

# The FHS Grapevine

Newletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society

Spring 2015

## Committee News

The trading hut is now open again and trading on Sunday mornings from 10.30am until 12.30pm. We sell a wide range of gardening goodies, including seed and potting compost at reasonable prices. It's open to all members. FHS was established in 1940 as part of the 'Dig for Victory' campaign and as we are 75 years old this year we are planning a year of celebrations including a tea party on **July 5th** - details from June to follow shortly.

## Children's Competition

Children under the age of 16 are invited to create a miniature garden. This could be in a seed box, tray or any sort of container roughly 30x40cms (12x16inches) but please note it should have holes in the bottom. This could be a short-term project put together on the day of our Autumn Fair using old sticks, flowers and moss or a longer term real little garden using plants that are living and growing. Objects such as stones, twigs, gravel, toy plastic figures and animals could also be used. The competition will be judged on the day of our Autumn Fair on the 6th September. For further information contact [judywoollett@hotmail.com](mailto:judywoollett@hotmail.com)

## Spring Time

Isn't it wonderful that Spring is with us again? The lighter evenings, the yellow daffodils and the promise of new growth to come shows us that Spring is here. It's all about to happen in the garden and on the allotments. What are your plans for this year? Whether you are a flower grower or a vegetable enthusiast you will want to come to the Grand Annual Plant Sale to buy our good quality plants which are great value for money. This major event in the Allotment calendar takes place over the May Bank Holiday on Sunday 24th May and Monday 25th May.



## Grand Annual Plant Sale 2015

**Sunday 24th May 10am until 1pm**

**Monday 25th May 10.30am until 1.00pm**

**Gordon Road Allotments, Finchley N3**

**Annual Bedding Plants**

**Vegetables**

**Perennials**

**Refreshments**

## Beekeepers' Corner

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by Chris Ouseley

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### Spring with the bees

Spring is with us again and activity has picked up in the bee colonies on the allotments. The bees have been out and about collecting pollen and so will be pollinating the flowers, fruit trees and bushes on our plots. You may have noticed the different colours of pollen which the bees carry on their back legs - yellows and greens are very common. My favourite is the bright red of the horse chestnut. The early pollen has stimulated the queen into laying. There is only one queen in each hive and her only job is to lay eggs. She needs to increase her rate of laying during the spring so that the colony can make maximum advantage of the nectar flow in May to July. Then they turn the nectar into honey.



### *The British honey bee*

In the winter there were about 10,000 bees in each hive and in the height of summer the numbers will have increased to about 50,000 to 60,000. It takes 3 weeks from egg to new worker bee and a further three weeks for that worker to become a productive forager, bringing back pollen and nectar to the colony. She will probably then have another three weeks to live, before becoming exhausted and dying. So the queen will need to step up her rate of laying to about 1000 a day to build up the numbers and replace those dying. So bear a thought for the queen as you turn the soil and plant for a productive year on your plot!

Honey from our own bee hives is on sale in the Trading Hut.

## Finchley Horticultural Society AGM

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We had a fantastic turnout for the AGM this year - I think the promise of cheese and wine must have been a big draw! Thank you to everyone who came along. Claudine Fear, our busy Chairman, gave a brief overview of the year. Our three allotment sites: Nethercourt Avenue, Brent Way and Gordon Road are self-managing and this means that we have to take care of every aspect of the sites ourselves and ensure that we comply with all relevant legislation. Thus non-return valves will be put on the feeder pipes to each allotment site by the Water Company and plotheolders are required to put pistols on the end of all hosepipes. The three sites have a joint waiting list and some vacant sites will be divided up to make them smaller and more manageable so that more people will be able to have a plot.

At the AGM the Treasurer reported 2014 as a satisfactory year for FHS finances. The success of the Plant Sale and Open Day has made funds available for capital projects on all our sites. We are also able to boost our Emergency Fund, a necessary reserve now the FHS is self managing.

Mr Tony Antoniou, a plotheolder since 1962, has been obliged to retire due to ill health. In honour of his 53 years at the Gordon Road site, he has been awarded a lifetime membership of FHS. Congratulations!

### **Welcome to new members**

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We welcome Joanna Hughes to Gordon Road and Michael Rees to Brent Way allotments. We hope to see you at our events.

## Finchley Horticultural Society AGM continued...



*Janine Limberg collecting the trophy from our President, Catherine Schmitt*

Nethercourt Avenue site won first place in the Small Sites Category in the Council competition (again) with Brent Way coming second. Well done to all those conscientious ploholders and their allotment secretaries who picked up the trophies!



*The Brent Way Team*

Thanks to Elain Wright and Brent Way Tennis Club for hosting the AGM.

## 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](mailto:chrysw@hotmail.co.uk). This saves us time and money.

## Outings

As Claudine mentioned in her report the Society had no outings in 2014 as there was little enthusiasm for visits. This is a shame as one of the main purposes of the Society is to organise visits to places and gardens of interest for all its members.

## Start a Cut Flower Patch

It's easy to grow your own flowers for cutting and showing at home. Kay Maguire suggests you can grow a summer's worth of blooms in



a metre-square patch. Cut-and-come-again flowers are best as they produce more blooms the more

you pick them. Cosmos, zinnia, cornflowers, stocks and marigolds can be grown from seed. Bulbs, tubers and corms such as dahlias, freesias, gladioli, tuberose and lillies will give longlasting blooms. Choose a mixture of early and late flowering plants for a long cutting season. Stocks, tuberose and tobacco plants have a wonderful scent that won't be lost when, freshly picked, you pop them in a vase. Many of these will be available at the Plant Sale.

This issue of the Grapevine has been generously sponsored by  
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## The Finchley Horticultural Society

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[www.finchleyhorticulturalsociety.org.uk](http://www.finchleyhorticulturalsociety.org.uk)

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

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Catherine Schmitt

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Member of the  
Barnet Federation of Allotment  
and Horticultural Societies

## Events Diary

### 2nd May 2015 Saturday 10am - 3.30pm

Plant Heritage Spring Plant Fair.  
St Michael's C of E School on North Road,  
Highgate N6 4BG  
Admission £2.50. Free to under 16's and Plant  
Heritage members.  
The money raised goes to support  
[www.plantheritage.com](http://www.plantheritage.com) who help to conserve  
cultivated plants around the UK in National  
Collections.

### 19th - 23rd May 2015

RHS Chelsea Flower Show



### 25th May and 26th May 2015

Grand Annual Plant Sale  
Gordon Road Allotment Site

### 29th - 30th May 2015

RHS London Rose Show



### May - September 2015

NGS Open Gardens -  
outer North/North West London Group  
see NGS website for details

### 11th - 14th June 2015

BBC Gardeners' World Live

### 30th June - 5th July 2015

RHS Hampton Court Flower  
Show



### 5th July

tea party

### 26th July 2015

BBQ at Gordon Road Allotments

### 30th July - 2nd August 2015

RHS Garden Hyde Hall Flower  
Show



### 6th September 2015

National Garden Scheme Open Day

### 8th - 13th September 2015

RHS Garden Wisley Flower Show



To book tickets, visit [rhs.org.uk/shows](http://rhs.org.uk/shows)  
or call 0844 338 7539

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