

FRIENDS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDENS

Minutes of the MAG Quarterly General Meeting held at 11am on Monday 3rd December 2018 in the Stables

PRESENT:

Steve Place, Sue Place, Liz Gambier, Audrey Newell, Chris Groom, Andy Weller, Christine Lake, Joan Butfield, Mary Sewell, Catherine Dann, Linda Wells, Doris Dowell, Lesley Crowcroft, Malcolm Penny, Heather Chamberlain, Sue Smales

APOLOGIES:

Jane Neave, David Payne, Susan Toms, Trevor Dixon, Keith Barnard, Alison Holtorp, Gerry Edwards

MATTERS ARISING FROM 1ST OCTOBER MEETING

Under Present - should read Jackie Solomon

TREASURER'S REPORT

As at the 30th November 2018

Balance of the General Account	£5,403.50
Balance of the Publications/Archive Account	£5,793.16
Petty Cash	£70.46
Savings/Reserve Balance	£2,503.38
Craft Group balance	£420.90

REPORTS ON PAST ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

CRAFT GROUP - Sue Smales

Following the bad weather on Open House day, when we were unable to have a craft stall, the Craft Group held a sale during half term week which was reasonably well attended. As a result, the Craft Group generated another £57 which was held as a float for the next event.

On 30th October the Craft Group decorated the gallery in the Stables with banners produced by the group and with strings of poppies made by the group with contributions from St.Alban's ladies in preparation for the start the following Saturday of the "Eastcote Remembers" exhibition (covered in Lesley's report). No craft meetings were held whilst the exhibition was running but several craft group members helped with stewarding.

I would like to give some special mention here, but in no particular order

to Jackie Solomon who produced the embroidered banner and created the war memorials on the two gallery side panels

to Jill Elliott who designed the Roll of Honour banner

to Linda Wells who did the majority of sewing for the Roll of Honour and the gallery side panels
to Ruth Ryan who designed and made the central panel of poppies
to Christine Hudson who knitted the soldiers, sailors, airmen and nurses
to Mandie Redding who produced the acetate poppies to be hung in house and car windows
to Doris Dowell who made the money spinning brooches out of spare poppies
and a very big thank you to ALL the ladies who knitted, sewed, made felt poppies and helped to steward the exhibition.

Photos have been sent to Trevor Dixon to be added to the Craft Group website.

On 27th November the Craft Group decorated the gallery (again) ready for the Tree Dressing and on Saturday the Craft Group raised further funds. A few large items and several small ones were sold. The final figure isn't yet known, but we were not unhappy AND we provided the knitted bear prizes for the Bear Hunt.

We will be holding our Christmas celebrations on the 11th December and our final meeting of the year will be on the 18th December

EASTCOTE REMEMBERS - Lesley Crowcroft

Planning for this event started 2.5 years ago. From that time on the Craft Group knitted, crocheted or cut out hundreds of poppies which resulted in fantastic displays in the stables.

Other groups, Southbourne WI (banner) and St. Alban Church North Harrow Ladies Group contributed to the displays as well.

The 6th Eastcote Scouts produced a splendid hanging.

The Seasons Art Class submitted art works based on songs and poems of the time. Visitors were asked to vote for their favourite art work. 220 votes were recorded; the winning three can be seen on the FEHG website.

The written content was supplied by Andy Weller, Lesley Crowcroft, Philip and Susan Toms.

Stewarding was mainly carried out by members of the Craft Group and the Seasons Art Class.

Two concerts were given by In Voice and Verse, three talks, Matt Neave of Eastcote Branch RBL gave two of the talks "Is it ticking?" and the History of the EBRBL. Frank Underhill of EBRBL added a display of WWI memorabilia.

Liz Smith, Edible History Society, Susan Toms RNELHS and Lesley Crowcroft FEHG gave the third talk, "Eastcote 1900-1920.

A party from St. Vincent's Care Home attended this talk. We were able to accommodate wheelchair users. They are hoping to attend other events at EHG. The exhibition was open when there were not any classes taking place in the Stables. The London Borough of Hillingdon did not take any other bookings during this fortnight to make the Stables available to us. Our thanks to Nick Porter for all his help with this project.

There was a steady flow of visitors at each opening. Those visiting were very appreciative of the exhibition, many coming from across the country, e.g. Wales, Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire and one from Turkey.

Donations were taken for the Royal British Legion Eastcote Branch amounting to £747.05. £595.05 was raised at the talks and exhibition. £152.00 from the two "In Voice and Verse" Concerts.

