AGM Dorset AGS

Held by zoom, Thursday, 4th March 2021 at 1930hrs.

Present, Chair Caroline Seymour, Vice Chair Graham Poynter,

Secretary David Hughes, Treasurer Pete Dixon,

Speaker secretary Christine Hughes, Membership secretary Christine Dixon, Show secretary Gill Chudley.

30 members of Dorset AGS in total.

10 members are necessary for a quorum

1. Apologies for Absence, John and Pat Field, Jane Hoare, Pat Haskell, Sue Collins.
2. The minutes of the last AGM held on March 7th 2019 were available and read by all.
3. Resolution 1. To accept the minutes.

Proposed David Hoskins

Seconded Gerry Maclachlan

Accepted unanimously.

4. Matters arising from the minutes – none.

5. Secretaries report - This is a report of 2 years and 2 halves. We started in April 2019 with a full house of members , full programme of speakers and a thriving group. Christine Hughes had arranged a full programme of fascinating talks starting with Richard Horswood on Alpine Gardening and then our own Chairlady Caroline Seymour gave a fascinating talk on her trip to Ecuador. At the end of May Dorset and Hampshire ran the Rocky flower show which was as ever well attended and a huge success. After that we were released to travel the world so Christine and I made off to Eastern Turkey, the border with Iran.

Autumn 2019 , still calm and going well, Micky Little talked on bulbs to an audience of 75 then Anna Pavord gave a fascinating talk on “Bulbs for all Seasons”, and we were delighted that Iain Robertson brought his Farrer winning Cyclamen to show us. John Mitchell came down from Edinburgh to talk on Central Asia, followed by Christopher Bailes on gardening with Hardy Orchids.

The first meeting on 2020 , our own Graham Poynter took us to the Picos de Europa, then Paul Tout gave a dissertation on the Alpine plants of the Northern Adriatic. After this Covid came onto the scene, we cancelled our meeting in March but did have the local Allendale show on 14th March. This was well supported in plants and photographs, with 3 nurseries, so we went home well laden with new alpines for the rock garden.

Then cancellation, no more meetings at Corfe Mullen no more Rocky Flower Show, but we did manage an outdoor meeting and bulb sale in Horton Village Hall which has good outside space and is a lovely hall for future reference but is rather far from Western Dorset.

We had to cancel our AGM in 2020 and combined with Hants and West Sussex for monthly Zoom talks. Zoom has been the saving of lockdown we have been able to have our committee meetings by Zoom as we will be having our AGM the same way. We have frequent and very good zoom meetings from the main AGS and groups around the country. Our own programme has been a huge success, Jon Evans set the ball rolling in September with some lovely pictures of Paxos, then it was my turn to take the groups around Yunnan in Western China. In November we take advantage of Zoom with an overseas speaker. Jenny Wainwright-Klein who manages Munich Botanical garden alpine section, gave us an excellent talk on Schachen garden high in the Bavarian Alps. In January Michael Myers gave a detailed account of Snowdrop species and varieties.

So, we go on with more Zoom talks, but no personal contact, no garden visits, no visits to nurseries, we are reliant on mail order from the nurseries. It is vital to keep up our enthusiasm and keep our groups together. We look forward to seeing you all when Covid has been controlled. In the meantime when allowed we will have some garden visits in the summer, and another plant sale at Horton, please come.

David Hughes, Hon Secretary, Dorset AGS

6.Resolution 2. to accept secretaries report.

Proposed Gill Chudley

Seconded Anne Wanstall

Accepted unanimously.

7. Treasurer’s report for 2019,

I succeeded David Hughes as treasurer in April 2019 when he took over the role of group secretary. The finances were in a healthy state and have been maintained as such during this year, ending with an excess of income over expenditure of £516.81. Our usual main sources of income are subscriptions and the Wimborne show profit but these were augmented last year and this by sales of plants and books generously donated by the estates of deceased members, or by members who are downsizing their collections. We are very grateful for these kind gifts and extend our thanks to the benefactors. Our regular meetings are made more pleasurable by our plant sales tables, raffle, refreshments, and library, which also provide a source of income. None of that would be possible without our dedicated band of volunteer helpers whose help on a regular basis is so much appreciated. The major expenses are the hall hire and our speakers. Some of our excellent speakers were our own members who did not charge us a fee (thank you very much!), but our healthy funds have allowed us to invite a wider range of outside speakers who we otherwise would not be able to afford. Thank you also to you, our members, for supporting the Dorset group so well throughout the year.

8. Resolution 3 – to accept Treasurer’s report for 2019

Proposed Graham Poynter

Seconded Christine Hughes

Accepted unanimously

9. Peter Dixon Treasurer report 2020,

As you are all aware, most activities in 2020 were severely affected by the outbreak of COVID-19. Nevertheless we were able to hold two meetings and our local show before lock-down in mid March, as well as a socially-distanced bulb sales event in September. Sales of plants were outstanding, and we ended the year with a surplus of £603.99. That was helped by not having the major expense of hall hire as after March no meetings were held, and by paying reduced speaker fees and no travel costs. We have continued with a programme of talks using “Zoom”, and speaker fees, where charged, have been shared with the Hampshire and West Sussex local groups. We started 2020 with a membership of 80, and over half have paid their annual subscription; we are very grateful for this support. A very big thank you to you all.

