

A brief history of Hagley's Flower Arrangement Society

The founder president of the Flower Arrangement Society was Pat Baylis; it was her enthusiasm which led to the formation of a committee. An inaugural meeting was held in Hagley Catholic High School on Friday 23rd May 1969 to start the Society.

Monthly meetings were initially held in Hagley Catholic High School and then, from September 1971, in the Hagley Community Centre. The focus of these meetings was demonstrations and the occasional workshop – which ranged from making hessian figures to arranging a basket of plant material.

The support and hard work of the committee throughout the years enabled the membership to enjoy a variety of demonstrations and outings. Members have taken part in local church flower festivals and on a larger scale have contributed to festivals in Brecon and Worcester cathedrals. Pat Baylis was invited to be part of the floral art team for the papal visit to Coventry on 30th May 1982.

Hagley library was provided with weekly flower arrangements by members from 23rd June 1971; this changed to fortnightly in 1981. This practice had to cease when computers were installed for library users as space for flower displays was no longer available.

Starting in spring 1978, for about 10 years, the Society held classes during spring and autumn. These were firstly at Hagley Community Centre but later moved to Hagley Free Church Hall and subsequently to Churchill Village Hall.

The Society's 21st anniversary was celebrated at a lunch at Stone Manor Hotel in June 1990 with special guest Julia Clements O.B.E. Julia Clements (1906-2010) also held the Royal Horticultural Society's Victoria Medal of Honour.

A diminishing membership and increases in running costs meant that the Society became unviable and so after 43 years the Flower Arrangement Society held their final meeting on 26th November 2012. I now look back with gratitude to those founder members who contributed so much to start the Flower Club (as members would often refer to it) which has given enormous pleasure to so many.

Caroline Jones
Retiring President