

Monday, April 28th, 2008
Issue 21

The Plot Thickens...

Introduction to issue 21

As this is the first newsletter this year let me welcome any new plot holders that may have started up and wish them well! Please come into the shop if you need any help or advice!

The weather is still quite cold after some nice quite warm days in early April even though it was cold and frosty at night. I am sure once that cold easterly stops blowing we will start to

have some nice warm weather.

The next item on the agenda is the trip to Cornwall arranged by Val Peach which we are all looking forward to, including a visit to the Lost Gardens of Heligan and Trebah (Alan Titchmarsh's favourite garden). Lets hope the weather warms up for that!

Soon it will be time for the Plant Sale and the date to put in your

diaries is 11th May. It will begin at 9.00 until 12.00 and there will be refreshments and also a raffle. (The raffle tickets are now on sale in the shop.) A chance to pick up any extra plants you need! If you have grown an abundance of anything we would be grateful for your extras, please bring them into the shop beforehand or on the morning of the sale.



This month's articles...

- Introduction
- Photo
- Allotment News
- Chairman's Chatter
- Top Tips
- Wildlife on the Allotments
- Recipes
- ...and finally

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

A Rare Snowy Scene on the Allotments



Photo taken by Bob Acheson of his wife Jean on their allotment on Sunday 6th April 2008.

Allotment News

Another date for your diaries is the Autumn Show which will be held on Sunday 31st August and the schedules will soon be available. The category for the photograph is “an allotment character” which can be interpreted how you like so get snapping! If you have any bric a brac or items which can be sold please bring them into the shop. Michael Montgomery who in previous years has taken excellent photos of the Show will not be available this year so a volunteer is needed!

On the 17th and 18th of May Portsmouth Corporation are holding a Southsea Food

Festival which will be centred around Palmerston Road, Southsea. It will be open from 10-00 am until 4 pm and will consist of a wide variety of food etc. The Society are having a stall and will be selling the Cookery books they produce and also showing pictures of the allotments etc. It sounds a very good Festival and worth a visit especially you ladies who are left alone whilst your husbands are at the Cup Final at Wembley! Help is needed to man the stall and if you would like help for a few hours please leave your name and contact number in the shop.

The Council have been about on the allotments clearing plots and trimming trees and the pile of compost which they made has nearly been used up. There is a huge pile of greenery building up so hopefully they will be doing the same with that. The wood pile is growing and has been burnt already once this year and the scrap has been sold and the money added to the Society's coffers, so please continue trying to make the allotments tidier. Also be considerate to other allotment holders and don't park on the allotment roads except for unloading etc.

The category for the photograph for this years' Autumn Show, is "an allotment character" which can be interpreted how you like, so get snapping!

Chairman's Chatter

Not much to report this time. The Council have sent out the new bills and it looks as if some of the plots that haven't been worked will be getting new people. I hope so!

We mentioned before that Rene Spreadbury had passed away and now, I regret to say, Peter, her husband, has died from cancer in Q A Hospital. Peter was our association treasurer for a while; he also arranged the venues for the harvest supper, both

at the Radical Club and our current venue the British Legion at Fratton. Both Peter and Rene worked hard for the autumn show and Peter's onions were often winners! They will both be sadly missed!

Talking of the Autumn Show, the Committee has decided to try and sell the khaki marquees which we purchased two years ago, they just haven't been a success! Anyone with any thoughts (not eBay)

who we might contact please get in touch.

We are having a stall at the Southsea food festival which is being held in May and Janet Howarth could do with some help to man the stand for a few hours. If anyone would like to help please leave a contact number in the shop. Lets hope the weather soon bucks up so we can get down to some serious planting, although the grass and weeds seem to grow even though it has been cold!

We are having a stall at the Southsea food festival which is being held in May and we could do with some help to man the stand for a few hours.

After pinching out the tops of your Broad Beans, you can steam them for a veg!

Top Tips

The Broad Beans that have been overwintering will not be long in producing and as the weather warms up pinch out the tops to prevent black fly. (You can steam these tops for a veg!) If you do have black fly I am sure the tip to make a spray of garlic, nettles and comfrey will work as well as it did on the runners last year! Don't forget to strain it as I blocked up mine and my neighbours spray with the mixture last time!

