



# WHALEY BRIDGE Allotment & Gardeners' Society



## JUNE 2014 NEWSLETTER

### SUN, RAIN, GROWTH AND GREENING!



The recently cleared and levelled land by the allotments. See article below

#### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A warm welcome to Diane Blaiklock of Whaley Bridge.

Unfortunately, 31 members decided not to renew their subscriptions this year. Where a reason was given, this generally reflected the problems of advancing years.

#### STORE NEWS

The last Wednesday evening opening of the Store will be on 2<sup>nd</sup> July and the last Sunday opening on 6<sup>th</sup> July. After these dates, any further orders should be directed to David Osborn or Dave Parker (phone numbers at foot of page), who will do their best to help.

#### NEWS FROM THE ALLOTMENTS

A year ago, the Newsletter reported the hard work that is being undertaken to reclaim the swampy land alongside the existing allotments. This was with a view to creating opportunities for some of the people on the waiting list for a plot. The project is being led by John Swift on behalf of the Council. It is supported by allotment holders, some of whom are members, and who have contributed regularly to the hard, physical work involved. Much has been done in terms of clearing the site, levelling it and disposing of the waste produced. There are many challenges still. Pipework is being put in to manage water draining from the football fields above and to

channel it into tanks and ultimately standpipes for allotment holders. Larger drainage pipes are being inserted, which will help remove surplus water into the River Goyt. There are many interests to be met and technical problems to be overcome. These include attention to listed trees and the wildlife they support, rampant mare's tail weeds, which need to be brought under control and difficulties of access for heavy machinery. The intention is to create large, raised beds. These will enable the land to be put into productive use and to offer opportunities for some of the 40 people on the waiting list for allotments. Congratulations on the progress made with a difficult job.



Insertion of tanks and pipework

#### RECENT EVENTS

##### SPRING TALK "The Gardens of Derbyshire" 1<sup>st</sup> May

32 people attended the talk by Irene Dougan, held at the Uniting Church. This included a handful of members from the Chapel Gardening Club, who were most welcome. Irene gave an overview of all the gardens in Derbyshire open to the public under the National Gardens Scheme, with the exception of a very small number which will open this year for the first time. Her talk was attractively illustrated with one or more defining slides for each garden covered. Some interesting anecdotes were included. It pays to read the NGS "Yellow Book" entry before a visit! For instance, despite its name, Bluebell Arboretum is not a wood full of

bluebells. The range of gardens varies enormously from small back gardens to large estates, of which Melbourne Hall is a favourite. The list also includes some National Trust gardens. Irene made the point however, that people relate very strongly to smaller gardens. She offered an invitation to any member interested in opening a garden under the scheme to contact her, since new gardens are always being sought. In 2013 the National Gardens Scheme openings raised over £2 million countrywide for a range of charities.

Several WBAGS members commented after the talk that the afternoon timing of the event was very much appreciated.

Irene Dougan 01335 370958

[www.ngs.org.uk/gardens/gardens-by-county/visit-derbyshire-gardens.aspx](http://www.ngs.org.uk/gardens/gardens-by-county/visit-derbyshire-gardens.aspx)

##### WOLLERTON OLD HALL GARDEN VISIT. 14<sup>th</sup> May

Rosemary Kellock reports as follows: "After heavy, prolonged showers on the previous days, we were very relieved to have a warm sunny day for this visit. We filled the 27 seater coach. As our trip took place by special arrangement, we had the garden virtually to ourselves. After an introductory talk by the Head Gardener, Andrew (formerly of Biddulph Grange), we were free to wander and enjoy this idyllic garden. It has been created over the last 25 years by the owner, Leslie Jenkins, who moved back in 1983, having lived in the Hall as a child. Despite being between seasons, there was still plenty of interest and colour. The formal layout of the individual garden "rooms" and crossing vistas was wonderful to behold. The Well Garden was particularly stunning with its arrangement of slender yews and pyramid spires. There was much more to admire as well, including a delightful Rill garden, Shade garden, Old garden, Font garden and an informal Croft garden with

a magnificent *cornus florida*. Andrew was happy to answer all our queries. An excellent pre-ordered light lunch was served in the adjacent tea room and we returned with many trophies from the plant sales.

Verdict – an excellent trip.”



Members enjoying the warm spring weather

### PLANT SWAP 18<sup>TH</sup> May

This annual event was held on a lovely, warm, sunny morning. It enabled all members (although not as many came as we would have liked) to find a plant “they just could not do without”. Passing members of the public also participated! Thanks to the loyal members who did turn up, to help, swap plants, supply them and of course, to talk gardening.

