



WHALEY BRIDGE Allotment & Gardeners' Society



JUNE 2012 NEWSLETTER

EFFORT, APPLICATION AND THE LONG HAUL!



"Queen Elizabeth"

GREETINGS!

Greetings to HM The Queen, President of The Royal Horticultural Society, long-time hostess of garden parties, ceremonial planter of countless trees and visitor every year to her local Flower Show. Let's celebrate her total dedication to the nation and her hard work over 60 years. She is a remarkable "Head Gardener"!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The Committee is delighted to welcome the following new members on your behalf: Martin Thomas and Susan Rowlands of Whaley Bridge, Hilary Hague of Chapel-en-le-Frith and Janet Elliott of Hope. A warm welcome back to Susan Reynolds of Whaley Bridge.

We offer condolences to the families of Dorothy Pearson and Margaret Fox following their deaths. Dorothy gave a huge amount to others through her work at Christie's Hospital, at East Cheshire Hospice and in supporting WBAGS and other organisations in Whaley Bridge. Margaret was known to many members of our Society as an informal guardian of our members' allotments. Her house overlooked them and whenever she saw something that might constitute a threat to their well-being, she would draw the matter to the attention of the relevant people. They will both be much missed.

STORE CLOSURE

The Store closes on Wednesdays after business on 4th July and on Sundays after business on 8th July. If you need something after 8th July, contact David Osborn, who may be able to help if your requirements are still in stock.

RECENT EVENTS

SPRING TALK. "Late Autumn Colour" by Martin Blow. 29th March

The talk was well attended and enjoyed, as were the refreshments afterwards. We can expect some colourful gardens in and around Whaley Bridge this autumn!

PLANT SWAP 20 May

David Osborn writes "Many thanks to the many members and friends who attended and sent plants to our annual plant swap. It was a successful morning. The weather played its part by being fine and still enabling members to sit, mingle and swap gardening experiences. The remaining plants will be taken to the coffee morning on 9th June." £82 were taken in donations.

FUTURE EVENTS

HODNET HALL GARDENS AND PLANTHUNTERS' FAIR 3rd June Depart Whaley Bridge 9.00am

There are still spaces on this trip at the time of "going to press". The trip is imminent, so contact Rosemary straight away if you would like to go. Hodnet Hall Gardens are no longer opened frequently, so it is a chance not to be missed if you are still free over the Jubilee weekend. Re-read the last newsletter for full details. (Lost it? Look for a copy on www.wbags.co.uk or ask a friend or relative to do so for you.) See also www.hodnethallgardens.org and www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk

COFFEE MORNING AND PLANT SALE 9 June 9.30 – 12.00

Full details of this event were given in the March Newsletter. Please remember to contact Roger Wood if you can bring plants and Rosemary Kellock if you can provide cakes, raffle prizes or bric-a-brac. Help with serving tea, coffee and biscuits to our visitors and with the clearing up would be very much appreciated. You would not need to be there the whole time – an hour would be appreciated.



NESS BOTANICAL GARDENS AND BURTON OPEN GARDENS Sunday, 1st July Depart Whaley Bridge 9.00am

The Ness gardens are the inspiration of Arthur Bulley, a Liverpool cotton merchant who had a passion for collecting Asian mountain plants. He started developing the garden in 1898. His family gave it to the University of Liverpool in 1948, which has continued to treasure and develop his concepts and wish to provide pleasure to the public. You can enjoy rock, water and heather gardens, herbaceous borders, an alpine house and many more features, including attractive refreshment and plant purchase facilities. After spending the morning at Ness, the visit will move to a series of gardens at Burton, also on the Wirral and enjoying similar aspects of its favourable microclimate. These gardens are open under the NGS scheme. Please let Rosemary Kellock know if you would like to go. £23.50 pp
www.nessgardens.org.uk

HIGHGROVE VISITS

If you have booked please let Rosemary Kellock have your cheque for £39.00 per person no later than the end of June (when related bills become due).

