

## Chairmans Report 11 March 2013

I have now completed my first year in office, as your Chairman. The time has flown by and I am getting used to knowing what is involved.

Again, we have a healthy membership. The last count was approximately 1220 .

Membership for 2013 is now due, in fact, almost overdue. Please see Rose Anderson before the end of March to re-join. The final cut off will be at the end of April. After that you will no longer be a member.

We have a waiting list of around 100 and we will invite new members to join in April. We will then hold our usual New Members Meeting, so that they can join the Groups that interest them and also get to meet the Committee and other new members. Thanks to all the Group Leaders that attended the 2012 New Members Meeting. I hope to see you all again this year.

The Combined Garden Groups Annual Show was held on 21<sup>st</sup> August at the Markwell Pavilion. There were a few less entries this year, due, I expect, to the awful weather we had last summer. My thanks go to Christine and Terry Robinson for all the organisation and to everyone who helped out. The Bishop's Stortford Mayor called to see what we do and he hopes that when he finishes his tenure as Mayor, he will find time to join us. I hope that this years' show on 20<sup>th</sup> August will have even more entries this time, so let us pray for good weather!

My thanks must go to the committee for all the help they have given me.

Our Speaker Booker, Derek Francis, has managed to find some excellent speakers for us. He has also arranged trips and holidays. Christine Miller continues the good work with organizing all her trips. Thanks also to Christine Robinson for all she does as Secretary, to Rose Anderson for doing all the Membership and New Members, ably assisted by Kath Hird and others. Also to Rose for being Group co-ordinator. To Alasdair for doing a grand job as Treasurer, also to Cyril, who has had to take over for me, twice in this last year. Also thanks to Jean Hooten for producing the monthly diary, John Holben for

the printing and Muriel Hilder, who sends get well cards and condolence cards. (Thanks for mine Muriel!) Also to Alan Draper for all the sterling work he does on the web-site. I hope I haven't forgotten anyone.

Cyril is stepping down as Vice Chairman as he has done his 3 years. He will still be on the committee helping us with his knowledge of the U3A.

We had a Group Leaders Meeting at the Markwell in October, which seemed to be a success and we hope to have one each year. Hopefully even more Leaders will turn up this year. I would like to say thank you to all the Group Leaders for everything you do. We wouldn't be where we are, without you. I hope even more people will take the initiative and start new Groups. We really do need some new blood! The committee will give all the help you need. I am hoping to visit some Groups this year, to see what you all do and to get to know you all.

I am hoping to help start a new London Walkers group. There is a meeting at the Markwell Pavilion on 20<sup>th</sup> March between 2-3 for anyone interested.

Although Diane Parker had to leave the committee last year, she has continued her work on the Newsletter. We have changed the format and I hope that everyone likes it. There were a few teething problems, which we will try and iron out before the next one is due. One that you all need to know, is that my **phone number is wrong!!!** Obviously my eyesight isn't that good!!

We continue to use Allswell for our catering and hope that as many of you as possible will be partaking of their excellent refreshments after the meeting.

That concludes all I have to say (I can hear you saying, thank goodness!!). I sound like am making an Oscar acceptance speech!

Thank you all for your continued support.