

Chairman's Report for 2013

Ray Keppler

1) Introduction

THACS has had another busy and successful year.

We ran ten events during 2013. They have all been reported in our newsletters, but it's worthwhile taking a few moments on an over-view of the whole year.

2) AGM 14th January

38 members braved the snow and cold to attend our AGM on Monday 14th January.

The talk following the AGM was *Biodiversity in a bottle; the story of the traditional English Orchard*. It was presented by David Curry, Chairman of Management Group, Hertfordshire Orchard Initiative. This initiative was launched 14 years ago in Tewin Memorial Hall, so there is a strong local connection.

3) Calligraphy workshops throughout Spring

Anna Clark organised a series of four enjoyable calligraphy workshops during February, March and April. These were again run by Jo Cooper. We were hoping to follow these with an advanced calligraphy workshop and a beginner's calligraphy workshop but unfortunately the level of interest did not support these or the continuation of the regular workshops. However, we will be delighted to organise workshops in future if there is sufficient interest.

4) Creative writing workshops 14th March & 24th October

Joanne Allen organised and hosted two more Creative Writing workshops in March and October. These workshops were run by Frances Wilson. They were enjoyable events and those who attended were very enthusiastic.

5) Spring Show 20th April

We got some sunshine at last and the *THACS* Spring Show on 20th April helped celebrate the arrival of the late spring.

There were 243 entries by 87 exhibitors at the Show, with classes for Flower Arranging, Horticulture, Arts and Crafts, Photography and Culinary. Although there was a slight reduction in the number of entries compared with last year, the standard was high and the judges had to work hard on their adjudications.

6) *THACS* plant stall at the village fete 30th June

Nick Whiting organised the plant stall at the Tewin Village Fete in June. This was well-supported with donations of plants and there were many willing volunteers to sort, label, price and sell.

The stall raised a record amount (about £350) for the village hall funds, perhaps because we were the only plant stall this year.

7) Visit to Wrest Park 31st July

The visit to Wrest Park in July was very interesting and everything went smoothly, despite the dubious weather. Thirty-eight people went on the visit and twenty-nine of these opted to go on the guided tour of the gardens in the morning.

The staff at Wrest Park did a great job in looking after us. The welcome was warm, the tour guides were excellent and the food in the restaurant was very tasty. It all made for an enjoyable day out.

8) Autumn Show 7th September

The Autumn Show on 7th September attracted 40 exhibitors who entered 290 exhibits. Although the number of exhibitors was lower than at last year's autumn show, the number of exhibits was up, mainly due to a significant increase in the number of exhibits in the vegetables & fruit class.

9) Visit to Tate Britain 9th October

We organised a visit to the *Lowry and the Painting of Modern Life* exhibition at Tate Britain.

This was the first major exhibition of landscapes by the much-loved British painter since the artist's death and consequently we expected this to be a popular event. Unfortunately this visit was cancelled because of lack of support. We are puzzled by this and would like to find out why this event wasn't more popular, so if you know of any reasons then please let us know.

10) Quiz evening 2nd November

There was a quiz night in November, run by our local quiz master, Andrew Whawell. Fifty-six people took part, grouped into teams. Andrew did a great job setting a wide variety of questions. There were questions on *THACS*-related themes (horticulture, arts & crafts, photography and culinary) as well as general knowledge.

In the early stages all the teams were pretty close and by the halfway point, when our fish and chip supper arrived, a number of teams were still in contention. As the quiz concluded, it took a tie breaker to decide which teams would be in first and second place. It all made for a great evening.

11) Art workshop 11th November

There was something different later in November when Jude O'Sullivan led an unusual art workshop that had been organised by Joanne Allen. Not a paint brush or a pencil was to be seen, but Jude showed the participants many different materials that could be used to make art. Only in the afternoon did they move on to colour, and then there was a challenge - to use only two colours to draw something from nature! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day.

12) Helpers

These events and activities were made possible by a large number of people who have given their time and skills so freely. We are indebted to them for their help and support.

The committee members have done a great job. We are also thankful for the staunch support and involvement of several *THACS* members who, although they are not on the committee, have given their time and effort to the benefit of us all. In addition to those I have already mentioned, I'd like to thank Pat & Alf Fulford. Pat found paying advertisers and, with help from Alf, dealt with the corresponding artwork for the newsletters and show schedules. Alf maintains the *THACS* page on the Tewin Village website, ensuring that everything is working correctly and that the information is correct and up-to-date.

Our thanks also go to all of the other numerous willing members and supporters of the society, who reliably help with many diverse tasks. Thank you all!