

## CHAIRMANS REPORT 2016.

THIS YEAR HAS, I THINK, BEEN THE MOST SUCCESSFUL SO FAR FOR THE BPGC, WITH ACHIEVING A MEMBERSHIP OF 100.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE COMMITTEE FOR THEIR WORK IN MAKING IT SO AND YOURSELVES FOR JOINING AND SUPPORTING THE EVENTS ARRANGED. THE LOSS OF ONE OF OUR MOST ARDENT SUPPORTERS IN KEN WEBB THIS YEAR WAS THE ONE SAD EVENT OF THE YEAR. (I AM PLEASED TO SEE AUDREY AND SUE HERE TODAY.)

THE MAIN REASON FOR THIS SUCCESS IS, I THINK, AN EVER IMPROVING PROGRAMME,

IN JANUARY FOLLOWING THE INSPIRATIONAL GARDENS OF THE EAST SLIDE SHOW, DAVID EASTWOOD GAVE US A SHORT PRESENTATION ABOUT THE VOLUNTARY WORK THEY DO MAINTAINING THE FAYE TURNER MEMORIAL GARDEN AT WORCESTER ROYAL HOSPITAL. DUE TO YOUR DONATIONS AND THE PROFIT FROM THE RAFFLE THEY WERE ABLE TO PURCHASE THE MANY BASIC ITEMS REQUIRED. ONE MEMBER, BETTY MILLS, HAS BEEN VISITING TO HELP WITH THE REGULAR MAINTENANCE, I VISITED IN FEBRUARY TO PRUNE THE WISTERIA, THANKFULLY IT FLOWERED!

FEBRUARY'S TALK BY ROSEMARY WINNALL MBE, ABOUT NATURE IN FOCUS, WAS VERY ENJOYABLE, YOU WILL BE PLEASED TO HEAR SHE IS BOOKED AGAIN FOR NEXT SEPTEMBER.

TAMSIN WESTHORPE'S INTERESTING TALK ABOUT LIFE AS A GARDEN MAGAZINE EDITOR, OPENED OUR EYES TO THE MANY ASPECTS OF THIS, WHICH WE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN AWARE OF. THIS WAS FOLLOWED IN JUNE, VISITING STOCKTON BURY GARDENS WHERE SHE IS GARDEN DIRECTOR. ALL THOSE WHO VISITED AGREED IT IS AN IMPRESSIVE GARDEN.

A LAST MINUTE SUBSTITUTE SPEAKER IN APRIL WAS RICHARD THOMKINSON WHO TOLD US ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE DEVELOPING HIS AWARD WINNING ROSEBANK VINEYARD.

THE GARDENERS MARKET AND CAFE IN MAY WAS, EVERYONE AGREED, BETTER FOR HAVING THE NEW TIMES OF 11-1PM. WE MADE A SMALL PROFIT BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY WE RECRUITED 6 NEW MEMBERS.

JULY SAW US VISITING THE WALLED GARDEN AT CROOME, WITH A GUIDED TOUR BY THE ENTHUSIASTIC OWNER, CHRIS CRONIN, HE BEGAN HIS TOUR BY OUTLINING THE HISTORY OF THE SITE FROM 1750 AND HOW IT WAS NOW BEING RESTORED AND DEVELOPED.

THE COACH TRIP TO TRENTHAM GARDENS WAS, ONCE WE HAD PERSUADED THE DRIVER WE DIDN'T WISH TO GO TO MONKEY WORLD, VERY SUCCESSFUL, THESE ARE STUNNING GARDENS ALONG WITH A RANGE OF SHOPS AND A LARGE GARDEN CENTRE. WELL WORTH VISITING.

CATHY OPENED HER GARDEN AGAIN THIS YEAR, PROVIDING TEA AND CAKES ALONG WITH A PLANT STALL TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE CLUB.

DISAPPOINTINGLY ONLY 14 MEMBERS VISITED MALCOLM STYLES BONSAI GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER. THE GARDEN IS AN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF JAPANESE GARDEN DESIGN AND BONSAI. WE WERE TREATED TO A DEMONSTRATION OF HOW TO CREATE A BONSAI TREE.

IN OCTOBER THE AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST VAL BOURNE TOLD US ABOUT HOW SHE HAS DEVELOPED HER GARDEN AT SPRING COTTAGE WITH THE MUCH BELOVED.

QUOTING LORNA'S ARTICLE,

"Val explained that she has always gardened organically and gave us numerous examples of good practice using very informative photographs, She shared her extensive knowledge and experience and talked about individual plants that she had found were particularly useful to encourage useful insects into the garden." AND COULD SURVIVE THE COLD WEATHER IN COLD ASTON.

WE ALSO RAISED £82 WITH THE RAFFLE HELD IN AID OF THE HORTICULTURAL CHARITY PERENNIAL.

THE BPGC OWES A DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO DOUGLAS FOR OPERATING AND MAINTAINING THE WEBSITE. ALSO THANK YOU TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE HELPED AT MEETINGS, PUTTING OUT THE CHAIRS, TABLES ECT. ANY HELP AT THE MEETINGS, PREPARING THE ROOM OR WITH THE REFRESHMENTS WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

I DID MENTION THE COMMITTEE AT THE BEGINNING, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR MINUTES SECRETARY PAM AND TREASURER CATHY FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SMOOTH RUNNING OF THE CLUB AND JASMINE FOR HER WORK AS MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO THANK THOSE MEMBERS WHO ARE STANDING DOWN THIS YEAR, JILL BRIGGS, WHOSE HUSBAND HAS HEALTH PROBLEMS AND CHERYL ROBERTSON, WHO HAS DECIDED SHE NEEDS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF COMMITTEES SHE IS ON FROM 5 TO 3! CHERYL HAS ALWAYS BEEN A RELIABLE SOURCE OF IDEAS.

AND FINALLY ROGER AND BARBARA PARKER, WHO WERE FOUNDER COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE WCGS IN 2003 WHICH BECAME THE BPGC. THAT IS 13 YEARS CONTINUOUS COMMITTEE WORK AND FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS AS JOINT PROGRAMME SECRETARIES. THEY HAVE ALSO MANNED THE CLUB MEETING PLANT STALLS, WHICH I AM DELIGHTED THEY HAVE SAID THEY WILL CONTINUE TO DO.

I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS YEARS PROGRAMME, ESPECIALLY THE CELEBRITY LECTURE BY THE WORLD RENOWNED DR NOEL KINGSBURY WITH THE SUBJECT OF WOMEN, MEN AND GARDENING! I HOPE YOU ARE TOO.

IF YOU HAVE GARDENING FRIENDS WHO HAVE NOT HEARD OF THE BPGC, PLEASE PASS ON THE WORD.