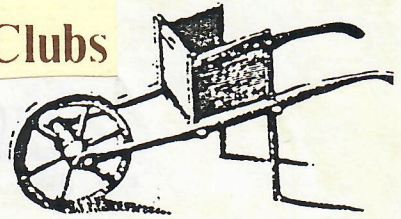


The Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs



NEWSLETTER 2. Autumn 1990

Just when we feel in need, as somebody said, of 'a cast-iron back with a hinge in it', dreary weather and shorter days slow down our seasonal tasks. We thankfully sit down and plan ahead. As Browning says, wistfully:

'How well I know what I mean to do

When the long dark autumn evenings come.'

So we sit and plan; but plans don't always work out. Welcome to our second Newsletter, a little later than projected..... I hope that the information contained here will help all members of the Federation towards another successful year.

There are now 76 different organisations in the Somerset Federation, spread over a very wide geographical area. Inter-Club contact can be difficult. Since your neighbours share common interests and common problems, by pooling resources, cooperating and exchanging opinions and ideas, some of the burden might be lifted from Clubs who feel isolated, or in need of stimulus. A suggestion, therefore, has been made to meet and make contact with other Clubs and Societies on a regional basis. I am sure that West Somerset view things differently from East Somerset. After all the Quantocks are very different from the Mendips. Please discuss this idea in Committee and with your members and include the result of these deliberations on the accompanying reply sheet.

THE GARDENING CLUB

Channel 4 are hoping to produce a television series on Gardening Clubs and are seeking our assistance. The series will be looking at problems encountered in everyday gardens, large or small. Ms. J. Readman, in charge of the research, has provided a questionnaire for completion by those gardeners interested.

PEAT ALTERNATIVES

The Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation has information on alternatives to peat and can arrange speakers on the question of raised bogs and their botanical interest. Contact G.C. Hancock, Conservation Officer, Fyne Court, Broomfield, Bridgwater TA5 2EQ.

SPEAKERS and JUDGES LISTS

Members are asked to note that a new complete list will not be published until 1992. The 1989 list together with its 1990 supplement provide over 150 names. It should be borne in mind that costs are rising, particularly travelling expenses. Could members and Hon. Secs. please recommend good speakers to other clubs. Speakers are urgently needed in the Watchet/Minehead area. If you know of good speakers available or willing to travel, please contact Miss B.M. Child, Castlemead, Washford, Watchet, TA23 0PZ, (Phone 0984 40765).

There is a second plea from underused judges. Show Secretaries are encouraged to try the services of new judges, especially those on the amended list.

SHOW DATES

If members wish us to publicise shows and events in the next newsletter, please ensure that you get the dates and any other relevant information to our Secretary by the end of January for inclusion in the Spring issue of the Newsletter. This could be of help to those clubs which have open classes to increase the number of entrants.

Public Liability Insurance

As the New Year for our P.L. Insurance scheme is due to start on 1st November, we would like to bring to the notice of non-participating Clubs the advice which we have received on the Insurance position of Clubs which hold meetings in Village Halls.

All Village Halls have their own insurance, but we are told that the conditions may vary from Hall to Hall. For example, if someone falls through the stage due to rotting timbers, or is injured by a piece of Hall equipment, these events would be covered; but, if a Club member falls over another member's umbrella which is sticking out from under a chair and breaks a leg, or, if during tea-making, a member is seriously scalded due to another member's negligence, this may not be covered by the Hall insurance, as these are accidents which their insurers could claim to have happened due to negligence outside the Hall's control, or outside the control of the Hall's administrators.

The Federation scheme covers all accidents of this type, as well as the five specialist Gardening Club clauses of which you have all been notified, in addition to the usual P.L. clauses, and we would recommend those clubs not at present participating and meeting in Village Halls to check that accidents such as those mentioned above are fully covered and that liability would be accepted by the Hall's insurers.

Any Club requiring further information about the Federation scheme should contact our Treasurer.

Constitution

The notice of this year's AGM, circulated to all Clubs in April, called for certain changes in the Constitution, among which was a section headed 'Officers'.

However, the proposed amendment on this section, after considerable discussion at the AGM, was rejected and you will have read in the Minutes circulated to all Clubs that it was decided to reword the clause and present it again at a subsequent meeting.

Your Committee have deliberated this matter in some detail, and feel that a much more simple approach is required. They therefore propose that the 'Officers' section of the Constitution consist of one clause only to read as follows:-

Officers & Committee : The Federation Committee will consist of four Officers, who shall be Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary, and Hon. Treasurer, and up to six other members, all of whom will retire annually and be eligible for re-election at the A.G.M.

The effect of this amendment, if adopted, will be:-

- 1) It is simple.
- 2) That the Committee has abandoned its original intention that it should have power to elect Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and these powers will now rest entirely with member clubs.
- 3) That the words 'ex-officio' are deleted, as these seemed to cause some confusion at the A.G.M.
- 4) That to increase the total of the Committee from a maximum of eight to ten, means that powers of co-optation will not be required, and the proposed co-optation clause is forgotten.

Will you please consider this one clause and let our Secretary know if it meets with your approval.