

## **NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2014**

Written by Margaret Dickinson telephone 01744 21482 or 07443450065

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### Chairman's Report

Welcome to our summer news letter. As I sit writing this, looking out of the window in early May, the trees are in full leaf and everything has started to grow, but it is still cold, wet and windy so I do hope things have improved by the time you read this. Many of you will have visited the hut and poly-tunnel during the first half of the year and I hope you have seen a significant improvement – with new shelving in the hut and more importantly, the poly-tunnel has been completely re-covered with all new staging throughout. With this we hope to be able to offer plants in better condition over a longer period, as watering has become a lot easier and plants do look healthier. Thank you to all who helped with this over the winter months.

Our 4-day trip to the WW1 Battlefields in Belgium returned a few days ago, in this the 100th anniversary year since its' start in 1914 and it was a moving experience for all who came along. The memory of the fallen and missing continues to be beautifully preserved by the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

This will be third year the plot at the side of the hut has been used to demonstrate and experiment with different growing techniques. Please take the opportunity to look around over the summer and discuss what is going on with any of the committee members, also feel free to make suggestions on things we may try in future years.

Thank you for your continued support

Dave Hemingway

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### **TOP OF THE CLASS**

I am from the working class, we don't have airs and graces. You can see us as we are, no botox on our faces.

We speak with different accents, for we live from north to south, we don't say "Please don't swear", we just say mind your mouth

We don't eat stuff like caviar, but fish and chips are fine and dinner time is 1pm and supper is at nine

I'm proud to say I'm working class, the finest class of them all and folk who think they are above, have got no class at all.

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### **TIP**

Cut the bottom out of plastic bottles, they make great cloches for your tender plants

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### **JUST A THOUGHT**

Live for today as yesterday is already a dream and tomorrow is only a vision. But today well-lived makes every yesterday a new dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope

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## RECIPE

### WINE BRAISED CHICKEN WITH ROASTED GRAPES

Olive oil	4 chicken breasts, or leg joints	4 onions cut into wedges
4 carrots, chopped	2 cloves garlic, finely chopped	fresh rosemary, chopped
1 heaped tbs plain flour	½ pint white wine	200ml chicken stock
600g (1lb 5oz) potatoes	2 handfuls of red and green grapes	parsley to serve

Preheat your oven to 190°C/gas 5. 1) Season the chicken and fry in a pan until golden all over then set aside on a plate. 2) Add the onions, carrots and garlic to the pan and gently sauté for about 15 minutes over a low heat until soft and sticky but not coloured. 3) Return the chicken to the pan along with rosemary and flour. Turn up the heat to medium and leave to colour for a few minutes. 4) Pour in the wine and bring to the boil, then lower the heat and let it reduce by half. 5) Add the stock and the potatoes and bring back to the boil. 6) Transfer everything to a roasting tin and bake for 30-45 minutes, until the potatoes are tender and the chicken is falling off the bone. 7) Place the grapes in a roasting tin drizzle with a little oil and cook in the oven for the last 20 minutes. Stir the grapes into the casserole and serve.

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### OUR TRIP TO BELGIUM TO SEE THE WW1 BATTLEFIELDS

We have just returned from a trip to the WW1 Battlefields in Belgium. It was a very moving experience but so much enjoyed by everyone. We stayed in Ostend and visited Bruges on the 1<sup>st</sup> day along with a stop in Sluis (a very pretty town with marvellous shops and cafes). The final stop on the way home was a chocolate factory – well as you can imagine we didn't enjoy that one little bit. Tee-Hee!! The next day we were joined by our guide for the next 2 days, he was very knowledgeable and could tell us a lot about the Great War that most of us weren't aware of. Some of the passengers had taken details of their relatives with them and we called at many cemeteries that held the graves or memorials to their family member. The final day we spent looking at museums and some more cemeteries including Tynecot, the largest cemetery. At the end of our tour at 8pm we went to the last post ceremony at the Menin Gate. What a wonderful experience, so moving, not a dry eye in the place. Thousands of people stood for 15 minutes and not a sound was heard, it was truly memorable, something I will never forget.

