

NEWTON-le-WILLOWS GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION SUMMER NEWSLETTER

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Well, summer is finally here after the coldest spring for 50 years; it did feel at times as though it would never arrive. In many gardens and allotments plants are probably 3 to 4 weeks behind a normal year, but as gardeners we are never disheartened. The quality of the produce and plants many of us still produce and are proud to put on the show bench come September, despite the weather, still always amazes me.

This has been my first year as chairman. I would like to thank our previous Chairman, Tony Addison for his excellent stewardship of the Association over the previous years. His on-going support together with the rest of the committee will, I hope continue to provide the wide range of activities, talks and sales advice you have become accustomed to.

Already this year we have had some excellent talks from experts on vegetable growing, Ponds and Wet areas, Herbal home remedies and Dahlia growing which have all been well attended and appreciated by the audience. The first trip of the year was a visit to the Northeast in the middle of May taking in Wallington gardens, Holy Island (Lindisfarne) together with Durham and its' Cathedral. Everyone who came along seemed to enjoy themselves and we intend to organise similar overnight trips in the future.

This will be the second season we have used the allotment plot adjacent to the hut to trial different growing methods. Please feel free to wander around and ask any questions on how things are progressing through the year. We will also included details on the website.

Our annual show this year will be on the 21<sup>st</sup> September at Penkford School, two weeks later than previous years to avoid a clash with the national flower exhibitions. I would encourage you all to come along not only as visitors but also as exhibitors in any of the many classes, either as an experienced or novice grower, in order to make the show a success.

I look forward to seeing you either at the sales hut or during the show.

Thank you all for your continued support

Dave Hemingway

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**Poetry corner**

Officials use my married name then usually get it wrong!

Friends call me by my first name as I've had it for so long

Some workmen call me dear or duck, or even love or mate

My parents called me cherub 'cos I was pink and overweight!

I don't mind what you call me, as long as it's not rude,

And I will laugh at cheeky names as long as they're not crude.

But the name that makes me glow with pride – and I love above all other

The name only my children use – that wonderful name is MOTHER.

## Flower and vegetable show 2013

Hello all. I hope that you are already looking forward to the show and are planning what you are going to enter ! Have a look at our demonstration allotment at Rob Lane for inspiration. Hopefully the weather will warm up a little before the day !

Our show will be at Penkford School again (Wharf Road, Newton) on Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> September, doors open to the public at 2pm. We would be delighted to see you there as an exhibitor or visitor – it's a lovely afternoon out!

As well as flowers and vegetables, other categories worth a look at are : --

PHOTOGRAPHY – Comedy, Places I've Visited, Old and New

COOKERY – Jam, fruit jelly, chutney, shortbread and chocolate cake (recipes in show schedule)

ART – In the woods

CHILDREN'S CLASSES –fruit/vegetable animal, arranged flowers, cookery - melting moments

Don't forget that we have classes especially for novices ! The show schedule will be ready soon, it can be downloaded from the website, or you can pick a copy up at the hut.

You can also sponsor a class to help make sure that our show continues in the future.

From just £3.20 it's a great gift for a keen gardener, a way to show support for our club, or a lovely way to remember someone. If you don't want to sponsor a specific class, we would welcome any donation. Just call into the hut or text or call me on 07415 942418.

You can now follow us on Twitter at: @showsec\_nlwga

Happy gardening,

Chantelle Seaborn, Show Secretary

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## 3 REASONS TO LOVE BEES

1) They are responsible for our 5-a-day, if you love your fruit and vegetables then we have much to love them for. Their work produces around 70 UK crops, including apples, raspberries, cauliflower and cucumber.

2) They help to keep the doctor at bay, apart from producing our 5-a-day they also produce a healthy dose of honey. As well as a tasty treat, honey boosts immunity through its antioxidant and antibacterial properties. It can be used as a natural cure for burns, cuts and even soothes a sore throat. It is also known that if you eat local honey it helps to relieve the symptoms of Hayfever.

3) Please plant bee-friendly plants in your gardens and allotments to help the bees. Plants such as lavender, clover and foxgloves are good nectar providers. Several celebrities have become beekeepers – including Bill Turnbull, Kate Humble and Pam Ayres.

### Just a bit of fun

1. The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on my list.

2. Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak

## HUT PLOT, SUMMER 2013

As those of you who visit our Sales Hut regularly will know, the plot by the Hut is tended by the Association Committee to provide interest to all our members. Please have a look round when you visit the Hut.

The plot has four raised beds, plus some fruit bushes (these are from cuttings taken in 2010) and a few flowers and shrubs. One corner looks a bit tatty; an environmentally friendly 'dry' loo is planned for this area.

Bed 1 (the one nearest the Hut) is the result of asking the question 'What would you like us to try and grow?' Here we are trying to grow Florence (bulb) Fennel and Celeriac, a Pumpkin (variety Small Sugar) and a Butternut Squash (var. Hunter F1). Both squash and pumpkin will probably have the trifid-like character of wandering, so it will be interesting to see how we keep them in check, yet get some good fruits. Space-utilisation is important on small vegetable plots, so here we have a wigwam with six Runner Beans (var Scarlet Emperor) giving a 3-D effect.

