



Friends of the University of Bristol Botanic Garden

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups

Registered Charity 291159

AGENDA

The Association of the Friends of the University of Bristol Botanic Garden

Forty-fourth Annual General Meeting

Thursday 19 March 2020

AGENDA

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of A G M held 21 March 2019
- 4 Annual reports. To receive reports from:
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Membership Secretary
 - c. Treasurer
- 5 Annual accounts: to approve the financial statements
- 6 Committee elections:
To re-elect the following:
 - a. Sue Beech: Proposed: Tony West
Seconded: Jean Martin
 - b. Sue Redfern: Proposed: Tony West
Seconded: Jean Martin
- 7 Honorary Auditor: to approve the appointment of Chris Starr
- 8 Any other business

MINUTES OF 2019 A.G.M.

ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL BOTANIC GARDEN

Minutes of the forty-third Annual General Meeting,

held in the Frank Lecture Theatre, H.H. Wills Physics Building, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol
on Thursday 21st March 2019 at 7 p.m.

Introduction

The Chairman of the Friends, Pat Davie, welcomed approximately forty Friends and guests. (Members were supplied with a booklet containing the agenda, the Minutes of the 2018 AGM, the Chairman's report, the Membership report, the Trustees' report, and the Financial Statement.)

Apologies

Apologies were received from Jekka McVicar (President of the Friends), Professor Jane Memmott (Director of the Botanic Garden), Geoffrey Blake and Jane Perkins.

Minutes

The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 22nd March 2018 were unanimously approved as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report

Pat Davie presented her report. 2018 was an exceptionally eventful year. Visitor numbers increased from 19,000 to over 30,000, thanks in great part to Luke Jerram's amazing exhibition, 'The Impossible Garden'. This helped the Friends to exceed 2000 members, which has been a target since the move to The Holmes in 2005. The highlight for all who volunteer was the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the MBE for volunteer groups. At a celebratory garden party, Professor Hugh Brady, Vice Chancellor of the University of Bristol, commented, 'The Volunteers and Friends allow us to run a Botanic Garden we could only dream of otherwise; their skill, dedication and enthusiasm is second to none'.

The regular Easter Sculpture Festival and Bee and Pollination Festival were both very successful. Our lecture programme was helped by both the Curator and the Director standing in for speakers who were unable to travel to Bristol. It was a record breaking hot summer which meant that much of the staff time was spent watering, but all credit to them for maintaining the usual high standard. The increase in visitor numbers meant that more facilities were needed; Chandos Deli extended their hours for coffee and cakes, and two eco-friendly air-drying toilets were installed. The Friends have made a major contribution to the Rondavel, which will be completed in time for the Easter Festival.

In January the new trainee, Irene Cambi, started a two year post funded jointly by the Friends and the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust. We much appreciate the contributions of the Benefactor and Corporate members who support the Education and Training Fund. The new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) were carefully studied to ensure compliance. Sadly, several long-term supporters died during 2018: John Leggatt, John Wragg (former Chairman), Richard Bland, Nada Jennett and John Leach (former Treasurer). Thanks are due to many people who make everything run smoothly, including Jane Perkins and all the guides, Heather Dunford and Roderick Macleod for the e-news, Sally Meadows for the lecture programme, Mike Rees and his team in the Welcome Lodge, Lynda Bryan-Brown and Ann Brake for leaflet distribution, Chris Purvis for the plant sales, the newsletter 'stuffers', the refreshment volunteers, the many gardeners and

event stewards. Finally, she offered her continued appreciation for the support and hard work of her fellow Committee members, and thanks to Jane Memmott, Nick Wray and all the Garden and office staff.

Membership Secretary's Report

Sue Beech introduced her report. She had worked alongside Sue Redfern for almost a year before taking over responsibility, but is still glad to call on her extensive knowledge at any time. In 2018 the aspiration to exceed 2000 members was realised, with 2216 on 31 December 2018 (1969 in 2017). The number of new members was 479, which is also a record for recent years, with three special offers accounting for 44% of new members. 12 Gift Memberships were purchased. The processing of card payments has some issues, for which Paul Mugford is seeking a new cost-effective solution. A new A5 membership leaflet was designed to complement the Garden information leaflets in the Welcome Lodge. She thanked the Garden Office staff, volunteers and Geoffrey Blake who make the newsletter process run so smoothly at our quarterly sessions, and looks forward to another busy and interesting year.

