



Blofield & District Gardening Club

Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in the Margaret Harker Hall, Yarmouth Road, Blofield, on Wednesday, 8th March, 2023, from 7.30 p.m.

1 Welcome to the meeting by the President,: Mrs Nelthorpe welcomed the 36 people attending the meeting on such an inhospitable evening, offering special thanks to the committee for preparing food for a light buffet and quizzes to keep us all amused afterwards.

2 Draft Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 9th March, 2022 were available for all to review. These were proposed as an accurate account of that meeting by Mrs C Veale, seconded by Mrs A Kelly, and were signed by the chairman as such.

3 Matters arising therefrom: there were no outstanding issues from the last A.G.M.

4 Treasurer's Report: the accounts for the year ending 31st December, 2022, were available for all to review. The Treasurer, Alan Drake, outlined the income and expenditure for the year, based on having attracted 44 members during the year, with enhanced income from the monthly raffles and £1 Bring and Buy Stall plus income from the Summer Show raffle, stalls and a later garage sale of plants. Expenditure was mainly for the hire of the Margaret Harker Hall, printing costs, insurance and speakers' professional fees. He thanked everyone for their support of the raffle, the £1 stall and the Summer Show, and confirmed that the accounts had been examined and signed by the Independent Financial Examiner, Peter Mackness.

Mr Drake confirmed a small profit of £60.73 over the year with a closing bank balance of £1,169.14. In view of the Club's wish to increase its membership, he proposed that the annual subscription charge should remain at £8 in 2023, continuing to charge guests £2:50 to attend a meeting. Subscriptions are paid from April each year, and the request was made for people wishing to re/join the Club to put their payment (cash or cheque) in a sealed envelope with their name, address and contact telephone number on it.

Fundraising does remain an issue, and members' ideas would be warmly welcomed. Mr Drake will continue to sharpen garden tools, donating a good percentage to Club funds.

The meeting was asked to approve the Treasurer's Report for 2022 and this was proposed by Mrs C Goodwin and seconded by Mr A Conneely.

5 Chair's Report: Mrs June Drake thanked all club members and the committee for their support during the last year. She confirmed how pleased she was that meetings were able to be held, and were so well supported, following two years of "lockdown" because of the Coronavirus pandemic. She congratulated Lynda Hunt, who was new to the Programme Secretary post, for a good variety of speakers and topics during the year, though was sorry to have missed the June meeting, when the Club celebrated its Golden Anniversary with wine and cake very kindly provided by our President, Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe.

Sadly membership numbers are still below those of some years ago so all were encouraged to bring friends/family/neighbours along, and ideally support the £1 Bring and Buy stall which had certainly help keep the funds in the black.

Mrs Drake especially wished to thank Mrs Christine Goodwin and Mrs Bridget Webb for organising the raffles at each meeting and at the Summer Show, Mrs Lynda Hunt for her work as Programme Secretary during the year and encouraged everyone to enjoy the buffet at the end of the meeting, and to try their hand at the two quizzes she had prepared.

6 Election of officers and committee: Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe thanked the chair, Mrs June Drake, for all that she does for the Club and in other community roles. She further thanked Mrs Maureen Willsher for undertaking the provision of refreshments at Club meetings and the Summer Show, and to Mrs Chloe Veale for kindly printing out the AGM paperwork.

Mrs Nelthorpe pointed out that currently the Club has rather a small committee, and with only three meetings a year it is not an onerous commitment, so if anyone might be interested in learning more about the role, would they please have a word with her or the chair.

Mrs Nelthorpe was pleased to confirm that the current committee members were willing to remain in post in 2023, and a new member, Mrs Christine Goodwin, had already offered to join the committee.

Office	Name proposed
Chair	Mrs June Drake
Treasurer	Mr Alan Drake
Assistant Treasurer	-
Secretary	Mrs Susan Rowe
Programme Secretary	Mrs Lynda Hunt
Show Secretary and Seed Order Scheme organiser	Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe
Assistant Show Secretary	Mrs Sue Brown
Committee members	Mrs Joanna Wicks, Mrs Maureen Willsher and Mrs Christine Goodwin.

