

The Meconopsis Group
Minutes of the 10th Annual General Meeting
held on March 2nd 2013
at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Conference Room

The meeting was opened at 10.30 by the Vice-Chairman, Jim Jermyn, who welcomed the large turnout of members [46 in total], to the meeting and the AGM.

Agenda for 10th AGM held on March 2nd 2013

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on March 3rd 2012
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 2014
13. Any Other Business

1 Apologies

Apologies have been received from the following members:-

Ann & Bob Armstrong, James W. Bell, Prof. Stephen Blackmore, Anne M. Chambers, Philippe Chauvet, Scott Cook, Cyril & Anne Cooper, Julia Corden, Avril M. & J. Leslie Drummond, Peter and Anne Elliott, Jonathan Finegan, Keith Folwell, Richard Fulcher, John Hawgood, Peter & Trish Kohn, James McFarlane, Nicola MacNee, John and Marissa Main, Monica Meenaghan, John Mitchell, Rick Nelson, Les Newby, J. O'Keefe, Richard Oliver, Mary Ridley, Ian Shearer, Sue Simpson, Peter Taylor, Richard Thornton and Terence J. Vince.

2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on March 3th 2012

The Minutes of last year's AGM had been distributed to Members in January 2013. The Minutes were taken as read and no changes or amendments were proposed. Adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Jeanie Jones and seconded by Evelyn Stevens.

3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Chairman's report

Jim intimated in John's absence the following:-

- a) The Monograph by Chris Grey-Wilson is now at the publisher at Kew Gardens and should be available in 2014. Chris apologised for reports of his talks to The Meconopsis Group at the last meeting not being provided with the last newsletter. Kew gardens had said, quite understandably, that this should not be done until after the publication of his monograph. Chris says that the reports from the meeting will be distributed after publication. This will be helpful to those members not purchasing the actual monograph itself.
- b) We are always pleased to hear news about the Plant Heritage National Collections and delighted that the big blue poppies at Holehird Garden under Pat Murphy have been given National Collection status.
- c) You will remember that questionnaires had been sent to you about the cultivars you grow and the success with seed. Copies of both questionnaires are available and, if you have not already done so, they can be handed in to Evelyn.

- d) There will be a Prize Draw - so thanks to those who have donated plants.
 e) Gardening Scotland - After a break of a year, we will be back at Gardening Scotland from 31st May to 2nd June. Sharon Bradley has kindly agreed to take over as co-ordinator from Geoff Hill, who did it so well for five years.
 f) The next meeting will take place here on October 26th 2013.
 Pat Murphy will give a talk on the RHS Trials and Results
 The final meetings will be taking place this year at Harlow Carr in May and June.
 g) Publications - The AGS published an article in the Alpine Gardener by Evelyn Stevens in the summer of 2012 and they used a couple of her photographs, one for a calendar and the other as a bookmark.

5 Secretary's Report

It is with sadness Norma had to report that a long standing members of The Meconopsis Group passed away in 2012 - Jim Eddison.

Jim was one of the first members to subscribe each year, and had made generous donations to the Group
 -Factsheets 5 and 6 were financed by him shortly before his death.

Membership

As Norma is also Subscription Secretary she provided a range of statistics (copied below) about membership in 2012 via Powerpoint. The financial year runs from Jan 1st to December 31st.

	<i>2013 at 28.02.13</i>	2012	<i>2011</i>
Paid members	<i>110</i>	166	<i>181</i>
Complimentary Members	<i>19</i>	22	<i>22</i>
<i>Lapsed Members</i>		28 (includes 2 paid for 2013)	<i>16</i>
<i>Resignations</i>		7	<i>1</i>
<i>Family memberships noted</i>	<i>13</i>	19	<i>13</i>

Membership 2012 by payment year	
Paid in 2010	1
Paid in 2011	40
Paid in 2012	125

Membership 2012 by method of payment

	by cheque/cash	by PayPal	total
Membership Renewals	85	45	130
New members	11	12	23
New+ members			13
Student free			
Total			166

Total Paid Membership by Country in 2012 = 166

COUNTRY	RENEWALS 2012		New members late 2011 with 2012 added	NEW MEMBERS 2012		TOTAL
	Cheque /cash	PayPal		Cheque /cash	PayPal	
Scotland	51	14	9	4	1	79
England	26	10	2	2	2	42
N. Ireland	2	1		4		7
Wales	1					1
Belgium		2		1		3
Canada	1	4			3	8
Denmark		2	1		1	4
France	1				2	3
Germany		1				1
Iceland			1			1
Japan	1	2				3
Netherlands		2				2
New Zealand		1				1
Norway		1			1	2
Sweden	1	2				3
Switzerland	1					1
USA		3			2	5
TOTAL	85	45	13	11	12	166
	130 renewals		New+ 13	23 new members		

2013 Update

Norma reported that 110 members were members for 2013 by the end of February (the official date).

