

The Meconopsis Group

Report of the meeting held on March 3rd 2012 at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Conference Room 10.00am-3.30pm

(Compiled by Norma McDowall)

The meeting was opened at 10.30am by the Chairman. John Mitchell, who welcomed the large turnout of members [49 in total], to the meeting and the AGM.

John was saddened to announce the recent death of Tom Shearer. He invited Jim Jermyn to speak about Tom's contribution to The Meconopsis Group over many years and his amazing garden at his home in Broughton. Jim noted that Tom was happy with just his two Meconopsis - M. 'Slieve Donard' and M. 'Huntfield' - both firm favourites despite frequent offers of others. Tom will be sadly missed by the Group and horticulture.

Agenda for 9th AGM held on March 3rd 2012

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 5th March 2011
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Secretary's Report
6. Treasurer's report
7. Seed Exchange Manager's Report
8. Web-site Manager's Report
9. Appointment of Office-bearers and Management Committee
10. Appointment of Trials and Assessment Subcommittee
11. Appointment of Auditor
12. Membership Subscription Rates 2013
13. Any Other Business

1 Apologies

Apologies have been received from the following members:-

Ann Armstrong, Bob Armstrong, J.W Bell, Alice Bremner, Ray Brown, Christian Curtis, Cath Davis, Susan Dawson, Jim Eddison, Avril M. and J. Leslie Drummond, Keith and Roz Folwell, Richard Fulcher, Hilary Glenn, Alison Goldie, John Hawgood, Terry Hunt, Mark Hutson, Nicola MacNee, Marissa Main, James McFarlane, Monica Meenaghan, Roger Newton, David Rankin, Harvey Shepherd, James P. Sutherland, John Telfer, Richard Thornton, Boel Thorsell, Alan Tomlinson, Jenny Wainwright-Klein and Tim Walsh.

2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on March 5th 2011

The Minutes of last year's AGM had been distributed to Members in January 2012. The Minutes were taken as read and no changes or amendments were proposed. Adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Jim Jermyn and seconded by William Campbell.

3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Chairman's report

This included the Group Co-ordinator's report.

John said that the last year has been very good again for The Meconopsis Group.

The RHS Trials have started and are now in their first year of assessment at Harlow Carr. More meetings will be held in May/June.

Trips by Members into the 'Wild':-

John Richards - western China - reporting to-day!

Margaret & David Thorne - went to Ha in Bhutan and saw 5 species of *Meconopsis* and Himachal Pradesh to see *M. aculeata*

David Rankin - Nepal (Langtan & Gosainkund) - studied *M. paniculata* and *napaulensis*

Toshio Yoshida - Yao Shan NE Yunnan and discovered a new species of *Meconopsis*

Publications

Paul Egan (2011) The entries on *Meconopsis* and *Cathcartia* in Flora of Nepal

Also (2011) Paper on 2 new species. *M. autumnalis* & *M. manaslueinis*

Alan Elliott Helped Paul with some of the above determinations.

David Rankin with others (2010) Paper on *M. wiisonii* subsp. *Orientalis*, Papaveraceae in Curtis Botanical Magazine.

Toshio Yoshida (2011) Paper on new species, *M. balanogensis*

Also in press (2102) Paper on new sp. *M. yaoshanensis*

Gardening Scotland has been a continued success so our thanks to Geoff for organising this over the last few years, and to the team of volunteers.

Geoff is now standing down from this responsibility so John announced that we a new organiser is required – still time for this year!

Jim Cobb has a website at www.meconopsisworld which is well worth exploring, if you have not already done so.

Al Elliott has done a **workshop** for the RBGE - this is great publicity for us.

Evelyn has done workshops too at The Linns.

Evelyn has also been awarded the **Kath Dryden Award** for her meritorious work on *Meconopsis*.

5 Secretary's Report

Sadly I have to report that three long standing members of The Meconopsis Group passed away in 2011 - Cameron Carmichael from Carmunock near Glasgow, Dr Ron Melrose from Penicuik and Dr. Bill Harpur from Cumbria.

2011

- Membership Renewals 143
 - 98 by cheque/cash
 - 45 by PayPal
- New members 38
 - 15 by cheque/ cash
 - 23 by PayPal

TOTAL Paid membership 181

Student complimentary 1
Complimentary Members 22
Lapsed Members 16
Resignation 1
Family memberships noted 13

2010 comparison

Membership Renewals 126

New members 26

TOTAL Paid membership 152

Student (Complimentary) 1

Complimentary members 22

2012 Update

Norma reported that 124 members were members for 2012 by the end of February (the official date) with another 7 before the start of the meeting.

