



HPS
HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

**South Pennine
Newsletter**



INCLUDING NOTICE OF THE AGM
AUTUMN 2024

Published by the South Pennine Group of the Hardy Plant Society

The Committee

Dot Witton (Chairman)

Judy Coulson (Secretary & Membership Secretary)

David Andrews (Honorary Treasurer and Coach Trips Organiser)

Don Witton (Garden Visits Organiser), Toni Frascina (Plant Sales Organiser, Instagram), Tricia Fraser (Website, Speakers), Jean Gater (Minutes Secretary and Plant Sales Publicity), Jayne Conquest (Conservation Plant Organiser), Linda Headford, Niall Clarke (Newsletter) and one vacancy.

Email spennine@hardy-plant.org.uk

Phone 0114 2351290

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***Please send contributions and suggestions to Niall Clarke
niallclarke01@gmail.com***

Closing Date for the next issue is 31st January 2025

Chairman's Letter

Hello everyone

Welcome back after the summer break!

Firstly, a big thank you to Niall for putting together this Newsletter and also to members for your contributions.

I have sad news that Angela Andrews, a stalwart member of our group from its inception, has passed away. This has shocked us all. She was a long standing member of the committee and will be greatly missed. I know that you, the members, will support David (our Treasurer) in the coming months. Judy Reid has also passed away after a long debilitating illness. Both Hugh and Judy were members for many years. Our thoughts are with Hugh and family. I have fond memories of a great MAD garden visit to Hugh and Judy's garden on a fabulous warm sunny day in February

Our speakers this year have been well received by members, so thanks to Tricia for all her efforts!

With Toni at the helm, our May plant fair was a great success, so a big thank you to all involved.

As you are aware, I am stepping down as Chair after eight years although I will be happy to remain on the committee. I am delighted that Tricia Fraser has been nominated for the role. Be assured you have not seen the last of me yet as I plan to remain on the committee.

We do need your help in volunteering to join the committee. There are currently vacancies and it is a great way to learn how things work. Just express your interest to anyone on the committee.

Looking forward to seeing you at the AGM in November.

Dot Witton

Chairman, South Pennine HPS

The opinions expressed by the authors are their personal views and not necessarily endorsed by the HPS South Pennine Group. The editor reserves the right to edit contributions as necessary.

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Cover picture: Rodgersia 'Cally Salmon' by Toni Frascina, see page 14.

Who does what to run the society

One of the great things about SPHPS is the number of people who contribute towards the successful running of the Society, it's not just the Committee. However, we thought it would be useful to see who does what. This is valid as of 1/10/24, some of the tasks will be redistributed when Dot stands down as Chair. If you feel there is a contribution you would like to make, please let us know, you don't need to join the Committee, just the merry band of members who make it all work.

Name	Role	Tasks
Dot Witton	Chair	Chairs committee meeting Manages Zoom account Leads monthly meetings Writes Chairs' report for Newsletter and AGM Deals with members' queries, requests and 'grumbles' Helps set up at plant sales Contact for Greenhill Methodist Church Stocks shop
David Andrews	Treasurer	Manages the money and produces accounts Liaises with bank and building society Provides float and coordinates taking money at plant sales and meetings Reimburses growers and expenses
Judy Coulson	Membership Secretary	Manages membership enquiries and payments Broadcasts emails to group membership
Jean Gater	Minute Secretary Publicity for Plant sales	Produces the agenda for committee meetings Takes minutes of committee meetings Manages publicity for plant sales including entries into local magazines, production of flyers, putting up banners at gates of SBG Maintains plant sale customer email database and emails as required
Don Witton	MAD visit organiser	Visits prospective gardens Liaises with garden owners and organises visits Ensures visits are advertised at meeting and has a list of attendees – meets and greets on the day Helps set up at plant sales