Treasurer's Report

Paul Mugford presented the Trustees' Report and Financial Statement. As agreed by the Committee, the accounting system has been changed from full accruals to a far simpler cash book approach. Membership subscriptions, together with income tax recovered under the Gift Aid scheme, accounted for 64% of income. Other income included legacies (£10,000) and donations (£5,000). The Education and Training Fund (ETF) continues to benefit from subscriptions from Benefactor and Corporate members. There was no new trainee in 2018, but we have been able to commit to provide support for the next two years.

The excess of income continues to support the work of the Garden. During 2018 this included £34,390 as the regular subvention for maintenance and development, £15,000 for the Rondavel, £10,000 from legacies and £5,000 for interpretation boards. The Cecily Jones Trust Fund, from which we can only make use of the interest, is now in a specific investment account. The healthy state of the reserves should enable the Friends to support a further trainee from autumn 2020.

The report was opened to comments. Dr David Speller noted that when the ETF was set up in 2014, its purpose was not restricted to funding of trainees; it could, for instance, be used to buy something of educational value.

There was comment that the new form of accounting made comparison with the previous year more difficult; this was acknowledged, but will not apply in future. The net assets include HMRC as a debtor for £5000 from Gift Aid, because payment is still awaited.

The Financial Statement was approved unanimously.

Committee elections

Alice Maltby (re-election). Proposed Paul Mugford, seconded Paul Wood; unanimous.
Pat Davie (re-election). Proposed Sue Redfern, seconded Alice Maltby; unanimous.
Paul Wood (re-election). Proposed Pat Davie, seconded Sue Redfern; unanimous.
No further nominations for new committee members were received.

Appointment of Honorary Auditor

Chris Starr was thanked for his continued role as auditor and reappointed for 2020, unanimously.

Any other business

There were no questions or comments. The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting was followed by a lecture from Natalie Chivers, Curator, Treborth Botanic Garden: Redevelopment plans for Treborth.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In 2019 the Botanic Garden and the Friends built on the success of the previous years. Visitor numbers were maintained at just under 30,000 which was very gratifying as there was no major exhibition. Friends' membership exceeded all expectations, as the Membership Secretary has reported, resulting in over 2,700 individuals becoming members by the end of the year. We have also noticed that the demographic of the Friends is changing: many more, younger people, some with families, have joined and the West Terrace often has a number of people with baby buggies enjoying their morning coffee provided by Chandos Deli in the sunshine.

The attendance at the two major weekend events confirmed this with 5,631 over the four days of the Easter Sculpture Festival and 2,115 for the two day Bee and Pollination Festival. All this visitor activity has increased the necessity of volunteers to augment the small dedicated staff and every year the Curator and his staff show how much they appreciate the free time we all give, as it would be impossible to put on these major events without help.

The final piece of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service fell into place on a damp day in April when we were privileged to have HRH the Duke of Kent come to the Garden to make the presentation of the beautiful engraved crystal and the Certificate, read out by Lord Lieutenant, Peaches Golding. Also there was the Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff of Bristol, together with Vice Chancellor Hugh Brady, Dean of Life Sciences, Jeremy Tavare, Garden Director Jane Memmott and Friends' President Jekka McVicar. Some 120 volunteers were present to enjoy the ceremony after which the Duke and the main party were taken on a quick tour of the Garden by the Curator, before going on to further engagements in the City. The South African rondavel which has been largely paid for by the Friends was completed and opened in another small ceremony, this time with representatives of the South African National Biodiversity Institute, Mrs Beryl Ferguson and Lihle Dlamani, who were in the UK for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. This has been used by school children as an education space and by visitors as a shelter from rain showers. A third ceremony was held in May with the opening of the Chinese Peony Garden by Tony Prescott from the Bristol China Bureau, with lectures by eminent experts, including our former President, Lady Christine Skelmersdale. In 2019 we benefitted from the efforts of our treasurer who, working with the membership team, submitted the returns to HMRC for a refund of tax for 3 years

under the Gift Aid scheme, hence the impressive amount of £16,719 which appears in the accounts. This means we have additional monies available just for this year, although our increased membership will also give rise to a good sum to be recovered in the future. The annual Jazz concert was also a great success with some 350 people enjoying a lovely summer evening and raising over £4,000.

