

The FHS Grapevine

Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society Autumn 2013

News

Barnet 2013 Allotments Competition

We did very well in the Barnet Allotments Competition this year. We won a grand total of three cups. Nethercourt won the best Small Site in Barnet; however, it was the only site to enter. We hope that next year Brent Way will also compete so Nethercourt has some opposition. We were also awarded second place in the Large Site competition. We were beaten by a single point by Hendon Grove. Finally the new Ted Green Memorial Award, awarded for an outstanding community initiative by an allotment society during the previous twelve months, was won by us for the Raised Beds Project. This was finally completed this year with the construction of the Log Cabin for the use and benefit of all those who have a raised bed and also to house the Sylvia Elkington Memorial Library for Gardening Books, for the use of all plot holders.

Christmas Social at Gordon Road Allotments

Join us on

Sunday December 15th

From 11am to 1pm

For

Mince Pies and

Mulled wine

All members of the FHS Welcome

Autumn Fete

The Autumn Fete, held on Sunday 8th September was a great success in spite of the heavy rain which threatened to spoil the afternoon. Entry, as always, was by raffle ticket for which we had lots of great prizes donated. There were stalls with honey from the Gordon



Terry and Sophie selling our fresh produce

Road hives; this was extremely popular as we were home-made jams and cakes. There was an excel-

lent selection of our perennial and biennial plants. We also had well stocked bric-a-brac and book stalls.

Andrew Brown gave guided tours round the site as and when the weather allowed and tea and cakes were served outside, although this was somewhat disrupted by the weather from time to time.

But even though the weather was against us we still raised £900 for the allotment funds. A big thank you to all who helped make this so successful.

Sunflower Competition

The results of the Sunflower Competition were announced at the Autumn Fete and prizes awarded. First prize went to Oliver, aged 10, whose sunflower was a massive 2.19m tall. Second prize went to Lily, aged 4, with a sunflower 1.58m tall and third prize was awarded to Hugo, aged 11, whose sunflower was 1.23m tall. Congratulations to all who entered the competition. We hope to hold the competition next year for the third year running. The Sunflower Competition



First Prize to Oliver

is fast becoming an annual event.

Brogdale Visit

How would you like to walk through a cherry orchard, picking and eating as many of the luscious red fruits as you want? That's just what around 20 FHS members and guests did in July



when they visited the Cherry Festival at Brogdale Farm, home of the National Fruit Collection, near Faversham in Kent. We tasted and compared some of the 323 different cherry varieties grown at Brogdale, as well as learning about some of the other fruits in the collection from the expert guides who led walking tours and trips round the site on farm vehicles.

Brogdale has two trees of every cultivar of every stone fruit grown in Britain. Visitors could have lunch in the cafe and also buy fruit from the shop to take home, as well as plants, locally brewed beer, cider and perry, meat or cheese pies and other Kent delicacies. Gifts and tapestries were also available in the shop. This was a most interesting and enjoyable day out.

Marcia

Autumn on the Allotment

I was walking around the allotment last week and was enchanted by what I saw still growing on our beautiful site. Every plot is an individual creation, our own vision of beauty. In autumn crops of apples, brassicas and leeks as well as colourful pumpkins and winter squash can be seen. I hope it has been a successful growing year for all of you and that next year will be even better. This little scarecrow, with his cheerful smile, seemed to sum it all up.



Brent Way

A few words from Elaine Wright, the secretary of Brent Way, the newest addition to our group of allotments. We hope to have a piece from each of our allotments in the near future.

Brent Way Allotments have had a busy year, both with cultivation and joining FHS. Growing and harvesting has been the easier of the two!

We are a small allotment site - there are just eight plots with seven plot holders, most of whom live in the adjacent streets. The site is tucked away between Brent Way and the Dollis Brook,



View of Brent Way Allotments and the Tennis Courts In the Autumn Season

next to Finchley Lawn Tennis Club.

Being small has its advantages, we know each other well and there is a lot of plant-sharing and helping-out with watering. Most of us have now been trained to use our mower (getting it started has its challenges) and keeping pathways tidy now is unplanned but happens. Our socialising seems to happen in the neighbouring tennis club! The year had a slow start for many plants but generally hasn't been too bad. Most crops have caught up and the much awaited runner beans are still producing. As usual courgettes grew to marrows, the lettuces all came at the same time and the brassicas got white fly, but some of us have grown wonderful swedes for the first time!

After much deliberation FHS and Barnet Council finally agreed the terms for our lease so we are now all members and look forward to the partnership.

Elaine Wright

Newsletter Editor

Vacant – volunteer urgently needed!
Contact Claudine if interested.

New Members

A big welcome to new members: Caroline and Richard Westgate who have a plot at Nethercourt Avenue.

Compost

The next recycled compost delivery at Gordon Road will be on Wednesday 18th December.

Newsletter

If you received a paper copy of this newsletter and are now able to receive it by e-mail, please inform Christine Williams, chrysw@hotmail.co.uk
This saves us time and money.

Farewell Ann and Andrew

We are very sad to see Ann and Andrew leave. They have contributed so much to the Society and the allotments over the years. They will definitely be greatly missed. However, I am sure you all wish them every happiness in their new home.