Name	Role	Tasks
Tricia Fraser	Speaker organiser + other tasks	Books and liaises with speakers Opens and shuts down Church Hall – key holder with Alistair Manages group Website Manages group Facebook page Deals with official comms from National HPS Deputises for Secretary where necessary
Toni Frascina	Plant sale organiser + Instagram	Books DFC and liaises with SBG education officer Coordinates growers and helpers Manages group Instagram account
Niall Clark	Newsletter Editor	Produces the SPHPS Newsletter
Jayne Conquest	Conservation plants	Attending national meetings to collect and distribute plant requests Keeping a collection of conservation plants Coordinating propagation of conservation plants Helps run plant stall at meetings
Linda Headford	Meet and greet at monthly meetings	



The long borders at Edinburgh Botanic Garden, Summer 2024

Plant Sales

We have had two very successful plant sales this year. Both mammoth tasks organised by Toni Frascina. The May sale was run in beautiful early summer weather whereas the more recent one in September saw decidedly more wintry conditions. However, regardless, the growers came up with the goods in terms of quality and quantity. There were ample numbers of volunteers to run it and probably most important of all, punters came through in droves yielding record sales for both events, netting around £4000 for our society funds. The precise figures will be in the accounts at the AGM. The May volunteers are pictured below (photo, Jean Gater).



There were many highlights (some pictured here) but seeing novices, especially children, engage with plants must be among the most enjoyable. Seeing a girl of about four insist on daddy buying her an oak tree sapling and her proudly struggling off with it in her arms was lovely. Later on, three students did need cautioning that one of Don's Euphorbias, impressive specimen as it was, wasn't really suitable for a side table in their flat.

The next sale is on May 17th & 18th 2025.





Forthcoming talks

Tricia Fraser

6th November 7.00pm for AGM, then talk at 7.30pm

Trish Kohn

Where do they come from? A brief look at plant introductions

Along with husband Peter, Trish looks after the South African border at Sheffield Botanical Gardens and raises a lot of plants from seed for SBG.



The picture (right) is their greenhouse from <https://www.fobssheffield.co.uk/news/tucked-up-for-winter>

4th December 7.30pm

Geoff Hodge

The Life and Times of a Gardening Editor

Geoff Hodge: Garden writer, book author, BBC local radio broadcaster and Horticultural Consultant. Former Web Editor for the RHS and Gardening Editor for Garden News & Garden Answers magazines.



The picture (right) is from his website <https://www.gardenforumhorticulture.co.uk/about.htm>

8th January, 7.30pm

Don Witton (right)

Flower Power Plus Plus Plus!

A talk stuffed with flowers of every shade, shape and colour. The perfect antidote to Winter!



<https://donseuphorbias.webador.co.uk/garden-talks>

Looking further ahead into 2025

Date	Speaker	Topic
5 th February	Troy Scott Smith, Sissinghurst Gardens	Sissinghurst – Revitalising Vita: Undertaking a seven year project to revitalize the garden, bringing about a more authentic Vita at Sissinghurst – a celebration of beauty, romance, intimacy and emotion
5 th March	John Grimshaw	Give me chastity - but not yet. Gardening choices in a changing climate.
2 nd April	Sue & Neil Huntley, Hartside Nursery Garden	My Favourite Alpines
7 th May	Ken Thompson	Modern Gardening Myths. Retired lecturer in Plant Sciences at Sheffield University. Ken returns to dispel some gardening myths.
4 th June	John Cullen	Achillea - A Healthy Obsession With is partner, John runs John Cullen Gardens a nursery in Lincolnshire growing herbs. He has a National Collection of Achillea
2 nd July	Peter Williams	Unnatural Gardening: This talk looks at the concept of natural gardening and questions whether this current fashion is actually possible, sustainable or even desirable.

MAD Garden Visits 2024

Don Witton

Disappointingly, participation in our monthly visits has been down this year for one reason or another. Numbers in general have not recovered back to pre-covid levels. However, people who turned out on these occasions, all enjoyed themselves.

Our first visit in March was to **Winthrop Garden** Wickersley (right), on a cool but bright spring morning. ten members enjoyed a guided tour of the one acre community garden and the adjoining allotment. There was plenty of spring plant interest and we all finished up in the cosy café for a light lunch.



