

## NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER, SPRING 2016

*EDITORIAL* For over a decade, Margaret Dickinson has been The Association's Treasurer and editor of our Newsletters and Fred Dickinson has been our Hut manager. We owe them great gratitude for their sterling work over so many years. We now have a new Treasurer and two members are taking over stock control at the Hut (see Chairman's Report). When you visit the Hut you will see other volunteers who are involved in running the Hut efficiently. We are always looking for such help, for without volunteers our Association could not exist. I have taken on the task of editing our Newsletters, which are important in keeping all members informed of what is planned for the future, points of contact and so on. I would also like to include growing tips, and would welcome any tips you have for passing on.

Malcolm Greenhalgh

*CHAIRMAN'S REPORT* The New Year has begun and so welcome to our 2016 spring newsletter. For our Gardeners' Association this is going to be a year of great change. Two long-standing members of our committee, Margaret and Fred Dickinson, have retired after many years of loyal service. To replace them we were happy, at the very end of last year, to co-opt three new members onto the committee who will carry out some of the tasks that Margaret and Fred carried out. Lynn Sumner has volunteered to take on the job of Treasurer, and Sheila and Graham Yorke will be the new Stock Controllers for the sales Hut. As the year proceeds there will inevitably be changes in who to contact for things like ordering seeds, onions, potatoes etc and booking trips. We will try to keep you updated as we go, and we still look to offer the wide range of membership activities and benefits that we have in recent years.

Talking of benefits of NIWGA membership, late last year two of our members came to the hut determined to purchase items that they felt they needed in preparing their garden for the winter. Both went away empty handed; their visit cost them nothing and we made nothing! Garden centres and other retailers would have been miffed at missing out on a sale, but our attitude was the complete opposite! We are always able to give free advice to members and perhaps suggest products that would be more suitable than the ones members think might do. In this case we were delighted to tell them not to waste money on things that were not necessary to put their garden to bed for the winter.

So please remember that our Rob Lane hut is not just a Sales Hut, where you can buy things cheaper than most other outlets. Ours is a "Sales and Advice Hut!"

Thank you for your continued support.

Dave Hemingway.

*A TIP from The Field, 4 June 1870* "The proper thinning of out-of-door fruit is one of the most important operations within the entire range of horticulture. Yet, strange to say, it is often wholly neglected, and mostly performed in a haphazard, rough-and-ready way."

It still is today 145 years on! If you thin out your apples, pears, plums, gages etc in late June or July the fruits that you harvest will be larger, juicier and tastier! For apples and pears, one fruit every four inches minimum is about right, three inches for plums and gages.

*RHS GARDEN AT WORSLEY* The RHS has obtained Worsley New Hall, which will become the northwest's first RHS garden. It will open in 2019. And about time!

## NIWGA ACTIVITIES – 2016

TALKS AND DEMONSTRATIONS AND AGM, at 7.30pm, at Newton-le-Willows Cricket and Sports Club

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January: Annual General Meeting

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February: Anthony Norman – Evergreens for small gardens

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March: Jane Allison – Making the most of your garden space

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April: Marguerite Hughes & Sue Gillon – Slugs, snails and other pests

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May: John Steedman – Herbs

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October: Diane Harrison – Winter hanging baskets

### SHOWS

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August: Newton Town Show (to be confirmed)

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September: Newton-le-Willows Gardeners' Association Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Show, Penkford School. Wharfe Road.

### TRIPS

Saturday 11 June 2016 **Biddulph Grange**: This splendid National Trust garden, designed by James Bateman and E.W. Cooke in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is known, amongst many things, for the "stumpery". There is an excellent cafe and shop. Then onto **Little Moreton Hall** which has a superb "Knot garden" and grows vegetables that would have been grown in Tudor England. Cost: £24. Last booking date: Sunday 29 May.

Saturday, 17 September 2016 **Harrogate Autumn Show**: This is as good an autumn show as there is, especially for those interested in fruit and vegetables, and 'show flowers' like chrysanthemums and dahlias. Here you will see the best! Cost: £27. Last booking date: Sunday 4 September.

Pick-up points: Stocks Tavern, Newton-le-Willows and Lane Head, Lowton.

In the past, these were ably organised by Margaret Dickinson. It is essential that the cost of the trip is paid when booking at our Sales and Advice Hut and, because the coach and venue must be booked well in advance, we would ask you to book as soon as possible, please, preferably before the 'last booking date'. Coach company Hattons have been very good to us over the years, and we do not want to mess them around with late cancellations. Time of departure to be announced.

### SALES AND ADVICE HUT OPENING TIMES

Saturdays, 9<sup>th</sup> January – 29<sup>th</sup> October, 10.30am – 12 noon (but NOT on 10 September: SHOW DAY)

Sundays, 10<sup>th</sup> January – 30<sup>th</sup> October, 10.30am – 12 noon

Wednesdays, 6<sup>th</sup> April – 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 7.00 – 8.00pm

### *GOOD FRIDAY COFFEE MORNING*

Friday, 25 March, is Good Friday when it has become a tradition that members may come and meet for coffee, the Sales and Advice Hut is open, and when we have a short talk/demonstration of gardening interest. The Hut will be open from 10.30am to noon, with, at 11 o'clock, a guide to all the fertilisers for sale and advice on which fertiliser is best for which plants or situation. You are more than welcome to bring other queries that you have about *your* plants and *your* garden or allotment.

## NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SHOW 2015

Rather like a swan gliding gracefully across a lake, the Annual Show came together beautifully with an air of calm and quiet excitement. But just as we do not see the swan's feet working hard underwater, so the casual visitor to the Show might not appreciate just how many people worked hard to move tables, supply water jugs to exhibitors, rearrange tables to accommodate more exhibits than expected in some classes, set out the tombola and raffle, welcome visitors, show judges around, write out certificates, hand out prizes, etc etc, and then clear and put away the tables and tidy up the rooms we have used after another successful year. Whew!

I want to give a heartfelt thanks to everyone involved, including the judges and those presenting prizes, as well as to all the visitors who make the Show what it is. Thanks also needs to go to all those who sponsor the Show, as this is what keeps it going year by year! Finally thanks to all those at Penkford School who are so welcoming and accommodating.

In 2015 we had a fantastic array of exhibits, with wonderful vegetables, flowers, baking and art. We had 110 more class entries than in 2014. We dropped the floral art classes because of a lack of exhibitors and will not run it again this year. However if there are individuals or groups interested in exhibiting, we could bring back floral art in 2017.

We had lovely exhibits in the art class, and we seek local artists or art groups who may like to participate next year.

The 2016 Show will be held on Saturday, 10 September at Penkford School. The school has already committed itself to sponsorship, but we have lost sponsorship from the Botanical Society. We need to raise another £100 or more this year. Will you help by sponsoring just one or two classes? Do you know any company or organisation that might help?

**The 2016 photography classes will be:** Agriculture, Reflections, and Architecture. So get your cameras out! **The theme for art** will be Garden(s). The committee is still sampling potential recipes for the baking categories. These will be announced in the next Newsletter.

I hope you enjoyed the 2015 Show, and I leave you with the list of winners to whet your appetite for the next Show, when it could be **you!**

RHS Banksian Medal Chris Nightingale

Dahlias Most Points Chris Nightingale

Gladioli Most Points Len Bailey

Pot Plants Most Points Chris Nightingale

Vegetables Most Points Jim Broderick

Garden News Shield Ian Burns

Nat. Crysant. Soc. Silver Medal Ian Burns

Nat. Dahlia soc. Bronze Medal Chris Nightingale

Top Tray Jeff Gibson

Royal National Rose Society Bronze Medal Chris Nightingale

Gordon Brooks Trophy Chris Nightingale

Chrysanthemums Most Points B.H. Wood

Roses Most Points Don Farrell

Flowers Most Points Chris Nightingale

NVS Silver Medal Jim Broderick

Photographic Challenge Cup David Hemingway

Nat. Dahlia Soc. Silver Medal Ray Weeks

Top Vase Don Sutcliffe

British Gladiolus Soc. Bronze Medal Len Bailey

Chantelle Seaborn, Show Secretary

Show Secretary

*WE NEED ALL THE MEMBERS WE CAN GET....and word-of-mouth seems to be the best way to get them. Please, if you have friend or neighbours who are keen gardeners (or novices who need help), BRING THEM ALONG TO THE HUT!*

#### GENERAL FERTILISERS

In the Hut we sell six 'general fertilisers' that we bag up ourselves. Three are inorganic (made of chemicals): Growmore, Onion fertiliser, Potato fertiliser. Three are organic (made of natural materials): Bonemeal, Fish, Blood & Bone, and Hoof & Horn. The three major nutrients are:

Nitrogen (in ammonia, nitrates etc) = N

Phosphorus (in phosphates) = P

Potassium (in many chemical forms) = K.

The table gives the percentages of these in each fertiliser, and also percentages in other garden sources.

	%N	%P	%K	NOTE
Growmore	7	7	7	- Great general fertiliser
Onion fertiliser	11	22	22	- For onions, shallots and garlic
Potato fertiliser	10	10	20	- For potatoes
Fish, Blood & Bone	3.5	8	trace	} Low on K, but that may come } from manure/compost mulch
Bonemeal	3.5	20	trace	
Hoof & Horn	13	trace	trace	- Excellent for brassicas
Well rotted manure	0.6	0.1	0.5	
Homemade garden compost	0.5	0.3	0.8	
Wood ash	0.1	0.3	1.0	

P is the element needed for root growth, K is for flower and fruit development, and N is for general growth, especially of shoots and leaves.

#### RECIPE: RED CABBAGE WITH ORANGE AND RAISINS

1 medium red cabbage (700g/1½ lb when trimmed and finely shredded)

75g/2½ oz seedless raisins

Grated zest and juice of 2 large oranges, diluted to 200cc/7 fl. oz. with water

25g/1oz sugar    ½ teaspoon salt    1 tablespoon red currant jelly

1. Preheat oven to 180C/350F/gas 4.
2. Put all ingredients other than red currant jelly into a large pan and bring to the boil.
3. Pour into ovenproof dish, cover and cook in oven for 45-50 minutes, or until soft.
4. Stir in red currant jelly.
5. Serve hot or allow to cool and store.

Store in fridge in sealed container, or in bags in freezer. Defrost if frozen and reheat in microwave or oven before serving. Goes well with ham, duck dishes, and pork and venison dishes.

Margaret Dickinson