

Monday, October 1st, 2007
Issue 19

The Plot Thickens...



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Don't forget if you have any articles to contribute for the next Newsletter, please leave them in the shop.

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Introduction to issue 19

The Autumn Show is over for another year! The weather was lovely and the produce on show excellent. For a full list of prizewinners see the notice board outside the shop! There was a good crowd of

locals that came to see it all and I am sure they will all have enjoyed it! The weather seems to have changed and Autumn is definitely here but hopefully we will get some really nice weather in October

when we can tidy up the plot and get it ready for winter.

We have a lot of new plot holders joining us so hopefully you will find the newsletter helpful in your new venture!

Allotment News

Thanks to all those who made cakes for the Autumn Show, they were all lovely. It was especially nice that the person who won the lovely iced cake, made by Bob and Jean Acheson for the raffle, was able to take it to her Dad who is quite poorly in a Home. It was very gratefully received. Thanks to all those who donated produce to sell, it was excellent and lots of locals went home happy with some lovely veg and flowers. The

Judges thought that the standard of produce in the show tent was very high but see below for some tips for all you newcomers which you might like to keep for next year.

The Japanese Onion sets are now in the shop ready for planting out and over wintering. Also Broad Beans which can be sown in October/November. If you don't want to overwinter them they can be sown in the

Spring but for an early crop it is nice to do them soon!

There has been further vandalism on the plots with a shed and a poly tunnel being burnt down. The Fire Brigade were called and the Police involved. Don't forget if you report any cases to the Police it will make more of a case for them to act upon. Ring Sergeant Terrett at Southsea Police Station on 0845 045 45 45.



Did you get a
first prize in the
Autumn Show?

see all the first prize exhibits on:
www.eastneyandmiltonallotments.co.uk

Chairman's Chatter

Once again thanks to all those who people who helped to make this year's Autumn Show a great success

Well that's it for another year. This year's show and prize giving went off great. A fine weekend, not so many entries which we put down to the weather! There were more people on the day, including lots of families and the kids loved the bouncy castle, the plate smashing and the cheap ice creams. The venue at the British Legion Hall at Fratton where the Harvest Supper was held was voted a big hit with everybody. Plenty of room, spotless, nice bar and plenty of parking. Back to the show, once again the same people (plus at least 4 new faces) worked hard all day Saturday to put the marquees up, Sunday to see that everything was ready for the judges, the stalls laid out and manned and when four o'clock came, despite pleas for help the same faces worked till seven o'clock to get it all packed away. A special mention to the ladies, without their help it would not have all got done, well done! What can we do to get more help? The team is getting older – where were the new plot holders, or the existing ones who have helped before? It seems that on the day people worked their plots and said they didn't know the show was on!! The only bad points were the army marquees were again too dark. The Committee has decided that a discussion will have to be made at the AGM on their future.

The skip came just right on the Monday to take the Show rubbish but

then they didn't take it away for two weeks and people proceeded to stack it higher and higher. Needless to say the driver when he took it knocked all the excess off. I wonder if those same people will clear up the mess when the next skip arrives.

Once again thanks to all those who helped, whether putting up the marquees and taking them down, manning the stalls, making cakes etc, feeding the workers on Saturday, and producing the excellent meal at the supper and prize giving. Last but not least the new Show Secretary Janet who did a super job. At the AGM we need your thoughts as to where we get more help and support.

Top Tips

Don't forget if your leeks have gone maggoty, cut them off at ground level and in no time they will have grown again and be maggot free!

Regarding the spraying of tomatoes with Bordeaux Mixture, to counteract blight, which I wrote about in the last Newsletter I was given a cutting from the News which talks about the mix and it states that 'it is organic and all you have to do is wash the fruit before eating'. It also states that

'Bordeaux is very safe, although you must not allow it to drift on to a pond'. I also found in a book called The Organic Garden the following:- 'Bordeaux Mix is a compound containing copper and sulphur used to control various fungal diseases. It is harmful to fish and livestock and frequent use can lead to a build

up of copper in the soil that can be harmful to worms'. So if you use it be sparing if you want to keep all those lovely worms happy.

Don't forget if your leeks have gone maggoty, cut them off at ground level and in no time they will have grown again and be maggot free!

Judges Comments

Carrots:

Need to be scrubbed clean, uniform size and shape, no green showing around top, keep tap root intact, green cut to 3" and tied with raffia 2/3 times about 1" up stem.

Beetroot:

Uniform size and shape, washed but not scrubbed raw, up to tennis ball size but no bigger, not woody, tap root intact, stalks 3" long tied with raffia 2/3 times about 1" up stem.

Parsnips: Need to be scrubbed clean, tap root intact, 3" of stem tied 2/3 times with raffia about 1" up stem.

Potatoes:

Scrubbed clean, all same size and shape, round or oval, not too big-fit in palm of average adult size hand.

Onions Under 250grms:

between golf ball and tennis ball size, tied down tops with raffia, uniform size and shape, displayed up on milk bottle tops/cut off loo roll middles.