Mailings

There have been 3 mailings to members as usual in 2012 with the Newsletters, in January, May and September 2012 and recently in January 2013. Reports from speakers were sent in January and May and a Questionnaire in November. A Report of the November 2012 meeting will be available shortly.

The latest mailing included the Newsletter and Program for today's meeting and Questionnaires as well as the Minutes of the Group AGM held in March 2012.

There have also been several reminder emails about meetings and events throughout the year.

At present about 130 members, several overseas Complimentary members and some UK Complimentary members get reports etc sent by email, other UK Complimentary members and about 40 members without known 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 for each and save on increasing postal and print costs - a second class stamp is now 50 pence. It all mounts up.

Membership List

A membership list is being prepared for later this year.

If you wish to be included - and have not already indicated - please let me know.

It will include your name, Town/county or country and email or phone number only.

It will only be sent to those who wish to be included.

6 Treasurer's Report

Peggy reported to the meeting that Matt Heasman has audited the accounts for 2012 and found them to be in order. She was pleased to report that the take-home message with respect to the 2012 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. **PayPal Account** This account was opened so that people, especially from abroad, could pay subscriptions and donations without excessive bank charges.
- iii. **The 2nd Bank Account** - 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 would not get into our main account which contained more money.

i) Table 1 compares income and expenditure in 2011 and 2012 in the General Account. Overall we made a surplus of about £200 compared to a surplus of £721.63 the previous year. Why the big difference?

Most of items coming under the heading of general running of the club don't vary very much from year to year so I won't be discussing them. I will only highlight those items which show a variation.

Donations: We received less in 2012 than in 2011. It's not that we did badly in 2012, but we were very lucky in 2012 to receive a couple of very generous donations.

Plant Sales: These were down in 2012, but we had had a very cold and wet winter and spring, so this is probably not surprising.

Gardening Scotland: The biggest fall in income came from not having a stand at Gardening Scotland. In 2011 we made £636.50 from seed sales. Compared with nothing in 2012. Taking into account the cost of the stand and transport of plants, the net income in 2011 was £346.42 compared with nil in 2012. When you think that our income expenditure over the year in this account was about £200, then Gardening Scotland generated more than this. As we are to have a stand again at Gardening Scotland in 2013, hopefully we will again generate money from seed sales to the public.

Web site: We don't have expenditure every year for the web because domain name extensions last for two years.

Seed packaging and dispatch: We did not have to purchase glassine envelopes in 2012, whereas we did in 2011. So the costs were less in 2012, but we sent out more seed.

RHS Affiliation and Insurance: In 2011 the RHS extended the period of affiliation to the RHS and public liability insurance premium to 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. So there was no payment for 2012.

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 £138

So in summary, we made £200.6 surplus in 2012 compared with £721.63 in 2011 in the general account.

ii) PayPal Account

Income into PayPal in 2012 all came from subscriptions. It was up from 2011. Payments come not only from overseas, but also from UK members.

iii) 2nd Bank Account

This account was set up as the nominated bank account for PayPal income and expenditure. When the auditor had the books for checking last year, I received some subscriptions. I did not have the pay in book for the General account, but I did have the one for the 2nd account. So I paid the subscriptions into the 2nd account and when I got the books back. I transferred the money into the General Account. We do not get bank interest now.

Questions: None

Jim thanked Peggy and Matt Heasman.

Acceptance of report: Proposed by Celia Wright and seconded by Ian Wright.

7 Seed Exchange Manager's Report

This report was given by Dr. Ian Scott to the meeting and a written copy provided for the Minutes.

“The 2012 seed exchange went remarkably well considering that it was a transition year. This was, in no small part, due to the much appreciated advice and support of Jim Jermyn, Geoff Hill and Norma McDowall. The Meconopsis Group owes a debt of gratitude to Jim and his colleagues for running the seed exchange since its inception. Many of our finest plants would not be gracing our gardens without their labours.

Second, my thanks go to the many donors who generously provide the seed for the exchange, year after year. Once again, without their efforts, the seed exchange could not offer such a wonderful range of plants to choose from. To encourage even more of our members to donate next year, some glassine envelopes were sent out with every batch of seed.

I am sure that we are all aware that it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain a seed collecting licence in Himalayan countries. With this in mind, I believe that one of the Group's objectives should be to maintain pure stocks of the *Meconopsis* which are currently in cultivation. Unless we can do that, it is hard to justify seed collection of new introductions.

In 2012 there were 5 species which came from single donors (*M. aculeata*, *M. integrifolia*, *M. pratii*, *M. quintuplinerva* and *M. racemosa*). None of these are difficult to grow, and I would urge members to collect seed of these for next year.