None of us have grown Fennel before, but the seeds have germinated fairly well and a first thinning carried out. Celeriac? That needs lots of water and we failed last year (probably not enough light, for there was more than a bit of rain). So where the Celeriac is growing, the top spit was removed, polythene from old compost bags laid under, garden compost put on that and then the soil put back. Thus the plants shouldn't run short of water...it can't all drain away. Both the pumpkin and squash will be fed weekly with tomato feed when they produce a flower or two.

Bed 2 and Bed 3 are identical save that Bed 2 was given a good dose of Rock Dust and Bed 3 wasn't. Rock Dust is ground-up volcanic rock (such as granite) and as the adverts tell us, provides all the micro-nutrients plants like but cannot get in sufficient quantity in ordinary composts/fertilisers. Other than that, both have had the usual dose of general fertiliser to give the normal nutrients vegetable plants need and they have been watered in the recent dry spell with measured equal volumes of water. No cheating here!

There are two rows of potatoes (one each of Charlotte and Pink Fir Apple) per bed, a few onions, a marrow plant and some parsnips that were initially germinated in cardboard kitchen-paper tube. We will harvest the spuds, onions and parsnips in September before the Show and weigh them. Each marrow plant will be allowed to produce one marrow and they will be exhibited at the Show; the one on Bed 2 should be the larger.

At the end of Beds 2 and 3 we have planted some permanent perennial vegetables: asparagus on Bed 2 and globe artichoke on Bed 3. No harvest of these until 2014, alas. They are not part of any of our experiments.

Bed 4 is a small bed which we are trying to cram lots into. Currently there are rows of broad beans, garden peas, a few onions, a few spinach and Swiss chard plants, a courgette (var Genoa), a Squash (White Pont), two trial outdoor tomatoes (Estonian Yellow and Peace Vine Cherry) and with them a few sweet corn (Supersweet F1). Soon a few turnips, beetroot and others will be added, including a new weird vegetable called Amaranth that is still in the late seedling stage.

Moral: you don't need a full allotment or large garden to grow a few tasty vegetables.

Good gardening,

Malcolm Greenhalgh

## CHOCOLATE ORANGE TEABREAD

150g/5 ½ oz butter, softened

75g/2 ¾ oz plain chocolate, broken into pieces

250g/9oz caster sugar

5 large eggs, beaten

150g/5 ½ oz plain flour

2 tsp baking powder

Pinch of salt

grated rind of 2 oranges

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/gas 4. Grease and line two 1lb loaf tins.

Melt the chocolate in a large heat-proof bowl set over a saucepan of barely simmering water. Remove from the heat. Cream the butter and sugar together in a separate bowl until light and fluffy, gradually add the eggs a little at a time, beating well after each addition. Sift the flour, baking powder and salt together and gently fold into the creamed mixture. Transfer one third of the mixture to the melted chocolate and stir together. Stir the orange rind into the remaining mixture. Divide half the orange mixture between the prepared tins and spread into an even layer. Drop tablespoons of the chocolate mixture on top, dividing it between the two tins, but do not spread out. Add the remaining orange mixture to the tins and using a knife, gently swirl the two mixtures together to give a marbled effect. Bake in the oven for 35 to 40 minutes until a skewer inserted into the centre of each loaf comes out clean. Leave the loaves to cool in the tins for 10 minutes then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

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## TRIP TO WW1 BATTLEFIELDS

Next year is the centenary of the start of World War One, so Hatton's are running a trip to Belgium between the 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2014 with 4 nights Bed & Breakfast at the Europe Hotel in Ostend.

Two days of guided tours with an experienced tour guide is included, as is the crossing by Eurotunnel.

The cost will be £269 per person, for 2 people sharing. Single supplement is £94 extra (£363)

A £30 deposit will secure your place on the trip. If you are interested can you please phone me on 01744 21482 or Mobile 07443450065, or come along to the hut for further information.

I am told that although very moving, the experience is well worth it. Do try and join us.

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## MESSAGE FROM "THE MANAGEMENT"

I haven't got a crystal ball – someone borrowed it – I have no idea what winter onions, garlic, vegetable seeds, summer onions, shallots and potato sets that you, our members want for next season.

I shall soon have a complete list of available varieties of all the above, ready to send to those of you who are interested – provided you e-mail me at [indewoods@talktalk.net](mailto:indewoods@talktalk.net) to register your interest – those members without e-mail or internet will need to speak to me at the hut as soon as possible for assistance.

The winter onion and garlic orders need to be given or sent to me by (date to be ascertained)

The vegetable seed, summer onion, shallot and potato orders need to be with me by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2013

The vegetable seed catalogue can be viewed online at <http://www.kingsseeds.com/> --- select Our Products then Vegetables A-Z (ignore the displayed prices)

The pre-ordering scheme worked reasonably well this year – help the Association to improve the scheme for your benefit next year. Avoid disappointment and long queues – your order will be prepared and waiting for collection when you receive an e-mail or 'phone call announcing the arrival of stock.

Help us to help you save time and money – pre-order !

Fred from the Hut