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### THE ANNUAL FLOWER & VEGETABLE SHOW

As the sun starts to shine we are looking forward to our show. What are you planning to grow, or show? There are competitive classes for fruit and vegetables, pot plants, flower arranging (All around my hat), photography (Woodland scene, birds, and an unusual perspective and art (A landscape). We have some childrens classes too, Mars Bar Cakes, Vegetable/fruit animal, Vase of garden flowers. If you are a gifted baker, why not try our millionaires' shortbread or apple cake recipes. You could even try your hand at jam making or a jar of chutney. Even if you don't want to enter, why not try to join us on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September at Penkford School in Wharf Road at 2pm for a great afternoon out. As well as looking at the flowers and vegetables on display there will be stalls selling plants, spring bulbs, also tombola and a raffle. Refreshments will be available. We hope you can join us.

Chantelle

## THE ASSOCIATION/SCHOOL PLOT

This year we are growing a selection of less well known maincrop potatoes and carrying out a test to see if non-F1 sprouts (variety Bedford Fillbasket) are that different from F1 sprouts (variety Petrus), considering that F1 seed are far more expensive than non-F1. We are also growing three 'special' plants donated, via member Alan Holman, from one of the great experts on growing mammoth vegetables : a pumpkin, a marrow grown from seed from giant prize-winners and an onion plant from the World Record onion!

Experimental ----- 'Biochar ' is charcoal that, according to the ad-man's blurb, increases size and improves flavour of vegetables. We have two approximately one metre squares marked out and they will be given the same treatment (F,B&B fertiliser and watering) but a kilo of Biochar has been dug into just one. Two rows of beetroot seeds and four cabbage seedlings will go in each metre square plot so that, at the end of the season, we can measure to see if the Biochar has done what the adverts say.

At the end of one bed are some globe artichoke plants and the end of another some asparagus plants. Next year we may take a crop from these; please check our website for details. One smaller bed was planted in autumn 2013 with some garlic that hadn't been sold at the Hut. This summer, that will be harvested; the bulbs will be available for kitchen use, *gratis*, at the Hut.

Now that the loo has been sorted out and the path to it completed we are hoping to improve our plot's attraction to wildlife by increasing the herbaceous perennials that attract bees and butterflies and putting up insect 'hotels'. Some moan about this – (I have a neighbour who accuses me of bringing 'cabbage white butterflies to the Grove, that eat my cabbages!'). Bees, butterflies and ladybirds add beauty to the garden and enhance pollination. Members who would like to join me on an evening moth trapping at the Hut, please sign up at the Hut.

Finally, my little book 'Grow Your Own in Lancashire' is £10 at the Hut, saving you £3 and making the Association a few bob!

Malcolm Greenhalgh

## CONTEMPLATE YOUR FUTURE NEEDS ..... and save money

For those who know our system, there's no problem – however, just in case, I'll mention it again.

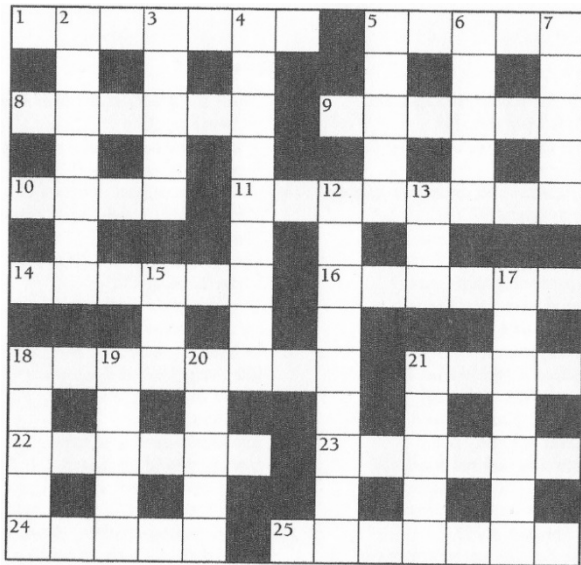
Every year I ask our secretary, Silvana, to push out e-mails to all the membership for whom we have an e-mail address (this newsletter is the only way to contact those without) – I always ask everyone to have a serious look at what they would like to grow next year and then tell me about it. I always ask Silvana to include my e-mail address and telephone number so that I can be reached by anyone who wishes to give me an advance order. This system started slowly but has developed into an excellent way of avoiding disappointment when trying to buy from the hut. It also helps prevent waste and thus saves money and keeps our prices down.

