

# SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

3/2000

## SUMMER IS HERE

Summer is here, and in spite of all the poor weather and the constant battle against slugs, the allotments are looking verdant and productive. A few moments break from weeding and digging, and a stroll along the well-kept paths will reveal such a variety of vegetables, fruit, flowers and now even wildlife. In this issue we have reports on Angela Wheeldon's newly installed chicken run (as yet no cocky, cowboy rooster!) and Dave Thomas's burgeoning vineyard.

## NEWS FROM THE HEN HOUSE

After some months negotiating with the Town Council for permission to keep livestock on an allotment, and with the help and encouragement of fellow allotment holders in erecting, fox-proof fencing and accommodation, on 14th March, the 6 point-of-lay pullets arrived from The Domestic Fowl Trust, near Evesham.

After all our preparations it was exciting to see them exploring their new Sunnyside home.

Three of the birds Clarissa, Clara and Clarice are Black Rocks (RIR x Plymouth Rock), and

Harriet, Hannabel and Henrietta are Speckled Hens (Maranx). They are both hybrids and apart from good egg-laying capability they have been bred to do well in free range outdoor flocks. They have a robust constitution and good

feather cover. They are very attractive big plump birds with a docile nature. They are friendly and enjoy nothing better than human



Left: Ted and the poppies  
Below: Peter with his vegetables



company, murmuring contentedly in response.

It was a real thrill to collect the first eggs and we achieved our first full house (ie 6 eggs per day) on 23rd May, 10 weeks to the day after their arrival. We have been averaging 5-6 per day since then. They have a lovely flavour and the yolks, which stand proud in the pan, are a beautiful deep yellow.

The project was set up as a co-operative, with each member taking sole responsibility for looking after the chickens for 1 week per month, and reaping the reward of the eggs produced that week. We are currently looking for another participant; anyone interested should contact Angela on Allotment B15.

Left: Happy hens!  
Below left: The chicken run under construction

## SAS contact numbers

<b>Chairman</b>	Ted Dyer	872684
<b>Treasurer</b>	John Savage	873877
<b>Secretary</b>	Jenny Sippings	865890
<b>Committee</b>	Peter Chapman	871470
	Rod Cottrell	384963
	Fiona Duck	874334
	Ken Harbord	865757
	Ian Stowe	876815

Cont'd



## SUNNYSIDE VINES

*David Thomas writes-*

I have about 45 vines on my allotment. They are a mix of two varieties, Madelaine-Angevine and Muller-Thurgau, both found to be successful in this country. I believe they are crosses of varieties used in Germany, where the climate is similar to ours. The vines are now in their fourth year and starting to get established. I am letting them produce some grapes for the first time this year, which may, just be enough for a couple of bottles of wine. (Whether it is drinkable or not is another matter).

The vines are the result of my second attempt at a 'mini-vineyard'. The first try was a disaster; I bought vines grafted onto rootstock and despite my best efforts they all died. 'Take 2' was a much cheaper option using cuttings from the Frithsden vineyard, run by Mr and Mrs Latchford. They very generously gave me a tour, advice and all the cutting I could manage. Ted's Timber yard furnished the support posts.

I have one other vine at the top of my adjoining allotment, which was a cutting from one of my first vines that I planted just over 15 years ago, in the back garden of 2 Ravens Lane. One of them is still there!

## DAMAGE TO SHEDS SUNNYSIDE OLD

Sadly we have to report that two Sheds were broken into since our last Newsletter and some property stolen. We would ask tenants to be vigilant when strangers are about, particularly in the early mornings or late evenings.

## BERKHAMSTED TOOL HIRE Discount for members

We have negotiated an arrangement for members hiring items from them to reduce a 10% discount on the hire charge. It will be necessary for members to produce proof of identity at the shop when seeking to hire equipment. The shop staff are being provided with a list of tenants names for their use in administering the scheme.

We hope you will find the scheme useful and please provide feedback on your experiences to Fiona Duck (Tel 874334).

## HAZEL COPPICE

We owe a vote of thanks to Ken Harbord for his single-handed efforts in keeping the grass under control by strimming.

