

SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

1/2002

2002 is well on its way. The quiet season is nearly over and it is almost time to put into action, new plans and ideas. But apart from digging, there is often another winter activity, the construction of that important part of allotment equipment, the shed.

If you stand and look across Sunnyside's expanse of allotments on a winter's day, when the view is clear of vegetation, your inspiration can be caught by crop of sheds in all sorts of shapes and sizes. An architect has commented that, "the allotment shed has been seen in Britain as the most prolific and vigorous example of the self-builder's art." There are no precise rules to be followed (but you must obtain planning permission today!) There is plenty of freedom for inventiveness with materials often obtained from the skip. Sheds can provide sanctuary, shelter from the rain, the store for tools and crops, a focus for friendship, and they can become just as important as the plot itself. They can even be a haven for writers as I have just read that Philip Pullman, who has just made literary history and won the Whitbread Prize with his children's book, does all his writing in his shed! Olga Lassman writes below of the pleasure her newly acquired shed has given her.

MAGICAL SHED

Do you believe in magic and....on New Year's Eve in particular?

December 31st was quite a busy day for me: the last minute preparations, shopping... The last item on my list was to make a quick raid on my allotment and pull out a vegetable gift for my friend in London, where we were going to spend New Year's Eve.

I came running to the allotment when it was quite dark, and only the bright moon and twinkling stars were lighting the road. There was no one around at this hour, and some rustling was coming from the cabbage beds to frighten occasional birds and...there it was, the wooden shed in its full splendour! I could not believe my eyes, I thought I was dreaming: three days ago it was not even in sight. Well, I had been discussing the construction of this shed with a certain person, and had been thinking when and how, it would all materialise, but the reality (or the magic?) came as a very pleasant surprise.

A few days later in the New Year, when I visited my allotment again to look at the magical shed in daylight I saw a plaque with the words "Olga's Dacha".

So would you like to know the names of the two magicians who had worked on the B32 Sunnyside Old on New Years Eve? You have



probably guessed that they were Ted Dyer and Angela Wheeldon, and my shed was one of their innumerable creations in their fascinating world of gardening and country life projects...

Thank you very much for this magical gift of the magical hands and hearts, Angela and Ted! Welcome to Olga's Dacha which is now a 'magical show shed'!

WINTER NEWS FROM THE HEN HOUSE

Just as the weather was beginning to turn cold and wintry, the hens decided to moult! first there were discarded feathers under the perch in the Hen house; it looked as though they had spent sleepless nights tweaking out their feathers. Next their bright red combs turned

pale and shrivelled. Then they sat about feeling sorry for themselves and looking bedraggled. It was obviously very much a case of 'bad hair' days!

But worst of all they stopped laying for about 3 weeks and we began to wonder, as we struggled against the elements, if it was all worthwhile.

The physical resources needed to produce a new set of feathers is high. The main constituent of feathers is protein, so a diet high in protein was necessary. It's not surprising that laying activity stops at this time. However they are now proudly strutting about in their glossy new plumage and are starting to lay again. The difficulties are easily forgotten at the sight and taste of a rich yellow omelette!

When it was so frosty just after

Christmas, we felt that a ration of dry meal wasn't appetising, so we tried them with hot mash. After their initial surprise at seeing steam rising from their feeding troughs, they have been tucking into it with great gusto. I suppose it's like some of us being tempted by a bowl of steaming porridge before going out on a cold morning. Also on the food front, they all enjoy pecking at half an apple on a stick and its quite comical to watch them. My freezer broke down during the soft fruit season so I was unable to freeze a supply of raspberries and blackberries for the hens (spoilt or what!) But quite by chance we came across a supply of rose hips which the hens seemed to enjoy. Perhaps their current healthy state is partly due to their daily dose of Vitamin C!

ALLOTMENTS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the new Committee took place on 7th November 2001. Issues affecting Sunnyside are as follows:-

The Allotment Tenancy Agreement enables the Council to evict any Tenant at the end of November, who has failed to pay any rents due on 29th September of that year. One months written notice of the intention to evict, due to non payment must be given, in accordance with paragraph 9 of the Tenancy agreement.

As a general reminder please read your Tenancy Agreement and ensure that you comply with various conditions including keeping your garden tidy. Failure to do this could lead to termination of your tenancy. In future Tenants requiring permission to erect a shed or greenhouse on their plot must obtain a form from the Council giving details of size etc and the intended position on their plot.

In April 2002 Burse construction has been given permission to use the

bottom roadway at Sunnyside New in order to create a workbase next to the Railway boundary on the South East corner of the site. They will be creating a trackside path on behalf of Railtrack. On completion of the works they will make good any damage. It is hoped that whilst on site the Car Park on plot 29 will be levelled and some form of hard-standing will be provided which will benefit tenants.

AGM REPORT

The AGM took place in the Training Centre on Sunnyside Old with the kind permission of Sunnyside Rural Trust. There were a number of decisions made at the meeting of which you need to be aware:

1. The society subscription will remain at £2.00 per annum and if you have not yet paid would you please let the Treasurer, John Savage, have the money as soon as possible.
2. Receipts will no longer be issued for subscription payments and the audit trail will in future be by reference to the society's nominal role and payments register.
3. Committee meetings, in future, will be held as and when required rather than every two months as before.
4. Officers and Committee were re-elected en block with the addition of Angela Wheeldon and Graham Hall as new Committee Members.
5. The annual accounts are included with this newsletter.

