

WHALEY BRIDGE
Allotment & Gardeners'
Society

newsletter

DECEMBER 2003

Dear Member,

Yet another year has flown by and, being the optimists that gardeners are, we look forward to an even more successful one in the garden plus lots of events that we hope members will find enjoyable. These, however, won't include another Garden Party at Whaley Hall. These special functions have to celebrate something quite momentous to qualify!

Even the stepping down of our Chairman, John Pressman, after 12 years in the service of the society doesn't quite make it! Twelve years is a long stint and only the committee fully appreciate the part John has played in the smooth running of the society often having to curb some of our wilder enthusiasms and ramblings about the old days – we do tend to get carried away from time to time. I know all our members will join us in thanking John for his efforts in the background on our behalf (the base for our store on Elnor Lane being a concrete example). But every cloud has a silver lining! Following unanimous endorsement at the agm John will be staying on the committee while Roy Jennings will take over the role of Chairman. Roy is a keen allotmenteer on the Sunnybank site and being a superfit outdoor type (cycling, running, scouting etc.) knows all about things like tightening the guy ropes correctly on our gazebos. I'm sure Roy will be amenable to the idea of having an 'open day' on the allotments one of these years!

Thirtyfive members made it a surprisingly good turnout for the agm on a really foul evening and it became quite lively when the subject of an increase in fees was discussed. The question of why we are affiliated to the National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners and the fees we pay (currently £1.50 per member increasing to £1.75 next year) came up again. The feeling of the committee remains that, as we were formed as an 'allotment society' we should continue to support the NSALG and the work they do in promoting the allotment movement nationally and enjoy the benefits we receive (seed scheme, insurance, legal advice if necessary). A £1.50 membership fee to a national society is really very modest although as a proportion of the £2 subscription to our society it does seem quite high of course.

The majority of the members present agreed with the committee that we should retain our affiliation with the National Society and on a vote decided to increase our subscription to £4 from November next year. This should be the rate for the foreseeable future and you may rest assured that, as in the past, any significant surplus funds will be used for the benefit of the members. You will still easily cover the cost of membership by making a trip or two to the store or taking your membership card to Brookside Garden Centre or Speedy Hire and as I never tire of pointing out it's only what you have to pay these days for a couple of pints!

The National Society publish a quarterly magazine which of course concerns the allotment movement but may be of interest to members who would like to know what they are all about. It costs £6 for four issues delivered to you or only £4 delivered to me to pass on to you. Ring me if you'd like to try it for a year.

Other news from the agm is that, as there were no other nominations from the floor, your committee agreed to stand for a further year with the following changes. Ethel Hallam agreed to act as Vice Chairman in addition to her duties as Social Secretary and it's 'as you were' with the rest of the committee.

Amendments to rule 7 (to create the position of Vice Chairman) and 14 (should the society be wound up its assets would be distributed as decided at the agm and not donated to the National Society as the original rule stated) were agreed and members are receiving a revised copy of the rules with this newsletter.

Bill Waring was the lucky first prize winner of a free trip for two on one of our outings next year. Runners-up were Audrey Hill and Wendy Nettleton. The meeting ended with the usual refreshments organised by Mary who seldom gets a mention but does sterling work in the background!

Seeds, except potatoes which will come next month, have now been distributed and thanks to everybody who ordered especially those who transferred their choices to the order form as they appeared in the catalogue, it makes life a bit easier. Thanks for her help go to Mary who seldom gets a mention but does sterling work in the background.

We were pleased to be able to order seeds for fellow allotmentees at Chinley until they organise their own ordering through the National Society next year.

PTO

Welcome to the first two new members of the year – Mr Ken Armstrong of Cromford Court and Mrs Jacky Meadows of Meadowside.

The store is pretty well stocked at the moment. We have supplies of most of the items on the list which I'm sure you will have kept – and at the same prices. We don't have John Innes Seed Compost or fleece yet but we do have a new line, Levington Multipurpose plus John Innes at £4.60. If you need anything to make an early start give me a ring and we'll sort out collection or delivery.

A new price list will be out in the New Year with, hopefully, not too many price increases.

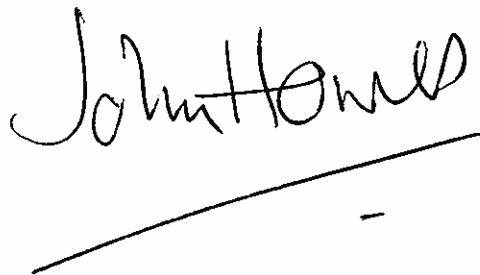
If anyone would like to see items at the store that we don't currently stock let me know. Loach, our wholesaler, has an amazingly comprehensive catalogue that we can order from and which I'll keep at the store in future.

Before I forget (no chance) subs are now due and still only £2. These can be sent or delivered to me at 6 Rock Bank, delivered to Mary at The Larder on Old Road most mornings, Ethel at 11 Jodrell Road or Charles Johns at 134 Macclesfield Road. We don't mind how they come as long as your name and address appears somewhere. If it doesn't the money goes straight into the donations box (we do have one should you have loose change you want to offload) and you won't receive a membership card thus missing out on lots of excellent discounts.

Some sad news for us, but good for them, is that our member Janet Langman and family complete with dog and a supply of seeds, are upping sticks and are off to put down new roots in France! Janet will continue to receive her newsletter by email and we look forward to occasional reports from across the Channel. Our best wishes go to them in their new home and garden.

A brief item which nature lovers may find of interest (and this isn't just padding). Typing this in our 'office' I've just been surprised, indeed startled, so see a Small Tortoiseshell butterfly fluttering about the room. I've no idea where it came from or how long it's been here or even what to do with it. Is this another example of global warming do you think? I don't know how you tell if a butterfly is confused but I'm sure this one must be.

And so, as the year draws to a close we say farewell to 2003 and look forward to 2004, and all that remains for me to do is wish our members old and new a very happy Christmas from your new Chairman, Roy Jennings, your old Chairman John Pressman, your Vice Chairman and Social Secretary Ethel Hallam, Treasurer Bob Kellock, Ron Macbeth, Mary (who seldom gets a mention etcetera) and, of course, yours truly.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Howes". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a long, thin horizontal line that extends across most of the width of the signature.

John Howes
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