

WAHGA NEWSLETTER SPRING 2015

EDITOR: DAVID HICKMAN



Welcome to the latest edition and a Happy Easter to all readers. It's always an exciting time of year when we need to get out and do all sorts of jobs on our allotments and in our gardens. This newsletter includes your latest updates and news from the Association. If you'd like to contribute to future editions please contact the Editor: contact details are on the back page.

SHOW AND FETE - NOW IN SEPTEMBER

The date for the annual Show & Fete has been moved to **Saturday 5th September**, just after the end of the school holidays, so please put this in your diaries. It is intended to be a friendly local show and not an RHS County Show look-alike. This year for the first time it is free to enter and there is a new easy-to-understand show schedule. Perhaps your main reason for growing is the pleasure of eating your own produce, so why not pick out the best examples and bring them along? You may think it is not for you, but you could be surprised at how much you enjoy taking part and seeing all the other entries. There has never been a better time to give it a go.

There are classes for novices as well as those with a bit more experience. There are fun categories such as the weirdest carrot or longest runner bean! Children have their own special classes. If you like baking, why not enter something in the domestic class? Show schedules giving details of all the classes will be available from the trading sheds or on-line shortly. Do have a look and seriously consider taking part. If you have any questions ask at the trading sheds.

Graham Ashley

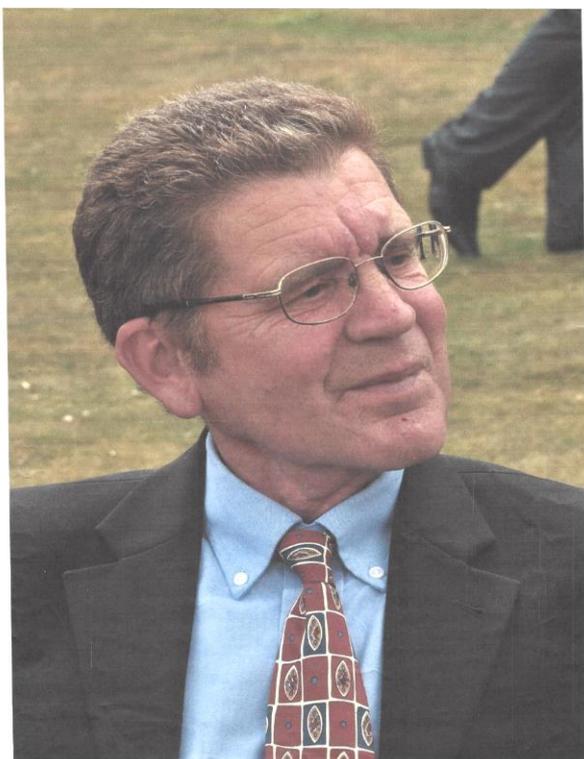
SPRING EVENTS

The Committee has organised a talk for new Allotment holders, which will be held on **Sunday 19th April** at 10.30am at the Gardeners Hall Bar. All are welcome. Also, Lesley Spence is organising a WAHGA Quiz night, at 7.30pm on **Friday 15th May**. Please contact Lesley for further details: more information is on the Events Board on the back page of this edition.

A TRIBUTE TO JOE RIGG

Joe (pictured, below) was a much respected member of WAHGA who sadly passed away last year. For many years Joe had an allotment on the Fairground site, very near to Gardeners Hall. He was a frequent prizewinner at the annual show, often due to his wonderful dahlias which, every year, gave his plot a great show of colour! Joe also spent a number of years serving on the Committee and running the bar at the Hall. He also had a long spell as Site Steward for the Fairground site. This typified Joe's generous approach to life and helping other people.

As many readers will know, Joe was married to Jayne who, until recently, cooked and served wonderful Sunday lunches at the Hall on a regular basis. The highlight of these



events was the Christmas special, when Jayne and her team would produce a superb feast, whilst Joe, dressed in his bright waistcoat, was "front of house". The Christmas event always included a quiz led by Joe. Although he was perhaps quite a shy man by nature, at these events he'd be transformed into the life and soul of the party. Joe was always particularly good with the children who came along to the lunches.