The acceptance of these committee names was proposed by Ms B. Basey-Fisher and seconded by Dr P. Rowe.

Post meeting note: Mrs Sarah Reynolds offered to join the committee too.

7 Summer Show Schedule for Saturday, 15th July, 2023: before discussing some changes to the show schedule Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe wished to confirm that no club member or officer who has entered items into the show, is present during the judging of show entries. Only she as show secretary and her assistant, Mrs Sue Brown, have been present during judging, and neither submits any entries into the show.

Mrs Nelthorpe then went on to identify changes to some classes, commenting specifically on Class No 37 – the large decorative arrangement. As so few members had submitted entries for this class in recent years, Mrs Nelthorpe had been minded to remove it from the schedule. However as 2023 will see the Coronation of King Charles III, she had proposed that the class remain and be called “Fit for a King”. She encouraged members to enter this class; if it is not well supported this year, it may well be removed in the future.

Another innovation this year regards class 24 – “1 Single Rose displayed in a frame, as supplied.” An example of this had been seen by several officers of the committee and deemed to be an excellent way to display a flower. The frames, kindly made by Alan Drake, will be available to members entering this class.

Other amendments have been made in the Small Exhibits and Baking Exhibits classes.

8 Club Programme for 2023 including competition titles: Mrs Lynda Hunt outlined the speakers and topics arranged for the forthcoming year, confirming the titles of the competitions.

These will be printed in Membership Cards and are also in the tri-fold leaflets and posters that were available for members to give out/display. Mrs Hunt also asked members to let her know any ideas they had for speakers or topics for future years. Mrs Hunt was thanked for her very varied and interesting series of talks planned for 2023.

9 Seed Order Scheme: Mrs Nelthorpe outlined the Club's arrangement for offering catalogues from Mr Fothergill Seeds, and organising the ordering of seeds and other items as members requested. Members could achieve a 50% discount on seeds if the order is large enough, as was usually the case. Mrs Nelthorpe will let members know when the next catalogues are available.

10 Any other business

a) **RHS Affiliated Society Recognition award:** Mrs Nelthorpe embarrassed the Secretary by awarding her the RHS Affiliated Society Recognition Award for "the outstanding work you do on behalf of the Club" thanking Mrs Rowe for her work as Minute secretary and especially for compiling the Gardening Club's Golden Anniversary pamphlet and lockdown newsletters.

b) **Margaret Harker Hall Craft Fair – Saturday 18th March 2023:** Mrs June Drake outlined the fair that the Hall committee is organising, asking members to donate any gardening-related items, spare plants etc. - as profits will go to Club funds.

c) **Norfolk & Norwich Horticultural Society Shows:** Mrs Sue Brown, the Club's link with the RHS and NNHS, outlined how well the Club had performed at the late autumn show, winning the Napier Challenge Cup for the best exhibit and several certificates for their entries as an Affiliated Club. The Spring show is to be held on Sunday, 26th March at the Costessey Centre and members were encouraged to review the show schedule and offer entries, and to attend the show.

Mrs Brown reminded attendees that as members of an Affiliated Club we are able to attend talks and outings arranged by the NNHS. Information is circulated via the Club's e-mail system to those who have agreed to accept such messages, according to General Data Protection Regulations.

d) **Royal Horticultural Society discount card:** Mrs June Drake confirmed that the Club had received a 50% discount card for admission to RHS gardens for two people. Should anyone be arranging to visit an RHS garden, would they please let her know and she will arrange to loan the card.

e) **Planting of the Gardening Club's Golden Anniversary apple tree:** Mrs Drake confirmed that the Golden Noble apple tree that the Club had ordered was to be planted in the Blofield Community Orchard by Richard Codling on Friday morning, 10th March. All members were invited to attend the planting and see the plaque that the Club had organised to mark this donation.

11 Date of next Annual General Meeting – Wednesday, 13th March, 2024

The meeting was followed by a buffet and two quizzes which all thoroughly enjoyed.



Planting the Club's Golden Noble apple tree in the snow, Saturday 10th March, 2023