On the 23rd April, seventeen of us made the journey into the Peak District to visit the historic ten acre garden at **Thornbridge Hall** (left). It was a self-guided tour and we wandered around together. Highlights at this time were the water garden, the grotto and the scented terrace. Once again, the visit was finished off with a visit to the café.

In June, twenty four of us visited a member's garden at **Abbey Lane, Whirlow** (below). Entering from the front garden, I was amazed by the size and planting of the back garden which backs on to Eccleshall Wood. The garden was in immaculate condition with several wonderful flowering shrubs including a fine specimen of *Cornus kousa*. I think this garden is easily up to Yellow Book standard. Janice had made a big effort for us in the garden and also with the refreshments which we enjoyed on the raised patio looking down on the garden.



July saw us visit another member's garden in Baslow (below). We last visited Elaine's garden at **The Corner House** in September 2016. A July visit meant we had a different selection of flowering plants to enjoy and boy – was there plenty of floral interest. From the white flowers in the front garden to a back garden stuffed with floral interest. The warm summer's day resulted in our best turn out of the year – thirty three. Refreshments were enjoyed in several seating areas around the garden. Thank you Janice and Elaine for two lovely visits to member's gardens in the summer months.



We don't normally have a garden visit in August but the Yellow Book garden at **138 Greystones Road** (right top and middle) is only open in August and twenty-five of us turned out for a midweek visit between the owners two weekend openings. This garden is quite small but very colourful with many unusual and large tender plants on view. It was a very interesting visit as we studied and discussed every plant in the garden. As usual, the visit was rounded off with refreshments in the sunshine.



Our last visit of the year was on September 19th to **Morton Nursery** (bottom right) near Retford. The long drive from Sheffield resulted in only ten members visiting. What a treat we had. We had a guided tour of the fantastic display garden attached to the nursery by owner Gill McMasters. With herbaceous borders, island beds, a water garden and rustic walkway with many fine grasses this wonderful garden is easily up to Yellow Book standard. There was so much colour and plant interest at this time of year. After our tea and cake refreshments, we all indulged in plenty of retail therapy in the excellent nursery.



Local, member's gardens are always the most popular to visit so if you have an interesting garden, whatever the size, why don't you volunteer for a MAD visit. Help and advice will be given. The feedback is always positive and members who have opened have always said it was an enjoyable experience. If you may be interested get in touch with me.



Lip na Cloiche Garden and Nursery

Tricia Fraser

Tricia writes “...It's on the North West coast of Isle of Mull - a must see for anyone visiting, providing you can cope with the single track roads! It's stuffed full of plants and the garden rises steeply above the house. Much use is made of found objects from the owner's beach combing trips. The photo to the right shows a few of these and the photo below shows the view to Loch Tuath and across to the Isle of Ulva) ...”



Cally Gardens

Toni Frascina

I'm sure many of you have visited Dumfries and Galloway and explored its many horticultural delights. We had a holiday there in July this year, paying a return visit to Cally Gardens.

I first discovered it in 2011 and I felt like I'd stumbled on the plant equivalent of Aladdin's cave. I left that day with a number of purchases, a couple of which I still have.



In those days, Michael Wickenden; plant hunter, nurseryman and photographer, owned and managed the gardens, but sadly he died in 2016 whilst trekking in northern Myanmar. He had amassed a huge collection of unusual plants from various exotic locations. Some of these he had grown from seed, some swapped with botanical gardens and some he bred at Cally.



After Michael's death, the garden closed, presumably left to its own devices, until 2018. It was then taken over by Kevin Hughes, a plantsman and ecologist. Kevin follows strict organic principals and is very focused on gardening for wildlife. He is now the guardian of a collection of plants in excess of 4000 and is focused on restoring this Grade 2 listed walled garden.

This is quite a challenge given the size (1 hectare), time left untended, lockdown and presumably a limit to available resources. But it is clear he is making some inroads and there are still some great plants for sale.

Some borders have been reclaimed, but paths are a bit weedy. A central area has been put aside to be a wild meadow, at the moment seeded with yellow rattle to reduce the grass. Photos include the largest stand of aruncus I've ever seen, a lovely kniphofia with dark stems, various attractive rodgersia and Veratrum 'Lorna's Green' dotted all over the place. Incidentally, the latter is (or was) an HPS conservation plant and comes with a warning that it is toxic, so like aconitum, gloves must be worn when handling.

