

# Newsletter

## Chairman's Comments



*Mary Davies and Peter  
Pinches at Tatton  
This picture and the one  
below taken by Ken  
Woodward*

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The highlight of the year for me was being asked to judge our own show due to the unfortunate illness of our chosen judge. No chance at that time to engage anyone else so I was the very privileged person to do it. Provided with a very able steward we certainly had a job on our hands. With no really poor exhibits some classes took quite a time determining the prize-winners. So many of you were just a fraction away from being in the frame. If only some damaged or old florets had been removed or a wayward stem of flowers just tweaked into place then a different story would have been told.

A typical example was when we came to judge "Best plant in show". Obviously all First Prize winners are first considered, this was easily cut down to about five, after a quick deliberation we were down to three then two, "Rhiannon" and "Texas Hot Chilli".

Having grown both of these I am well aware of each ones degree of difficulty in growing to show standard. Well both plants were excellent in their own right and having to make a decision was very difficult, in the end it was decided that the larger Rhiannon was marginally better, having said that after the judging and explaining some of my decisions to you the exhibitors. I had around six or seven of you with me when I was by the said "Texas Hot Chilli". I had noticed during judging a gap in the flowering head which at the time I thought could easily be covered, so to demonstrate I held one stem, moved another released them and lo and behold an almost perfect head of flower with no gaps, had that have been done before judging best in show may well have gone the other way. I thoroughly enjoyed judging our own show and I thank you all.

My own season has been somewhat up and down, from a very late start in flowering to the arrival of some very nice plants via Frank and the society to what has seemed like a strange growing pattern with some varieties this year. A fair number of plants which had a good head of flower when they first started and lasted well through warm weather but once having finished for some reason failed to repeat to flower. Maybe our weather has something to do with it; our area is the 3 W's, warm wet and windy. I still have some very nice plants which should continue to flower for some time yet. Enjoy the rest of the season.

### Ken Jones Chairman



*What has Frank been up  
to this time?*



*Ken hard at work judging  
assisted by Mr. Smith*



*Some of the plants Ken had to  
judge*

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## *Secretary's Report*

First I want to say that the milk issue should be clear to all following this note from Rex Dibley.

**Dear Frank,**

It has been brought to my attention that there has been a debate about milk being a sterilant. In correspondence that I have had with Dr Mumford, Plant Virologist at the Central Science Laboratory he recommends disinfecting blades when taking cuttings as a matter of course. He says skimmed milk as well as some commercial products can be used and all are effective against risk of viral transmission.

**Rex.**

Now to the society show, well what a show again this year, the plants again where first class, no wonder Ken took quite a time judging, I would not liked to have had to do it myself, a very good job all round, Mr Smith who helped, was also a student, he wanted to have first hand knowledge of how to judge streps, as mainly a fuchsia judge from the Isle of Wight, he could not of had a better tutor, his wife grows the streps by the way.

We had a lot of members, who just came along to see how we do it, and I am sure that they were all impressed with the plants you put into the show, also some non members turned up, but they are not non members now, quite a few joined us. We had members from all parts of the UK. I think next year we will have a visitor's book, that way we will get a better idea from how far a-field members are coming.

My thanks to all the ladies who helped out in the kitchen, and a special thanks to Ann, who again I think was on her own for most of the afternoon.

The show over, relaxing at home with a glass of beer and a pipe, Sue told me that see had had a good afternoon with the seed fund, and Gordon had been working out for next year, and was drawing up a plan for the staging, so all being well we won't have to move anything plant wise. Sue and Gordon went off early on Sunday morning as Mary and I where off to Tatton Park to set up the stand frame and notice board ready for the flowers on Tuesday.

On Tuesday with the help of Brian (Brian Grieve) we put a display of species at the end of our area while Mary did the main display, we just finished within the time frame as judging was at 2.30 pm.

Every one who saw the stand said it was worth a Gold, but the judges only thought it was worth Silver Gilt, again the notice board let us down, one day I will get that thing right, but they keep moving the goalposts.

Please note Gardeners World Live was covered by Mary and one day by Jim and Doreen Ellis, I only went in on set up and break down, I don't think Mary will do it next year.

