



Geoff Stonebanks in his small but overflowing Driftwood Gardens. Image: Jon Santa Cruz

Argus garden writer welcomed by guild

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A garden writer has been named a full member of a national media guild.

Geoff Stonebanks, a gardener in Sussex and a long-time garden columnist for *The Argus*, has been welcomed into the Garden Media Guild, the national organisation for professional communicators in horticulture.

Mr Stonebanks said: "I reckon I have written close on three quarters of a million words since 2012 across several gardening mediums, both in print and online, and given well over 120 gardening related presentations to horticultural societies and clubs in the last 10 years. Here's to the next 10 years!"

Mr Stonebanks turned to gardening in 2004 after retiring from a career in London.

He soon created Driftwood, his award winning garden in Bishopstone, which he has opened to the public and used to raise more than £182,000 for charity.

His passion for gardening soon led to writing.

Since 2012, he has contributed a monthly column to *Garden*



Geoff Stonebanks prunes a fuchsia. Image: Jon Santa Cruz

News magazine. In 2017, he began writing a weekly feature for *The Argus* and now produces regular content for a range of publications, including *Bournfree Magazine*, Richard Jackson Garden and *Sussex Exclusive*.

He has also made regular appearances on BBC Radio Sussex's Sunday Gardening programme, talking about garden

openings throughout the season. In 2013, he took on the role of publicity officer for the National Garden Scheme in East and Mid Sussex, helping to promote garden openings across the region.

The Garden Media Guild, originally founded as the Garden Writers' Guild in 1991, represents professionals across all forms of garden communication, including writing, photography, broadcasting and digital media.

Full membership is open to those who actively communicate about gardening and horticulture in any professional capacity.

The Garden Media Guild aims to raise the quality of garden media in all its forms and formats and to keep members up-to-date with events in the world of gardening and horticulture.

Mr Stonebanks' garden, Driftwood, will be open to visitors by appointment from June 1 to August 2.

Visitors can email visitdriftwood@gmail.com to book. More information about the garden can be found at driftwoodbysea.co.uk.



The National Lottery. Image: Yui Mok/PA Wire

Couple's £3.6m win

A young couple from Brighton has won the equivalent of £3,600,000 on The National Lottery.

The pair won £10,000 a month for 30 years after matching five numbers and the Life Ball on January 8 in the Set for Life draw.

The couple said: "When we found out we had won, it just didn't feel real, we couldn't believe it

"We just kept giggling at the thought that all this money is coming our way every month for the next 30 years.

"We chose our numbers at random on a whim and are planning a lovely holiday and setting things up for the future with our winnings."

Andy Carter, senior winners' adviser at Allwyn, operator of The National Lottery, said: "We hope the win has sunk in for them now and that they have a lovely time celebrating on their holiday."

Players can buy and check their tickets online by downloading the National Lottery app or at national-lottery.co.uk. They can also buy and check tickets in retail.

Playing online via the app or website means that your ticket is checked, and you get an email notification if you win a prize.

Each week, players help generate around £32 million for National Lottery-funded projects.

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