Tripadvisor includes a real range of reviews, one sums it up for me: 'this is a garden which you either get or don't'. Clearly several reviewers didn't with comments like 'complete rip off', and 'like a pre-war abandoned allotment' sitting alongside 'magical' and 'wonderful peaceful place'. It is, and probably always will be, work in progress, but is clearly a passion for the owner and I found it fascinating to revisit.

A couple of days earlier we had been to Threave, home to the School of Heritage Gardening. It is extremely well tended and manicured by a number of students, staff and volunteers. At its centre stands Threave House, a Scottish baronial property built as a hunting lodge for wealthy Londoners. Threave is lovely in its own right, but is at the opposite end of the horticultural spectrum to Cally. I think there is room for both.

I of course bought several plants from Kevin including; Rodgersia 'Cally Salmon' (cover picture), a creamy yellow Cally hybrid of Roscoeae cautleyoides' and Polygonatum kingianum which apparently has a rusty orange flower.



Cally is open Thursdays – Sundays, 10am – 5 pm until autumn. Entry fee is by a suggested and voluntary donation of £5. More information on the web site www.callygardens.co.uk

An Autumn Weekend remembered

Judy Coulson has written a piece remembering the 'Autum Weekend' we ran in 2004. Thanks to the carefully curated society archives, we can publish some contemporaneous material about the weekend from Newsletter No 25 (Winter 2004-5) edited by Barbara Rich.

It is 20 years in September since our group hosted the now defunct "Autumn Weekend"

We volunteered in 2002, so to find out what was involved, four of us went to Durham where the North East Group were hosting the Weekend.

First job was to book a hotel to house the 200 members who would be attending. We managed to get accommodation at the Hallam Tower Hotel on Fulwood Rd. We thought it would create a good impression of Sheffield. Not long after our booking, I read in "The Star" that the Hallam Tower Hotel was closing! We now had to start looking again. We managed to get 3 hotels in the city centre close to each other, The Royal Victoria, a budget hotel at the bottom of station approach, and the Hilton on Victoria Quays which would do all the evening meals. Not in the leafy suburb we had planned.

Next we booked four coaches to take fifty members each. These would be called blue, red, yellow and green. Two couriers were needed on each coach, and a back-up driver (in their own car) for each coach in case of emergencies

Then we had to choose gardens which were big enough to accommodate 50 people and have parking for a coach.

As you can imagine, it involved a lot of hard work.

Here is the report from the National Events Co-ordinator at the time

By the time you read this the Autumn Weekend will be a dim memory. But for those who came to Sheffield every time they go out in their gardens all the plants they brought home will remind them of the splendid weekend they spent with the South Pennine Group.

Two years of planning and three days of bliss. You made us feel so welcome from the moment we arrived and showed us such superb gardens – all different but all memorable. We were pleased to meet so many of the group in the hotels, on the coaches and in the gardens dispensing delicious tea and cakes.

To all the group thank you for giving us such a good time. Every one of you helped to make it one of the best- ever Autumn Weekends.

Margot Bishop

National Events Co-ordinator

A Worm's Eye View



As a very small cog in the proceedings, I looked on in some awe at the slick system behind the very successful weekend.

The beginning was not promising; Hallam Towers Hotel where the party had been booked was summarily sold and the committee were back to square one, added to which the Firemen's World Games were being held in Sheffield on the same weekend! Bravely, the committee pressed ahead and managed to book the party into three hotels, Holiday Inn and The Sheffield Hilton. Then the all important garden visits were sorted, all of which were of high standard and went down very well with the punters. The coach companies were booked and routes and journeys were fine-tuned. Each coach had a back-up car for emergencies. Meals had to be arranged with the hotels, taking on any special diets. 400 packed lunches were provided each day of good quality and variety by a specialist caterer. Refreshments were provided mid-morning and afternoon by South Pennine Group and many members contributed cakes to these. All this had to be costed within budget and all arrangements agreed with head office.

