

Gardener's writing honour

contributor

Contributor

Seaford gardener Geoff Stonebanks felt very honoured to be accepted into the Garden Media Guild as a full member.

The Guild started life as the Garden Writers' Guild in 1991, as the UK's national organisation of professional communicators associated with the garden and horticulture industry. The rationale behind the name change to The Garden Media Guild was simple – the Guild's membership covers all aspects of garden media communication – including photography, videography, broadcasting, social media, lecturing, editing, illustrations and PR – as well as writing. It had become increasingly inaccurate and misleading to continue to call us the Garden Writers' Guild. The Garden Media Guild's aims are to raise the quality of garden media in all its forms and formats, and to keep their members up-to-date with events in the world of gardening and horticulture. It encourages and rewards excellence in garden communication, assists members with various aspects of their careers and helps with educational aspects of the gardening communications industry.

Full membership of the Guild is open to those who communicate information on the subject of gardening and horticulture, whether as authors, journalists, editors, photographers, broadcasters,

bloggers, social media influencers, lecturers or artists.

Geoff was a complete gardening novice when he retired to Sussex, back in 2004, from many years working in London, latterly as a Personnel Manager. Finding himself with nothing to do, by 2007 he started gardening and created an award winning garden, Driftwood, in Bishopstone, near Seaford, which he went on to open and currently has raised over £182,000 for charity. Geoff's all consuming interest in gardening then led to writing about his experiences.

Geoff has been writing features and articles on gardening, dating back to 2012, when he started writing a monthly "Over The Fence" piece on his garden for the weekly gardening magazine, Garden News, something he is still doing to this day. Writing a weekly gardening column, then full page feature for The Argus newspaper in Brighton began in 2017 and continues. Regular monthly features are written for Bournefree Magazine in Eastbourne and for the online gardening company, Richard Jacksons Garden on a variety of garden related issues. Quarterly 4 page spreads are written for the digital magazine Sussex Exclusive too.

Having opened his garden for the National Garden Scheme since 2011, Geoff has been their Publicity Officer in East & Mid Sussex since 2013 and regularly publishes fea-



Geoff in the garden

tures and articles about upcoming garden openings, both in print and online, not to mention broadcast every week through the open garden season about openings on BBC Radio Sussex's Sunday Gardening programme with Pat Marsh. He has been broadcasting on BBC Sussex since 2013.

Geoff says, "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!"

Geoff's garden can be seen at www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk and will be available to pre book a visit to from 1st June to 2nd August by emailing visitdriftwood@gmail.com