Mailings

There have been 3 mailings to members, in May and September 2011 and in January 2012. Reports from speakers were sent following the meetings in February and November. The latest bumper mailing included several reports and information, the Newsletter and Program for today's meeting as well as the Minutes of the Group AGM held in February 2011. There have also been several reminder emails about meetings and events throughout the year.

At present about 141 members, several overseas Complimentary members and some UK Complimentary members get reports etc sent by email, other UK Complimentary members and 40 members without email by post. Major mailings have now to be divided up into 9 groups.

A final plea was again made to let us use email if you have it - using an email address rather than using post would save 5 minutes of time and save on increasing postal and print costs - it all mounts up.

Total Paid Membership by Country in 2011

Country	RENEWALS cheque/cash	RENEWALS PayPal	NEW MEMBERS Cheque/ cash	NEW MEMBERS PayPal
Scotland	58	18	8	6
England & Wales	29	8	3	5
Northern Ireland	4		4	
Australia		1		
Belgium		1		1
Canada	2	4		1
China				2
Denmark	1	1		1
France	1			
Germany		2		
Iceland				1
Ireland		1		
Japan	1	1		
Netherlands		2		
New Zealand		1		1
Norway	1			1
Sweden	1			2
Switzerland		1		
USA		4		2
TOTAL	98	45	15	23

6 Treasurer's Report

Peggy reported to the meeting that Matt Heasman has audited the accounts for 2011 and (found them to be in order). She was pleased to report that the take-home message with respect to the 2011 finances of The Meconopsis Group is that they are in a healthy state.

Peggy kindly provided this financial statement of her verbal report to the meeting for the published Minutes. To all intents and purposes we have money in three places:

- i. A general account which we have had since the Group was founded.
- ii. In PayPal. This account was opened so that people, especially from abroad, could pay subscriptions and donations without excessive bank charges.
- iii. The nominated account for PayPal. This is a bank of Scotland account that we opened in 2009 and into which we could transfer money from PayPal. We opened this new account so that if PayPal was hacked into, the hacker could not get into our main account which contained more money.

Table 1 (Separate) compares income and expenditure in 2010 and 2011 in the General Account.

Expenditure

The first set of figures deal with general running of the club. You'll notice that some items vary between the years and this is normal. For 2011 the total is £434.99 and for 2010 it is £572.90. The greatest difference in the 2 years is the costs of photocopying. In 2011 the cost was less than half that in 2010. This is probably because Norma did most of the photocopying in house. The cost of affiliation to the RHS and public liability insurance premium is up in 2011 because the RHS has made it over 17 months instead of the usual 12 months. This was in order to bring the accounting of small groups into line with the RHS's own accounting period.

Seed sales The costs in sending out seeds in 2011 was greater than in 2010 reflecting the increase in postage prices and the need to purchase glassine envelopes (The difference is £39.09)

Gardening Scotland The costs of setting up the Group's stand were much the same in 2010 and 2011.

Look at the income we got from selling spare seeds at Gardening Scotland. - £636.50. Selling seeds continues to be a great success.

Some categories of income and expenditure don't occur every year. An example of this is the talk by Toshio Yoshida which occurred in 2010 and there was not one in 2011. Similarly, "Mulch" was a one-off category in 2010.

Speaker's costs The figures here are a function of the number of speakers and who get a 'gift' and their travel costs. Some years the costs are higher and sometimes lower.

Printing Fact sheets A new set of fact sheets was printed costing £270.

Overall the expenditure was much the same for the two years.

Income

Donations Donations in 2011 were up by some £164. We are fortunate to have such generous donors and greatly appreciate their generosity.

Door The income from the door was up by about 1/3.

Subscriptions The amount paid in subscriptions in 2011 into this bank account is £582.09 less than in 2010. In addition, people have started to pay subscriptions via PayPal. This does not mean that the number of subscribers has fallen. I will show you another table for subscriptions in a minute which will explain the situation.

Plant sales at meetings were up on 2010 by £ 100.

Seed sales were up on 2010. Sale of seeds is bringing in over £900 in income. We gratefully acknowledge a donation of proceeds of members' seeds at a meeting.

Bank interest We used to get a sizeable income from bank interest. Over the years this has dwindled and as from July of 2011, we get no interest at all.

So in summary, income exceeded expenditure by £721.63 and we have a healthy £5,189.63 in the bank.

PayPal account

In November 2010 we set up a PayPal account so that members could pay their subscriptions easily. This is especially useful for overseas members in that they avoid the horrendous bank charges they are incurred when paying through the bank. We pay charges for each payment and this varies with the amount paid and the currency exchange charges. Up to the end of December 2010 subscriptions via PayPal brought in net income of £210. In 2011 the equivalent figure was £506.46.

At the end of December, 2011 we had £712.69 in our account with PayPal.