The huge task of sending out publicity material and sorting out bookings and waiting lists came next; what a mammoth job, to deal with so many people at three different venues.

On the day of arrival each guest was greeted and provided with a professional standard information pack and colour co-ordinated to a particular coach. Before dinner on the first evening a plant sale set up by South Pennine Group and FOBs was invited to provide a stall selling SBG cards etc. Lots of goodies winged their way to all parts of the country that afternoon. On Friday evening, our very own

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Don Witton gave an excellent after dinner speech on becoming a National Collection holder and James Hitchmough provided a thought provoking lecture on the ecology of plants in gardens, on Saturday evening.

I was at Linda Stewart's garden on Sunday and got a flavour of what was on offer for visitors. The garden was a model of subtle elegance - complete with vintage car! Refreshments were superb and then the hoards descended on the plants provided by Jean Marshall of Green Farm Plants. This relaxed friendly atmosphere was typical of the weekend.

On Friday and Monday, smaller gardens were opened by South Pennine Group members for informal visits. These were well attended and gave another view of local gardens. Throughout all this the weather was gorgeous, praise be, although the Monday was cloudier.

I think we owe a huge vote of thanks to all the committee for an outstanding job well done. It was great to take part and this was all made possible by their truly Herculean labours. Congratulations to you all!

Decie Needham

A funny thing happened on the Autumn Weekend

At the end of the first day, we were leaving Horsleygate Hall, and the driver said 'we're going to have a sing-song'. There were murmurs back from the members 'Oh no we're not!'

He proceeded to put a cassette on, which started with 'My old Man's a Dustman' and he sang along happily - and alone. I was cringing with embarrassment and asked him to stop. He didn't. When the next track started, I got out of my seat to be close to him, and told him to switch it off, as it was not appropriate. He did.



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(Inula hookeri from Edinburgh Botanic Gardens in the background)

A review of recent talks

We have had a season of diverse, interesting and always enjoyable talks organised by Tricia Fraser.



April started off with a call no speaker organiser wants to receive, the scheduled speaker had been taken to hospital. **Hilary Hutson** was kind enough to step in at the last minute and gave a talk on native plants '**Going Native - gardening with decorative native plants**'. Native can be defined in different ways, Hilary took it in part to mean plants thriving naturally without the intervention of humans. Our native plants typically are those which had established here before we became an island after the end of the last ice ages. Our earliest garden plants evolved from gardeners selecting interesting sports or varieties from the wild and cultivating them. Some examples included *Orchis mascula* with the pink variety being chosen over the more common purple colour or the blue colour splashes on *Geranium pratense* 'Splish Splash'. Trees too were selected, the yellow berried *Ilex aquifolium* 'Bacciflava' and *Ilex aquifolium* 'Ferrox

Argentea' with the fine spines on the surface of the leaf as well as the margin.

The talk was illustrated with many examples from her own garden on Bents Road open under the National Garden Scheme. (Picture above from the NGS website).

In May we had '**Plants, Borders and Gardens**' by **Timothy Walker** (right), a lecturer in Plant Sciences and formerly Director at University of Oxford Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum. Whereas Hilary had celebrated native plants, Timothy celebrated the variety of plants from around the world which thrive in our climate.



Timothy took us on a quick tour of the world, showing us his plant highlights, e.g. autumn colours of Japan and New England. He had some excellent anecdotes from a lifetime in horticulture. He posed several interesting questions including the two below. If you have answers, or even a theory, please write an article for our next newsletter.

Why do so many orange coloured plants come from South Africa?

Why won't some plants grow in the UK but in the wild grow perfectly happily alongside plants which themselves thrive in the UK?

Maureen Sawyer, gardener, artist and designer spoke to us in June on **'See Through Plants – Turn Your Garden into a Painting'**. This was much, much more than a celebration of *Verbena bonariensis*, pretty as that is. Thinking of layering plants can



add a dimension to the herb garden and using 'see through trees' has been an inspiration for many artists. The talk was a riot of colours and diverse plants and her photography magnificent. There was *Gypsophila* 'Bristol Fairy', *Limonium latifolium*, *Gaura*, and a range of verbenas. Maureen spoke about spots of colour like using *Patrinia scabiosifolia* against a dark background. Then there were grasses such as *Molina* and *Stipa*, especially useful on a windy site.. Her garden near Manchester is occasionally open to the public.