I routinely send out order requests for garlic, winter onions and shallot orders at the beginning of August so that I can take advantage of suppliers' early offers. Similarly, I send out a request for potato orders at the beginning of September and ask for early replies – this year, I will send out a 'wish-list' of varieties for your perusal. Finally, I send out a request for flower and vegetable seed orders together with advice on accessing the Kings Seeds website so that you can send or give me the necessary information to obtain your orders and collate them into a 'bulk order', thus making our final discounted prices as low as possible. Those without e-mail or internet can either see me at the hut or contact me using the details below. We haven't stocked flower seeds for a few years and still don't, however, if you choose the seeds you want from the catalogue I will include them with the order and they will attract the same 'bulk order' discount as the vegetable seeds.

E-mail me at [indewoods@talktalk.net](mailto:indewoods@talktalk.net) 'Phone me on 01744 21482 or see me at the hut – I'll never ignore you.

Fred Dickinson

**TRY A CROSSWORD.** FILL IT IN, BRING IT TO THE HUT FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A £10 VOUCHER TO SPEND IN THE HUT. Put your name and phone number on the back and we will draw the winning form out at the show in September



Crossword quiz. All clues are straightforward; some initial help given!

ACROSS

- 1 What is the botanical name for Angel's fishing rod? (7)
- 5 Give the alternative name for the sacred lotus (5)
- 8 The mountain ash, or rowan, is also known as what? [S] (6)
- 9 What kind of passion fruit is the *Passiflora antioquiensis*? (6)
- 10 Name gardening tools most associated with weeding and loosening earth (4)
- 11 Of which genus is the species *clandestina*, better known as the purple toothwort? [L] (8)
- 14 What edible plant of the Umbelliferae family has a distinctively-coloured root? (6)
- 16 Which trees, whose berries are used in wine-making, are of the genus *Sambucus*? (6)
- 18 What is the alternative common name for the Scottish bluebell? (8)
- 21 How is the frost left after freezing fog, or frozen dew, also known? (4)
- 22 What is the botanical name for the chokeberry? [A] (6)
- 23 The mountain fire shrub's species is *japonica*, but of what genus? [P] (6)
- 24 How is the plantain lily also known? [H] (5)
- 25 What is the wide-ranging windflower properly called? (7)

DOWN

- 2 Name the genus commonly known as morning glory [I] (7)
- 3 What is the botanical name for the flowering currant shrub? [R] (5)
- 4 Give the common name of *Viscum album*, much sought-after around Christmas (9)
- 5 How is the fruit tree *Prunus persica* better known? (5)
- 6 Of what genus is the common name whitlow grass? [D] (5)
- 7 In what genus do we find species like *integrifolia* and *lanceolata*? (5)
- 12 Name the hardy evergreen, related to 'The Chatelaine', which produces scented yellow (sometimes blue) flowers, (4,5)
- 13 What colour does the species name *rubra* indicate? (3)
- 15 Which strong-smelling shrub may remind you of something to repent? (3)
- 17 What is the edible bellflower called? (7)
- 18 How is the *Erica* better known? (5)
- 19 What are the plants' feeding antennae called? (5)
- 20 Botanically, what is quaking grass? [B] (5)
- 21 Give the genus name of rhubarb [R] (5)



**SUGGESTION BOX**

We are going to put a suggestion box in the hut, so that you can tell us about anything you don't like or maybe that you do like. You can also help us by suggesting somewhere you would like to go on a trip, or subjects for a talk, plants to grow in our allotment, flowers for hanging baskets next year or anything that you like really, as long as it is practicable we will try to accommodate you. And finally, don't forget to keep looking at the website, there's a lot of information and photographs of different events that David keeps up to date.