

Chairman's report for 2022 AGM

Firstly, I would like to welcome everyone to this AGM of the Old Basing and Lychpit Village Show.

2021/2 was another uncertain year for the Committee, with the effects of Coronavirus still causing some problems in the early part of 2022. As the year went on however, we became more confident that the Show would go on in September and we continued to plan for a more "normal" return to the pre-pandemic type of event.

Before that, in December 2021, Sue, Judith and myself decorated our Christmas Tree as part of the St Mary's Christmas Tree festival. This year the event was held indoors again we chose the theme of "Gardener's friend and foes". Again, our tree provoked much favourable comment although it didn't win any prizes!

In June we again joined with the Old Basing WI to hold a plant sale. This time it was held at the Beddington Centre. It involved a lot of work by the Committee Members for which I am very grateful. However, the footfall was not as good as we had hoped and we didn't make as much money as we had at the Lychpit Hall in 2021, although it was comparable to that which we usually make at the Carnival.

Later in June we contributed to the St Mary's Flower Festival. We decided that we would do a flower display instead of an outside stall this year as everyone had other commitments at around this time and it was felt that this would be easier to do with the people who were available. Our theme was "The Queen at RHS Chelsea" and again Sue, Judith and myself did a fair amount of planning for a flower arrangement on this theme. Events conspired against us however. Firstly, I was given a long-awaited date for surgery on my foot for the week before and Judith unfortunately contracted COVID, meaning that Sue was left to do our display on her own, as well as the large display that she had already committed to do as an individual. I am very grateful to Sue for stepping in and completing the Village Show arrangement, especially as she had other pressing issues of her own at the time.

As Show date approached in September, we felt that we would be able to run the usual offering including the teas and cakes and opening up the upstairs floor for the handicrafts, photos and wine and beer. Publicity was increased on the Old Basing Facebook page, and on the allotment Facebook group. Articles had already been placed in the Basinga each month and in the Parish Quarterly newsletter A reminder was put in the Gazette for the Thursday preceding the Show and the banners were put out in plenty of time. However, it became clear on the Thursday prior to the Show that entries were considerably down on previous years. This could well have been due to the extremely dry weather over the summer which perhaps accounted for reduced entries in the flowers fruit and vegetable categories. Again, flower arranging was not popular. However, on the plus side we had 20 new or returning entrants and the new classes for poetry were well subscribed.

On Show-day itself, it is fair to say that the attendance was disappointing- almost half of what it was last year when COVID was still rife. The weather was not that good but probably cannot account entirely for the lower numbers. Takings on the day for raffle, tombola and teas and cakes reflected the lower number of people attending, although overall a small profit was made on the day.

The Committee has discussed whether any fundamental changes should be made for next year at our wash-up meeting, and it has been suggested that we should purchase a couple of card payment machines as it was felt that people no longer carry the cash around that they used to do. To this end we are looking at buying some "Sum Up" machines. I have made enquiries to the Councillor's fund

as to whether this is something that could be funded by them and I am encouraged by a conversation I have had with Onnalee Cubitt, that we are most definitely in the running.

The Committee has decided not to take part in the St Mary's Christmas tree festival this year, but next year we fully hope to have a plant stall at the 2023 Carnival, which we understand will be taking place. The funds raised by this and previous sales help to fund our fixed costs such as Public Liability and trophy insurance. We also may have to look at repairing our tea urn again as it was found to be leaking.

Before coming to a close, I would like to thank all the committee for their on-going support in this difficult year. In particular I wish to thank Mark who retires from the Committee after many years of dedicated service to the Village Show most recently as Treasurer. I would like to present Mark with a token of our appreciation by giving him a bottle of wine.

I look forward to 2023 when our Show will take place on 3rd September which is slightly earlier than in recent times due to a Frawley wedding on the following week. Thank you again for all your support over the past year and I hope that I can count on the same again next year.

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Linda Frawley
Chair of the Old Basing and Lychpit Village Show

31th October 2022