A natural mentor, guide and teacher, Joe loved to share his enthusiasm and skills with any willing student. When he took up gardening, allegedly as a hobby, some 20 years ago and, especially when he took on an allotment for

the first time, he was fascinated by all of the tricks and tips that were shared by older more experienced gardeners. Joe was always willing to share his own discoveries with others taking new and less experienced allotment growers "under his wing" to make sure they were up to scratch and fit to be a close neighbour to his precious plot of land.

Latterly, Joe was a very enthusiastic keeper of chickens on his plot. He was greatly assisted in this activity by Steve Gray, who became a close friend.

CHUTNEY DELIGHTS

We have selected this delicious looking **Rhubarb and Date Chutney** recipe courtesy of "The Best Kept Secrets of the Women's Institute".

900 g (2 lb) rhubarb, trimmed and cut into 5 cm (2 inch) chunks
450 g (1 lb) onions chopped roughly
115 g (4 oz) dates, chopped
300 ml (½ pint) each of malt vinegar and water
1 level tablespoon salt
1 level tablespoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Place all the ingredients in a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer gently until the chutney has a jam-like consistency and there is no excess liquid on the surface. Stir from time to time to prevent sticking.

Allow to cool slightly. Spoon into cooled, sterilised jars and seal with vinegar-proof tops. Label and store for 6-8 weeks before use.

NEWS FROM THE SHEDS

Now that the soil is drying out a bit and starting to warm up you should be planting your seed potatoes if you haven't already done so. If you didn't place your order in the trading sheds, we still have a few main crop varieties left.

The Dobies seeds have been selling well and we have had to re-order some varieties. Hurry, hurry, hurry before we run out of your favourites. We order seeds based on previous years' sales and also taking notice of requests made in the trading sheds. Although it's too late for this year, please note that it is possible to order individual items from the catalogues to add to our bulk order. A few enterprising members have benefited from personal requests made this way. All you with calendars and diaries please make a note to think about this before Christmas for next year! Ask to see a catalogue in the sheds, or get the information from the Dobies website. Whilst we're on the subject of seeds, some of you have noticed the empty pigeon hole for Aquadulce broad beans. These are recommended for autumn sowing:

I sow mine on 1st November. We will have stocks in the autumn. For spring sowing try Imperial Green Longpod or Karmazyn.

We try to have something different for our members each year. In the autumn we had supplies of Wight garlic and banana shallots for autumn planting. These sold out quickly and we'd love to know what success you had with them. After a slow start mine are all flourishing. I put Chempak onion fertiliser round them to start with, just waiting for the warmer weather now.

Finally, the team who run the trading sheds would like to invite some strong, perhaps younger, members who could help to man the sheds, especially on Sunday mornings. Virtue is its own reward, but you might learn something as well.

John Spence, Purchasing Officer

BURNING ISSUES

This is a quick reminder to allotment holders that you should only have bonfires outside the summer months, ie they are banned in June, July and August. There have been lots of complaints about bonfires in the past, so please can all allotment holders observe this rule.

EVENTS BOARD

EVENT	DATE & VENUE
Talk on how to get the best out of your allotment by Graham Ashley - designed for new allotment holders.	10.30am Sunday 19 th April, 2015. Gardeners Hall bar.
WAHGA Quiz. Come along for a relaxed but hopefully competitive evening!	7.30pm Friday 15 th May, 2015. Gardeners Hall. The bar will be open from around 7pm.
WAHGA Annual Show & Fete. The first Saturday after the summer holiday s- a great opportunity to enter the show with your fruit, veg and flowers. Or just come along for a fun family afternoon.	2pm-5pm, Saturday 5 th September, 2015. Gardeners Hall and car park/ lawn areas.

The following are events organised by the Chrysanthemum, Fuchsia and Pelargonium Society

Sunday June 7th at 2pm - Pelargonium Show, Staging from 9-11am

Saturday August 8th at 2pm - Fuchsia Show, Staging from 9 - 11am

Tuesday September 15th at 8pm - Evening Show, Staging from 6 - 7.45pm

Tuesday November 10th at 8pm - Late Chrysanthemum Show, Staging from 6 - 7.45pm

Thursday December 3rd at 2pm- Social Afternoon with quiz - till 4pm

CONTACTS

Lesley Spence (Membership Secretary) - membership@wahga.org.uk

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WAHGA is Windsor Allotments & Home Gardens Association
Visit our website: wahga.org.uk