



WHALEY BRIDGE Allotment & Gardeners' Society



OCTOBER 2020

I hope our shared love of gardening has helped to sustain you during these difficult times. A report by the King's Fund stressed the health benefits of gardening including reducing depression, anxiety and stress as well as providing great all round exercise which improves strength, flexibility and endurance.

Add in the benefits of growing your own produce and harvesting it at the peak of perfection and the pleasure of sharing the inevitable gluts with friends and neighbours and you can see why gardening is so popular.



Bob and Rosemary Kellock are giving up their allotment plot at the end of the current season after about 25 years. Bob says he is happy with his years as a plot holder but the effort is now getting too much. He's not totally losing the plot though as blueberries and strawberries will be relocated to Meadow Close. Bob is tidying up the plot before handing it on to the next person

on the waiting list; the list is held by the Town Clerk and there is still a significant wait for plots.



The RHS has reported a huge increase in queries about vegetable growing and many parents have turned to home growing as a way to occupy children during lockdown. Many of you will have, like me, enjoyed the clips sent in by viewers of Gardeners' World of their own garden projects.

The members' seed scheme offers you a chance to buy your old favourites or try something new if you fancy a project next year. 50% discount on Dobies seeds is a great saving, if you want a catalogue please contact David Osborn on 01663 733659. If you have had one previously David will supply one automatically.

I have grown monster cosmos from my Dobies seeds this year, I didn't expect them to reach over six feet high.



A bonus has been the opportunity to closely observe bumble bees. Apparently wild bees of many types regularly sleep in flowers, sometimes in large groups called leks.



Once the males emerge from the nest they are not allowed back by the hard working females. They hang around nesting sites looking for newly emerging females, defend their territory, feed up on nectar till the sun goes down then hole up for the night in a handy bloom.

Member Stephanie Raybould has amused herself during lockdown

by making a solar powered water feature from largely recycled items. Sadly the sound of running water means we have to restrict ourselves to one gin and tonic on her sunny patio!



We welcome a new Whaley Bridge member, Mrs Delia McCabe, and look forward to meeting up when events allow. Paid up members for this year will have their membership extended through 2021 at no additional cost.

It has been possible for some of us to get out and about to garden events. Bob and Rosemary visited an NGS open garden at Laskeys' Farm near Thelwall. This garden normally receives around 800 hundred visitors on its open days and has raised over £12,000 each year for NGS charities.



Current arrangements required pre-booked timed tickets and

social distancing but Bob reported an enjoyable and interesting visit. This garden of one and a half acres specialises in late summer colour with a maze planted with grasses and prairie style plants. It also has two large ponds, one hot and one cold and a bespoke glasshouse.



I had an enjoyable visit to a new plant hunter's fair at Capesthorpe Hall in August. Again pre-booked timed tickets were required for this outdoor event. You were advised to bring your own bags and make contactless payments where possible.



These fairs provide a great opportunity to speak to specialist growers and nurseries and obtain advice and recommendations as well as more unusual plant varieties.



Thanks to those kind members who donated auriculars for my up-cycled auricular theatre. I have potted red and pink astilbe and also hostas in my cold frame if anyone would like them (733070) Let Bob know if you have anything you would like to share as we did not manage the plant swap this year.

The committee have agreed a donation of £100 to the Uniting Church this year as we have had to cancel our bookings and they have had a significant loss of revenue. Lots of organisations are struggling to maintain themselves, we are in a strong financial position but need to refresh our membership due to inevitable loss of members as time passes. Please encourage any new neighbours and friends to join as the £5 per annum membership is, I'm sure you will agree, excellent value for money.

It's tricky to produce a newsletter when so little is happening so if you have time on your hands please send anything of interest or any suggestions to aizlewood@sky.com To fill up this last space I will add a picture of the begonias which I grew from seed (see April newsletter) which have made a lovely show in the window boxes. The utility room is now full of winter pansies waiting for the frost to see off the begonias and I'm still longing for a greenhouse!