Since the Education and Training Fund was set up in 2014, including the annual subscriptions from our Benefactor and Corporate members, the Friends have continued to support the horticultural trainees and Irene Cambi is enjoying her second year at the Garden, with success in her RHS exams. Another trainee will be sought to start in the autumn. I must mention the amazing hard work by all concerned in the Open Gardens scheme and plant sales in 2019, which resulted in over £6,000 being added to this fund. A very big thank you to all the garden openers and volunteers who helped and especially to Chris Purvis and Kate Harvey, who I am delighted to say have both agreed to carry on their sterling work in 2020.

All of this means we have been able to continue to support the Garden in its continued development as well as the trainees, which is fundamental to our aims and objectives. To introduce more and more people to the benefits of being on the open air with the added knowledge of the plants and wildlife is such a privilege. So much is being written and discussed regarding the 'wellbeing' of us all that the Botanic Garden is more and more important as an asset to the University and the people of Bristol.

With the increases in the Garden entrance charge the committee have discussed the matter of the cost of annual membership. After much deliberating it has been agreed that no increase will be recommended at this stage but with a view to looking at it again in a year's time. We have however considered the annual membership in the light of comments received and the increasing workload. Sue has mentioned in her report how we are going to deal with new members on a quarterly basis so that removes the 'special offers' we have had in the past but gives everyone a full year of membership, whenever they join. It will not affect those already members who will continue to renew on 1 January. My thanks to Sue Beech for instigating this change and for the many hours she has spent on this, with advice from Sue Redfern and Paul Mugford.

Finally on behalf of the Friends and the Garden our sincere thanks for the many hours given by everyone who supports us, especially all the volunteers who help with the general maintenance as well as making the events in the Garden a success including the gardeners, those in the Welcome Lodge and refreshments, the tour guides and stewards. Thank you to those who coordinate all these groups: to Mike Rees for 8 years of organising the Welcome Lodge rota who has now stepped back but is continuing to volunteer; to Jane Perkins for organising the tour guides; Lynda Bryan-Brown and Ann Brake for the leaflet distribution (also standing down but again continuing to volunteer). Also to Sally Meadows for the lecture programme; Heather Dunford and Roderick McLeod for the enews; the newsletter team including the 'stuffers'; the RHS exam invigilators; and of course my colleagues on the committee who have supported me, some of them for many years: Sue Redfern, Sue Beech, Paul Mugford, Paul Wood, Alice Maltby, Jean Martin and Tony West.

We all willingly give our time but it would be of no use without the hard working and welcoming garden and admin staff, including Corinne Lamplugh and Helen Beek who joined Judy Cordell in the office and quickly become part of the team. I would like to thank the Curator, Nick Wray for his dedication to this Garden and his enthusiastic support for the work of the Friends. Nick attends our committee meetings as an ex-officio member sharing his knowledge and experience, making it possible to achieve the common goal of an increasingly well-known and popular botanic garden which continues to develop its engagement and educational role.

Pat Davie March 2020

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

It has been a very successful and busy year for the Membership Team. A record number of new members, approximately 600, joined during the year. On 31 December we had a total of 2715 Friends. There are 26 Life Members and 38 Benefactors. 46 gift memberships were purchased this year including 12 at Christmas. Due to the increase in workload we have just recruited a new member to join our team.

We have faced some challenges, which have arisen from the increase in work, digital technology and the complexity of the system. In May a membership subcommittee with Sue Beech, Sue Redfern, Pat Davie and Paul Mugford, met to address the problems and make the system easier for the Welcome Lodge Volunteers. We believe we have found a solution and the new forms are now available. Briefly, we have stopped refunds to members joining after visiting the Garden, we will have no special offers and the same membership application form will be used throughout the year and on the internet. Membership will now be for 12 months from the quarter of joining. The quarters are timed to coincide with the newsletter issue dates. The aim of this is to make the membership fee more equitable and distribute the work of renewal throughout the year, without extra postage costs.

Our Festival membership recruitment was very successful and over 80 new members joined at both the Bee and Sculpture Festivals. Thanks to enthusiastic stewards who directed the visitors to the membership table which was beside the entry payment table, new Friends received their membership pack immediately and entered the Festival free. This saves postage and administration.

