**NAFAS NORTH EAST AREA REPRESENTATIVES’ REPORTS – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022**

**TRADING REPORT – Sue Guilliatt**

I am pleased to report that we have had a more normal year this year and trading was taken to 4 Council meetings and the Harrogate Spring and Autumn Shows.

Financially we had a good year with sales of just over £4,100 split one third at Council meeting and two thirds at the Harrogate shows. This is very impressive when you consider that we mainly sell low value items.

I would like to thank everyone who helped to carry in, carry out, helped to sell and to those of you who bought from us at any of these events. Thanks also go to Sue Spencer who has helped source items for us.

What was noticeable when sourcing items for the trading stand was a significant increase in the cost of items and the unavailability of many others.

We look forward to another full year of activity next year.

**FLOWER ARRANGER REPORT – Hazel Bell**

NATIONAL

The Flower Arranger remains the most popular magazine on Flower Arranging, selling to a larger percentage of the market. It continues to provide excellent quality photographs and content for a wide audience. The ‘step by step’ arrangements prove to be popular, as does the coverage of festivals and shows.

The price has had to rise for the coming year to £15, which was expected as so many of the production costs are increasing. We have been lucky over the past few years that the cost to members has been constant.

AREA

During the year different flower arrangers from our area have had their designs featured in the magazine. Sometimes it has been through the designs featured in ‘You be the Judge’, some were articles and others step by step designs. Well done to everyone.

This year halve the clubs have ordered fewer magazine subscriptions, one quarter have increased their order and the rest have ordered the same number as last year. The clubs who run flower arranging classes or have practical sessions do seem to be gaining members and ordering more magazines. Overall, our order is down by 40 subscriptions which is a 6% reduction from last year.

Thank you to all the club flower arranging officers who have worked hard to collect your orders and deliver your magazines through the year. Back issues from 2020 will be available at the AGM at £1.50 a copy, or all 4 issues in a tied bundle for £5. Useful as a gift or as a raffle prize.

Remember you can order magazines through your club officer at any time, as orders go in four times a year.

**DEMONSTRATORS REPORT – Sue Spencer**

As we look back on the year how things have changed:

We learnt how to use zoom, to keep our members connected and continue to share our love of flowers.

And so, we began the year with clubs just trying to get back to normal after the lock down, but what is normal.

Clubs low on numbers Demonstrators facing increase in fuel and flower prices, but over the last few months we seem to have been able to come back to some sort of normality.

It has not been easy for anyone, Demonstrators have had to reduce the number of arrangements on the stage, as well as changing some designs to avoid using too much floral foam. We can understand why some of our Demonstrators have decided to retire early, and some clubs have found it difficult to continue.

Our new Demonstrators passed their test in 2019, but then had almost two years without being able to Demonstrate which was not easy for anyone. So only last week we had an extra training day for these Demonstrators and also included members wishing to start training.

During the last 12 months we have been able to join in both the Spring and Autumn Harrogate Shows - at these shows we are able to share our love of flowers with gardeners, craft people and the general public, thus trying to encourage others to join our association.

As Demonstrators we work hard to produce an entertaining evening for our clubs, but so few people realise how much hard work goes into the preparation for these evenings. As Area Demonstrators Representative I would like to thank all our Demonstrators Area and National for the hours of unseen work that is done for the love of flowers and our organisation.

I hope all our members are able to enjoy the wonderful Christmas Demonstrations in the next few weeks

**EDUCATION REPORT – Vanessa Wellock**

NATIONAL

The National committee are working on the education remit for NAFAS to be a governing body to own their own courses. They have so far worked through the design and development qualifications from the Ofqual government site. They hope to obtain help from an Educational Consultant to guide them through to the next level.

They are hoping once the course is up and running the average time to complete the full course will be four to four and half years.

AREA

We had an innovative workshop in March with Elaine Bedford, she was very generous with her knowledge, hints and tips, everyone who attended enjoyed the day.

In September the workshop tutor was June Borrowdale who showed the members how to use Agra wool and test tubes, contemporary designs for everyone.

We have found catering for the education days a challenge so the decision has been made for members to bring their own lunch to future education days with the membership fee set at £45.00. We will still serve coffee and snacks throughout the day.

**JUDGES REPORT – Janet Hayton**

NATIONAL

I attended the Judges’ Representatives Zoom meeting on 27 September and it was good to catch up on all that has been happening. Once again, the National Judging Committee has had a busy year. Planning has been in progress for the National Show to be held in Gloucester Cathedral next May. The Schedule has been completed and is now available on line for those interested in taking part.

The Competitions Manual has been revamped by the Committee and this will be re-launched in Gloucester.

Lesley Sturdy has taken over as the training officer for judges and has been involved in gathering information from the areas to ascertain the situation with regard to training for future tests and refresher days.

A National Test for Judges was held on 30 October and there are four new National Judges. Sue Clissold from Cheshire and Karen Frew, Heather Hume and Cherie Nummy all from NIGFAS. Many congratulations to all of them.