## NATIONAL SOCIETY OF ALLOTMENT AND LEISURE GARDENERS.

We are now affiliated to the National Society and copies of a quarterly magazine are available on a loan basis to paid up members of the SAS. The magazines are available from the shed on Plot n B15 on Sunnyside Old.

So far as the seed scheme is concerned no volunteers have been forthcoming so far. If paid up members wish to take advantage of the seed scheme with its beneficial prices, your committee suggest that those members wishing to order administer the ordering themselves on a joint basis, and put in the required bulk order.

## ENVIRONMENT FAIR

On the 27th and 28th June an Environment Fair took place at the Civic Centre. The Society were invited by the Town Council to put on an exhibit and the display was prepared by Angela Wheeldon to whom we owe a vote of thanks. The

opportunity was taken to publicise allotments in the Town with a view to increasing tenancies.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This years AGM will held in the Gable Hall, Prince Edward Street on Saturday 25th November at 10.30am. Please make a note in your diaries and turn up to air your views.

If you have any items which you would wish to have included on the agenda then you should put these in writing to our Secretary, Jenny Sippings, 82 George Street. Please submit any items by 1st October, as the agenda for the meeting will go out with the October Newsletter, in order to remind you of the approaching AGM.

## TENANCY CHANGES

We welcome the following new tenants and wish them well with their gardening at Sunnyside.

### Sunnyside New

Plots 61/2

Sarah Burgess/Anton Winney  
Plot 70 Nicky Wright  
Plots 71/116 Nick Upton

### Sunnyside Old

B39 Fran and Les Freelove



## **RUBBISH CLEARANCE**

Once again you are invited to gather up all your unwanted glass, metal plastic on your allotment and place it at the usual designated collection points marked by pegs as before.

For ease of reference the points are as follows: -

### **Sunnyside Old**

- Adjacent to the Church Car Park
- On our Car Park next to Grantham Mews

### **Sunnyside New**

- Adjacent to the bottom gateway on Ivy House Lane
- Councillors and members of the public have commented in a favourable manner about the improvement we have achieved in the appearance of our allotment sites. We need to keep up the good work but your co-operation is needed, for unless you physically relocate your unwanted items to the collection points we will not achieve our goal.

## **ALLOTMENTS**

### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The first meeting of the Committee took place on Tuesday 13th June. So far as Sunnyside is concerned bids were put in for another new tank on 'A' road on the Old site and for the relocation of the tank on the new site, which is in the middle of Sunnyside Rural Trusts area. It is planned that this tank be relocated onto plot 49.

The question of rents was deferred until the July meeting.

The Council will be pressing ahead with the installation of taps on selected tanks to enable pressure hoses to be used by those tenants who opt to pay the hose pipe levy. Timescales for this are unclear at present.

A number of shed requests were discussed and agreed and the tenants concerned will by now have been advised.

At the next meeting there will be discussions on changes to the Tenancy Agreement which will make it a condition

of Tenancy that tenants keep the roadway edge adjacent to their gardens cut a tidy to facilitate mowing.

There may also be a move towards the introduction of tighter rules on the tidiness of gardens with the possibility of sanctions against those tenants who fail to keep their plots tidy.

### **KEEP SUNNYSIDE TIDY**

The Allotment Management Committee is obviously concerned about the whole appearance of Sunnyside. It is up to us as individual holders to make sure that we keep our plots and edges as tidy as possible. We are very lucky to have Ted Dyer and his helpers to keep the broad green sweep of the paths looking so attractive.

Sunnyside is a place to enjoy and hopefully new tenants will be encouraged to join and share in the delights and satisfactions of gardening.

As Confucius quotes "Garden when the sun shines, read when it's not".

### **ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT**

We felt that it would be a good idea to remind tenants of some of their conditions of tenancy, which is, after all a contract between each tenant and the Town Council.

- \* **5(a)** To keep the allotment garden clean and in a good state of cultivation and fertility and in good condition.
- 5(e)** Not, without written consent of the Council to erect any building on the allotment garden. He/She will maintain any such building in good order.
- 5(g)** To keep the width of the grass pathway surrounding the allotment garden clear of obstruction and in good order and condition.
- 7** If the tenant shall have been in breach of any of the foregoing provisions of this agreement for a period of one month or longer, the Council may re-enter upon the allotment Garden and the tenancy shall thereupon come to an end,....."