THE SPRING PLANT SALE

TEA/COFFEE & HOME MADE CAKES
SUNDAY 11TH MAY 2008

RAFFLE WILL BE DRAWN AT 11:00
LOTS OF GOOD PRIZES!

IF YOU HAVE ANY SPARE PLANTS PLEASE BRING THEM TO THE SHOP
IF YOU CAN MAKE A CAKE (OR CAKES) IT WILL BE MOST HELPFUL.
PLEASE BRING TO THE SHOP ON SATURDAY 10TH MAY PM OR EARLY SUNDAY MORNING.
IF NEED BE YOU CAN CONTACT A COMMITTEE MEMBER AND WE CAN ARRANGE TO COLLECT ITEMS

Wildlife on the Allotments

Janet Howarth, the Show Secretary, is organising a survey of wildlife on the allotments and if you are interested a leaflet can be obtained in the shop.

Janet Howarth, the Show Secretary, is organising a survey of wildlife on the allotments and if you are interested a leaflet can be obtained in the shop. It is in the interests of the allotments to record any wildlife so keep your eyes open. Some growers may still regard wildlife as "the enemy"; imagining legions of furry, feathered, slimy and shelled pests with their beady eyes fixed on carrots, strawberries and prize-winning marrows! It's true that, left uncontrolled, many creatures can play havoc with a crop, but for every "pest" there is at least one predator species ready to step in and tackle it on your behalf.

Attracting beneficial wildlife can be quite straightforward and to encourage more of the right kind of creature to live on your allotment you can create the right kind of habitat for them. A good example is a pond which will boost the local frog population who are some of the best slug predators there are. Other habitats are nest boxes for birds, roosts for bats, beetle banks, overgrown, undisturbed areas, log and stone piles and a wildflower patch.

Pan Fried Potato Cakes

400g boiled potatoes, 1 ½ tsp salt
grated 2 tbsp veg oil for
1 ½ tsp toasted cumin frying.
seeds, crushed
½ tsp red chilli powder Mix together all the
1 tbsp chopped ginger ingredients except the
½ tsp chopped green oil. Shape into 6 cm
chillies diameter cakes 2 cm
2 tbsp coriander leaves thick. Pat into shape

firmly and leave in the
fridge for 20 minuts.

Heat oil in pan and
fry on both sides until
crisp and brown on
medium heat. Serve
with tomato chutney.

*This recipe goes very
well with our
Tomato Chutney!*

Tomato Chutney

Veg oil, 1 tsp chopped Heat 1 tbsp of oil and
ginger, 3 tbsp chopped saute ginger and onions
onions, 250g chopped till translucent. Add
tomatoes, 1 tsp salt, ½ toms, chilli, salt and
tsp red chilli powder, 2 sugar and cook until a
½ tsp sugar, ½ tsp sauce consistency.
cumin seeds. Blend and pass through

a fine sieve. Saute
cumin seeds in 2 tbsp of
veg oil and add to
sauce. Mix well.

*...and this recipe
goes very well with
our Pan Fried
Potato Cakes!*

We have a stand at the...



...see you there!

...and finally

A recent survey in the
Mail highlighted a
dramatic rise in
vegetable prices and it
seems that more and
more of us are buying
seeds and growing their
own. Sales of
vegetable seeds
reportedly flying off the
racks by up to 60 per
cent on last Spring. We
are lucky to have the

allotments and have the
chance to grow cheaply
and its worth the hard
work for the taste alone.
It was also reported that
more and more people
are turning to the
“green gym” to get fit,
much more enjoyable
than running on a
treadmill or cycling on
a static bike!

Dates to remember:

Plant Sale 11th May
from 9.30 am, Southsea
Food Festival 17th and
18th May from 10.00
am till 4 pm, and
Autumn Show 31st
August.

Also on the 11th
May Albert Road Cycle
Day from 12.00, so lots
of outings to look
forward to, summers
coming!

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