Geoffrey Blake, who organised letter printing and One Post for the newsletter distribution, retired from this role in November. Geoffrey still prints our membership cards, constitutions and the AGM report. We thank him for his diligence and efficiency. We are pleased to say that Mike Austin, a Garden volunteer who has been involved in the plant collection labelling, has taken on Geoffrey's role.

Our thanks to the envelope stuffing team who have helped us with the increased number of newsletters. This year we sent out around 8500 envelopes at the four sessions. We would also like to thank all the Welcome Lodge volunteers, Garden staff, Festival stewards and office staff for their patience, help and support during this busy and changing year.

Sue Beech, on behalf of the Membership Team March 2020

TRUSTEE'S REPORT

The Association of Friends of the University of Bristol Botanic Garden
Hollybush Lane, Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9 1JB
Charity No. 291159

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st December 2019

Constitution

The objects of the Association are to advance public education in, and to promote research into, Botany and its related subjects and to publish useful results of such research. In pursuance of these objectives the Association supports the work and further development of the University of Bristol Botanic Garden. The Garden is unique in the West Country and the plant collections have been chosen to provide teaching and research resources for the University. Its mission to educate, communicate and conserve has also established a valuable amenity for local schools and a cultural attraction for the public.

Committee

Management of the Association is vested in a Committee (the Trustees) and its powers and duties are set out in the Constitution, including the procedures for appointment, nomination and election. Regular meetings of the Committee provide opportunity to apply risk management criteria in the assessment of the viability of potential fund-raising initiatives, whilst being dutifully aware of its charitable objectives.

The following members served the Committee during the year:

Patricia Davie	Chair
Paul Mugford	Treasurer
Susan Beech	Membership Secretary
Tony West	Vice Chair
Alice Maltby	
Jean Martin	
Paul Wood	
Susan Redfern	

Nicholas Wray, Curator of the Garden, and other volunteers as appropriate, may attend Committee meetings in an ex officio capacity.

Important aspects of the Committee's role are to encourage new members of the Association and to stimulate interest in the Garden through a variety of events and activities. Income generated by such initiatives, and from members' subscriptions and donations, after meeting expenses, is used to support the maintenance and development of the Garden. The Committee acknowledges the support of those members who have become involved directly in Friends activities and 'hands-on' work in the Garden.

Accounting system

Our accounting system is a simple cash book approach that is acceptable to the Charities Commission and reflects the straightforward financial activity of the Association.

Income

During the year membership subscriptions have increased by 11% (£4994). For this year Gift Aid at £16,719 reflects recovery for three years (2016/17/18) and this, together with subscriptions, accounts for 72% of the Associations total income (64% in 2018). Legacies and donations have been far less at £6,207 (£18,082 in 2018). The Jazz Concert contributed an impressive £4,161, the Open Gardens scheme a significant £3,875 along with plant sales at £2,343 and a number of smaller items as shown.

The Education and Training Fund, set up in 2014 to enable the Garden to employ trainee horticulturalists, continues to benefit from subscriptions from our Benefactor and Corporate members along with Life Memberships.

Use of funds

The excess of income, after expenses, continues to support the work of the Garden and during 2019 this included regular maintenance and development amounting to £35,528 (£34,390 in 2018); Trainee support £12,881, and a contribution of £6000 towards the replacement of garden furniture on the west terrace. Our most significant recurring operating cost, apart from the above, remains stationery, printing and postage, mainly for the newsletter, at £11,972 (£7,895 in 2108).

Reserves

Having set aside the Cecily Jones Trust Fund of £62,565, along with the full £25,437 in the Education and Training Fund (as the £3,000 provision is no longer needed), we currently hold £64,160 in the general fund. We still hope to be able to support two trainees over time and, as this will need to be balanced carefully against available funds, we have committed to fully support just one until 2022 and we will review the situation again next year.

Investments

The NS&I Investment Account is the home of the Cecily Jones Trust Fund. This is a legacy from which we can only make use of the interest. All remaining funds are held with either Lloyds Bank or Barclays Bank.

Insurance

The Association's activities are covered by a Public / Employers' Liability Insurance Policy under the Affiliated Societies Insurance Scheme operated by the Royal Horticultural Society.

Auditor

The Committee wishes to record its appreciation of Chris Starr's services in his capacity as Honorary Auditor.

