

Church of England Flower Arrangers' Association – London Branch
April 2015 – March 2016
Chairman's Report

During the year we have had good attendance at the meetings with stimulated discussion. We have welcomed many new members which is very encouraging and essential to keep the association flourishing. Long may it continue.

In **April 2015** we had our AGM at St John the Baptist's Church, Barnet when we had a change of Chairman and Treasurer. Lynda Rigg stepped down as Chairman after a sterling fifteen years (plus) in the post but didn't leave the Committee as she took up the post of Treasurer after Ann Topper retired due to ill health. Ann had also been Treasurer for many years. Lynda and Ann were thanked for their service and each given a bouquet as a token gesture from the members. After the business meeting Averill Lovatt, Laurie Little and Diane all demonstrated their flower arranging skills using unusual shaped containers. Laurie used a pedestal for his arrangement.

In **May 2015** we held our meeting in Christ Church, Highbury, a venue we do not often go to. We were thrilled to have Ruth Thomson joining us from the York branch of CEFAA. She gave a short talk about life in CEFAA York and life as Editor of 'Faith and Flowers'. Afterwards we were entertained by Gloria Eobar, a local florist who helps Valerie Brett out with the Church flowers.

June 2015 we travelled to St Michael's Church, Bounds Green where Pam Howett gave us a lovely demonstration using a goldfish bowl shaped container which she filled with a beautiful array of alstroemerias all from her garden, making us all very envious. Bisi followed Pam proving that using green and white flowers together give a stunning arrangement too.

July 2015 brought our first workshop of the year and we held this at St Andrew's Church, Muswell Hill. Members were asked to depict 'An Artist's Palette' and the results were stunning. Members had really used their imagination by arranging flowers to mimic a palette right through to copying a painting.

In **August 2015** thirteen members visited Capel Manor and after a brief tour of the gardens all met up in the café for refreshments before going off and exploring the gardens more thoroughly. Luckily the sun was shining and everyone had a very enjoyable morning.

September 2015 took us to Jesus Church, Forty Hill. Susan Harper and Penny showed us some really lovely harvest arrangements which left us all buzzing with ideas for our own Church's harvest displays.

October 2015 was our annual meeting entertained by a professional demonstrator. The meeting was held in St Paul's, Mill Hill and one of our own CEFAA members, Yvonne Olver, rehearsed for her NAFAS demonstrator's examination using us as audience. Judging on the many arrangements Yvonne did and the interesting pattern, she must have passed with flying colours. As usual, all the

arrangements were raffled, members went off with lovely prizes and the branch made a profit from the funds.

Christmas came early when we visited Christ Church, Potter's Bar in **November 2015**. Tricia Salmon and Leanne gave us some ideas for decorating our own churches or homes by showing us window arrangements and how to make swags and holly wreaths.

The first meeting of **2016 in January** took us to St John the Apostle, Whetstone where Mary Longfellow showed how effective a simple candle wreath was.

All stops were pulled out in **February 2016** when the CEFAA trio from St James, Enfield Highway (Margaret Shuffield, Janet Martyr and I) tried to prove that arrangements could be just as nice without flowers by giving demonstrations using just greenery, useful for Lent and Advent.

March 2016 was the last meeting of the CEFAA year and perhaps the most challenging workshop ever. We all went to Lynda Rigg's Church, Christ Church, Southgate and we all did our own interpretation of 'Palm Sunday' which was the following day in the Church calendar. A difficult title but again members both new and longstanding all showed some wonderful use of flowers, greenery and props to 'take our breath away'. The lovely churchwarden Phillip Dawson not only took everyone's photograph alongside their arrangement, he also put us all on their website for all to see!

A year organising meetings is something not done easily. I would like to thank the Committee on your behalfs, for all their hard work in making this task so much easier. An extra big 'thank you' must be given from me to Kathy Horton (Vice Chairman), Mary Longfellow (Secretary), Lynda Rigg (Treasurer), Averill Lovatt (Council Member), Sylvia Hinder (St Paul's rota), Barbara Moore (bus and travel supremo), Frances Alger and Pat Wildman for their support to me as Chairman. Their help and encouragement getting me through this first year has made my job a joy and extremely enjoyable. I am enormously appreciative of the excellent team I work alongside. Thank you to all the lovely members who have passed on kind wishes and nice comments to me. I hope I can follow in Lynda's footsteps with the same aims and passion that she showed in this role. A very hard act to follow but with your continued support, I will try.

A final thank you to all the many non CEFAA members who open their Church doors to us each month to host our meetings and provide us with refreshment. We are all very grateful for a hot drink especially on a cold Saturday morning. Their welcoming smiles warm us physically and spiritually.

We have another wide and varied calendar planned so I look forward to another challenging but exciting year with you all.

Carole

Carole Harvey
CEFAA Chairman, London Branch