Onions Over 250grms:

the bigger the better, as before, don't peel too much skin off, need to see brown not white, cut off roots.

Cherry Tomatoes:

Have to fit through 35mm diameter ring to count as cherry.

Uniform colour and shape, fresh green stalks still attached.

Beefsteak Tomatoes:

Uniform colour and shape, fresh stalks still attached.

Exhibition Tomatoes:

Have to be at least golf ball size, uniform colour and shape, fresh green stalks attached.

Cucumbers:

Keep flower on if possible, bright fresh green, about 12" to 15" long (30cm to 38cm).

Runner Beans:

(judge was impressed with entries) Pick fresh for snap value, uniform length and thickness; keep stalks on, about 10" to 12" (25cm to 30cm).

Leeks:

Keep tops on, fold over and tied with raffia about half way down. Trimmed to about 1" and scrubbed roots. Straight all the way down, no bulb at the end, long length of white stem before green.

Cabbage:

Keep outside leaves on, 3" stalk attached, hearts should be rock hard, whole cabbage should feel crispy not soft.

Marrows:

Same colour and size, ready to eat not stored, so slight give around stalk, around 18" (45cm).

Squash:

Same colour and size, ready to eat not stored so fresh stalks.

Any other veg:

(difficult to judge different types against each other)

Peppers:

Judge gave 1st and 2nd to peppers but different number and colour for each entry so may need to check RHS rules, if any.

Best container of veg:

Good mix of fruit and veg, smaller items allow more to be included, angled container showed to advantage, keep in proportion.

Victoria Sponge:

Should not show marks of cooling rack

Muffins: Use a muffin tray to get the accurate shape and size

Scones:

Don't use a large cutter

Chutney:

Chutney is not pickle.

Jam:

Jam should have either a lid or cellophane.

Overall:

Exhibits need to be as fresh as possible, free from disease and pest damage, uniform in size colour and shape when grouped.

The Judges thought that the standard of produce in the show tent was very high but see on the right for some tips for all you newcomers which you might like to keep for next year

Recipe: Honey and Pistachio Muffins

300gm Plain Flour
1 tbsp Baking Powder
½ tsp salt
1 tsp Cinnamon
3 tbsp chopped Pistachios
3 tbsp chopped Almonds
100gm brown sugar
4 tbsp Honey
225 ml Milk
2 tbsp Vegetable Oil
2 Eggs, lightly beaten

Pre-heat oven to 200c.
Line a 12 hole muffin tin with cases. Mix the flour, baking powder, salt and cinnamon in a large bowl. Stir in 2 tbsp pistachios, 2 tbsp almonds and the brown sugar. In another bowl mix 2 tbsp of the honey with the milk, oil and eggs. Add the wet ingredients to the dry and stir briefly until just combined. Spoon the batter into the prepared tin, sprinkle with the remaining nuts and bake for about 20 minutes until risen and golden. Remove from the oven and drizzle with the remaining honey. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes then turn on to a wire rack. Enjoy!!!

All the helpers on the Saturday of the Show were treated to Gina's delicious muffins and she was asked for the recipe, so here it is!

A message from the Chairman's wife

Now the Show and Harvest Supper are over, it is time to evaluate how it went. In terms of finance, very well, and everyone's enjoyment of the day, excellent, but this cannot go on. If more people are not prepared to help before and after the Show, there will not be a Show. The small group (getting smaller and older by the year) cannot continue. It is a great pleasure and lots of fun to enter produce, lots of the workers are unable to enter due to lack of time. Age and disability are no barrier to helping, if you have time and energy to work a plot and enter the Show then the work involved should be no problem. Lots of people said after the event they were tired, we all were, some have families, so have we. No one expects people to give up their whole weekend but without more help there will not be another Autumn Show!

A message from the Chairman's wife, Barbara Simpson

...and finally

Valerie Peach has very kindly decided to organize a coach trip next year to Cornwall for us all with BRIJAN TOURS. The trip will start on Friday 25th April 2008 and will be for three nights bed, breakfast and evening meal in a newly refurbished hotel in Newquay. All the rooms are en suite and have tea making facilities etc. The hotel overlooks the bay and has primarily double rooms but has four single rooms available and does not charge a single supplement. The cost for the three nights, including the coach will cost £161.00 per person and a deposit of £40.00 per person must be paid before the 13th October. The balance is due by the 20th March 2008. There will be a full day trip to The Lost Gardens of Heligan, a beautiful place, and also a ½ day trip to Trebar Gardens (Alan T i t c h m a r s h ' s favourite), leaving ½ a day to explore the delights of Newquay. Entrance to the gardens is not included but Val should be able to get a group booking. It should be a great weekend, the coach takes 55 people so book early! If you are interested Val can be contacted on 023 92732644 or John and Val can be found on Plot 79 Eastney Lake.

And finally, finally the next social event will be the Christmas Raffle and free mulled wine and mince pies which takes place on the last day of trading which this year will be Sunday 9th December, all welcome! Come along and try and win a nice bottle of Whisky!
