

WHALEY BRIDGE
Allotment & Gardeners'
Society

newsletter

MAY 2003

Dear Member,

Lots of goodies and things to get in this month – trips, talks, open gardens, you name it. So, no boring, long-winded musings about the weather and that sort of thing – although we're now paying for those long dry weeks of course. As I write it's pouring down and the water butts are filling up on the allotment again and we certainly don't need to water. It's really good growing weather now being pretty mild and damp. The giant snails are girding whatever giant snails gird ready for an onslaught on the newly emerging hostas and the like. I keep throwing them into the back field every evening (that's the slugs not the hostas) but I'm sure the same ones come back again. I should paint their shells with some white emulsion to check but I can't be bothered!

Where was I? Oh yes, lots to get in this month. Starting with the popular plant swap/sale at the store on Elnor Lane on Saturday, 10 May at 2pm. Bring all your spare plants etc and either swap them or offer them for sale - and if you're feeling generous donate the proceeds to the society! It's a splendid opportunity to make the odd purchase from the store. And pay subs if you haven't done so - we'll soon be reaching that time of the year when we have to reluctantly assume that you no longer wish to remain a member if you haven't coughed up your £2. Regular visitors to the store won't need telling that sensible footwear is the order of the day if there's been the slightest drop of rain!

Then it's our first trip of the year on Saturday, 17 May to Erdigg near Wrexham. I have it on good authority that the house and gardens are superb and there's lots to see and do and I understand that there is also an exhibition of work by British Woodcarvers to enjoy. Ring Ethel on 734436 to book. Cost of the trip is £12 for non NT members and £6.50 if you are an NT member. We leave from Horwich End at 9.30am. (As usual, the Board a bit earlier, the Jodrell a bit later – you all know the drill).

There are still some tickets left for our Grand Garden Party on 8 June to Celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Inaugural Meeting of the Society. Tickets cost £6 per person and members may bring one guest. Ring Ethel on the usual number and please pay for your tickets by Saturday, 10 May (we've extended the deadline by a week). Your tickets will be delivered to you in good time for the big day. When they arrive please write your name on the back. These will be collected on arrival and will then act as your entry ticket for our super raffle.

It's coffee morning time again on Saturday, 21 June at the Mechanics. It's the same date as the Water Weekend so there should be lots of thirsty punt – er people around to make it another good do.

Details of two more trips: Arley Hall on Saturday, 19 July departing at 10am. Cost is £10.50. We hope to arrange a nursery visit on the return journey.

Our midweek trip to Chatsworth and Fir Croft Alpine Nursery is on Wednesday, 6 August departing at 9.45am. Cost for this trip is £11 and includes entry to the house and garden. Our vegetable growers won't want to miss the kitchen garden as featured in a recent The Kitchen Garden magazine.

Tickets are still available. Ring Ethel to book for Arley Hall and me on 733579 for Chatsworth.

Two of our members have very kindly volunteered to open up their gardens for us to visit. Firstly, on Sunday, 15 June we hope to pay a return visit to Janet Langman's at Top of the Plane on Ashbourne Lane, Chapel. This is a superb spot with panoramic views and quite a bit of local history of which I'm sure Janet or her husband will happily give details. Plants will be on sale too. Final confirmation to come for this one. On Sunday, 10 August we stay nearer to home with a visit to Annette Anderson's splendid garden at Overlea Farm off Eccles Road. No admission charges of course but donations and raffle takings all go to charity so 'please give generously!' Both will be from 2pm – 5pm.

PTO

You know how, like farmers, gardeners are always as they say these days 'banging on' about the weather? Well, we've arranged a talk for you that you're sure enjoy on the very subject to be given by John Weston from Buxton. I understand that as well as being an authority on the subject he's a very entertaining speaker and those who have heard him before speak very highly of his talk.

This will be on Friday, 13 June at the Trinity Church Hall starting at 8pm. Admission is free as usual and refreshments (light) will be provided. Even if you're not interested in the weather (I can't believe you're not) please come and support both the society and our speaker.

A very warm welcome to a whole load of new members! Ivan McDonagh of Old Hall Drive, Sheila Berry of Nearwell Close and Chris Jackson of High Street both Chapel, Malcolm Schofield of Low Meadow, Peter Jodrell of Jodrell Meadow (not many of our members have roads named after them) and Dale Culliford of Rock Bank.

Two members spotted my error regarding Mr and Mrs Sharp's open garden at Otterbrook, Alders Lane, Chinley. It's open from 2pm on the last two SUNDAYS in June not Saturdays as I said. You won't be surprised to learn that the two members who did spot it were Mr and Mrs Sharp! If you haven't been before I urge you to pay a visit – you'll be very impressed.

Our store is still doing brisk business with some new items that do not appear on your price list. When you come to the plant swap/sale you'll be able to purchase Osmocote plant food tablets (both loose and in a cluster) and Supergel especially for your tubs and hanging baskets. We've even got bags of special Tub & Hanging Basket compost. I could go on – and will.

We have some soluble moss killer and lawn tonic as well as the granular variety plus a couple of 25kg bags of lawn sand. Some good news is that Jeyes Fluid is not being taken off the market as was once feared and we have some of that. Don't forget your 8' canes for the runner beans.

We've taken a special delivery of ladies gardening gloves in various colours that also make an ideal gift. I'm told they make excellent bowling gloves too!

And don't forget, you may borrow our fertilizer spreader, lawn aerators, long pruning loppers, ratchet loppers and 5ltr Killaspray.

We also have the two gazebos that you may borrow for your own garden party. A flat lawn and no wind are the ideal conditions! Phone Bob Kellock to reserve either of these (gazebos not lawns and wind and yes, I know I've already done that).

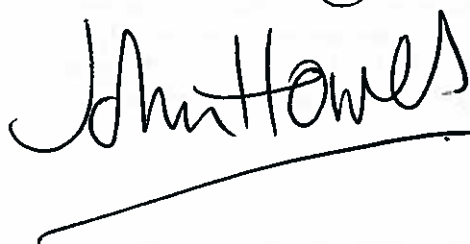
Well, that's filled a space!

ALLOTMENT JOTTINGS

We've pretty well all paid our rents for the coming year now and the threat of regular site visits by the Town Clerk have prompted some attempts at actual cultivation!

Those plots that are seriously worked are looking good now. The overwintering onions are looking more like onions and I actually spotted some early potatoes coming through. This will mean dashing down and covering the spuds with fleece and stuff when frost is forecast – as it surely will be. There are flowers on the strawberries and the apple blossom is just about out as are the slugs and snails. It's a pity there aren't more thrushes about – they'd have a field day. There is one that occasionally makes an appearance but it would have its work cut out dealing with our lot.

Anyway, it's an extremely pleasant spot to be on a mild, sunny day!



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