

The Grapevine



Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society

Spring 2019

The first
Community Meeting
of 2019 will be held on
Sunday 28th April at 11am
in the Log Cabin at
Gordon Road Allotments

All FHS members are very
welcome

Meet other ploholders and
Finchley gardeners for a
chat and refreshments. We
aim to share advice and
support. Bring along seeds
for a seed swap.

Plans for 2019

The 78th AGM of the FHS was held on 26th March. It was very well attended and we had to bring more chairs in from outside to seat everybody. Claudine outlined the priorities for the Society for the coming year. Her report is on the website. This year we dispensed quickly with the formalities and James Robbins, a ploholder and gardening expert spoke on 'Crop Diversity and why it matters'. More inside!

The FHS is still waiting for planning permission from Barnet Council to put in a new, higher fence along Dollis Road. We have to show that we will not damage the mature trees when the fence is erected and an arboricultural report has been sent to the Council. We hope to know the outcome by the end of April.

Gordon Road Allotments Committee intends to buy a heavy duty lawn mower, similar to the one purchased by Brent Way Allotment Site. This mower should be able to cope with the uneven ground better than our current ones, which regularly break down, and frequently need repairing. Mark Hanslip is in charge of the mowers at Gordon Road.

The large polytunnel desperately needs a new cover and we plan to do this work in June, after the Plant Sale, to minimise disruption. It's quite a big job as the cover has to be securely buried in the ground to ensure it stays in place, so we'll be asking for volunteers next month.

We are delighted that Kisharon School in Golders Green is taking on a raised bed this year in order to enhance their students' learning. Kisharon is an independent school which supports children with complex learning disabilities. They will travel using public transport and they intend to come once a week.



Grand Plant Sale 2019



At Gordon Road Allotments N3 IEL
Sunday 26th May 10.30 am to 1.30 pm

And

Monday 27th May 10.30 am to 1.30 pm

Allotment Shop

Annual bedding plants, Vegetable plants

Perennials

Refreshments:

Tea, Coffee, Soft
Drinks

Homemade Cakes

Free Entry



Crop Diversity and why it matters

James Robbins gave the inaugural lecture to a packed hall at the AGM last month.



He is an experienced professional gardener with skills in horticulture, landscape and estate management. He has worked as a horticultural researcher and writer conducting gardening trials for Which? Gardening Magazine, ran his own business, and he has worked for several large public gardens and estates, including Capel Manor College, Kenwood House, and the RHS at Harlow Carr in Harrogate.

Here is a brief resume of what he talked about.

Biodiversity is the complex web of life which sustains us all. None of us lives in isolation from nature. Protecting biodiversity is not just about saving animals or habitats. It's about providing sustainable access to food and water. A greater diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms and every species has a role to play.

Allotments can make a good contribution to biodiversity because there are lots of different habitats - orchards, grass land, cultivated beds and compost heaps. The edges between habitats also create diversity. This all helps to sustain local plants and wildlife.

This is how it works: we grow lots of different crops, which give a spread of harvests throughout the year.

The many cultures represented on our sites means many more different crops are grown. We also grow different varieties of each type of vegetable and this strengthens sustainability.



Vegetable Varieties

F1 is the abbreviation for Filial 1 - literally first children. It refers to the selective breeding of a plant by cross pollinating two different parent plants. Open pollination refers to plants that breed true and the seeds produce plants that are very similar to their parents. An Heirloom or Heritage plant is an open pollinated variety that has been grown for many years and passed down within a family or group. The Heritage Seed Library is run by the Garden Organic Charity and its aim is to preserve heritage and heirloom varieties which are no longer commercially available. By growing a diverse selection of less common vegetables we have less problems from the pests and diseases that affect the most widely grown crops. Tastes change over time and some crops fall out of favour. Root crops like Skirret, salsify and Scorzonera were familiar in Tudor times.

This Wonderberry, bred in the USA in the early 20th century, tastes like blueberries but failed to be more widely grown.



Glass Gem Corn was discovered by Carl Baines, a US farmer with Cherokee heritage. Carl began by collecting some of the sacred varieties used by his ancestors and cross pollinating them. This variety needs a long growing season in

the UK and can be used for popcorn.

What we can do to support greater diversity

We can grow more varieties and different varieties, both F1 and older varieties. Growing different and unusual vegetables helps diversity and we should buy seeds from different sources for variety. Perhaps most importantly, we should save our own seeds and swap them with other plottolders and gardeners. Save the seeds from the best plants and collect them as the pods split, put them in a paper bag, label and store in a dry place at 3-6°.