<https://www.southlands12.com/visit>



Above: *Dierama insigne* and left *Astrantia* 'Burgundy Manor' and a *Sanguisorba*

A review of recent talks continued

In July, **Paul Green** (right) of Greens Leaves Nursery, spoke about **Plants of the Season**, using live plant material instead of pictures. All our speakers put considerable effort into their talks but Paul was certainly the most animated we have had, running up and down several tables of plants. He posed the question we have all probably thought from time to time, 'what is special about this new cultivar, how has it been improved and is it just marketing?'. He sought to convince us that new is more often than not also improved. Some of his favourites, for example Fatsia 'Camouflage' a three coloured variegated form and the statement that Buddleia is currently 'en vogue' proved a little controversial with some. The quality of his plants for sale was top drawer.



Michael Brown (left) is a specialist in historic gardens and a wonderful story teller. He wove tale after tale into his talk '**Death in the Garden**' a study of poisonous plants and their uses through out history. We heard about Mandrake and also White bryony , used as counterfeit for Mandrake. There was a tragic story of a jilted lover murdering her ex and his new partner with *Aconitum ferox* in a curry; a reminder that Dr Crippen used henbane and that Peter Rabbit has probably overdosed on bitter lettuce or *Lactuca virosa* , otherwise known as the English Opium. He pointed out that we may inadvertently over or underestimate the toxicity of familiar garden plants and the RHS website is full of useful information on this. His book 'Death in the Garden' is available at <https://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Death-in-the-Garden-Paperback/>

Kitchen Garden Flowers

Branch member Vanessa Swetman has a flower growing business based in Matlock supplying seasonal flowers grown without chemicals for any event that would benefit from flowers and what event can't be improved with flowers?

Vanessa is based in Matlock Meadows and cultivates $\frac{2}{3}$ of an acre and is a member of a network called Flowers from the Farm, an association which aims to encourage more people to grow cut flowers for market in the UK and to promote local, seasonal flowers. As well as providing flowers for weddings and funerals, she runs 'pick your own days' (by appointment) and a subscription service in the area whereby customers can have their flowers changed every fortnight from April to October. She grows around 300 varieties of plants and as well as flowers the foliage and fruit of the hedges and shrubs on her farm is used. The picture below is from her website

<https://www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk/about-us/>



Annual General Meeting notice

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY
SOUTH PENNINE GROUP AGM 2024
Wednesday 6 November at 7.00 pm

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 1 November 2023**
3. **Matters Arising**
4. **Financial Statement 2023/24**
5. **Chairman's Report 2023/24**

6. **Election of Officers:**

Constitutionally, the Group must have three officers.. No individual may hold, at the same time, the posts of Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer.

Chairperson: Vacancy – Dot Witton is standing down

A nomination for the post has been received for Tricia Fraser

Treasurer: Vacancy – David Andrews is standing down.

A nomination for the post has been received for John Horobin

Proposer Don Witton, Seconder Jean Gater

Secretary: Judy Coulson is willing to stand again for 2024/25.

7. **Election of Committee Members**

All existing Committee Members are willing to stand again. Both Dot Witton and David Andrews are willing to serve as Committee Members. There is therefore a vacancy for the Officer's position of Treasurer and one further vacancy on the Committee, nominees for which should be received by the Secretary Judy Coulson in writing together with confirmation of the nominee's consent not later than Wednesday 23rd October with the names of a proposer and seconder. (Please send to Judy Coulson, 46 Ryefield Gardens, Sheffield, S11 9UD or by email: judycoulson@blueyonder.co.uk).

8. **Questions from Members**

Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting

HPS SOUTH PENNINE GROUP

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 1st November 2023

Committee Members Present: Dorothy Witton (Chairman), Judy Coulson (Secretary & Membership Secretary), David Andrews (Treasurer and Coach Trips Organiser), Don Witton (Garden Visits Organiser), Angela Andrews (Meet and Greet), Toni Frascina (Plant Sales Organiser, Instagram), Tricia Fraser (Website, Speakers), Jean Gater (Minutes Secretary and Plant Sales Publicity).