Peter Dixon Treasurer, Dorset AGS Group

For detailed finance accounts see below.

10. Resolution 4 – to accept treasurer’s report for 2020

Proposed Bobby Knowles

Seconded Anna Ridley

Accepted unanimously

11. Chairman’s report.

Dorset AGS Group Chairman’s address to AGM 4 March 2021 This address covers two years and so my remarks are not all relevant to this last year. However, in these unprecedented times, it serves to remind us what we can look forward to. We have a thriving Group – or we did have before the pandemic – and we fully expect crowds to reappear at our meetings once the menace is under control. Our strength lies in exchange of news, plants and advice, and in the large number of Members who lend a hand at all times. I would like to thank especially those that keep this Group running so efficiently. Thanks to David and Christine Hughes. Christine arranges our interesting programme of speakers that draws in visitors regularly and she lets us know every month by email what to expect. As Group Secretary, David has been keeping up with the admin, as well as running all our photographic competitions and giving us fascinating lectures. They host many of our speakers and their travels and enthusiasm for alpine plants and people everywhere has been invaluable. Since many are home grown, we should here thank those speakers who charge us nothing for their time and effort. Thanks to Graham Poynter who has supported me as Vice Chairman and who looks after our projector. Thanks to Peter and Christine Dixon; Christine for being the cheerful welcome at all our events, for keeping in touch with all our members and keeping records; and Peter for keeping the accounts, negotiating with venues, anchoring our Zoom meetings and so much more. Thanks also to Peter Williams and Jess Chapman for scrutinising the accounts. We have light suppers at our AGM (except this year – bring your own to the Zoom), our October ‘open’ meeting and mince pies at Christmas – thank you to Maureen and Shirley who organise this and to all those who help out each month serving refreshments. We have a fabulous table display each month, testimony to the success of many growers in our midst – thank you all for bringing your plants in for us to enjoy and thank you to Sue Collins who sets it all out and counts the votes – no mean task given the number of plants. We have regular plant sales, augmented recently by collections that have been given to us. Thanks to Gill Chudley, Chris Hughes, Ben Turner and all others who have helped in collecting and potting the plants. Our raffle continues to supplement our funds and spreads plants around within the group. Thank you to Vivien for being raffle-ticket seller. We could do with a few more plants – the general idea was to bring a plant in and take another home. We have a library of books on a range of genus and alpine topics for you to borrow – thank you to Claire Horsey for housing them and bringing them in each month. We run two shows each year – our spring show in March and the Rocky Flower Show jointly with the Hampshire Group. Thanks to Gill Chudley who has taken on the organisation of the Spring show at the Allendale – we haven’t been so organised for many years! Thanks to the Hampshire Group for their friendship and support – it has strengthened both groups. We would like to run another group holiday as the last was so successful. (If someone would like to take that on, we would be very supportive!), botanising holidays are the source of most of our plant photography. So, since our excellent local show a year ago, we have been reduced to Zoom meetings – including our AGM. One of the benefits of these gatherings is that we can call on speakers who would normally be beyond our reach and interact with many people from around the country and even overseas who are keen alpine gardeners. With the better weather and the vaccination programme well under way, we shall be looking at ways that we can gather outside in gardens. We look forward to getting together again in person. A big thank you to everyone, whatever you contribute, and generally for being a Member of this Group.

Caroline Seymour Chairman

12 & 13 Resolution 5 . to reelect all returning members of the committee and elect any new nominees.

Election of retuning members of committee

Caroline Seymour Chairman, David Hughes secretary, Peter Dixon treasurer, Christine Hughes speaker secretary, Christine Dixon membership secretary and Gill Chudley show secretary.

Proposed Bobby Knowles

Seconded Claire Horsey

Accepted unanimously

election of new nominees.

Jo Amey John Lockwood

Dot Sample John Sample

Anne Wanstall

Proposed Christine Hughes

Seconded David Hoskins

Accepted unanimously

14. Resolution 6. That Caroline Seymour and Peter Dixon be signatories of the National Savings account. David Hughes is already a signatory.

Proposed Bobby Knowles

Seconded Gill Chudley

Passed unanimously

15. Appointment of scrutineer – Peter Williams has agreed to act as scrutineer for 2021.

16. Discussion on the views of staying at Corfe Mullen or moving to Saturday afternoons at Colehill. Ben Parmee suggested a survey of the membership. Gerry Maclachlan pointed out that there would be a conflict of interest in Saturday meetings. It was agreed to hold a survey.

17. AOB - none

AGM closed at 2005hrs.

David Hughes – secretary.

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