The first week in August saw us again at Bakewell in Derbyshire, which is a nice steady show, we where awarded Large Gold with a display nothing like Tatton, it was good but not as large. On the Wednesday morning the judges did the rounds and talking to 3 of them, they said that they had seen the display at Tatton and all thought it should have been awarded Gold. Two of our members run a Cactus Nursery and they came to Bakewell for the first time this year with the cacti stand and where awarded best in floral marquee.

September is going to be very busy this year as we have 4 shows in 5 weeks.

### **Capillary matting.**

Quite a few members asked at the show about matting as the all seemed to have the same complaint about what they had had from the garden centre, all asking what matting I use.

The matting Ken and I use is a commercial one mainly for bedding plant growers and can only be obtained in 50-metre rolls. So the society has purchased some to pass on to any member who wants it at cost plus the postage. The size is 120 cm wide approx 4 feet and it works out at £3.10p per meter length. Use the 4 feet for the length and cut to the width you require.

### **Now I will tell you how I use it in the greenhouse.**

My benches are slatted wood covered with ½ inch polystyrene, that's covered with a thin polythene sheet in one length if possible, if you have to overlap it do so for at least 2 feet, this is then covered with the matting, this wants to be an inch shorter front, back and both ends so that you do not have any hanging over, if you do it will drain off all your water.

If you need to use more than one piece of matting, don't overlap; just place them touching each

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## *Secretary's Report (continued)*

other. Once your plants are on the matting you need only water them when the PLANTS need watering, the matting will not hurt dry. Summertime you MAY need to water 2 or 3 times a week, winter-time 1 or 2 times a month, it's all according to the weather. When feeding your plants all you need to do is add feed to the watering can and water the matting as usual the plants will take up the food.

### **In the house.**

The basics are the same as for greenhouse use, you can cut the matting to fit trays (not recommended for individual pots) and water as greenhouse and you may have to water a little more often in the winter as the house will be much warmer than the greenhouse.

### **Strep care October.**

Flowering will be slowing down this month so reduce the amount of water used, stop feeding as the plants will need a rest.

Any extra long leaves can be cut back to half their size; these will have no use next year, as the flowers will all be on new leaves. Check your seedlings if you sowed in September, they will need a mist spray occasionally. If you have not sown any seed this month is a very good time to do it, seed sown should be put on bottom heat in a propagator, if trying in the house the warmest room and covered with glass or clingfilm. If you think any plants need repotting cut all the flowers off before doing this, this helps the root form in the new compost. Do not over pot, use the next pot size up.

### **Strep care November.**

Not much to do this month if you've fulfilled the October tasks, just keep taking the dead flowers off, and don't over water them.

### **Strep care December and January.**

First half of December just keep them clean of dead flowers, the second half you can start to take off some of the old leaves, not all of them just the ones that are large and tatty, then towards the end of January take all the leaves that flowered off, take them as low as possible to the base of the plant, this is best done with your finger nail, score under the leaf to be taken off then rock from side to side gently and off it comes, if you use a knife be very careful not to cut the new leaves that are just forming, if the knife slips next seasons flowers are lost, far better with your finger nail. So if you bite your nails leave one alone for a month before.

**Frank.**

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### **News from the Seed Fund**

Just a few words on the seed fund. At present we have plenty of seed and some new varieties to us from the USA. Requests for seed are rather slow this year, perhaps the cold spring is putting people off trying to grow from seed.

If you have never grown from seed then you might like to try this year. I have plenty of mixed hybrid seed, if you just want to see if you can germinate seed. Who knows what colour or form of flowering strep you might get. It's all interesting and gives you a buzz to know you personally have achieved something new.

The seed is free and so is the postage, members can ask for 10 packets in all, either 10 of hybrids or 5 species and 5 hybrids, just no more than 10 packets at a time.

I personally sow seed a few at a time (20 max) approx on the surface of very small pots of compost and put them in a propagator, heated at this time of year and no heat later on in the year. This way I can get lots of pots in my propagator and also save on compost. Do not cover the seed with compost as they need light to germinate. This year I have sowed some of the seed on compost covered with silver sand. It seems to be working quite well, I can see the seed when they take up moisture and when they start to sprout (if you look very carefully) When I can see the sand has dried out I either spray overhead or soak the pots until the sand is hydrated. If anybody tries this can you please let me know what you think.

My thanks to members Alison and Judy, Brian and Lorraine and any other members I have failed to mention for their contribution of seed, it is most welcome.

