



SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk
email: info@sunnysideallotments.org.uk

No: 4 October 2011

Prize Potato

To the right is the editor's prize potato which weighed 727 gms. It was dug by my delighted granddaughter as I was suffering from a bad back. It came from a plant which yielded 18 usable potatoes in all with a total weight of 3.6 kgs. I'm embarrassed to say that I don't know what variety it is as I bought it in desperation from Woods when I failed to find any salad potatoes and kept no record.

Chris Locke



Chairman's Report

Access

This has been a good year for concerted action by our members. We have seen off the attempt by a neighbour to get vehicle access through the allotments. Many thanks for your support.

Which reminds me, now that the wetter weather is on its way, please do not drive through the allotment unless you absolutely must as this damages the roadways which are maintained by volunteers.

AGM

To make sure you know what you need to know about Sunnyside matters and have your say, come to the AGM, date and Agenda on the back of this newsletter. Last year we had more people from New and we would like this trend to continue.

Rents

Rents are now due. To avoid problems please pay as soon as possible. Last year there were a lot of late payers and the committee was asked to save money for the Town Council by contacting these people to save the cost of sending reminders to those who did not intend to renew. It took ages and we ask you to please notify the office if you want to give up rather than waiting to be thrown off after Christmas.. In accordance with Town Council policy if you do not pay you will be evicted and will not even be allowed back on the waiting list for four years if your circumstances change.

Goodbye to Prue

Prue Scofield has left Sunnyside to spend more time with her commitments in Northchurch. We would like to thank her for all the work she has done as minutes secretary and controller of the seed order as well as

working party tasks like helping to paint the loo (plus some of the housekeeping). Thank you Prue. We will miss you. Do come back and see us.

Freda Earl

Open Day 2011

We had another very successful Open Day with a lot of enthusiastic visitors. We were able to give £180 to the hospice from the raffle and sale of plums donated by Broadway Orchard.

Angela has been the main organiser of the event for the last 10 years and feels it is time for someone else to take over. We are looking for somebody to co-ordinate the various teams for 2012. This will be discussed at the AGM.

Our Open Day has been immortalised on DeeTV. You can view the video on the following link: <http://www.deetv.tv/in-your-area/berkhamsted/#enjoying-sunnyside-allotments>



A small farewell tea party was held for Prue on 1st October

And here's a latter day parable from John Driver:

God said: "Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet? What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But, all I see are these green rectangles.."

ST. FRANCIS: It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD: Grass? But, it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees; only grubs and sod worms. It's sensitive to temperatures.. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD: The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it-sometimes twice a week.

GOD: They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS: Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS: No, Sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD: Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And, when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS: Yes, Sir..

GOD: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS: You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD: What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer.

In the autumn, they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. It's a natural cycle of life.

ST. FRANCIS: You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD: No!? What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS: After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves..

GOD: And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS: They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD: Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE: 'Dumb and Dumber', Lord.. It's a story about.....

GOD: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.

Tenancy Changes

Welcome to:

Emma Norrington & Richard Coverdale	B12A, B14A
Mr Richard Bassett	N10
Mr & Mrs Sweetman	B12A, B14A
Mrs Emma Britton	A24B
Mrs Samantha Rycroft	N9
Mr Iain Jackson	B20A
Ms Maria De Oliveira	C33B

Goodbye to:

Mrs Prue Scofield	B35
Mr Neil Churchard	C3
Mr Simon Chasey	C23
Mr Mark Kennedy	N33B
Ms Kathleen Lazar	N7A
Ms Penny Marshall & Mr Richard Clarke	N51
Ms Kate Yeo	C7B
Ms Liza Rigby	N5A
Mrs Susan Holmes	B9A
Ms Fiona Powell	B14A
Mr Luke Stockbridge	N7B
Mrs Ann & Mr Geoffrey Obee	B10A, B12A
Mr Peter Block	B30A
Mr Fred & Mrs Joan Jackson	A42B

Please Note: To offset rising printing costs, an electronic version of future editions of the newsletter will be sent to all those people that supply an email address to Jenny Sippings – (jenny.sippings@ntlworld.com).

Working Party Dates

Working Parties will take place on the following Sundays:

November 6th 2010
January 8th 2011
February 5th 2011
March 4th 2011

We really need your help for various communal tasks and the events can be good fun (and the lunchtime soup excellent).



Sunnyside Rural Trust have recently won a tender to lease the **Central Nursery** site in **Two Waters Way, Hemel Hempstead**; along with the lease we secured a 5 years contract to grow and supply Dacorum Borough Council's bedding plants. Above is some of the winter bedding plant order growing in our new 100m² state of the art greenhouse. The next time you see a hanging basket in Dacorum or a roundabout display you'll know adults with learning disabilities have grown the plants! This is an amazing achievement for the charity and our service users.

Our new Deputy CEO, Emma Norrington will be managing and developing the site. It needs a lot of love and attention but Emma is relishing the challenge!

We will be opening the site to the public to sell bedding plants and hanging baskets. Sunnyside Rural Trust will also use the site as a community food growing hub offering courses as well as selling produce. This will allow us to contribute to the Dacorum food strategy. There will be a shop on site where you can purchase our usual produce and much more.

