

Monday, May 16, 2005
Issue 5

The Plot Thickens...

This month's articles...

- Introduction
- Allotment News
- Caption Competition
- Chairman's Chatter
- Coach Trip to Kew Gardens
- Top Tips
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- ...and finally

Don't forget if you have any articles to contribute for the next Newsletter, please leave them in the shop. Hopefully this will be produced sometime

Introduction to issue 5

Hopefully all your now after plenty of rain Unfortunately, all the plants are growing well and lots of sunshine! weeds are growing too!

Allotment News

Don't forget the Plant Sale on Sunday 22nd May!

There will be plenty of plants on sale and you can purchase a cup of tea and a nice home made cake! Also there will be a raffle with plenty of prizes including one of Shirley's lovely home made fruit cakes! The sale starts at 10.00 am and the raffle will be drawn at 11.00. If anyone has spare plants can they bring them on the 21st and leave at the shop, there will be people around from 9.00 putting up tables etc. Also if any ladies could make a cake it would be gratefully received.

Mike Simpson has, after much searching, found a place that sells refurbished marquees. They are similar to the one we have been using for the Show Tent. The old one is full of holes and we have been lucky with the weather for the last couple of years as if it rained or was windy we would be in trouble! The marquee would cost about £2,500, which seems a lot of money but as the Autumn Show is such a great day, for allotment holders and also locals, the Committee thought it was a good

investment for future years. Mike has also looked into hiring which would prove to be too expensive! If anyone has any thoughts or comments on this proposed purchase please let a member of the Committee know!

If anyone has too many rosettes to display and would like to return them to the shop we can use them again in the Autumn Show! They are rather expensive and will save the Association some money!

Caption Competition

The winner of the Caption Competition was Pauline, Plot 14A Eastney Lake. So, Pauline if you can come to the plant sale on the 22nd, The Chairman Mike Simpson will

present you with your bottle of whisky just before the raffle at 11.00. If you can't make it just pop into the shop on a Sunday or Tuesday! Pauline's caption was "Is that my

knees creaking or your wheelbarrow?" So well done to Pauline and hope you enjoy the whisky. Also thanks to all the other entrants, it was hard to choose the winner!

Chairman's Chatter

We are trying to get a new floor in the shop, which is very bad

Having met Laura Reidman from the Council on April 1st, it turned out to be a good day as it was the first day of the new Council budget. We are trying to get a new floor in the shop, which is very bad, and also all the holes in the road up to the area where the Council tip their grass etc. need filling! Whilst we looked at this she was horrified at all the rubbish dumped up there and in the area of the skip. Having repeatedly asked for extra skips or larger ones, she said we have no chance as the budget for allotments has gone down not up! Should anyone see people dumping (tyres, fridges, household rubbish, kitchen tiles, units etc.) please ring the Council with the details. What amazes me is that people bring it up to the allotments by car when they could take it to the free tip!

Well done to Val Peach for a great day out to Kew Gardens with a full coach!

We have tracked down a replacement marquee for the Autumn Show, we haven't yet bought it but we will!

Coach Trip to Kew Gardens

A lovely day was enjoyed by all on the trip to Kew Gardens on 16th April. There was a full coach and we set off at 9.00 from the allotments. The weather was overcast but just right for walking round the gardens. The Victorian Temperate House and Palm House were spectacular and also the more recently built Princess of Wales Conservatory which had amazing cat fish swimming about. We managed to see most of the gardens including the Student Vegetable Plots and the Kew Gardens large compost heap which was smoking. The blossom on the trees at this time of year is beautiful and it was different to see all the big trees not yet in leaf but looking very majestic!

All in all a very enjoyable day out and thanks to Val Peach for arranging it!

A lovely day was enjoyed by all on the trip to Kew Gardens on 16th April.



Some of the trippers enjoying a welcome rest!

Top Tips

Top tip for this issue is for bigger tastier tomatoes! Simply mix a packet of powdered jelly into 1 cup of boiling water and stir until dissolved. Mix with three cups of cold water then pour round the base of the plants. Apparently the gelatin helps the plants retain

water, the nitrogen in Jelly enhances plant growth and hastens sprouting and the sugar feeds the microbes in the soil, producing more nutrients for the plant.

I'm going to try this on a couple of plants and compare with others to

see if it works!

Also a tip to prevent potato tubers from being disfigured by common scab, keep the soil slightly acid by watering the plant with a mixture of two tablespoons of White Vinegar per quart of water.