So come on have a go at growing from seed. It's not a fast process but very satisfying.

Regards from the Seed Fund

**Sue Long**

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## ***SHOW REPORT Saturday July 19 2008.***

### ***by Mary Davies***

10 days before the show our judge informed us that he would not be able to do the judging this year owing to just getting over his second bout of pneumonia in six months. **HELP.**

Frank made a few phone calls, all to no avail, then it became obvious, what was he doing getting all worked up when we had a judge just up the road, our chairman Ken, so after explaining what had happened to him he agreed to do it, and a very fine job he made of it too.

Most of the staging was up by 6.30 Friday evening thanks to Sue and Gordon's help, the rest we could do in the morning before the plants start to arrive.

Brian and Lorraine were the first to arrive and, after a cuppa, Lorraine soon got the paperwork ready for the entries, she didn't have long to wait Ron Aldous was not far behind with a car full of beauties.

After Ron we had a steady flow, of members with plants and members without plants who had turned up to see how it's done, I think we may have a few more entries next year, Franks already said he will have to make some more staging.

The show was again a huge success, if the layout had stayed as it was a few years ago, just flat on tables we would not have had enough room, every ones plants seem to be getting bigger with more flowers.

This year for the first time we had a best in show, Ron Aldous won it, and this took the form of a cut glass vase engraved with British Streptocarpus Society Best in Show 2008. We hope to do this every year from now on.

Just a little thing regarding the judging of best in show, this must have been a very hard thing to decide, when talking to Ken after judging he told me that it was very close between Texas Hot Chilli and Rhiannon, the way he put it to me was T H C got 99-8 and Rh got 99-9 out of 100, so better luck next year Rodney.

My thanks to all who brought cakes and helped out in the kitchen, I am sure that all the members who attended would add there thanks too.

The date for next years show will have to be **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> of July;** again Tatton Park is the week after.

#### **CLASS RESULTS.**

##### **Greenhouse Grown.**

**Class 1.** 1 Plant, 4 inch (10cm) pot. 33 Entries, 33 plants.

First. Peter Wilson, with a Seedling.

Second. Peter Wilson, with Strawberry Fondant.

Third. Stan Gorman, with Amanda.

Fourth. Peter Wilson, with a Seedling.

**Class 2.** 3 Plants, 4 inch (10cm) pot. 10 Entries, 30 plants.

First. Ron Aldous, with Signet, Elizabeth and Something Special.

Second. Peter Wilson, with 3 Seedlings of his own.

Third. Peter Wilson, with 3 more of his Seedlings.

Fourth. Joan Dale, Midnight Flame, Pink Variegated and one with no name.

**Class 3.** 1 Plant, 6 inch (15cm) pot. 23 Entries 23 plants.

First. Rodney Woods, with Texas Hot Chilli.

Second. Rodney Woods, with Purple Pepper.

Third. Brian Grieve, with Ronja.

Fourth. Brian Grieve, with Katie.

**Class 4.** 3 Plants, 6 inch (15cm) pot. 4 Entries 12 plants

First. Ron Aldous, with Ruby, Blue Confetti and Excellent.

Second. Margaret Green, with Heidi, a Seedling and Falling Stars.

Third. Margaret Green, with 2 Seedlings and Maassens White

Fourth. Barbara Smallwood, with Albatross, Anne and Bethan.

##### **Grown in House or Conservatory.**

**Class 5.** 1 Plant, 4 inch (10cm) pot. 17 Entries 17 plants.

First. Pauline Benton, with Night Beacon.

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## *Show Report 2008 (continued)*

Second. Brian Hawkins, with Persian Carpet.  
Third. Peter Wilson, with one of his seedlings.  
Fourth. Pauline Benton, with Bristol Gunpowder.

**Class 6.** 3 Plants, 4 inch (10cm) pot. 6 Entries. 18 plants.  
First. Anita Harper, with Burgundy Ruffles, Ruby and Christine.  
Second. Pauline Benton, with Emily, Misty Blue and Jessica.  
Third. Pauline Benton, Party Doll, Nia and Seren.  
Fourth. Peter Wilson, with Dainty Lady and 2 of his seedlings.

