

East Blatchington Pond Conservation Society

AGM, 2nd November 2010. 7.30pm.

Held at St James' Clubhouse, South Hall, Blatchington Road, Seaford.

1: Chairman's Welcome & Introduction

The Chairman welcomed the members present:-

Kevin Trash, Jane Lambert, Zena Gibbs, John Creasy, Vaughan Reynolds, Anne Lloyd-James, Hazel Trenfield and the Honorary Committee.

2: Apologies for absence:

Helen Palmer, Honorary President.

3: Minutes of 2009 AGM.

The minutes of the previous AGM were agreed, with Zena Gibbs proposing and Kevin Trash seconding and duly signed by the Chairman.

4: Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

However, Mrs. Zena Gibbs did suggest adding the minutes of the AGM to the website.

The Hon.Chairman said this would be discussed with the Web Master - Mr. Mick Barratt.

5: Chairman's Report:

Firstly, many thanks to Mr. Kevin Trash who is present this evening and has kindly donated £50. (His letter was read out by the Chairman.)

We have had a fairly interesting year generally. The pond is looking very attractive and our thanks to Cedric and his helpers over the year. Last June, Mr. Bob Hutchinson, a resident from the Kingsmead area offered to donate a red water lily as it had overgrown his own pond. It has been agreed to accept it next spring.

In August, we received an invitation to visit Seahaven FM studios to participate in an Internet radio programme interview, by Bob Peedle, about "Community People in Seaford." The Pond Manager Cedric Trenfield and me went along and talked for about nine minutes in total, answering questions and giving information about how the pond conservation was started and what we are doing now. We have had no follow up by listeners but as we gave our Website address, a few more people may have learnt about the work we do.

In September, a donation of £100 was sent to us by the daughter of the late Madge Lewis – the lady who first started the interest in reinstalling the pond – when she read in our Newsletter that we had named the boat after her mother. A thank you letter was sent on behalf of the Committee.

Also in September, Martin Murdoch held two open days on behalf of East Blatchington Pond Conservation Society in a Belgrave Road garden. This gentleman is totally blind but with help from friends he runs a Narrow Gauge railway around the front and through to the back of his garden.

Visitors and passengers were charged and the money amounting to £100 was donated to us. Several people have become members and a letter of thanks has been sent.

As the weather was wet on one of the days, it is quite fantastic that £100 was collected.

Hon. Secretary Helen Randall has updated our information leaflet and a drawing by a previous member – Sally Taylor – was found in our archives, which was very suitable for the front page. The printers suggested the paper colour pale green, instead of the white, at no extra cost. We are very pleased with the result.

6: Treasurer's Report:

Although we have an agreement with the Town Council to maintain the pond they have not allotted this year the usual annual grant of £250. An application was not submitted as it was hoped we would be given the usual consideration. We were told that we now have to compete with others and apply each year.

Anne Lloyd-James suggested that we should apply for the grant, as there may come a time when we need additional funds and we might need to show previous applications for the grant. It was agreed that the pond is an asset to Seaford and the council should be prepared to pay towards the maintenance.

Expenditure to date includes £300 for printing the Newsletters and Leaflets and £5 to cover a cheque that was refused. As interest paid on the deposit account has been minimal, there is little point in transferring additional funds to that account until interest rates improve.

Current account total - £1,447.04

Deposit account total - £2,161.80

The Treasurer's report was agreed by Hazel Trenfield and seconded by Anne Lloyd-James

7: Membership Secretary's Report:

Number of members: 331

Subscriptions: £650.00

Donations: £481.10

Numbers have fluctuated over the years. Although we have fewer members than last year, donations have increased.

It was acknowledged that the core membership resulted from people who live around the pond area and suggested that leaflets be delivered to Belgrave Road and Kingsmead area. The more leaflets we can deliver the more chance we have to recruit additional members.

Mr. Kevin Trash a member present at the AGM offered to take on some delivery of Newsletters and it was suggested that this could be one of the areas to cover. The Membership Secretary will contact Mr. Trash next year when deliveries of Newsletter 2011 are needed.

8: Pond Manager's Report

The pond seems to be at its best at the moment. The water quality is very good and the pond life is thriving. A Cormorant was seen sitting by the pond, which is a good sign of a healthy pond. This year the pollarded trees are growing with renewed vigour and we now have a progression of wild

flowers blooming up until the end of September. The scabious has proved very successful in competing with the grass and weeds.

In autumn the banks are strimmed back, which helps to keep rats away by removing potential nesting sites for them. The strimmer is the only power tool we have and it has certainly earned its keep. We are thinking of getting a hedge trimmer, which would cost £300 to £350. The work around the pond is usually undertaken by a small group of 3-4 people. Their work weeding on the banks and removing the bindweed, which chokes the other plants, is essential. Many thanks to all who participate in the work parties and particularly to John, who remains a very important member of the group, always available to do what he can despite his recent health problems.

A new young man, who is a welcome member, came along towards the end of last year. He enjoys digging and we hope he will continue to enjoy working with us.

The lock-up for the boat has proved very successful and very secure. The boat has been used to get out to the island to remove the duck house, which is now under repair and to ferry the tree surgeon across to pollard the trees.

9 Any Other Business

Anne Lloyd-James asked if anything had been done about setting up a stall in the Martello Tower. The Treasurer said it had been discussed within the Committee and the £86 insurance cost now required when using a gazebo for participating in events was thought to be against us going ahead. Mrs. Lloyd-James replied that is one of the reasons perhaps that we should apply for the Town Council grant to which everyone present agreed.

10. Election of officers

Julia Llewellyn who has been our Honorary Chairman since November, 2004, thanked the Committee for their help in running the Society and informed everyone of her wish to step down when a replacement can be found. Anyone interested in taking over either as Hon.Chairman or Hon. Education Officer should contact her either by phone or email.

Mr. Anthony Hepworth-Taylor has resigned from the post of Honorary Education Officer due to his many other commitments. We thank him very much for his contribution over the years.

All other officers agreed to carry on.

11. Date of next AGM This was agreed for Tuesday, 1st. November, 2011
(This date has now been booked with St. James' Clubhouse.)

The A.G.M finished at 8.45pm.

Free refreshments were then given out and the Pond Manager Mr. Cedric Trenfield gave a very informative Slide Show of the history of the Pond since the 1980's.

This was enjoyed by everyone present. Thanks were given to Cedric.