

WHALEY BRIDGE
Allotment & Gardeners'
Society

newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2006

Dear Member,

Well, our recent trip to Hanbury Hall signals that another year in our exciting calendar of events has almost come to an end and your committee hopes that you've enjoyed joining in at least some of them. Still to come, of course, is our Christmas coffee morning on Saturday, 16 December. Christmas is always a good time to have a coffee morning as most people are full of Christmas spirit, sorry, that should have been written *the* Christmas spirit. Well, possibly not!

Our extremely well supported trips to Bodnant, Speke Hall and Bent's superb nursery and, more recently, Hanbury Hall went very well and I'm sure members' gardens are looking all the better judging by the many plants purchased. Clowes' drivers are very good at stowing these in the coach 'boot' for us although there has been the odd mix up and the last member off the coach has been left with something they hadn't bought and what they had bought had disappeared. It eventually gets sorted out though. Raffle winners on the Speke trip were Mrs Knowles, Mrs Whitehall and Mr Raynor (a visitor from the Disley Society). I've forgotten what the actual prizes were but one of them was certainly fudge. On every trip Mary and I search out boxes of fudge as prizes. You may all hate the stuff but never complain! By the way, as we were about to depart from Bent's Nursery this chap came up to our driver and asked him "Is this coach going to Speke?" Being a bit of a wag the driver replied "Well, I've been on it all day and it hasn't said.... No, sorry, I mustn't go on with this. Lucky prizewinners on the Hanbury trip were Mrs Dugdale (Jam), 'Marjorie' (biscuits) and Mr Derbyshire (fudge).

Our thanks, as usual, go to our hardworking social secretary, Ethel Hallam, for all the organizing of our outings - it ain't easy I know! On a sad note, most members will be aware that Ethel is unwell at the moment and I know all of us send her our very best wishes.

We enjoyed our visit to Roeside Farm recently and thanks go to our hosts Cathy and Phil Canning (ably assisted by Phil's mother, Ruth) for their hospitality. Visitors were interested in seeing the swimming pool once used by the residents of Chapel - unfortunately empty at the time which perhaps was no bad thing as wine was on the menu! Latest news from Cathy is that with all the rain we've had it's once again full! Thanks to members' generosity, Blythe House and a charity in Bristol supported by mother-in-law Ruth shared the proceeds which totalled £126.

Still to come, and not to be missed, is the Society's AGM. This will be on Friday, 3 November at the Trinity Church Hall at 8pm. As I never fail to say this is your chance to kick out the existing committee members or at least have a go at them if you're not happy! I also always say it's an enjoyable social evening as much as anything else. We'll end the evening with refreshments including wine plus the usual raffle but sadly without the fudge.

Members will have been saddened to hear of the death of two of our long-serving members. Mrs Elsie Thornley of Start Lane who, with husband Victor, attended very many of our functions over the years and Gordon Rampley of Hockerley Lane who was a regular customer at our store. Our sympathies go to their respective families.

Don't forget the Whaley Show next Saturday, 9 September at the Bowling Club at 1.30pm. Why not enter something - if you're not a winner you can always drown your sorrows with a pint or two at the bar. That's what I do anyway.

A warm welcome to new member, Mrs Irene Taylor of Yardsley Green.

PFO

Kings' seed catalogues from the National Society are with us once again! These will be delivered to new members, allotment holders and those who ordered last year. If you don't fit into any of these categories but would like one give me ring. The really cheap price of these quality seeds offers excellent value for money and ordering from the catalogue helps both us and the National Society financially. We'll need your completed order form and money by the beginning of November. Further details next month.

NATURE NOTES

An odd sighting to report. Well, it was at least unusual to me. I was crouching down behind a Hebe shrub the other day (don't ask) and a long worm suddenly appeared from under it. This was closely followed by a large frog that was obviously intent on making a meal of it. When the frog saw me it turned tail and hopped back under the bush and the worm escaped. Unless they are tadpoles I know frogs don't have tails but do they eat worms?

When I was a young lad – yes, I was once – I seem to remember in the fields where we used to play there were always grasshoppers to be found. Since those halcyon days not a sign of them – until recently when I spotted two. These were in different gardens so I don't think it was the same one hopping from place to place. Where have they been all these years? Are they making a comeback? Of course someone's going to tell me they've been around all the time and I should keep my eyes open.

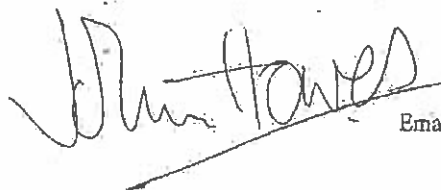
We either have three quite tame young robins or one that gets around a bit down on the allotment plots. Chairman Roy Jennings has one he keeps well fed with worms, it visits the Kellock's plot and I spent the other day feeding worms to one I boringly call Robbie! It's an entertaining way of getting some digging done as they're great fun to watch.

A more important item of news: Your secretary has decided that after 10 happy years in the job it's time to sit back and let someone else have go. We are therefore looking for one of our members to take over and play a part in the running of the Society.

You won't be over-stretched as several aspects of the previous secretary's 'duties' are being taken on by other committee members. For instance I will continue to take care of the annual seed order and will also run the store – so no heavy lifting there then. Our treasurer, Bob Kellock will take not only members' money but look after the membership lists plus sending out 'welcome' letters, copies of our rules, etc. to new members. Bob and his wife Rosemary will produce and arrange delivery of the newsletter. Rosemary and Mary, in Ethel's absence, will think about trips.

However, there will be a few things for our secretary to do such as take minutes of meetings, make room bookings for coffee mornings, meetings or talks and contribute generally and as the job adverts say "full training will be given". Basically, what we're looking for is someone who will bring enthusiasm and fresh ideas to the post, have reasonable organizational skills, be able to delegate occasionally, turn their hand to a bit of writing now and again plus have a good memory for names as we have around 200 members (how did I get the job!) Having access to a car and a computer will be an asset. You'll probably already know lots of the Society's friendly members plus your colleagues on the committee who will always be around to offer help and advice.

The post is open to male or female applicants. You don't need to be a gardener although it would help! If the job of secretary appeals to you or you'd like further details please ring me on 733579. You wouldn't want the Society to fold for want of a secretary now would you?



John Howes
6 Rock Bank
Whaley Bridge
Telephone: WB 733579
Email: jay_howes34@hotmail.com