**Class 7.** 1 Plant, 6 inch (15cm) pot. 10 Entries. 10 plants.  
First. Margaret Ereaut, with Strawberry Fondant (entered as crushed strawberry)  
Second. Margaret Ereaut, with Demeter.  
Third. Margaret Ereaut, with Olwen.  
Fourth. Tricia heath, with a Seedling (Y7)

### **CLASSES 8 TO 13 CAN BE GROWN ANYWHERE.**

**Class 8.** 1 Plant, any size pot. 3 Entries. 3 plants.  
First. Ron Aldous, with Rhiannon. \*\*\*\* **This plant won BEST IN SHOW.**  
Second. Margaret Green with Laura.  
Third. Margaret Green, with Bethan.  
Fourth. None

**Class 9.** Any Species need not be in flower, any size pot. 11 Entries 11 plants.  
First. Ron Aldous, with s. candidus.  
Second. Jim Ellis, with s. wendlandii.  
Third. Brian Grieve, with s. parviflora.  
Fourth. Frank Marsh, with s. caulescens.

**Class 10.** 6 Plants in flower. 6 Entries 36 plants.  
First. Ron Aldous with, Falling Stars, Kelly, 2 Thandi, pink seedling and Rhiannon.  
Second. Keith Capper with, Incosi, Impi, Thandi, Jubulani, Jacaranda and Umfula.  
Third. Anita Harper with, Ruby, Ella Mae, Chloe, Charlotte, Mia and Iona.  
Fourth. Jim Ellis with, Blushing Bride, Jessica, Falling Stars, Cherry Tub, Jacqui and Gloria.

**Class 11.** Any new seedling. Judged by members.  
We had 26 entries in this class,  
First. Jim Ellis with a new red very well veined.  
Second. Brian Grieve  
Third. Rodney Woods.  
Fourth. Stan Gorman.

**Class 12.** A photograph of a single streptocarpus plant. 1 entry this year.  
First. Len Harford

**Class 13.** A photograph of a group of streptocarpus. 1 entry this year.  
First. Len Harford

**Class 14.** Beginner. 1 Plant in flower in any size pot. 1 entry 1 plants  
First. Richard Spiers, with Bethan.

**Class 15.** Beginner. 3 Plants in flower in any size pot. 1 entry 3 plants.  
First. Richard Spiers, with Cynthia-Raspberry Velvet and Salmon Sunset.



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## *“Croseo Abertawe” (Welcome to Swansea)*

### *by Gordon Long*

Five miles out of the City Centre of Swansea, on the edge of the Gower Peninsular, Gt. Britain's' first area of outstanding natural beauty lies Dunvant, home of Sue Long your seed secretary and husband Gordon. Sue has been retired for a year now, but I am still doing my 40 hours a week!

We have not been too busy strep wise over the last few years, although we always travel up to the show and stay with Mary and Frank to help put up and organise the annual show.

Last year with Sue having more time to tend the plants, we decided to put up a stand in the Gower show. This is always on the first Sunday in August, set in the grounds of Penrice Castle overlooking Oxwich Bay in Gower----a proper country show with cattle, pigs, sheepdogs, falconry, vintage tractors the lot, and yes a horticultural tent. The schedule called for a six by four foot display, my stand made years ago was eight by four foot, so rather than cut down 'old faithful' a new one was made, hinged in the middle so it folded up---- easier to transport. Judging was at 3pm on the Saturday, the show being open on Sunday morning to the public. So Friday evening, off we went. The stand went up like a dream, black cloths pinned into place, society banner and all, so home we went, delighted. Later on over a pint of real ale in the local club, the next day's plans were laid. What's the saying 'the best laid plans of mice and men'. Saturday dawned, time to go off and dress the stand, we were loading the plants into the van when the phone rang. The show was cancelled at the last minute, there was an outbreak of foot and mouth in Sussex and all movement of cattle and stock was frozen. Down we went to the showground; they allowed us to dismantle the stand after disinfecting the van both in and out of the ground. Disaster for us but at least Gower was kept clear of foot and mouth...

So Margam Show was in late August, up the M4 to Port Talbot about 25 miles from us. A two day show set in the grounds of Margam Castle, a stately home, ravaged by fire about 15 years ago, but thankfully restored. The ancestral home of the Fox Talbot family set in acres of ground complete with herds of deer. It is steeped in history with the ruins of Margam Abbey close by, and the restored 'Orangery' where the toffs grew their citrus fruit, similar to the one at Kew gardens. This used to be the venue for the show exhibits but is now so popular as a wedding venue, that the council hire out, that we gardeners are back in a marquee! Incidentally Henry Fox Talbot was a photographic pioneer, some of the earliest photographic images were made at this gothic mansion and most recently it has been used as a location for 'Dr Who'. However up went the stand again and this time we even put plants on it!!