In a similar vein these are a number of species which I would like to have listed in our 2013 seed exchange, including *M. dhowjii*, *M. henricii* and *M. simplicifolia*.

66 batches of seed were sent out to UK members, and 15 batches to non-UK members. Donors were given preference over non-donors and supplies of *M. aculeata*, *M. delavayi*, *M. fertile* blue group ‘Ballyrogan form’, *M. integrifolia*, *M. Kingsbarn hybrid*, *M. punicea* (all types) and *M. quintuplinerva* were depleted items well before the seed exchange closed.

The cost of postage has risen steeply, but we have managed to generate a small surplus which will be used to cover the cost of packeting seed for Gardening Scotland 2013. And the good news is that next year we will reduce the price of additional packets from £1 a packet to 50p.

I have been asked to say something about the ‘companion seed’ (i.e. not *Meconopsis*) on the seed list, and whether they should continue to be included. Within limits, I think that the answer should be yes. In a large number of cases, members wanting only a few packets of Meconopsis seed were delighted to be able to make up their selection of ten packets with other desirable seed. The demand for *Daphne retusa*, *Glaucidium palmatum*, *Lilium mackliniae*, *Primula brevicula*, *Primula ioessa* and *Primula reidii* greatly exceeded the number of packets which were available.

Some seed, such as *M. punicea*, benefits from sowing in the autumn. If seed donors can provide fresh seed in late summer there is the possibility of running a separate, second, seed exchange for such species. We are considering how best to organise this venture and will update members later this year.

Finally, I would be delighted to get suggestions for improving the seed exchange, comments on germination rates or identification of our Tibetan seed.”

Jim thanked Ian for his report.

8 Web Manager's report

This was given by Evelyn Stevens as the Web Manager, Peter Taylor, had sent his apologies.

General

The usage of the site increased by approximately 18% in 2012 compared with 2011. PayPal, for joining and renewing membership, has proved popular. Site hosting continues to be with Easily.

Usage

For the period 1 January to 31 December 2012, the average number of visitors each month was 2,010. The corresponding figure for 2011 was 1,700. (These figures should not be confused with the number of “hits” a much larger but misleading figure, over 65,000 per month in 2012). The peak usage was in May 2012 when there were over 3,700 visitors. (The site continues to be in first position (excluding commercially paid-for links) with the major search engines (Google, Yahoo, Bing) when the keyword “Meconopsis” is used.

Development

The site continues to be developed. The main emphasis recently has been to re-write the section on the important topic on the genetics of *M. ‘Lingholm’* to correct mistakes in the original entry. This will be inserted in the next

few days. It is also particularly important to update the RHS trials page as soon as possible as this has not been done recently

Costs Renewal charges in 2012 were:

Web hosting for one year	£29.98
Registration of three domain names for two years	£51.56
Total	£81.54

The average cost per year is about £55. Prices include VAT at 20%.

The domain names currently owned by the group are:

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

The next renewal will be in January 2014 for web hosting (current cost £29.98 pa). Domain names will not need renewal until September 2014.)

9 Appointment of Office-bearers and Management Committee

Jim announced that two Members of the Management Committee wished to resign - namely Willie Campbell and Geoff Hill.

The other members of the present Management Committee stand down but were 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
Web-site Manager	Peter Taylor
Committee members	Sharon Bradley, Scott Cook, Pat Murphy, Steve McNamara and Beryl McNaughton

The Management Committee was elected to serve a further year. This was proposed by Harley Milne and seconded by Adam Curtis.

Nominations were sought for additional members of the Management Committee.

Matt Heasman was elected to the Management Committee. This was proposed by Norma McDowall and seconded by Beryl McNaughton and agreed unanimously by the meeting.

10 Appointment of Trials and Assessment Subcommittee

John intimated that 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.

They were elected to serve a further year. This was proposed by Peggy Anderson and seconded by George Watt.

11 Appointment of auditor

John thanked Matt Heasman for undertaking the job of auditor in 2012. As he was now on the Management Committee Matt had to step down as auditor.

Willie Campbell was nominated as auditor for 2013 and agreed to do so. This was proposed by Matt Heasman and seconded by Ian Douglas.

12 Membership Subscription Rates 2013

The Management Committee recommended that the membership rates remained the same for 2014 as for 2013.

- £8 for UK members
- £13 for non -UK members

The rates for 2014 were accepted by Members.

13 Any Other Business

James Cobb intimated that his website will not be updated.

Ian Christie reminded members that there would be a series of workshops on the proposed 'Meconopsis Day' on Monday June 3rd 2013 at Harlow Carr. There being no other business the AGM concluded at 11.02 a.m.