AREA

After a very quiet time on the judging scene a number of our judges have been busy during this year as more Shows and Club Practice Meetings have taken place giving them the opportunity to practise their skills after quite a long gap. As always, the Spring Show was very popular with some amazing work being created by our members.

A Refresher Day is in the process of being planned for the new year and this will be a great opportunity for us all to get together. Hopefully there will be some people interested in going forward to take the test.

**SPEAKERS REPORT – Rita Braithwaite**

2022 has been a good year with our speakers getting out and about to share their interesting topics to both NAFAS clubs and to other organisations. It is so good to able to meet properly in person; Zoom was an asset and meant we could keep in touch but nothing beats being among friends.

We enjoyed being with our Area Demonstrators for a refresher day in March and with a smaller group in October.

Our Area Speakers are constantly updating their portfolios and have new talks you may enjoy. We look forward with optimism to 2023 when we hope we will have the privilege of holding a National and Area Speakers Test in York.

If you or any of your members would like to consider taking a test in 2023 please get in touch. We welcome new Speakers who have enthusiasm for a topic and think our members would like to hear about it. Training is available in our Area and all members are welcome.

**PHOTOGRAPHY REPORT**

Written by Rita Braithwaite following the resignation of Anne Lindsay

Earlier in the year the Area Photography Competition for 2022 was announced with a varied schedule and with Judging anticipated to take place at the Hull weekend.

Sadly, the event was cancelled but it was very pleasing that the Photography Competition was able to go ahead.

It was wonderful for those attending the October Council to enjoy viewing all the entries and hear the richly deserved awards announced. The pictures can be seen on our Area Web Page,

Our Photography representative Anne Lindsay has regretfully had to resign, due to family commitments. The Area is really grateful, that even having resigned, Anne was very kindly, willing and able to collate the fifty plus photographs which were entered for judging.

We sincerely thank Anne for her sterling work in producing a pictorial record of many, many events over the six years of her tenure as our Photography Officer and wish her well for the future.

There is a vacancy for Area Photography Officer and we hope someone will come forward to take this on.

**MEDIA REPORT – Lynn Naylor**

As I have only been in post a short while, I would like to thank my predecessor, Sarah Spencer, for all the work she has carried out on behalf of the North East Area of NAFAS and for the help and support she has given me in my term as her deputy.

Social Media:

In my role, over the past year, as Deputy Media Officer, my primary aim has been to update the Area’s Facebook Page and encourage more members to use it as a medium for sharing anything that that may be related to flowers and flower arranging. It seems to be working, as at present, we have over 1.5 K followers, not only do these followers just read our posts but many will copy the information to other sites, a great way of promoting Clubs. I have reported on the various RHS Flower Shows, competition work from around the world and of course our Area News.

Some members contacted me saying they were unsure, even a bit afraid about using Facebook, how it works and not trusting it. With their comments in mind, I produced and circulated a short, explanatory leaflet explaining how it works. This is a very basic introduction, to a very large and complicated programme and I recommended them to refer to the many books written on this subject, and the courses which are available free, online or via YouTube.

A 5 Flyers:

I would like to thank all the Clubs that have provided flyers to advertise their Club meetings, special events and Christmas demonstrations. These have been used at both the Spring Flower Show, held at the Great Yorkshire Show Ground and the Autumn Flower Show held at Newby Hall. We also promote and publicise events via our Council Meetings held 4 times per year in York. Speaking on behalf of my Flower Club, Halifax, I know that advertising in this way has resulted in enquiries from prospective new members. Promoting our Clubs in this way will help build a healthy profile with vibrant, growing clubs with increased membership.

If you feel I could help raise the profile of your Flower Club, please speak to me with your ideas and between us I am sure we can come to some conclusion, on how best to do this for the benefit of all.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and positive New Year for 2023.

**WEBMASTER’S REPORT – Peter Mathers**

NATIONAL

Because of other events there has been very little National news directly concerning the National website over the previous twelve months.

AREA

I am delighted with the way that the Area website has progressed, it has now bedded down well having been in existence for almost two years. The initial problems we had with navigation on the mobile version have been sorted.

The aim of the website is threefold: it is a source of information for the outside world of our art and a potential source of guests and new members, it is a shop window for Clubs to advertise their presence and their programmes, and it performs a similar function for the demonstrators, judges, speakers and teachers that provide the mainstay of Clubs’ programmes.

The two main changes to the website over the past twelve months have been firstly the starting of a page dedicated to Clubs’ “forthcoming attractions”, a type of online notice board of Open meetings and flower festivals. Currently this is busy advertising Christmas demonstrations, and secondly the discontinuation of the written “Area News” has seen the idea of this quarterly publication go online.

**HISTORIAN’S REPORT – Tony Cleaver**

The Area has gathered together a large number of photograph albums over the years which are proving difficult to store. They have been given homes by various members of the Executive Committee and others, right now I am in the process of a cull of the contents so they can be reduced in number and stored in one place. Hopefully by this time next year the number of albums will be a more manageable number as I hereby give notice that I would like to retire at the 2023 AGM.