

receiving, all we do is send her items to go on it. She is now helping with how our finances are recorded.

We are so lucky to have someone with Clare's IT skills on board and I can't thank her enough for the help she has given me in so many areas this year and her willingness to get things done.

We have had a varied programme this year and some excellent speakers including Steve Austin, who we have had several times. He is a great speaker but he did give me high blood pressure by not arriving until 7.30pm.

One of our highlights was Neil Lovesey's brilliant cottage garden talk which he followed up by providing notes. As you may know, he has a form of blood cancer and was undergoing treatment when he came to us, but we really hope he stays well enough for us to be able to have him back again in the future. A lovely man with a fabulous store of knowledge which he is very happy to share.

We had a lovely out evening at Christina and David's garden at Ivy Bank on Vinegar Hill. The weather was kind and the garden is a hidden gem with many surprises, right in the heart of Milford. Thank you so much for your hospitality Christina and David, the members loved exploring your garden and all went home buzzing.

The year finished with Rosemary LeGrand whisking us off to New Zealand and Stewart Pocock whose talk gave us great insight into the processes of rose grafting and production, I felt quite exhausted by all the work that was involved. He debunked a lot of things about pruning and I am sure that a lot of us went home with new confidence that we weren't going to ruin our roses by not sticking to the book.

The Xmas party went extremely well, our first in the Community Centre. The food contributions were super and there was plenty for everyone. The quizzes went down well and I think everyone who came had a good evening. To avoid future confusion, it will be the third Wednesday next year again and forever after. It's only January that gets messed up because of the panto.

The plant fair was our best ever in terms of the amount of money raised and the quality and labelling of plants that you, the members, brought to our stall. We were able to give cheques for £950 each to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and Milford Library. Both are relatively small concerns with scant funding and were delighted to have such a generous boost to their funds. Let's hope we can do as well at this year's plant fair.

We had a fabulous day out in June to Holme Nursery near Bere Regis and Anderson Manor near Winterborne, organised by Iris. The weather was glorious, blue sky and sunshine and the meadow planting at Holme Gardens was magnificent. Great swathes of orange poppies mixed with white oxeye daisies, and a host of other plants in purples, pinky reds and, lemon, too numerous to name. This was all over a large area of several fields, the poppies simply glowed and you felt enveloped by the warmth of orange.

Iris managed a coup with Anderson Manor as it was no longer opening to the public but she had visited it at an NGS opening and persuaded them to let us come. Well, what a treat! The Manor dates from 1622 and is considered to be one of the best Jacobean house in the country but it was the garden we had come to see.

The Manor had an impressive entrance over an aged bridge with low stone walls

each side and ahead, the house itself, set beautifully in the surrounding garden. We could have been coming into a film set.

It was full of old roses, tumbling over walls and trellised structures. A stream running alongside part of the property was full of white arum lilies with roses hanging over the wall above. There was a dry garden with herbs, a topiary garden and a lime walk against a wall where there was some welcome shade. And then there was the rose garden with roses dating from 1843, they were all labelled with dates. Think rambling types, exuberant, floriferous and under control but not manicured in any way, and we were lucky enough to catch them at their peak. The lady of the manor said she had help from a gardener who had worked for many years at Hampton Court.

Jenny organised yet another brilliant club holiday to Sussex and Kent in September. She has this fantastic ability to find special gardens not always in the mainstream. We went to the Sussex Prairie gardens which had a mega plant fair going on and that was just the first day! We went to Hever Castle, Great Dixter, the Salutation in Sandwich to name the big ones. There were 2 others, boy did we pack a lot in. The icing on the cake was Wisley, on the way back, where there was a national dahlia display and guess what, an Autumn plant Fair. Plantaholics were well satisfied and the coach came back stuffed with plants as ever. We are planning to run a club trip to Wisley this year at the same time, so that more of you can have the chance to enjoy this late summer show and of course benefit from the free entry we get as an affiliated group to the RHS.

So, all in all it was a very successful year. We must be doing something right as we now have 136 paid up members for 2020. We have an exciting programme coming up with two outings planned as well as the holiday in Ireland and our 20th annual Plant Fair. Please start thinking about growing a few extra plants for the plant fair now and maybe think about getting involved, it's fun.

Finally, I would just like to say that I always welcome feedback whether good or bad so feel free to chat to me about the club activities and thank you all for your continued support.

Proposed by: John Clayton

Seconded: Christine Luxton

Passed by the Members

3. TREASURER'S REPORT: Marigold de Jongh read the report her Treasurer's Report.

We have approximately 137 members at present and we hope to welcome more this year. Subscriptions so far have brought in £1904.00.

The Plant Fair made £1636.83, a slight increase over 2018. It was a very well supported event, and our thanks go to Juanita Woods and Jenny Spenser for organising this for us.

Your Committee agreed to round up the amount to £1900.00 so that we were able to donate £950.00 each to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust which aims to conserve bees now in decline, and Milford Library.

The General Fund at the end of 2019, having received some subscriptions, stood at 2019.39.

I would like to thank Paul Garton for his invaluable support throughout the year and particularly for having the accounts audited for us.

There are some copies of the accounts at the back of the hall for you to see. If there are none left please ask for one.

Are there any questions?

No questions were raised.

Proposed: Jenny Hedges

Seconded: Sue Tennant

Passed by the Members

5. VOTE OF THANKS:

On behalf of the members, the Chairman thanked all those on the Committee for their rock solid support. Sheila Dence and Jill Spencer have decided to step down after many years on the committee. All the other committee members have expressed their willingness to serve another term.

Also thanked were Richard and Anne Bickle for their service of refreshments at the Open Evening and Christmas Event. Paul Garton was again thanked for the assistance he gives to our Treasurer in preparing the books, and to David Pratley, our Auditor,

Valerie Newell has volunteered her services in running the kitchen. Valerie will welcome additional helpers at the meetings.

John Hall has provided tremendous support with the audio system in the Community Centre – we would have struggled without him, and it has been a great relief that this area is managed by someone who understands the control panel.

Vouchers were given to Sheila Dence and Jill Spencer, and were again thanked for their services over many years.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS & ORDINARY MEMBERS:

The election of those willing to continue, with the addition of 3 new committee members – Sue Berriman, Ginny McIllroy and Pam Shiell was proposed en-bloc

Nominations:

Chairman

Sue Crabb

Treasurer:

Marigold de Jongh

Secretary:

Jean Robinson

Sue also passed on information that Andy McIndoe is at Beaulieu Horticultural Society on 12th March should any members wish to attend. Andy will be with us later in the year with a different topic.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 7.57 pm.