By order of the Trustees March 2020.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Association of Friends of the University of Bristol Botanic Garden
Registered Charity No 291159

Income and Expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2019

	2019		2018
	£		£
INCOME		INCOME	
Membership Subscriptions	51,752		46,758
Benefactor Membership	4,750		3,600
New Life Membership	625		
Corporate Membership	2,650		1,950
Legacies	4,000		10,000
Donations	2,207		8,082
Social Events - Jazz concert	5,667		3,208
Open Gardens	3,875		
Plant sales	2,343		1,172
Gift Aid (2016/17/18)	16,719		
Interest on bank deposits etc.	566		15
Lectures	210		212
Book sales	89		60
Sundry receipts / petty cash	183		190
	<u>95,636</u>		<u>75,246</u>
EXPENDITURE		EXPENDITURE	
Garden support and development	35,528		34,390
Education & Training Support	12,881		12,600
Garden Support - Garden Furniture	6,000	Garden support - Interpretation boards	5,000
		Garden support - Rondavel	15,000
		Garden support - Luke Jerram exhibition	2,000
		Garden support - Donations and legacies	10,000
Social Events -Jazz Concert	1,506		1,426
Lectures	739		215
Bank charges	496		1,057
Entertaining	249		181
Insurance & affiliation	110		110
Stationery & Printing	7,926		
Postage	4,046	Printing, postage & stationery	7,895
			100
Sundry (Software)	199		
Petty Cash	150		468
Miscellaneous	30		
	<u>69,860</u>		<u>90,442</u>
Surplus/(-) for the Year	<u>25,776</u>	Surplus/(-) for the Year	<u>(15,196)</u>
BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December		BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December	
Net Assets		Net Assets	
Barclays Bank C/A	28,506		20,466
Lloyds Bank C/A	35,384		15,111
Petty cash	270		229
Provision	(3,000)	Debtors	5,000
Restricted: Barclays Bank (Education and Training Fund)	25,437		20,015
Restricted: NS&I Investment (Cecily Jones Trust)	62,565		62,565
	<u>149,162</u>		<u>123,386</u>
Profit & Loss Account			
Brought forward	123,386		138,582
Net profit / (loss)	25,776		(15,196)
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>149,162</u>		<u>123,386</u>

Approved on behalf of the Committee
P Mugford (Honorary Treasurer) 1 March 2020

Audit Report

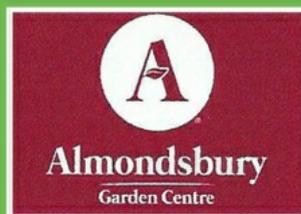
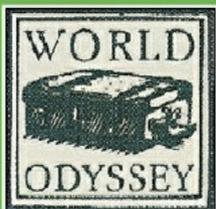
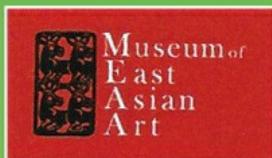
I have audited the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 which, in my opinion, give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Association at that date and of its income and expenditure for the year.

C Starr BA ACA (Honorary Auditor)

NOTES

CORPORATE MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

The Friends would like to thank the following for their continued support in 2019



Easter Sculpture Festival

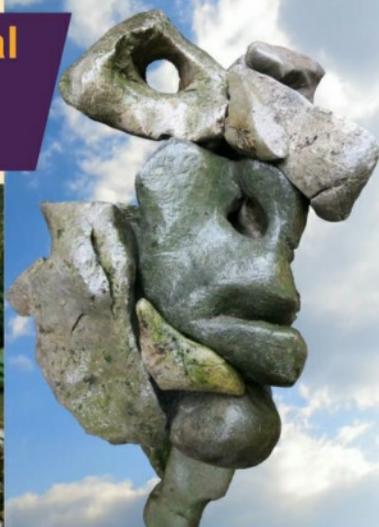
University of Bristol Botanic Garden

Friday 10th – Monday 13th April 2020

Pay on gate, or book online in advance for discounted entry



Spectacular garden sculptures, workshops and refreshments in a beautiful setting



www.bris.ac.uk/botanic-garden

University of Bristol Botanic Garden, Stoke Park Road, BS9 1JG
Tel: 0117 428 2041 Email: botanic-gardens@bristol.ac.uk