If anyone would like to volunteer or visit the new site please get in touch by visiting our website:

www.sunnysideruraltrust.org.uk

Write to us at:

Sunnyside Rural Trust

c/o Civic Centre,

161-163 High Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 3HD

Telephone (01442) 863364

Email: info@sunnysideruraltrust.org.uk

Record Crops?

I wonder how many of you have had record crops of something and total failure of others.

Elsy Ambrose writes: Yes, like Chris, we here, (Allotment 56B New Sunnyside), had enormous potatoes in our crop. It is also worth mentioning that the Spinach was particularly vigorous and of enormous leaves! And still producing!

We grew artichokes for the first time expecting nothing from them but they have been producing glorious (to us) heads, which we are relishing when you think that each head costs £1.99 in the supermarkets!

We have grown corn before and enjoyed it very much. However, this year the mice had it all! And our neighbours' have suffered the same fate, I'm afraid.

We attempted to grow some Thai squash given to us by friends. However, after much work, we managed to save from weather and other conditions, 6 of them and only one plant produced two beautiful squashes! A spectacular failure but we think that it was mostly due to the seeds.

However, we grew some Italian long yellow squash for the first time and they were a marvellous surprise; not a crawling plant but growing upwards producing some squash as long as 50/60 cms long! And roasted, even the skin tastes delicious.

Andy Dolwyn writes: Potatoes that worked well for me - Sarpo Mira. "Mira is extremely blight and virus resistant - the most resistant variety known"

<http://www.alanromans.com/p-1892-sarpo-mira.aspx>

And finally from Prue Scofield: I have grown an experimental half row of a maincrop variety called 'Rooster'. It has grown well with good sized potatoes with less scab than the others I have grown. It has red skin and yellow flesh, cooks very well and tastes better than others I have grown - for me it's a 3-star variety!

Runner and French beans have done very well, as have beetroot and courgettes. The butternut squash is failing spectacularly to produce fruits bigger than a small pear - I think it is sulking as it prefers a Mediterranean climate!

Your current Committee Members

Chairman:	Freda Earl	865661
Vice Chairman:	John Eaton	865307
Secretary:	Jenny Sippings	865890
Treasurer:	John Powell	878640
Newsletter Editor:	Chris Locke	877326

Other members:	Debby Figueirido	877607
	Nick Hood	878331
	Annick Mulcahy	862572
	Andy Walker	07966 245732
	Angela Wheeldon	874440
Associate member:	John Driver	862734



**AGENDA FOR THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON
SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER, 2011 AT THE
SUNNYSIDE RURAL TRUST, IVY HOUSE
LANE, BERKHAMSTED AT 10.30 A.M.**

1. Apologies for absence
2. To approve the minutes of the last AGM
3. Chairman's report
4. To consider and approve the Society's accounts
5. To receive any nominations for officers/committee members
6. Election of officers and committee:
 - Chairman
 - Vice Chairman
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Committee members
7. Election of Allotments' representative on Town Council's Allotments Management Team
8. Future developments
9. Any other business

Please send in any nominations for officers, the committee and allotments site rep to Jenny Sippings, 82 George Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 2EQ or email to jenny.sippings@ntlworld.com. Please make sure your nominee is willing to stand.

Sunnyside Calendar 2012

The theme of our calendar this year is 'potatoes'. There will be lots of tasty recipes for you to try, as well as cultivation tips and recommendations of varieties.

The calendar will be on sale at the AGM at the same price as last year: £5.50.

Contaminated Manure

John Eaton has suggested the following sites for the apparently ongoing problem with contaminated manure:

http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/safe_use.asp?id=2926

<http://www.nsalg.org.uk/page.php?article=693&name=Aminopyralid+Reported>
<http://www.nsalg.org.uk/page.php?article=693&name=Aminopyralid+Reported>

and another one for the question of keeping bees which has been raised by a couple of allotment holders:

http://www.nsalg.org.uk/uploads/article459/BBKA%20Allotment_Beekeeping.pdf

Help

At SAS committee meetings we have discussed the importance of helping allotment holders who are finding it temporarily difficult to maintain their plot, perhaps due to illness. However, there is obviously also a need for occasional help with heavy work.

Wendy Calder asks 'whether anyone is prepared to help, at a reasonable price, with some of the heavier jobs. Speaking to other allotment holders, there seems to be a need for strimming and heavy digging. I don't think it has to be an allotment holder, someone must know someone who would like to earn some extra money.' Could be a useful source of pocket money for a capable teenager? Offers of help to me (christine@locke.gotadsl.co.uk) and I'll pass them on.

Soil Improvement

For your information Ted Lake has no manure for sale this year. It will be up to tenants to find alternative sources.

We will be getting new deliveries of leaves on Sunnyside New this autumn, anyone wanting rotted down leaves to improve their soil should help themselves from the existing stocks as soon as possible.



SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

All tenants are invited to

**Christmas Drinks (mulled wine,
mince pies etc)**

on

Sunday 18th December
12.00—3.00 ish

at the Tea Hut B15
Please bring a contribution.