### FUTURE EVENTS

#### COFFEE MORNING AND PLANT SALE Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June. Mechanics Institute, Whaley Bridge 9.30am to 12 noon.

These coffee mornings provide an opportunity for members of the local community to enjoy refreshments, conversation and to buy plants grown by our members. The proceeds enable the Society to make donations to local organisations. Please bring on the day any plants you can spare, potted and labelled. Contact David Osborn or Roger Wood if you need guidance or help with this. Roger has been growing on heleniums, asters and primula viailli and David has been similarly busy with pelargoniums. These will be available to buy at the event. If you can help on the day with plant sales, serving coffee or washing up, your contribution would be much appreciated.

#### VISIT TO CARTMEL AND YEWBARROW HOUSE AND GARDENS 18<sup>th</sup> July 8.00am from Whaley Bridge

The group will stop for about an hour and a half at the monthly local food market

held alongside Cartmel Priory. Some 20 local merchants offer their goods for sale. Whilst the stalls vary from time to time, they offer such goods as cakes, confectionary, pork, poultry, fish and game products, Lancashire cheeses, local fruit and vegetables and non-edible products such as locally made soaps. Cartmel is a delightful medieval village and will offer plenty of places to have some lunch. The second half of the visit will be to Yewbarrow House and Gardens, located at Grange-Over-Sands. The gardens and special features, of which there are some 10 in number, have been developed largely by Jonathon and Margaret Denby, since they arrived at the house in 1999. The site enjoys a micro-climate due to the presence of the Gulf Stream – but it is not without its challenges! If you would like to go, please phone Rosemary Kellock (number at foot of page) and let her have your payment by 3<sup>rd</sup> July latest. Price £28.00.

[www.cartmelvillage.com/foodmarket](http://www.cartmelvillage.com/foodmarket)

[www.yewbarrowhouse.co.uk](http://www.yewbarrowhouse.co.uk)

#### VISIT TO SHREWSBURY FLOWER SHOW. Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> August. 8.30am from Whaley Bridge.

The Guinness Book of Records claims that this is the longest running flower show and is now in its 127<sup>th</sup> year. It offers marquees for professional horticulturalists to present their goods and services, exhibits by amateur growers, displays of floristry and crafts of diverse types. There are show gardens and talks on gardening topics. There are also many other attractions (anyone for a go in a Red Arrows flight simulator?) The attractive town of Shrewsbury is also within easy walking distance. Please phone Rosemary if you would like to go and let her have your money no later than 14<sup>th</sup> July. Price: £40.00

[www.shrewsburyflowershow.org.uk](http://www.shrewsburyflowershow.org.uk)

#### TALKS AT CHAPEL GARDENING CLUB

30<sup>th</sup> July. Jane Allison. “Herbaceous Hall of Fame”

27<sup>th</sup> August. Ian Greenhaigh. “Dahlia’s”.

All talks/slideshows are held at Chapel Town hall starting at 7.30pm. Entry fee for non-members is £3. For further information, contact Mike and Tricia McKinna on 01663 750119.

### MUSINGS FROM PODICEPS CRISTATUS.....on the subject of “Think Global- Act Local”

“Have you ever thought seriously about food security?” said the spider to the fly..with a smug smile..

“Yours or mine?” spluttered the trapped fly, rapidly continuing “actually I have.. and as long as it is drizzling, and you stay in your tunnel, I’ll tell you more” and (to himself) “when the sun comes out and dries this web, I hope I’ll wriggle free”..

“OK brainbox – what wonders have you seen through your multi-retina, bulgy eyes that I don’t know about? Eh?” taunted the spider.

So the fly replied: “During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rising demand for food globally was met by intensification of farming methods. This used up a lot more natural habitat, especially in Europe. With the mechanisation and use of synthetic fertilisers, and the need to maximise yields, this intensification of agriculture has depleted the natural capital of soil organic carbon and other nutrients, resulting in serious losses to the supporting ecosystems upon which food production depends”.

“Think local *musca domestica*, what about this allotment?”

“That’s easy! The sustainable gardening techniques used by urban gardeners produce good food yields without sacrificing soil quality. Compared to arable farmland, allotment soil is healthier, containing 32% more organic carbon and 36% higher carbon to nitrogen ratios – and this without soil compaction! Er, hello..are you still listening? There are 330,000 allotment plots in the UK and 90,000 people on the waiting lists.... I believe allotments hold the key to sustainable food production... don’t you agree, incy-wincy?”

Then the sun came out...