It's a wonderful dahlia and veg. show but lacking in the pot plant department. We are trying to redress this with the organisers but don't seem to be getting far. Any way great weather and some interest from the public, a few really inquisitive and lots stopped to talk. Anyway, this year the new stand did go up at the Gower show, complete with plants and good weather prevailed. The odd shower drove everybody into the tents and we were able to talk plants. Some joining forms were taken so who knows we might have pulled in a few new members. On the downside I reversed my van into a ruddy great tractor rut behind the tent and had to be towed out before we could return home!!! On the upside, Sue won with her single pot of strep, and was second in the three pot class, whilst another member Brian Clark won the three pot class and was second in the single pot class.

Margam show was also attended this year, but a total reversal----- mud up to your armpits!! Here in Wales we 'enjoy' above average rainfall, this year it has not stopped, dreadful summer----damp dark, dismal growing conditions. Any way with a few ferns to add interest, the stand was put up. We don't get judged, the stand (the only one there) is purely for the public to see the plants and generate interest. Terrific over night rain put a damper on things, with attendances down both days. However the stalwarts turned out and interest was shown. Perhaps next year we will attend a different show, who knows.

#### **The Society**

Nine years have now passed since seven founder members pledged £10.00 each to begin this society in Boney Hay Workingmen's Club in 1999. Who would have thought, that we would have gained so much. The success of this society has, in the main been down to the dedication of Mary and Frank who took on the responsibility of attending shows and bring the streptocarpus to the notice of a wider range of gardeners. I remember in our early streptocarpus days in the middle seventies, we only knew a few local growers, now we have friends all over, home and abroad

Thanks must also go to our chairman Ken, for his cultural knowledge in the early days, the Franken partnership producing plants we still grow today, and since those early days, look what you the members have bred from them. Yes indeed we have come a long way. If anyone has any ideas for our 10<sup>th</sup> show, please contact Frank.

With work commitments at some weekends, it is difficult to get around all local shows, and the price of diesel doesn't help either, but we try to spread the word in Swansea with talks to local societies and clubs.

Well that's all from me for now

**Regards, Gordon**

## *An Experience Needing Answers*

Hi again from Somerset, to you fellow strepto growers. Some of you might remember, I got called upon by Frank a couple of years ago, to write about how I got into strepto's.

Well he's back after me again, He reckons he's short on news, come on, there's 600 to 700 members out there who have got to have some experiences to let us all know about.

I haven't had that many years in streps, about 7 but I've certainly had some experiences, something most weeks. I told you in the last bit I wrote about my experiences at hybridizing and how it took me 28 attempts before I even managed to get anything to grow (seed wise) beyond a week or so, much better at it now.

What can I write about this time? Nothing too long as this time of the year is very busy, usually start the greenhouses around 8 o'clock and I don't very often finish until that time at night or later, (got to have my breaks and do the house chores as my other half Dulcie still goes to work most days) Of course everything seems to take longer when your older (like to relax before I go to bed Frank).

Frank mentioned recently about using milk as a sterilizer, well right or wrong I must admit I use it. Read about it in one of the gardening magazines a few years ago, can't remember which one (a few more brain cells gone in the last couple of years).

This brings me to something that happened last year and I'd be glad of other people's opinions or perhaps you've had the same experiences and how did you get over it.

I went into one of the greenhouses one morning last year not long after the streps had started flowering and had quite a surprise to see that one of the previous years seedlings had brilliant coloured blotches on the flower, funny, I don't remember the flower looking like this the previous year, I must admit it did look rather striking so I left it, (big mistake) I did mention it to Frank, he thought at the time it would probably be just an odd flower. As more flowers appeared they were blotched as well, this was beginning to look an attractive plant but I did not notice that every flower was marked differently but I still let it carry on. Now, although my scissors stand in milk when I dead head, I had a terrible habit of pinching off the odd flower, therefore carrying anything from one plant to the next. I still forget now and again.

