

Monday, September 26, 2005
Issue 8

The Plot Thickens...

This month's articles...

- Introduction
- Allotment News
- Autumn Show Statistics
- Chairman's Chatter
- Top Tips
- Recipes
- Autumn Show Pictures
- ...and finally

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

Editor: Carol Bannister
Design: Andrew Leonard

Introduction to issue 8

As promised a bumper issue with all the details of the Autumn Show and including some of the great photos taken by Mike Montgomery and now on sale!

Welcome to all the new Allotment Holders that have just obtained a

plot! If you need any help or advice come into the shop (Tuesdays and Sundays at 9.30 - 11.30 am) and Happy Digging to you all! A column from The News of last Thursday states "there are still 90 on the waiting list for

Locksway Road allotments and warning letters have been sent to current allotment holders who have not kept their plots up to scratch! City chiefs say the rush shows that allotments are more popular than ever!"

Allotment News

The Autumn Show this year was bigger and better than ever with over 450 adults coming through the turnstiles and also plenty of children for whom there were even more attractions this year!

A special thank you to all you allotment holders who contributed with gifts of lovely cakes and home made pickles and jams! Also all the donations of produce and bric a brac etc. which were given freely! The show costs a lot to produce so all the contributions were very welcome.

All the stalls did very well this year and thanks

to all the people who helped on the day! Not forgetting the hardy folk who helped to put up the tents and also take them down! It was a lot of work but rewarded with Barbara's home made corned beef hash (with waitress service too)! Thank you everyone!

The raffle did even better this year thanks to Jean's beautiful iced cake, (with verse by Bob), which was popularly won by Ruth. She is keeping it for her father's 104th birthday and we send him our very best wishes! Also thanks very much to Shirley for her luscious fruit cake and pickles which she donated to the raffle!

Japanese onion sets are now on sale in the shop for sowing now and also Shallots and Garlic. Broad Beans for overwintering will be in shortly. The beans are better for sowing now as they overwinter well and result in an earlier crop without the black fly which can result from later sowings. Kings Seed Catalogues are now available in the shop and should be returned by the end of October. (Don't forget to add 80p for postage and packing.)

Don't forget we are permitted to light bonfires at the allotments on November the 5th! So save all your old wood etc. and get rid of it then!

Autumn Show Statistics

1. We had 54 people entering the Show
27 from Eastney Lake (11.4% of 236 plots in total)
1 from Hope Cottages (3.2% of 31 plots in total)
26 from Milton Piece (6.2% of 421 plots in total)
In total 54 entrants from 421 plots (a total of 12.8%)
2. We had 63 classes in the following categories:

Vegetables	33
Flowers	8
Cookery	5
Fruit	5
Wine	3
Junior	3
Plants	3
Photography	2
The Master Gardener	1

Only one class had no entries '62 - One bottle Table White Wine'
The most popular classes with 17 entries were '26 - Nine Runner Beans' and '31 - Any Other Vegetable - as RHS Rules'
3. We had the following number of prizes awarded:
61 First prizes
57 Second prizes
48 Third prizes
24 Highly Commended
We also awarded 28 Trophies
Anthea Haseler got the most prizes (14) and the most Trophies (4)
4. For those of you who like numbers:

Longest Runner Bean	54cm
Longest Carrot	40cm
Longest Parsnip	141cm
Heaviest Cabbage	24lb 9oz
Heaviest Onion	3lb 2oz
Heaviest 3 Onions	8lb
Heaviest Marrow	22lb 12oz
Heaviest Truss of Tomatoes	2lb 3oz
Heaviest Pumpkin	98lb
Heaviest Root of Potatoes grown in a 9" Pot	3lb 4oz
Most Tomatoes on One Truss	30
5. Each year, after the judging, we ask the judges for their comments on the Show:
Overall they thought the show was of very high quality but the area we could improve on was on the importance of presentation:
Jams etc: use a proper jam jar - use correct size of wax circle
Victoria sponges - do not cool top of cake on a rack - this leaves marks on top of the cake
Carrots - remove side shoots - only tie up stalks if you can do this without damaging the stalks
Veg - all veg should look clean - wash veg in soapy water to remove dirt but do not scrub
Beans - it is not desirable to have the bean shape showing through the bean
Cherry tomatoes - check your tomatoes are the correct size - not too large
Tomatoes (and all veg) - all veg must be ripe ie no green tomatoes
Cabages - get rid of damaged leaves
Sweet corn - strip off some leaves to exhibit some kernels
Apples - should be displayed stalk down - leave stalk but remove knot
Cucumbers - these were very good this year
6. Please remember it takes a long time for the judges to judge the show - almost 3 hours!
Show entrants must vacate the tent by 10:45 at the latest to give the judges the time to do a good job. It probably takes more time to arrange your exhibits than you think - so try to get into the tent as early as possible. If you enter for juniors, please fill out an individual entry form for them so we know whose name to put on the certificate etc.

*The most popular
entry this year were
Runner Beans*

Chairman's Chatter

We have now paid £1,000 deposit on a new marquee which means we can have it at this year's price.

Well since the last newsletter the main event was the show. At the last minute the company who we have been dealing with regarding a new marquee, informed me they had sold out! What could we do but put up the old one, which was quite a feat as the wind was blowing hard and it started to rip, but we got there in the end. I think it was the best show yet and that was the general opinion. My thanks go to all

those who helped with erecting the tents, manning the stalls, taking down the tents and stacking it all away. The weather helped, the sun shone on Saturday and Sunday and we had finished before Sunday's storms. We have now paid £1,000 deposit on a marquee which means we can have it at this year's price. The old one has been scrapped, it did us proud! The supper and prize giving went well at our new venue, The Radical Club, the old

venue at St James has been shut. Good food (again many thanks to all those who cooked and provided the food it was excellent). A good bar and helpful staff made for a good evening. The only downside was the fact that there were a few people who didn't come to collect their prizes! The Council have started clearing plots and allocating them but no sign yet of fence repairs or skips!