It's that time of year again!

Preparations are well under way for the Plant Sale: seeds planted, pricked out, potted on and labelled. You won't be surprised to learn that we'll be asking for volunteers to help over the bank holiday weekend. We will need to set up tables



and benches beforehand and then we'll need sellers on the Sunday and Monday. The Plant Sale is our major fundraiser, enabling us to improve facilities at all our sites.



Elain will be running the tea hut again and she always needs donations of cakes and biscuits. Please get in touch with June, Christine or Claudine if you can offer your help.

Don't forget these money saving treats

We have 3 RHS tickets giving 30% discount on entry prices to any RHS garden in 2019. Members may borrow these tickets for a visit and then return them. Treasurer, Chris Ouseley is holding them for the Society.

Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre offers a 10% discount on plants to all Finchley Horticultural Society members.

There will be an FHS visit to RHS Wisley later this year, organised by June Brookes. Come along and enjoy a great day out. Further details and dates to be announced.

Catherine and Christine have perennials for sale every Sunday and they offer a wealth of knowledge to help you choose the right plant for your garden or pot.



FHS Summer visit to Pashley Manor Gardens and Great Dixter House and Gardens Saturday 22nd June 2019

Pashley Manor is a Grade 1 listed timber-framed house dating from 1550. The gardens were opened to the public in 1991, the owners having employed the eminent landscape architect, the late Anthony du Gard Pasley. Delight in the sweeping herbaceous borders, elegant rose and historic walled gardens, the productive kitchen garden and the tranquil vistas that form this award winning garden. Lunch can be taken in their Garden Room Cafe after which we'll take the coach to Great Dixter House and Gardens.



Pashley Manor Rose Garden

Great Dixter was the family home of gardener and writer, Christopher Lloyd. Designed by Edwin Lutyens and Nathaniel Lloyd, Christopher Lloyd made the garden one of the most experimental and constantly changing gardens of our time. Clipped topiary, wild flower meadows, the famous long border, pot displays and the exotic garden make up this amazing garden. Your fee includes entry to the house as well as the garden.

We will be travelling in a luxury coach (with loo) leaving at 9am. Departure will be from Regents Park Road just up from Henleys Corner. There's plenty of parking in nearby roads. The cost is £37.50 per person, £39.50 for non FHS members and includes travel and entry to both gardens.

To book a place on this fabulous trip please contact Judy Woollett on 020 8346 5107 or at finchleyhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com. Places are going fast.

The Finchley Horticultural Society

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www.finchleyhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

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

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Member of the Barnet Federation of Allotment and Horticultural Societies

Affiliated to the
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Newsletter

If you received a paper copy of this newsletter and are now able to receive it by e-mail, please inform Christine Williams,

finchleyhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com

This saves us time and money.

Events Diary

8th - 10th April 2019

RHS London Spring Launch and Orchid Show

Monday 8th from 5pm to 9pm £10 or £12 on day

Tuesday 9th from 10am to 5pm

Wednesday 10th from 10am to 5pm

Members free, nonmembers £5 or £8 on day



28th April 2019

Community Meeting and seed swap
Log Cabin, Gordon Road Allotments
All FHS members welcome



21st - 25th May 2019

RHS Chelsea Flower Show

Royal Hospital Chelsea, SW3 4SL

Tuesday - Friday 8.00am until 8.00pm

Saturday 8.00am until 5.30pm

tickets are selling fast



26th and 27th May 2019

FHS Plant Sale

Sunday 26th May from 10.30 am to 1.30pm

Monday 27th May from 10.30 am to 1.30pm



22nd June 2019

FHS visit to Pashley Manor
Gardens and Great Dixter House
and Gardens

£28 or £30 for non-members



23rd - 25th July 2019

RHS London Art and Photography
Show

RHS Lindley Hall, SW1P 2QW

Tuesday 5pm to 9pm £10 and £12 on the day

Wednesday and Thursday

RHS members free, non-members £5 in
advance and £8 on the day



30th July- 4th August 2019

RHS Garden Hyde Hall Flower
Show, Essex



To book tickets to RHS shows, visit

rhs.org.uk/shows or call 084 4338 7539

Members of the RHS get discounts on entry
to the shows

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