



Grass Cuttings



Newsletter of Sale Horticultural & Allotment Society – August 2008

Chairman's Report

Hello again. Since you received our last "Grass Cuttings" quite a lot has been happening.

I am pleased to advise that following Trafford's judging, 3 plot holders, Alf Edwards plot 41, Lionel Kay plot 48 and Peter Webster plot 58, have been awarded Certificates of Excellence, which will be presented at Trafford's Gardener's Evening 3rd September. Eight other plot holders, 2, 3, 7, 9a, 27, 44, 55b and 60a will each be receiving letters of commendation.

Part of our site hitherto overgrown and part shaded is currently being cleared and developed by offenders as part of their community service. Trees have been trimmed to reduce the shade. This reclaimed area now has 8 raised beds with wood chip pathways and will be used as a TMBC Pathways project.

In conjunction with the Police all our Society equipment has now been identified with their "Smart Water System".

Contaminated Manure has been found on 2 local allotments in Timperley. This contamination is from the use of Aminopyralid herbicide by farmers to control weeds. To date thankfully no members have reported finding signs of this contamination in their gardens or allotments. Visit our newly-updated Web Site www.shas.org.uk and click on the "Links" section near the end for more information.

I recently went to a very interesting talk by David Hampsey, a well known vegetable and flower grower and exhibitor, from Stockport. He mentioned 2 newly introduced varieties of cabbage, Kilaxy and Kailton, and also Clapton cauliflower which are resistant to club root. I also asked about mildew on onions, which appears to be endemic on Grosvenor Road Allotments. He suggested that to prevent mildew on onions they need to be treated with a chemical called "Mancozeb" every week until bulbing begins. He had no knowledge of any successful treatment to remove mildew. He also mentioned work being carried out by the University of Bangor on blight resistant potatoes, and suggested trying Google on this subject.

I must again thank on your behalf our SHAS committee for their continuing work.

Best regards

Don Jackson

New look website



Committee Contact details

Don Jackson	Chairman	973 5256
Email chairman@shas.org.uk Plot 50		
Sylvia Steer	Secretary	282 8664
Email secretary@shas.org.uk Plot 13		
Peter Baggaley	Treasurer	962 5642
Email: treasurer@shas.org.uk Plot 7		
Tony Turnbull	Membership	973 1946
Email: memberships@shas.org.uk Plot 21		
Linda McLachlan	Allotments	962 2920
Plot 60a		
Alf Edwards	Trading Hut	282 0048
Plot 41		
David Taylor	Equipment	973 0867
Plot 27		
Kevin Brooks	Grasscutting	962 3218
Plot 38		
Jonathan Richards		
Ken Bostock		
Website : www.shas.org.uk		

If you have looked at our website at www.shas.org.uk recently, you will see it has now got a fresh new look. This is thanks to a lot of hard work from Paul Howarth, who is our resident web wizard, while he is not working on his plot!

Now that we have the new look, we are now working on the content, so that it is relevant and up to date – which will hopefully give those of you with internet access the incentive to log on regularly to find out what is going on in SHAS and the wider allotment and gardening world, and to get answers to questions like, "Is the Trading Hut open this Sunday?", and, "What should I be doing on my plot this week?"

Please keep checking on progress, and if you have any suggestions for content, let me know. Even better, if you are willing to create a new section or maintain an existing one, please let me know and we will arrange to show you how to do it and to give you editing access to the site. (It can't be too hard as I have managed to make some changes!!)

Tony Turnbull

Dates for your Diary

Trafford Gardeners Evening

This popular event will be held at a different venue this year:

Flixton Ex-Servicemen's Club

(John Alker Club)

Flixton Rd

Wednesday 3rd September
7.15-10.30pm

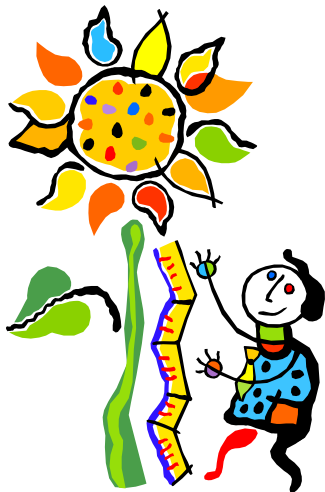
Bill Blackledge

Will give a talk

"A Light Hearted Look at Gardening"

Gardeners Questions will be tackled by **Bill, Frank Ashton and John Steedman**

Giant Sunflower Competition



Judging and measuring will take place during the plot inspection on Monday 8th September.

Is it tall?

Does it have an enormous flower? Let us know if you have an entry at home instead of on the plot for the competition.

Prizes will be awarded at the Pumpkin Party.

Talk for members

"Widely as His Mersey Flows"

a talk with slides by

Hugh Begg

Tuesday 28th October
2.30pm
at
St Mary's Church

Please come along and support our second talk this season. This is free to members but friends may come for a small charge.

Allotment News

The water supply was fixed in the nick of time for seed sowing. The weather, a mixture of sun and showers has given good growing conditions. Most plots are now producing crops, which is what we need to see on our inspections. If any part of your plot is unproductive most of the time, please consider giving up a part of it voluntarily, before you are asked formally. **Our waiting list** is at 30 with some people waiting since August 2006.

In June the committee hired a skip and spent a rain sodden morning clearing specific plots of dangerous glass and metal. Please don't use your plot as a place to store 'old stuff from the house'. The plot is for growing plants after all.

Several paths are in dire need of regular trimming and straightening. Please keep them clear of any wood or stones to avoid the mower and strimmer being damaged.