Well as time went on another plant was showing up the odd blotched flower, I noticed another and another, whole stems of blotched flowers. Alarm bells, something wrong here, got on to Frank again and asked if any of the plants he had of mine had this problem, 'no' was the reply, so something's going wrong my end. Although I had no cuttings from some of these plants, some I thought had potential for registering, they had to go, so in the bin they went. But that wasn't the end, through the course of the summer I must have thrown away some 20 or more plants, gone for ever.

Could it be a 'virus'? Something I haven't experienced before so don't know much about it or how it spreads.

When at one of the shows I thought I'll ask the experts, they had a panel answering gardening questions. When I brought the subject up, they just looked at each other, eventually saying 'whose going to answer this one? Silence, I've posed a good one here obviously I thought, eventually one of the panel gave me what he thought was the answer. 'Because the previous summer had been a very hot one (06) and this one was a bad damp one (07) with poor light factors the plants were stressed and it was affecting the flowers. I asked 'could it not be a virus'? After another confab they decided 'no' they didn't think so. They could be right, but I came away not being quite convinced.

At another show I spoke to a well-known grower, who had the same idea as myself a 'virus'. How do you get a virus? Perhaps somebody out there can help out and let us all know, I can't be the only simpleton, or am I.

So far this year I have only had one with this problem, no messing, straight in the bin, (dustbin that is not compost bin) this was a cutting taken from a plant I dumped last year

before it showed the symptoms. Have I cured it? I don't know, time will tell. I have several pairs of scissors in each greenhouse and when I am deadheading they stand in milk and only one plant gets deadheaded with that pair of scissors before it goes back into the milk, how do you sterilize your equipment? Lets have your views please.

Till next time (and there's sure to be one if I know Frank)

PS.

Since this article was written it's reared its ugly head again, coming through on cuttings taken last year, some from plants that had the problem last year but weren't showing it at the time cuttings were taken.

**Ron Clarke**

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## *Letters from Members & Swap Shop*

### REGIONAL GROUPS.

BEDS & HERTS local streptocarpus group (from small streps grow.... **WANTED** a Streptocarpus Pal living in any of the following areas ... Bedford, Biggleswade, Sandy, Letchworth, Hitchin, Luton, Harpenden, Royston or Baldock area to share interest in these lovely plants, swap plants, leaves etc as well as being helpful or giving advice , Contact, Pat Smith on 01462 811575' As a result of the article in the last issue, I was contacted by Alan living in the next village to me in Bedfordshire, and Audrey, some few miles away in Hertfordshire. Initially both Alan & Audrey came to my house individually, and on each occasion an interesting & fulfilling time was spent looking at plants, exchanging ideas and looking on various web sites which each of us had found. Exchange of plants and or leaves followed. Then it was arranged that both Alan & I would visit Audrey because her system of caring for plants was so different from ours. She uses the 'wick' system and what a display to be proud of. The massive display was stunning and beautiful. We all spent an enjoyable time one Wednesday morning, and as a result we have agreed to all travel together next year to attend the Streptocarpus Annual Show. So if there are any other strep fanatics, living in Beds & Herts who would care to join us and enlarge the group, I'm sure it would be more than worthwhile if our experiences are anything to go by. Please contact Pat Smith on 01462 811575.E-mail [[pat@pat93.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:pat@pat93.wanadoo.co.uk)]

Any one interested in forming a group in Cheshire, please contact **Mrs Pauline Benton** on **01614 398794** or e-mail her at [RickBenton@aol.com](mailto:RickBenton@aol.com)

Any one else interested in having a go at forming a group in your area, with the idea of meeting 3 or 4 times a year, please let me have your details. **Frank**

Great show on Saturday we all really enjoyed it & learnt a lot too!!

Idea for 10th show! What about each exhibitor receiving a small plate or dish engraved, no need for bone china though too expensive, this would be better than more prize money for the winners as everyone would take home a memento.

Regards

**Richard**

**Hello Frank,**

I just want to thank you for sending the Newsletter and Information leaflet and also for making Lisa and I so welcome at the meeting last Saturday. I must say that we really enjoyed it and were absolutely amazed at the lovely plants on show. I started collecting these plants about a year ago and managed to take some cuttings that lasted, in a spare bedroom, over the winter. Lisa admired them and I gave her a couple of plants, and so she too became hooked. I have learnt a lot over the last few days and hope to grow some good plants. The Dibleys plants in our local garden centre look really tatty and they are charging £8.99each so I shall not be buying any more from there. **Not Dibleys fault though;** they just haven't been looked after and are not in the shade. I have about 20 different varieties around the house but also have some in large pots outside (under a pergola) they are doing well. Thanks again I look forward to meeting in August at some time.