PARCEVALL HALL GARDENS, WHARFEDALE 23rd August. Depart Whaley Bridge 9.00am

Sir William Milner, a renowned plantsman, started to restore the derelict shell of Parcevall Hall and to build its garden at the head of a valley in Wharfedale in the 1920s. It now offers south-facing, formal terraces, a bedrock limestone garden, a beautiful rose garden and fabulous views down the valley. You can enjoy an interesting collection of apple trees, a wide variety of alpine and woodland plants, unusual perennials and many specimen trees and shrubs. There is the possibility of a garden tour at £2.00 extra. Please let Rosemary know if this would interest you when you contact her to book. Cost is £17.50. You need to be reasonably fit, mobile and stoutly shod to enjoy all this remarkable garden offers. www.parcevallhallgardens.co.uk

SOCIAL EVENING Friday 14 September 7.30pm Trinity Church Hall

This will include the usual attractions of liquid refreshments, nibbles and good company. A special feature of the evening will be tomato-tasting, organised by Margaret Day. This follows on her successful tasting a year ago of a specific type of potato grown by several members and assessed for flavour by those present. Margaret writes as follows: *“At the 14th September social evening we will have a ‘tomato tasting’. The idea is to compare the flavour of tomatoes grown indoors and outdoors. The ever popular Gardener’s Delight has been chosen. There are a number of you already ‘signed up’ to take part, however should anyone growing this variety wish to take part please contact Margaret Day on 01663 742877 or enginehouse48@hotmail.com.”*

JULIE BATTENS’S OPEN GARDEN

Julie thanks all WBAGS members who attended her Garden Party. Sales and

donations added up to £950 for the Lymphoma Research Fund at Christie’s Hospital. If you would like to donate to help Julie her make up the total to £1000, please contact her at julie.bat@virgin.net

“VIRTUAL GARDENING”

Can’t dig like you used to or don’t have space for a “veg. patch”? Eagle-eyed Dave Parker read a press article recently about a farm which will plant an allotment on **its** land to **your** specification. You can keep an eye on what is happening on-line and your produce is delivered to you within 24 hours of harvesting. For details go to www.abbeyparks.co.uk/allotments.

RHODODENDRON REMOVAL AT TAXAL MOOR



In the June edition a year ago, you were promised an update on progress eighteen months into this three year project to clear rhododendrons from Taxal Moor. The land-owner Arthur Slack reports that the stumps are out and cleared away and a few resistant ones have been treated to prevent their resurgence. The intention during this summer is to allow the seeds of grasses and bilberries on the moor to emerge and - with the heather - to recolonise the cleared areas. Whilst there is a danger of unwanted weeds taking hold, the early signs are that the grasses and bilberry plants are taking advantage of their improved environment. The heather is slower off the mark. Mr Slack will review progress with Natural England (which provided a grant towards the work) after the summer and maybe replant heather and other wanted species which are struggling. Despite the limited plant cover in some areas, there has been practically no soil erosion. The tough existing heather is “a grand cover for birds” and there are plenty up there.

MUSINGS from Podiceps Cristatus. “Plant a Tree for Jubilee”

“I was watching some blue tits and great tits squabbling to get the best position on a hanging feeder this morning, and the great tit was definitely the “top dog”. There are at least two families at work, regularly crossing this garden to visit their respective nest boxes – a busy shuttle flight to feed the new brood. As more visitors joined the action around the feeders, the blue tits moved their attention to “working” the big oak trees nearby. Tits have a multi-purpose bill shape, and can take seeds and insects, and also feed their young on caterpillars – at this time of year the oaks and other broadleaf woodland trees are coming into leaf, and are a bountiful marketplace for the early morning “breakfast run”!

As the majestic mature trees of our surroundings woodlands gleam in the early sunshine, we should remember sadly that half of the Ancient Woodland (more than 400 years old) in the UK has been felled in the last 80 years... The UK is now the least wooded country in Europe...

Our woodlands are the most valuable space for wildlife, and home to rare and threatened species like the willow tit, marsh tit, barbastelle bat, dormouse and pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly.

The Forestry Commission with the Woodland Trust, Natural England and private land-owners are working to raise awareness of the serious threat to woodlands by new roads, electricity pylons, housing and airport extensions.

We can all make a positive impact on the environment and contribute by sponsoring the planting of trees in the 500 acre Diamond Wood in Leicestershire which is planting now to celebrate the Queen’s diamond jubilee year, and also by planting trees in allotments and gardens. Information about packs of saplings (including a limited edition Royal Oak sapling!), selecting trees for smaller gardens, and schemes for encouraging the involvement of the next generation is available online at www.woodlandtrustshop.com, www.woodlandtrust.org.uk and www.jubileewoods.org.uk”

