



**WAHGA NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2006
SPECIAL PUMPKIN EDITION**

Editor: David Hickman

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter: as we finish harvesting and tidying up our allotments and gardens it's time to catch up with what's going on in your Association.

WHAT'S ON - EVENTS

- Saturday November 18th
7.30pm - Supper Dance,
Golden Oldies' disco,
Gardeners' Hall
- Thursday December 7th
7.30pm - the 2006 AGM,
Gardeners' Hall
- Sunday December 10th -
XMAS Lunch in the
Gardeners' Hall
- Sunday December 31st
2006 - New Year's Eve
Dance, Gardeners' Hall

SHOW ME THE WAY

The annual Show and Fete is the biggest event in the WAHGA calendar, so reserve the following date in your diary now:

SATURDAY 18 AUGUST 2007

In addition to the splendid displays of flowers and vegetables in the Gardeners' Hall, the traditional fete events, train and pony rides and Punch and Judy will be laid on.

OUTINGS: Kneller Hall Concert: 1 August 2007



John Filmer has tickets now for this special military brass band concert. Tickets are £15 each and can be bought from John at the St Leonard's Road Trading Shed during normal trading hours. Kneller Hall is in Twickenham and a coach will leave the Gardeners' Hall at 5.30pm sharp.

There are lots of other outings which are organised by Karin Lohr: we'll give you a full list of these in the New Year's Edition which will be out next January.

Topical News from Allotments around the UK

In our last edition we reported on the giant “were rabbit” attacking the veggies on the allotments of Felton, Northumberland. Our roving reporter, Dave Hackman, has been researching stories of giant pumpkins produced in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales, (there’s lovely). Dave, who cheated by listening to the excellent Jeremy Vine show on Radio 2 has learnt about the Radio Allotment star Terry Walton who hails from the valley. Terry has had a great success in growing giant pumpkins, using an unexpected plantfood: beer!

Judging by the size of some of the pumpkins we’ve seen on the allotments of Windsor this year some Windsorians may have taken up the beer feeding trick too.



Look what a few beers can do for your pumpkins!

REPORTS FROM THE STARS OF YOUR COMMITTEE

John Filmer, our Purchasing Officer reports on the Trading Sheds:

The busy season is upon us with the potatoes ordered and expected to be in the sheds mid January. You will find order lists in the sheds as well as being distributed generally. After 10 years it became necessary to purchase bags. Not surprisingly, the price has advanced leading to a small increase in our sales price. Still a bargain as compared with local garden centres. Don’t forget orders are executed in strict rotation so it is advisable to order early to ensure that you get the cultivars you prefer.

This year we introduce a new additional seed supplier which has enabled us to expand our range. If your requirements are not on the list please let us know and we will do what we can to oblige. You will also notice a standard price for all seeds.



The annual stocktake nears completion and as usual is followed by an order to bring stock up to date. Again, please let us know if there are other products we should consider having in stock.

Again we repeat our request for help in the sheds. A couple of hours a month will help and you may find it informative and fun. Please contact us if you can help. For those of you who don't purchase your seeds etc. with us pay us a visit: see David's article on the back page!

Wishing you a successful season.

John

Meanwhile, **Don Hartridge, our Allotment Secretary** reports on lettings and the annual best allotment prizes.

I am pleased to report a successful year in allotment lettings. There continues to be a steady stream of enquiries through our web site which is encouraging for the future. Some of our sites are now fully occupied with a waiting list. Consequently it places a greater responsibility on allotment holders to ensure their plots are properly worked.

Despite some difficult conditions created by the dry weather and water restrictions, allotment holders achieved many excellent results, which were demonstrated by the entries at the show in August. It was pleasing to see many good efforts when the best allotment competition was judged. In this regard our congratulations go to the worthy winners who were:-

First:	Barry Pateman – Maidenhead Road
Second:	Armando Mannone – Bolton Road
Third:	Eric Black – Fairground
Best Newcomer:	Alan Jacobs – Maidenhead Road

During the year site supervisors and their assistants have worked very hard to improve our sites and we are grateful for their continuing efforts. If any member has spare time to help in this work they will be most welcome. If this is not possible you can help by ensuring that your plot and surrounding paths are kept in good order.

It is now time to be getting on with the autumn digging. Inevitably, there will be finished crops to clear from the plot. Please compost all that you can. If you need to burn any items ensure that they are dry and that any smoke is not going to annoy neighbouring residents. We did receive one or two complaints during the hot period.

Don



Fran's Recipe Corner : SLOE GIN

Have you ever tried making Sloe Gin? It's a delicious cocktail and a lovely "winter warmer"! It's very simple to make. This is what you do:

First find a blackthorn tree: you may have one in your garden or you may know one growing in an open space. The sloes need to be soft so you either need to wait until after the first frost OR you pick them once they're ripe on the branch (September or October)and then freeze them.

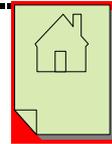
Second come the ingredients and this is pretty simple;

You need a pint of gin, a pound of sloes and a pound of sugar.

Mix them all together and pour into a bottle and close it! Put the bottle on its side and turn it over once a week for six months. Then you open the bottle and remove the sloes by pouring through a sieve: close the bottle again and leave it to mature for another six months or more if you're patient!

I've got vintages going back to 1998!

YOUR TRADING SHEDS : USE THEM!



Do you know about the three trading sheds run by the Association for members? If you're a new member or if you haven't visited our website you may not be aware of the sheds We sell a wide range of garden and allotment products including composts, seeds, seed potatoes, onion sets and flower bulbs. The sheds are operated by volunteer members who are happy to have a friendly chat and to offer advice. So where are these sheds and when are they open?

Maidenhead Road Allotment Site: Open on Sundays between 9am and 12 noon and Thursdays 9am-11am

Gardeners' Hall, St Leonard's Road: Open Sundays between 10.15am and 12.15pm and Thursdays from 2.30pm to 3.30pm AND between February and May this shed is also open on Saturdays from 2.30pm to 3.30pm.

Clewer Fuel Site in St Andrew's Avenue: Open Sundays from 11am to 12noon.