

CHAIRMANS REPORT FOR MUWAGA AGM – 22 JUNE 2022

- This year MUWAGA is 37 years old.
- Hopefully we are coming to the end of Covid and our return to normal operation will continue. However, this may well depend upon recruiting some new committee members and filling some of our specific committee roles in the coming months – more of that later.
- **Matters Arising from the 2021 AGM**
 - Subscriptions were increased to £6 at the 2019 AGM. We had a subs holiday in 2020 and returned to £6 subs last year. As our accounts are stable we have continued at the £6 level and will do so until there a need to change it. I am pleased to report that 130 members have paid this year so far.
 - We intend to continue to use Kings Seeds (11 years now) as we believe we get a good service, people are getting good germination and their prices remain competitive.
 - I again offer thanks to David and Joanna van de Poll for all the work they have put into this over the years but they wish to stand back from this so, this is an activity where we seek someone to take this on. In the meantime, Joanna has gallantly ‘volunteered’ to keep it going for now. In order to save paper we will only order catalogues for regular seed order users or if someone specifically asks for one.
 - Over the last year e-mail has been vital in keeping members informed and using the internet (Zoom) for talks and events. We continue to safeguard your contact details which we are committed to continue to do. E-mail is such a useful medium to keep you abreast of events and also of any offers of items that members want to offer for free. We do encourage all members to let us have their contact e-mail address. **We know that not every member has passed their e-mail address to us. If you know someone in that group please encourage them to pass the e-mail address to us so we contact them easily.**
- **MUWAGA Report**

This year marks the 37th anniversary of the Association. The last year’s activities were impacted by the pandemic but as the situation has eased we have now returned to meetings in the Hall with our last 2 speakers of this year’s

programme giving their talks in person. Fortunately, the Association was in a good financial state so we have weathered the storm, I want to thank so many of our members who donated their subs in the previous year and continue to support the Association now. Our current membership stands at 130 and unless we hear from members who have not renewed we will delete them from our e-mailing list.

Our normal planned events and speaker evenings from March to September 2021/2 were disrupted and we had a mix of talks by Zoom and latterly in person and the programme was 'fluid' as we had to find speakers to meet the changing situation but I hope you enjoyed the talks which, to put it mildly were very varied. It was noticeable that our last 2 'in person' talks in the hall were very well attended as I think we all wanted to just get some normality back in our lives. The one positive from using Zoom for speaker evenings is that it does allow us to access speakers from anywhere with no thought to travel distance. It may still be an option we could use in the future, particularly as the Village hall is having a projector installed so we could have remote speakers presenting in the hall. Sue Cunningham worked hard to fill the programme and I certainly want to give her my thanks for keeping the show on the road.

- We do remind members that, as an Association, we now have 2 passes/tickets that would allow 2 members to visit RHS gardens for with a 30% reduction. If you want to take advantage of this please contact Joanna to borrow them for your visit – we do need them back!
- Also a gentle reminder that subscriptions were due in May so, if you know anyone who intends to join or renew please ask them to contact Joanna van de Poll soonest. Our preferred method of payment is by bank transfer but we appreciate this does not suit everyone and therefore we did have a session in the Hall car park in May for those who preferred to pay with cash.

Looking ahead:

- MUWAGA will have a stall at the Milton Fete on 2 July, we will be selling cut flowers and raffling a hamper so if you are able to help with either we will very gratefully accept donations.
- We are not holding the Show this year. Joanna and David van de Poll have been the mainstays of this for many years (around 30!!) and they want to step back so, instead, we are holding a MUWAGA social event on the 20th of August at Milton Hall, with refreshments and you can still bring your veg and flowers along. They will not be judged, but still appreciated

and if you agree they will be available to buy with the proceeds going to charity. We look forward to seeing you there.

- The next speaker programme will start in September. You will notice on your new membership card that we have included the talks up to December and the rest as TBN because we were not able to set up the remaining speakers prior to producing the membership cards. Arranging the remaining talks is underway and we will keep you informed.
- The best way to stay informed is to look at the MUWAGA website (www.MUWAGA.com) which David Betterton set up for us and I am very grateful to David for producing such an attractive and usable facility. I hope you find it as attractive and informative as I believe it is and you find that it is an easy way to stay up to date. We will strive to make sure it stays current and accurate.

I take this opportunity to register my thanks to all of the Committee and other members who give their time and considerable effort to make things happen. You all have my heartfelt thanks. The most visible part for you are the speakers but Committee members maintain finances, memberships and keep the Chairman in order. We do need new committee members to keep things running and spread the load

- **Financial Report**

Our finances remain stable, with a small increase in the account over the last year. We did circulate the accounts as at 1 May with a balance of almost £3600. Using Zoom did decrease our speaker costs over the last year and these will inevitably increase in the coming year; nonetheless, we believe the current subscription will be sufficient and we hope there will not be any need to increase subscriptions for a good while

We will seek a proposer and seconder to approve the accounts at the AGM

- **Committee**

I am pleased to let you know that all the current committee members have agreed to serve another year. I am grateful to have such a supportive and hard working committee and at the AGM I will seek a proposer and seconder to agree to the existing committee members serving another term. However, 2 committee members have had to resign during the year and others while still serving want to step back. This means that now Joanna van de Poll is acting as Secretary (we sadly miss Di Fletcher who filled this role for 20 years but fortunately Di is still remaining a committee member), Sue Cunningham will step

down as programme lead and Nicky Pratt has agreed to take on the role. We have no-one to lead on the Show. So, if you want one, we need people to take on the arrangements. For the moment Joanna is willing to keep going with the seed order but we need a long term solution to this as well. So, if members want events such as the Show and services such as the seed order to continue we need people to join the committee willing to take these roles on so tasks can be shared out. We are short of 2 full committee members and do not have any co-opted members. It is important that we do recruit new members to help inject new ideas and keep the keep us all on our toes. If anyone is interested in giving it a go, without obligation, why not see what it entails and see if you like it. You will be very welcome and it is in no way intimidating. Lastly, I find I have been Chairman for 16 years, it is too long, and I intend to step down next May, or sooner if a new chair can be identified. So, in brief MUWAGA and the Committee will continue until 2023, but beyond that much will depend on your response to our call for assistance

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM which will be followed by, our now traditional, Cheese, Wine and Pate evening which is free to members.

Tony Lewis