can recommend them. The challenge of satisfying Brighton Town Council's horticultural needs was successfully demonstrated to us, and met, by Sarah Carlisle. Steven Moore from Rapkyns Nursery returned to show many plants to delight us, and light up our gardens. At the conclusion of his talk there was the inevitable stampede towards his display. Barry Newman in his talk gave us a host of tips on preparing our vegetables and fruit for the show bench. Who will forget his tip about maximising the length of your longest runner beans by putting them in a splint a few days before harvesting, to increase your chances of them being longer than your rivals!

Our three shows continue to remind us of how lucky we are that there are still sufficient members willing to fill up our show benches with such attractive exhibits. It was particularly pleasing that there were several new exhibitors and that two of our junior members were prepared to take on the seniors and more than hold their own. It is difficult to decide whether I prefer the Spring Show for its heralding rebirth and the new growing season; the Summer Show for embracing that most English time of year; or the Autumn Show for so richly displaying the fruits of your, and Nature's, labours. – perhaps it is best just to enjoy them on their own terms with tea and cake to hand.

The Sundries Centre continued to offer high quality products at very competitive prices thanks to Noreen Smith and her team; we are sorry that Noreen and Alan are moving away shortly, but thanked them at the Autumn Show for all that they have done for the Society. There were the usual coffee morning and plant sales which are always enjoyable occasions and the plants stand on Village Day was very busy.

To many members our Christmas Social heralds the start of the festive season and the 2014 evening was a particularly enjoyable occasion. To be able to deliver this event and all the others which make up our programme is only possible due to the support and hard work of the committee and our band of helpers. So a very big thank you to all of you.

Finally the committee has just started to debate how to make the Society attractive to a modern membership. It is important that we do not just keep repeating all the same things that we regularly undertake as part of our programme. We are not suggesting changes for changes sake, but questioning whether the Society does offer something that is valued by all our present and potential members. To do this properly we need your thoughts and suggestions, and as a start a questionnaire has been attached to the Winter Newsletter. Please return it to us so that we can have the benefit of your views.

Martin Higgins

12/10/2015

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LHS

Making the Society attractive to a modern membership

At this stage we are seeking your views about the various events which make up our programme. We want:

- a) your honest comments about the existing programme
- b) suggestions as to how the existing programme might be improved
- c) ideas about any new events

If you need any more room to be able to say all that you want to under the specific headings please attach additional sheet(s). You do not have to sign your response unless you want to. If you have any queries please contact Martin Higgins (484120 or martin.lindfield@btinternet.com).

a) The existing programme

Shows

Coffee Mornings & Plant Sales

Outings

Talks

Christmas Social

Sundries Centre

b) How the existing programme might be improved

c) Ideas about any new events

Please bring this form with you to the AGM and put it in the box on the stage, or post it to: Martin Higgins, 39 Dukes Road, Lindfield RH16 2JQ – Thank you