1 Apologies for absence: Jayne Conquest (Conservation Plant Organiser), Sue & Phil Stockdale, Sue Clark, Marjory Green, Collette Longford, Niall Clarke and Simon Silcock.

2 Report of the AGM held on 2nd November 2022

The report was accepted and approved by the meeting – proposed by Tricia Fraser, seconded by Judy Coulson.

3 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Honorary Treasurer's Report and Presentation of the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts

The Treasurer presented the Receipts and Payments account for the year ended 31st August 2023. The accounts were proposed by Don Witton, seconded by Toni Frascina and accepted by the meeting.

The Treasurer presented his report as follows:

I start by saying a big thank you to Niall Clarke who stepped in at the eleventh hour and agreed to examine the accounts, and I'm pleased to say that he found nothing wrong but he did have a few sensible questions that I was able to answer.

Welcome back one and all and it's good to see so many people again and also, we have a number of new members this year. So perhaps it's a good time to remind members that we only have money in the bank thanks to all the plants we sell at our three sales during the year. If you can propagate plants have a go, and sell them at meetings, you can earn yourself a crust and help finance the group for all our events over the year. This gives me the ideal opportunity to thank everyone on the committee for their endeavours and commitment.

I trust you have the accounts in front of you and there's very little I can say about them other than we had a surplus of £1,687.64 for this year, of which £514.15 is due for a much-delayed coach trip. The cost of the coach was paid for in 2020! I hope I'm not pushing my luck in saying I think we are over the worst of Covid 19 but other world events now have caused another cyclical downturn in people's finances, and could hold back our finances in the future.

I haven't asked Niall if he will be the examiner next year and if he does agree I'm willing to propose him.

Any questions? There were no questions.

David Andrews

5 Chairman's Report 2022-23

I would like to welcome everyone to our 2023 AGM and thank you for your attendance tonight. I am aware that the little hall is not ideal for meetings and we can't fit in our group plant sales and the shop, but we don't have them at our AGM and it is the end of the season. These will be back in January. We have been looking at trying for a different day for these two meetings but the hall is used for other events.

Chairman's Report Continued:

As always, I need to thank people for their help and support this year.

David's careful management of the accounts has meant our financial situation is very healthy, having recovered from our lack of income during Covid, so thank you David.

Thank you, Judy, for your work as secretary, it is invaluable. She certainly keeps me in order! She is the king pin of the group, liaising with the main HPS and other committee members and passing on information to you the membership. Judy informs me that we have had a number of new members this year so let's hope this continues!!

Thank you, Tricia, for your selection of interesting speakers this year. Doug Stewart's talk in September certainly caused some conversations. If anyone hears of any good speakers, please don't hesitate to let Tricia know.

Once again, Toni is back at the helm as our plant sales organiser. She was greatly missed at the May sale, but it went well as always, owing to her excellent planning. Many thanks Toni. Also thank you to our growers and helpers which help make our sales so successful.

Jean, thanks for all your efforts this year, as minutes secretary. There are times when I don't know how you manage to record our committee meetings so accurately!

Unfortunately, Don's monthly MAD (meet at destination) garden visits have been disrupted this year with gales, snow and rain. Hopefully they will be rearranged for next year. Never the less we have enjoyed the social get-togethers in a variety of destinations. For new members these visits are a great way to get to know other members. Thank you for arranging them.

Thank you, Angela for volunteering to take over the role of meeting and greeting and the badges. Please make sure you sign her list as this is also a fire list which is part of our contract with Greenhill.

Jayne, I think you are right about your idea of having a conservation plant table at the back, next to our own sales table. Members can volunteer to take conservation plants to propagate so they can be distributed to other groups when requests for plants are sent in. It's a great way to acquire free plants! Jayne reports that the number taking part has increased by 8 members and 35 plants have been exchanged between members! Thank you for your work on this Jane.