Watch this space.

Top Tips

As tomato blight appeared again this year you may find the following useful:-

Keep tomato plants well spaced to let the air in as it seems to start when it is hot and humid, and cut off affected stems immediately. It was

found that a lot of outside tomatoes were saved by doing this. As yet no blight has been found in the greenhouse which shows that it must be airborne! Also if you want to spray it is best to start spraying in early June - Bordeaux mixture has been used

with good results by some plot holders!

If your leeks look tatty you may find they are maggoty! If you cut them down to ground level they soon grow again and this seems to do the trick!

If anyone has any tips please let us know!

Two Top Tips in this issue!

Recipe 1

Nettle Soup

And as the soup season is nearly upon us a recipe for a delicious Nettle Soup which is easy, full of vitamins and minerals and very cheap to make!

One and a half pints of stock, half a pint of milk, one pint of nettles, 1 oz of oatmeal and 2 oz of butter.

Choose young, bright green nettles. Remove stalks and chop leaves. Melt butter in a large saucepan, add oatmeal and cook until mixture is golden brown. Remove pan and add stock, bring to the boil and add milk. When boiling again add chopped nettles and

cook for another few minutes. Season to taste. Recipe by Margaret Watts of Eastney Lake. Can be found in the new cookery book (volume 8) which is on sale in the shop priced at £1 or buy all 8 for £6.00. Would make a lovely Christmas present!

This recipe can be found in the new cookery book (volume 8) which is on sale in the shop priced at £1

Recipe 2

Blackberry & Apple Cake

Oil for greasing, 6 oz butter, 6 oz caster sugar, grated zest of 1 orange, 3 eggs beaten, 5 oz blackberries, 6 oz self raising flour, milk.

For the filling:-

2 large Bramley Apples, peeled, cored and cut into chunks, 4 tbsp soft light brown sugar, 1 tsp cinnamon, 8 tbsp water, ½ pint of double cream, lightly whipped, icing sugar to serve.

1. Preheat the oven to 180c/350f/gas mark 4. Prepare two 8in sandwich tins by brushing with a little oil, then place a circle of greaseproof paper in the bottom of each tin, then oil again.

2. Cream the butter and, when soft, add the sugar and the zest. Beat until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs, then stir in the blackberries. Fold in the flour. Add a little

milk if necessary to bring the mixture to a dropping consistency.

3. Divide the mixture between the prepared tins and smooth the tops with a spatula. Bake in the middle of the oven for 25-30

minutes, or until the cakes are well risen, golden and feel spongy to the fingertips.

4. Meanwhile make the filling. Place the apple, sugar, cinnamon and water in a small pan, cover with lid and cook until soft. Mash with a fork then allow to cool.

5. Allow the cakes to cool for a few minutes in the tins, then turn out on to a wire rack. Peel off the lining paper, invert the cakes so they cook right-side up.

6. When filling is cool,



into the cream. Sandwich cakes together with apple filling. Dust with icing sugar.

This recipe was tried and tested by Shirley Gunn and is a delicious cake for a special treat!

This recipe was tried and tested by Shirley Gunn and is a delicious cake for a special treat!

Contact Details for Mike Montgomery for photos:-

Telephone - 0791 7896461

Email - events.photography@ntlworld.com

Web Page - <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/mr.mike.montgomery>

For those of you on the internet visit <http://growit.ik.com/> to see a website of allotments in Walsall, Birmingham which is really interesting.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12

Autumn Show Pictures

- 1 - Get in line there!
- 2 - We're having a smashing time!
- 3 - Alice's Best In Show!
- 4 - What a Good Show!
- 5 - Spiderman!
- 6 - Barbara's Winning Top Tray!
- 7 - Hilary's colourful prizewinning Veg!
- 8 - Family Day Out!
- 9 - I can lift this all by myself!
- 10 - Anthea rushing to get her prizewinning veg in!
- 11 - Yum, Yum, Yum!
- 12 - Will my pumpkin be big enough?

...and finally

Steve & Shirley Gunn are taking their annual break in the Gambia in the New Year! Shirley has asked for donations of any good clean children's or baby's clothes which they will take out with them for the children! Any donations please bring into the shop but please note they only have one spare suitcase!

Ruth asked for the following to be printed which you may find useful:-

To request a congratulatory message from The Queen, for 60th, 65th and 70th wedding anniversaries,

and for every anniversary following, and for birthday congratulations sent to celebrate 100th and 105th and following birthdays, request an application form from:- The Anniversaries Office, Buckingham Palace, London SW1A 1AA, no sooner than three weeks before the celebration date.

Two dates for your diary:-

The first is Sunday December the 11th when the shop will close for the Christmas period! Free mince pies and mulled wine

will be available (shop opening hours 9.30 till 11.30) and a Christmas raffle will be held at 11.00.

The second is the Annual General Meeting which will be held at Bransbury Park Community Centre at 7.30 pm on 1st February 2006. This will take place later than previous years to give everyone a chance to get over the Christmas and New Year Festivities! So if you have any questions or comments to raise please come along and tea and biscuits will be served!

A request for donations, how to get a message from The Queen and Two dates for your diary!