Top tip for this issue is for bigger tastier tomatoes!

Recipe

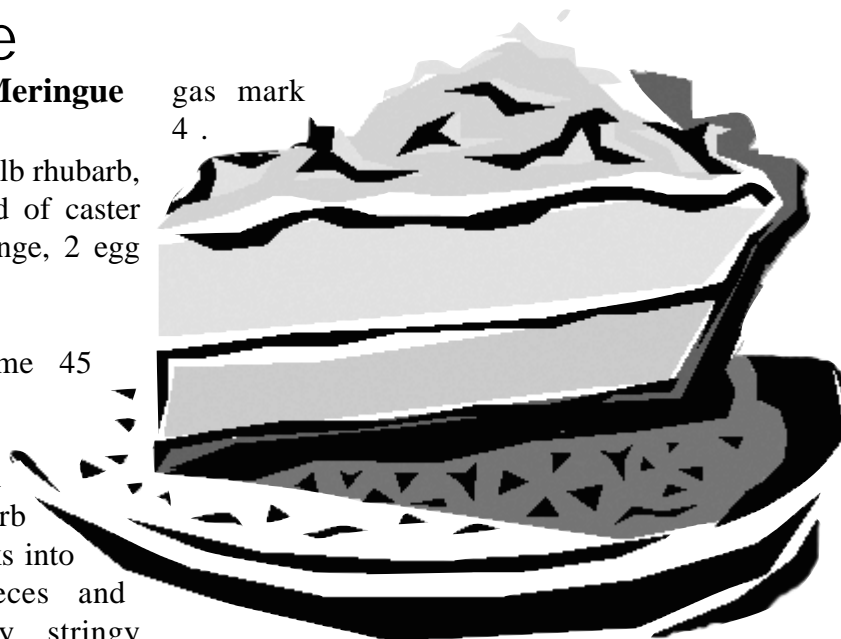
Rhubarb Meringue

1 and a 1/4 lb rhubarb, half a pound of caster sugar, 1 orange, 2 egg whites.

Cooking time 45 minutes.

Trim and wash rhubarb and cut stalks into 1 inch pieces and remove any stringy bits. Put into ovenproof dish with half the sugar. Sprinkle with the juice and grated rind of the orange. Cover with a lid or foil and cook for 30 mins at 180 (350f)

gas mark 4.



Meanwhile beat the egg whites stiff and fold in the sugar. Remove the rhubarb from the oven and cover with the meringue. Return to the oven in the lower part with the

temperature reduced to 150 (300f) gas mark 2 and cook for about 20 mins until golden brown. Serve warm rather than hot or cold with a jug of cream or vanilla ice cream.

Rhubarb Meringue

Recipe extras...

Of course rhubarb crumble is always a favourite - try putting half a teaspoon of ginger into the flour mix.

Has anyone got a recipe for nettle soup? We've

got so many nettles and apparently it is a good source of iron! We tried it as a tea and it was quite nice - just cut up some leaves and poured boiling water on and left it to stand.

Barbara Simpson gave me the following tip. When you pinch out the tops of your broad beans steam them until soft and they are like a mild spinach, delicious.

Poem

A poem sent in by Ruth Taylor:-

FOR THE GARDEN OF YOUR DAILY LIVING

*Plant three rows of peas
Peace of mind
Peace of heart
Peace of soul*

*Plant four rows of squash
Squash Gossip
Squash indifference
Squash grumbling
Squash selfishness*

*Thank you very
much Ruth for
sending in this poem*

*Plant four rows of lettuce
Let us be faithful
Let us be kind
Let us be patient
Let us really love one another*

*And also some turnips
Turn up for meetings
Turn up for service
Turn up to help one another*

*To conclude our garden we must have thyme
Time for each other
Time for family
Time for friends*

**WATER FREELY WITH PATIENCE AND CULTIVATE WITH LOVE
THERE IS MUCH FRUIT IN YOUR GARDEN BECAUSE
YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW**

Thank you very much Ruth for sending in this poem - can we please have other contributions, any tips, recipes etc. You have all got a wealth of information to share and don't forget there are a lot of newcomers who are grateful for any help, including me!

...and finally

*Please try not to
dump weeds*

Please try not to dump weeds, etc., especially on the piles of leaves which are rotting nicely and will be used by many plot holders to fill their compost heaps. If you can't compost it try and take it home for the dustmen.