We have a website, which Tricia has developed and keeps up dated, together with Facebook. Toni runs our Instagram account. Please do have a look and contribute pictures to this and to Tricia for our website. Jean is our publicity officer and advertises our sales through leaflets plus has over the years developed an email list of people whom she emails our sales information. At least 500 at the last count. Thanks to all of you.

Social media plays an important role in spreading news of our local group and the HPS as a whole, in order to inform and to encourage new members. It would be great if someone could develop this role for our group!

Of course, as a group, we also have volunteers who help setting out and clearing up after the meetings, the shop, members plant sales and also Janet and Joan for serving teas. Thank you to you all.

We have two members who have put themselves forward for committee so please give them your support.

As no one has come forward to do the role of Chair, I have agreed to stay on this next year although I won't be at the odd meeting owing to Don's lecture commitments but will be definitely retiring next November.

Behind every Chairman is a good committee and we as a group are so fortunate to have this committee working for you to make such a successful and friendly group. Thank you to you the membership for all your support and loyalty this last year.

Dot Witton

6 Election of Officers

The Chair explained that she is happy to stay in office for one more year only which will be her eighth. The constitution states that the tenure is five years but can be extended if needed. Therefore, she, along with the Treasurer and Secretary were willing to stand again. This was approved by Don Witton, seconded by Decie Needham and accepted by the meeting.

7 Election of Committee Members

The Chairman reported that Susi Lyles was no longer a member of the Committee.

All other Committee Members listed above were happy to continue to serve. Proposed by Decie Needham, seconded by Hilary Hutson and approved by the meeting.

8 Committee Member Nominations:

Nominations were received from Linda Headford, proposer David Andrews, seconder Tricia Fraser and Niall Clarke, proposer Dot Witton, seconder Toni Frascina. and approved by the meeting.

There is one other vacancy on the Committee, but no further nominations were received.

9 Any Other business

Joan Hobson asked if it was a rule that if someone brings plants to the Plant Sale, that they are obligated to stay for the whole day. She referred to a member who had requested to have two hours off and was refused. Toni Frascina (Plant Sales Organiser) explained that this was not the conversation that was had. The Chair stated that as each of the Plant Sale selling times were only over four and three hours respectively, that if someone asked for 1 or more hours off, they would effectively be away from the sale.

It was agreed that Toni Frascina would speak with Joan Hobson personally and that the matter would be itemised for discussion at the next Committee Meeting.

Pam Hutchinson asked if anyone had taken on the role of Newsletter Editor. The Chair explained that we had thought about having it online, that we had always had a newsletter years ago as a sheet which then became a booklet, although Jim Chandler, the last Editor, was struggling to get articles. It was something that we would very much like to resurrect.

Tricia Fraser wondered if it was possible that our new member Niall Clarke might be interested.

It was agreed to itemise this for discussion at the next Committee Meeting.

As there was no further business the Chair formally closed the meeting at 7.25 p.m.

ends

South Pennine HPS—Calendar

Date	Speaker	Topic
6 th November 7.00pm for AGM, then talk at 7.30pm	Trish Kohn	<i>Where do they come from? A brief look at plant introductions.</i>
4 th December 7.30pm	Geoff Hodge	<i>The Life and Times of a Gardening Edi- tor</i>
8 th January	Don Witton	<i>Flower Power Plus Plus Plus!</i>
5 th February	Troy Scott Smith, Sissinghurst Gardens	<i>Sissinghurst – Revitalising Vita</i>
5 th March	John Grimshaw	<i>Give me chastity - but not yet. Garden- ing choices in a changing climate.</i>
2 nd April	Sue & Neil Huntley, Hartside Nursery Gar- den	<i>My Favourite Alpines</i>
7 th May 17th & 18th	Ken Thompson	<i>Modern Gardening Myths. PLANT SALE</i>
4 th June	John Cullen	<i>Achillea - A Healthy Obsession</i>
2 nd July	Peter Williams	<i>Unnatural Gardening</i>

***Please send contributions and suggestions to Niall Clarke
niallclarke01@gmail.com***

Closing Date for the next issue is 31 January 2025