**Regards, Jill**

**Hello Frank,**

As members of the society we visited the show we were met by you though you did not know us and made to feel most welcome by the members the show was amazing with so many wonderful plants a credit to the members we came home with a few more plants and a lot more knowledge on how to grow them we hope to return next year with a few exhibits.

**Best wishes Alan & Janet Jillings.**

**(Continued on page 10)**



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## ***British Streptocarpus Society AGM Minutes for 2008***

Welcome All

The Judge has been taken ill and has had to cancel at very short notice. Therefore we are unable to recruit a substitute. So the committee have decided to ask an obvious replacement in our Chairman, Ken, to judge this year's show. After all he is a founder member of the Society, knows the plant and knows a 'Good 'un' when he sees it. As the Society has no elected vice chairman, then it has been agreed that Gordon Long another founder member chairs the meeting.

The meeting was declared open at 12.10 pm. Every one present was given a copy of the 2007 minutes and a balance sheet. It was proposed by Bob Counsel and seconded by Mrs Green, that the minutes were taken as read. There were no matters arising from the minutes, neither was there any correspondence relevant to the meeting.

### **Secretary's Report**

Frank kicked off by mentioning the shows so far, Harrogate Spring Show was a success with the Society stand gaining the top premier award, with lots of interest from the public. Malvern Spring show was next, with the stand gaining a silver gilt medal, with reasonable response from the public. This was put down to the Societies' stands being located in the display sheds. People respond much better in the floral marquees and the natural light is better.

The N.E.C. was as last year a waste of time, with leaflets and seed sales of only £127 over five days. The new format of homes and gardens theme is definitely not working and is unpopular with the nurseries and societies. Coupled with five days travelling back and for this venue is most uneconomical as not even the stands are judged and no awards given.

Next up Arley Hall, a new venue was most recent. This was a very quiet show and may not be repeated. Frank is now looking forward to Kings Heath Gardeners' Weekend, always popular and reasonably priced for Joe Public.

Frank mentioned that people had been e-mailing him about slow growth of plants, but all in all it was not a bad season. Plants are slow due to the weather, with an absence of flowers. He then congratulated the exhibitors at the show on the ever increasing quality of their plants and making the effort to support the show.

Costs were mentioned with Bob Counsel asking about postage costs and the possibility of using e-mail instead. It was pointed out that overseas members were contacted this way, but it was unworkable in the U.K.

### **Treasures Report**

It was Peter's first full year in office after the loss of Don Corfield. Peter presented the accounts, noting that the society was in good heart and that the year had turned a profit. Ian Davies questioned why the emphasis was on making money as the society was so well off compared to some. It was mentioned that whilst we had enjoyed the good times, no one knew what was around the corner and with rising costs in printing, travel and possible nationwide recession it was better safe than sorry and if there was a downturn then funds are available. The report was adopted, moved by Mr Alan Darkins, seconded by Mrs Margaret Ereaut. The Chairman pointed out that there was a signed audited account on the desk if anybody wished to see it.

### **Officers and Committee**

Officers and committee serve a three year term and it was time for elections. It was proposed by Mr Green and seconded by Mr Ereaut that if the existing personnel were willing to stand then they be re-elected 'en bloc'

There were no withdrawals so it was passed all in favour.

The Chairman then thanked the ladies for manning the kitchen and their catering skills. This was endorsed by a round of applause from members.

The meeting was formally closed at 1.00pm. There followed an informal discussion on various topics including a class for hanging containers at next years show.

A few members expressed interest in forming local groups of the parent society where like minded members could have their own meetings. It was explained that owing to the Data Protection Act, the Society could not give out details to prospective organisers. However there is no objection to interested parties advertising in the newsletter, and if this takes off then it could bring in new members.