New Bank Account

This account was set up as the nominated bank account for PayPal income and expenditure; the only transactions in 2011 were for Bank interest amounting to 14p. Interest payment has now been stopped by the bank. Total Income from Subscriptions

While the amount of income from subscriptions paid into the bank has declined, by about £582, those paid via PayPal have increased by almost £300. Overall there was a decrease in subscription income in 2011 of about £285. This doesn't mean that we had fewer members in 2011. Income varies according to whether people pay their subscriptions before the end of December or after the beginning of January. So, the figures shown are for the amount paid in that year, which is not necessarily the same as subscriptions due for that year.

Summary

On 31.12.11

The total in the general Account was	£5,189.63
The total in the 2nd Bank Account was	£300.67
The total in PayPal was	£712.69
Total	£6,202.99

John thanked Peggy for the Treasurer's Report.

Copies were made available if required. There were no questions.

The accounts were accepted by the meeting - Proposer- Evelyn Stevens. Seconder -Beryl McNaughton

7 Seed Exchange Manager's Report

Jim thanked members for sending him seed, for without seed there can be no Seed Exchange.

He thanked Geoff Hill for his assistance with packing up the seed. Overseas members were particularly generous.

60 consignments of seed were despatched. He noted positive reports from members about the germination this year.

John sought confirmation that this was probably Jim's last year as Seed Exchange Manager. Jim said he would be willing to help in the changeover but a new Manager is sought. John thanked Jim for his work.

8 Web Manager's report

This has been given to John by Peter Taylor who sent his apologies.

General

The usage of the site increased by approximately 25% in 2011 compared with 2010. PayPal, for joining and renewing membership, has proved popular. Site hosting continues to be with Easily.

Usage

Over 2011, the average number of unique visitors each month was 1700. (This figure should not be confused with the number of "hits" a much larger but misleading figure (over 55,000 per month). The peak usage was in May 2011 when there were over 3400 unique visitors. The site continues to be in first position (excluding commercially paid-for links) with the major search engines (Google, Yahoo. MSN. Bing) when the keyword "Meconopsis" is used.

Development

The site continues to be developed, particularly the plant portraits section. A few big blue poppy cultivars still need to be covered. We are planning, and work is under way, to reorganize and then put many more entries in the "species in the wild" section.

Costs

Projected renewal charges which will be incurred over the next year (until March 2013) are:

Web hosting for one year	£30
Domain names registration for two years	£50
Total	£80

Thus the average cost per year is £55. Prices are approximate and include VAT The domain names currently owned by the group are:-

www.meconopsis.org www.meconopsis.org.uk www.meconopsis.co.uk

John thanked Peter for his Report.

9 Appointment of Office-bearers and Management Committee

John announced that the present Management Committee was standing down but was willing to stand for re-election for a further year. Present Management Committee

Chairman	John Mitchell
Vice-chairman	Jim Jermyn
Secretary	Norma McDowall
Treasurer	Peggy Anderson
Group Co-ordinator	Evelyn Stevens
Seed Exchange Manager	Jim Jermyn
Web-site Manager	Peter Taylor
Committee members	Willie Campbell, Scott Cook. Geoff Hill, Steve McNamara and Beryl McNaughton

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Report of 9th AGM

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The present Management Committee was elected to serve a further year. This was proposed by Matt Heasman and seconded by Jeanie Jones.

Nominations had been sought for additional members of the Management Committee.

Pat Murphy was elected to the Management Committee. This was proposed by Peggy Anderson and seconded by Geoff Hill and agreed unanimously by the meeting.

Sharon Bradley was elected to the Management Committee. This was proposed by George Watt and seconded by Janet Watson and agreed unanimously by the meeting.

10 Appointment of Trials and Assessment Subcommittee

John intimated that the present members of the subcommittee, namely John Mitchell, Jim Jermyn, Beryl McNaughton, Steve McNamara and Evelyn Stevens were all willing to continue in office, if elected. The present Trials and Assessment Subcommittee was elected to serve a further year. This was proposed by Elizabeth Ferro and seconded by Scott Cook.

11 Appointment of auditor

John thanked Matt Heasman for undertaking the job of auditor in 2011. He was asked to continue in this role for 2012 and agreed to do so. This was proposed by Jeanie Jones and seconded by Margaret Thorne.

12 Membership Subscription Rates 2013

The Management Committee recommended that the membership rates remained the same for 2013:-

> £8 for UK members

> £13 for non -UK members

The rates for 2013 were accepted by Members.

13 Any Other Business

Evelyn Stevens said that fact sheets have been reprinted and were available to Members. Fact sheet I showing *M. 'Lingholm'* and *M. baileyi* had been revised.

There being no other business John closed the AGM at 11.04 a.m.