CHRISTMAS CHEER

At lunchtime Sunday 23rd December, about 30 intrepid allotmenters braved the elements (actually it was bright and not too cold) and headed towards B15 to enjoy an alfresco Christmas get-together with mince pies and mulled wine. It was a welcome chance to escape the frenetic shopping and media hype for a couple of hours; to pause and wish each



other the compliments of the season. Thanks to David and Ag for mulling the wine and to all the others who provided snacks and mince pies.

RUBBISH CLEARANCE

The dumps detailed in the last Newsletter will remain open until the end of January, after which steps will be taken to have the rubbish collected by the Borough Council. It would be appreciated if all tenants would co-operate by keeping their plots free of rubbish. The service provided by the Society is free.

SUNNYSIDE CHURCH CAR PARK

The Town Council has agreed to renew the Church's lease, which will enable works to take place on the roadway and car park surface. It would appear that the grass verge next to the Rectory garden will not now be included in the surfacing works and a hedge will be planted on the boundary between the Car park and the Allotments. There may be a small extension of the present car park but until the council has drawn up the revised lease, this is unclear. Allotment holders will continue to be able to use the Car park, although on Sunday mornings you will have to be early to find a slot.



LEFT: Christmas Cheer Sunnyside style!

RIGHT: Plenty of hands 'make light work', at the clearance day in January

TENANCY CHANGES

Sunnyside New – Out

Rod Cotrell	6&7
John Pilkington	12
Simon Lawes	32
Sarah & Anton Whinney	60&61
Nick Upton	116
In	
Mark Bulpitt	48

Sunnyside Old – Out

Jackie Wharam	A41
Rose Scarborough	A39
Kate Jones	A6
John Piller	B27
Melissa Storey	C1
Jane Miller	C3
In	

Elizabeth Jones	A6
Richard Harper	C3
Phillip Dobson	C7
Brenda Baynes	B27b

TOWN COUNCIL WEB SITE

Information on the availability of allotments is shown on the Town Council's Web site and it includes a picture of the society's display at the Community fair.

CLEARANCE DAYS

We had a good turnout of volunteers. In November we managed to complete the maintenance tasks on the Hazel Coppice, including the planting of five replacement trees.

We also cleared plots C7,9 and part of C11 before bad light stopped play.

On January 19th in bright sunshine we worked on the bottom of Sunnyside New. We thank everyone for their help. **Note the next Clearance days are on February 16th and March 16th at 10.00 – come along and join in the fun!**

GARDENERS CLIPPINGS

Electric Garden Shredder for sale – little used due to heaviness of motor. £60.00.
Tel: 01442 872217 (Ann Duvall)

VEG OUT

A series of 15 half hour programmes called VEG OUT was screened by Sky Digital at the end of last year. It was presented by 2 greengrocers-cum-radio presenters (Radio 4 – Veg talk) and covers vegetable growing on allotments.

Having imported strawberries in winter and parsnips in summer to supply top London Restaurants, their message now is that nothing beats the flavour of freshly picked British produce in season.

The programmes may not teach you anything earth-shattering, but they are quite entertaining and they do show allotment sites all over the

country. George Brown has kindly recorded them for us, so if you would like to borrow the videos, please contact Angela Wheeldon on B15 (or 10 Chapel Street or 874440) giving your name and phone number. (This is always assuming that you can spare 7 hours to watch veg grow on TV instead of digging your own allotment for the new season!)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

After the success of the Summer Barbeque in June of last year, we have decided to make this an annual event for the benefit of all allotment holders, their families and friends. The proposed date for this years event is **Saturday June 29th**. Look out for more details in the next newsletter.

Peter Block's garden will again be open this year under the National Gardens Scheme. See it at 22 Hall Park Gate on Sunday 5th May or Sunday 18th August.

CONDOLENCES

We were sad to hear of the death of Ray Cheshire after a long illness. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife and sons.

The Sunnyside Allotment Society

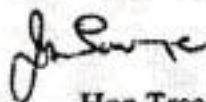
Accounts for Financial Year ended 31 October 2001

1999/2000	Income	2000/1	1999/2000	Expenditure	2000/1
£		£	£		£
102.00	Subscriptions	96.00	41.00	Hire of digger	Nil
41.50	General Donations	35.08	22.50	Hire of hall	18.00
Nil	Barbecue & open day	45.00	Nil	Barbecue & open day	91.00
Nil	Seed order	292.43	Nil	Seed order	251.78
1.62	Interest	2.60	48.10	Membership of NSALG	43.00
				Community Fair	23.00
<u>145.12</u>	Total	<u>471.11</u>	<u>111.60</u>	Total	<u>426.78</u>

33.52 Excess of income over expenditure 44.33

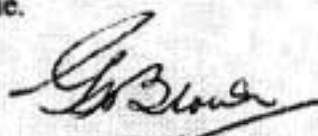
2000	Balance sheet at 31 October	2001
£		£
162.63	Deposit with Nationwide Building Society	207.36
<u>0.40</u>	Cash in hand	<u>0.00</u>
<u>163.03</u>	Total assets	<u>207.36</u>
	Represented by:-	
129.51	Accumulated fund at beginning of year	163.03
<u>33.52</u>	Excess of income over expenditure	<u>44.33</u>
<u>163.03</u>	Fund at end of year	<u>207.36</u>

I certify that the foregoing statement of accounts is correct.



Hon Treasurer

I certify that the above accounts are in accordance with the books of account and the information and explanations given to me.



Hon Auditor

15/11/01
November 2001