### **Minutes taken by Gordon Long**

Congratulations on yet another amazing stand and Tatton. The plants were wonderful, my streps have been slow to 'get going' in my greenhouse this year I thought they were starting to come on until I saw yours, they were amazing. I understand there were more beauties at the show at Brownhills I must try to get there next year. I look forward to my new plants from the seeds I planted earlier this year. Best wishes to you all and thank you for your enthusiasm.

**Brenda Wright ( Member 14)**

**Dear Tom**

I have been a keen Amateur grower of Streps for the past 14 years or so, taking over from my Mother after her death. Usually I grow about a hundred or so in a 12 x 8 greenhouse, heated in the winter by electricity. Cuttings and seed are done on a sandbox with electric wires and thermostat.

Being disabled after a works accident some 20 years ago, mobility is not great so I cannot travel long distances to most of the shows. But I do get to the Amateur Gardening Show at Shepton Mallet most years. It is great to meet up with Frank and his wife on the strep stand.

I get told off by the other half for waffling too long to the great couple they are so knowledgeable about streps etc. I am looking forward to seeing them again this year. The stand with those beautiful plants is a sight to behold.

Yours sincerely

**Mr. R P. Kearle. (Phil) Membership No. 2**

**FOR SALE**

Nerys, Coral Flair, Rosebud, Something Special, Anne, Blue Heaven, Tracey, Carys, Gretta, and Melanie. I also have a lot in small quantities, so if you could put my address, and E- mail, so the members can contact me, I would be very grateful. Plants are £1.25 each please add £1.00 towards postage etc.

**Mrs A R Bilverstone.**

**22 King Street.**

**Swaffham.**

**Norfolk.**

**PE37 7BU. E-mail <[a.bilverstone@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:a.bilverstone@tiscali.co.uk)>**

**Hi Tom,**

Please can you include this in the next swap shop? Thanks.

Does anyone have a leaf or starter plant of the following?

Merle, Kazia, Karoline, Mishka, Velvet lady, Strawberry Fondant. Beverly Ruth, Borderline, Amy, Sylvia and Night and Day. Willing to swap or pay. If anyone has just one of the streps on the list (leaf or small plant) I'd be very happy to hear from you

Please email me at [marksarson@hotmail.com](mailto:marksarson@hotmail.com)

**Hi Tom,**

I have a request for Swap Shop.

I'm aiming to build up a collection of the paler hybrids , already having MASSENS WHITE , BLUSHING BRIDE , CRYSTAL ICE , RHIANNON , JOHAN-NIS , etc. Does anyone have a leaf of ALBATROSS, CLOUDS, EIRA, CRYSTAL SNOW or anything of that ilk to spare? I've several red /purple varieties to swap.

I've also lost DAINTY LADY and JACO'S GEM which I'm anxious to replace!! Anything would be most welcome. **Many thanks,**

**Jennifer Johnson, 102 Longedge Lane, Wingerworth, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S42 6PQ or email**

**[jenniferjohnson@talktalk.net](mailto:jenniferjohnson@talktalk.net)**

**Hi Tom,**

Can you include the following request please?

Has anyone any of the following plants for sale or swap please...Blue network; Calico print; Izzy or Jolene (or even a leaf ??) **Tel Pat Smith on 01462 811575**

**Addresses for mail or articles for publication in next issue**

**Ken Jones**  
**23 North Street**  
**Boney Hay**  
**Burntwood**  
**Staffs**  
**WS7 2PB**  
**Tel:- 01543 318554**

**Frank Davies**  
**9 Wharf Lane**  
**Chasetown**  
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**Tom Causer**  
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**e-mail [tom.causer@ntlworld.com](mailto:tom.causer@ntlworld.com)**  
**Deadline for articles,**  
**questions or letters is**  
**31/12/2008**

**SEED FUND**

**Sue Long**  
**26 Killan Road,**  
**Dunvant,**  
**Swansea.**  
**SA2 7TD**  
**Tel:- 01792 207898**  
**e-mail [gowerstreps@hotmail.com](mailto:gowerstreps@hotmail.com)**

**MEMBERSHIP TREASURER**

**Peter Pinches**  
**72 Coopers Road**  
**Handsworth Wood**  
**Birmingham**  
**B20 2JX**  
**Tel:- 0121 5540428**

If you have pictures you want printed in the Newsletter please send photos, 35mm negs or slides to Tom Causer or Ken Jones these will be returned after publication.

**Many thanks**  
**Tom**  
**The editor**