New plot-holders have a 6 month probationary period as it is not always realised how much commitment is needed to maintain a plot on a regular basis. We might think we've got the plot completely weed free until we get back from holiday and the mare's tail is pushing up in all directions and it's all to do again. How many hours are needed to maintain a productive plot in good condition? Probably a minimum of four hours per week once it's under control but in practice it can be more than double. Don't underestimate how pressurised the harvesting is when so much needs picking, podding, cleaning and eating or freezing in a short space of time.

Courgettes are on the rampage. Have them steamed, stir-fried, made into soup and grated into salads with carrot. There is also a recipe for courgette loaf which helps get rid of them! Don't forget to keep some big ones for the Pumpkin Party.

To do now

Shear over strawberry plants to expose the new growth below. Select some runners to pot up for new plants.

As ground becomes vacant cover it over with manure to suppress weeds and allow it to rot down to provide good humous-rich soil for next spring.

PUMPKIN PARTY!



Friday 31st October
6pm

The Hoe down

We enjoyed last year's event so much we want to do it again. Entry will be limited to 80 people and strictly by ticket only. Adults £1.50, children £1.00. Your ticket will entitle you to soup, a hot dog, baked potato and cake! But this year extra food will be available to buy at a small cost.

Full details are on the attached flier. All offers of help both before, (shopping, baking, erecting gazebos), and on the night, (doing a stint at the barbecue), will be gratefully accepted.

Reclaimed area

Without doubt the greatest change this year has been in the hitherto uncultivated area of plots 9 and 10. As Don said, having had the permission of the adjacent householders to lop the boundary sycamores which shaded the site, we have been able let the plots to two new tenants.

We extend a warm welcome to members of Pathways and look forward to seeing their plot develop and flourish.

Manure Bay

A manure bay is to be built at the end of the southern main path which leads me on to the **warning** issued on site last month and mentioned by Don in his remarks. The product, aminopyralid, is in certain herbicides used by farmers. If pastureland has been sprayed with this to kill docks thistles etc, the farmer must not allow grass, hay silage, manure or slurry to be exported from the farm without informing recipients of the use of the herbicide. Soil containing such manure is likely to damage crops, specifically potatoes, tomatoes legumes carrots and lettuce, and will be contaminated for at least a year.

As far as we have been able to ascertain, our supply of manure is free of such herbicide. We are lucky to have a free continuous supply from a local source. Please use as much as possible on your plot and compost heap to lower the mountain in the centre bay. Please dispose of the old bags yourselves.

Health Advice

First Aid Kits

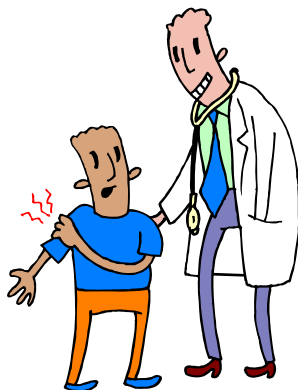
We now have three basic first aid kits on the allotment. They are situated in the Trading Hut, The Hoe Down and the Tool Shed.



The purpose is to provide a simple aid for self administration.

Tetanus

Clare Gorman RGN, plot 15b urges everyone to ensure they are covered against Tetanus. Gardeners are very susceptible to injury from tools and possible infection from the soil. You need a booster injection every 10 years. Why not check with your GP?



Our thanks to Clare for giving The Hoe Down a major clean up. Please help maintain standards by doing your bit whenever you can.

Trading Hut

Onion Sets

We have once again ordered onion sets for Autumn Planting.

SENSHYU YELLOW is a Japanese over-wintering variety that produces a heavy crop of semi-globe bulbs of excellent quality.

ELECTRIC RED is a popular over-wintering variety that produces medium to large bulbs of a mild and sweet flavour.

Delivery will be some time in September, a notice will be posted to alert you of delivery and to tell you the price.

Opening Dates:

7th, 21st, 28th September,
12th, 26th October and
9th November

Alf Edwards

Plot-holders in the news

Congratulations to **Jacqui Brocklehurst** on achieving another RHS Silver Gilt award for her 'Cider House' garden entry at Tatton Show last month.



Jacqui and Tully making an arch of willow for sweet peas on her plot

Did you all see the **Leicester** family from plot 25b on Look North West promoting the virtues of allotmenting? The film showed them on the plot and then at home eating their 'veggie fingers'.

Alex writes:

'I enjoyed being on TV. I wasn't nervous because I pretended that they weren't there and got on with it.

We had to dig up potatoes then I had to bury them and then dig them again and again.'

Well done Alex and Katy too. I think everyone enjoyed watching your dad eat the enormous lettuce leaf!

Past Events

Plant Sale

Our plant Sale back in May was blessed with fine weather and made a profit of £340 for the society. Thank you to all who supported it.

John Steedman's Talk

A dozen members turned out for this entertaining and informative talk made all the more so by audience participation!

John brought specimens of his own plants to the new venue at Townscroft Lodge in Ashton which proved very convenient.

Fairfield Compost

At the Hoe Down, members learned about the processes involved in turning the contents of our green wheelie bins into compost. Leaflets on Fairfield are available in The Hoe Down.

SHAS
PUMPKIN PARTY 2008!



Friday
31st October
6pm

The Hoe down

Hot dog, soup, baked potato and cake with ticket!

Extras can be bought.

Only soft drinks provided.

Bring your own wine or beer.

Prizes!

for

home-grown pumpkins

Bring along your gourds, squashes and marrows....anything huge, unusual or particularly ugly to add to the ambience

Jack O'Lanterns

may be made from shop bought pumpkins.

Fancy dress

Games and Races

for the children among us!

Presentation of sunflower prizes

Voucher Award

For best plot!

Entry by ticket only

£1.50 adult £1.00p child

last date 26th October.

Tickets available from the Trading Hut or

Sylvia Steer Tel: 282 8664

Members' families and friends welcome!