Ann and Andrew Brown with Felicity Nock

I am very sad to be leaving the lovely Gordon Road Allotments for pastures new in Leicestershire. I have enjoyed every one of my thirty years gardening my plots, starting out on 1st April 1982 with only a vague idea about growing fruit and vegetables. At a time when allotments were a lot less popular than they are today I was lucky to have three plots complete with mature fruit trees and a greenhouse. Establishing and managing the Wildlife Plot as well was a real bonus with its slowworms, little pond, old apple trees and wildflowers. All these plots have been a big, enjoyable and productive part of my life. Tending the land is only part of the joy of allotments; the diverse and ever changing plot holder community brought friends and good company plus an opportunity to swap gardening tips, successes and disasters. The events, socials and activities, going from strength to strength through the years, added to the whole experience. Perhaps less fun, but equally rewarding, was helping to run the FHS, as Treasurer, editing the Newsletter and as Chairman. I leave the Society with updated systems, a new style circular, and its sites under new self management leases. I wish everyone at Gordon Road, Nethercourt Avenue and Brent Way good gardening on their plots for many years to come.

Ann Brown
Departing Chairman

From The Acting Chairman

After the surprise resignation of our Chairman, Ann Brown, I have now been entrusted with the chairmanship of the FHS, even if for a short time until another Chairman can be appointed. I hope that I will be able to fulfil this task and carry on with the good work that my predecessor has so ably carried out during her relatively short but very eventful Chairmanship.

During this time, Ann has overseen the creation of the Raised Beds Project and even more importantly, she has seen through the implementation of the self-management leases to Gordon Road, Nethercourt Avenue and Brent Way Allotment Sites; a no mean feat. The leases for Gordon Road and Nethercourt Avenue are now complete and the lease for Brent Way is now in its final stages and may well be through by the time of publication of this Newsletter.

Ann also produced the Newsletter and this has also changed its character most dramatically when she took it over. However, we are now in need of someone to continue with this as it would be a shame if we could no longer publish it in this form.

This has been a time of great change for all allotments in the area and self management means that we should be able to manage the allotments more effectively in the future. However, with this independence there comes more responsibility with the need to raise funds for all the maintenance and repairs to our boundaries and infrastructure. We hope to be able to achieve this with fund raising events such as the Plant Sale and with the Autumn Fete which, next year, will be held in conjunction with the NGS Open Garden Scheme.

Life goes on and we have many exciting things happening in the Society. We will continue to have outings and events throughout the year; the next one will be the Christmas Social in December. I hope that you will all be able to join us with both Ann and Andrew on Sunday 15th December from 11am to 1pm, when we can celebrate and show them our appreciation for all their hard work.

Claudine Fear
Acting Chairman

This issue of The Grapevine has been generously sponsored by Winkworth Estate Agents.

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The Finchley Horticultural Society

43 Oakdene Park, Finchley, N3 1EU

For all Finchley gardeners and for plot holders at
Gordon Road, Nethercote Avenue and Brent Way

President

Catherine Schmidt

Acting Chairman, Newsletter & FHS Enquiries

Claudine Fear: 0208 346 0353

crubie@waitrose.com

Allotments Secretaries

Gordon Road: June Brookes

0208 349 2253

jayemjaybee@btinternet.com

Nethercote Avenue: Janine Limberg

07535 720691

janine.limberg@gmail.com

Brent Way: Elaine Wright

0208 346 9975

colain43@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Margot Boss

margotboss@homechoice.co.uk

Membership

Christine Williams: 0798 493 5668

chrysw@hotmail.co.uk

Trading Hut

Helen Skelton: h.skelton1@btinternet.com

Website, NGS Liaison & Sunflower Competition

Judy Woollett 0208 346 5107 judy-woollett@hotmail.com

woollett@hotmail.com

website: www.finchleyhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

Allotments Security & Break-Ins

Tony Ingram 0208 349 1265

or 0796 727 4739

tonyngram@aqp.co.uk

Next Newsletter

Winter Issue – January 2014

Member of the
Barnet Federation of
Allotment and
Horticultural Societies



Remember FHS Members can get a 10% discount
off seeds and plants at Finchley Nurseries Garden
Centre

Events

Enchanted Woodland at Syon Park

Syon House, Syon Park, Brentford,
Middx, TW8 8JF

Web: <http://www.syonpark.co.uk/news.asp>

From 16th Nov to 8th December 2013

(Fri, Sat and Sun Only) 5pm to 9pm last entry 8pm

Adults £7, Children £3

A new illuminated trail through the arboretum around
the lake and Capability Brown gardens

RHS Wisley: Free Day Friday

RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey,
GU23 6QB

Friday November 8th 2013 10am to 4.30pm

Visit the gardens for free!



NGS Open Gardens

42 Falconer Road

Bushey Herts, Watford, Hertfordshire,
WD23 3AD

Email: sylvia@barnardsfarm.eu

Telephone: 01277 811262

Evening Opening with wine, Sat 9 Nov (5-9)

Admission £3, children free

Wood View Gardens

24 Chapel Road, Great Totham, nr Maldon,
Essex, CM9 8DA

Telephone: 07540 798135

Web: <http://www.woodviewgardenessex.co.uk/>

Sun 1 Dec (3-6), Admission £6, children £4,

King's Arms Garden

1 Brinsmade Road, Ampthill,
Bedfordshire, MK45 2PP

Telephone: 01525 755648

Email: bryden.k@ntlworld.com

Sun 26 Jan 2014 (2-4); Admission: £2, chd free

Christmas Past

Geffrye Museum,

136 Kingsland Road, Hackney, London, E2 8EA

Tube: Old Street Station

Web: <http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk/aboutus/press/releases/christmas-2013/>

Dates: 26th November 2013 to 5th January 2014

Discover how Christmas was celebrated in the past.

Snowdrop Days

Chelsea Physic Garden

66 Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, SW3 4HS

Web: <http://chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/special-events/snowdrops-days/>

Saturday 8 - Sunday 16 February 2014, 10am-4pm