CD President of the Eastcote Branch of the Royal British Legion thanked everyone on behalf of the EBRBL. In Voice and Verse was thoroughly enjoyed and the Craft Group was excellent. The financial donation was most welcome.

MS Vice Chairman of the Eastcote Branch of the Royal British Legion thanked everyone for their donations.

SP thanked CD and MS for their kind comments.

GSK CORPORATE VISIT - Lesley Crowcroft

An all day session took place on 27th September 2018. Approximately 17 volunteers arrived eager to get 'stuck in'. They split into groups, each group being led by FEHG volunteers. One group helped clear and mulch two areas of land on the High Road boundary, one to be planted in the spring with summer/late flowering shrubs, the other a very shady area for ferns and habitat piles. Some helped in Long Meadow cutting and clearing the grassy areas not cut at the time of the regular hay cut. These areas were left uncut until the butterfly season finished.

A visit to the dovecote and a Q & A session in the walled garden was fitted in as well.

COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION – Steve Place

We removed more sweet grass from the backwater to maintain plenty of open water.

We removed some silt from the channel connecting the backwater to the river so water can flow into the backwater and keep it topped up.

We planted some buckthorns to replace two that died. These are the food plant of the caterpillars of the brimstone butterfly.

We topped up the dead hedges that have been built to exclude motorised vehicles from the meadow.

The 2018 butterfly report has been posted on the EHG website.

An updated dragonfly and damselfly report covering the activities of these creatures over the last five years has also been posted on the website. The backwater is becoming ever more attractive as a place to breed to an increasing range of species.

TREE DRESSING - Christine Lake

CL stated that although there had been rain all morning, by the time the children and families arrived for our annual tree-dressing it had at last stopped! Three schools, Warrender Primary, Coteford Infants and Field End Infants - all brought choirs and entertained us with festive songs. We also had representatives from 6th Eastcote Cubs. The Mayor and Mayoress of Hillingdon led

the dressing of the tree and presented each community group with a shrub from FEHG as a thank you.

The Stables looked beautiful and was full of lovely crafts and tea and cakes for sale. A raffle and Teddy Bear Hunt made sure there was plenty to do. A very big thank you to everyone who helped before and during the event to make it so special: our tea stall helpers, our very talented craft team, raffle sellers, Teddy Hunt organisers, outdoor stewards and Audrey on the baubles!

Not only was it a lovely community event, but we also raised some money for the gardens:

Raffle	£41.
Audrey donations	£28.27
Teas	£141.30
Calendar sales	£5.00
Total	£215.57

NB. The Craft Group will also be making a donation to this total

Photos of the events are on the website.

WAITROSE COMMUNITY MATTERS - Joan Butfield

JB said that over the past few years we had received a sizeable amount of money from the Waitrose Community Matters scheme from both the Ruislip and the Northwood Branches. These monies had gone towards purchasing bulbs and other items for EHG. JB will submit future applications on a regular basis.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Toshiba Corporate Visit - Lesley Crowcroft

This is planned for Friday December 7th. 15 volunteers are expected for the morning. Planting and mulching the next section of the Pamela Gardens boundary is planned.

2019 Dates

The following are confirmed

The annual picnic - Saturday 8th June 11am-4pm
Open House Sunday 22nd September with the Classic Car Rally
Tree Dressing Saturday 30th November 1.30pm-3.30pm

Arrangements have been made to open the Dovecote monthly from May-September. During the season if anyone wants to come to talks to steward and listen please let LC know

Plant and Second Hand Book Sales will take place during the warmer months.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Alison Holtorp - ERA Chair e-mailed that ERA would like to congratulate the FEHG on their recent achievements in this year's London in Bloom. Local residents are very appreciative of all the hard work that goes into maintaining such a nice open space for them to enjoy.

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

You have heard today about some of the work being done in the gardens and the meadows; in particular the contribution made by corporate volunteers and some of the community events.

But there have been other Friends at work in the background

Joan who keeps us in the Waitrose Community Matters scheme to obtain funding for us.

Keith who undertook a gastronomic tour of local restaurants and pubs so instead of weeding on Thursday we can enjoy some festive spirit.

Doris and Andy who unobtrusively clipped away at the box and yew to keep them in good shape.

Finally in recent months we have been joined by a good number of new gardeners who are steadily integrating into the Friends' group.

The date of the next QGM is Monday 4th March 2019 in the stables at 11am.

The meeting closed at 11.30.am