

Chichester Organic Gardening Society

Newsletter 66
September 2014



Notes from the Committee

As you will see, we have arranged meetings for the rest of the year, Since Vee stood down, this has been done jointly by committee members. **But we do need someone to co-ordinate**; if you think you would like to, please contact one of the Committee. You will have plenty of support and ideas and contacts from the rest of us.

You will also see that we are starting to have coffee/tea at meetings, after the main talk.

And another reminder about our two Shows this autumn, Green Fair and Weald & Downland.

You will also find the summary of the year, with papers for the AGM. We do hope as many as possible will come to that and the Harvest Supper.

The Committee

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Please note that membership now stands at £6 per household. Should you wish to renew by Standing Order, here are the details:

Lloyds TSB
No: 01914064
Sort Code: 30 91 97
Chichester Organic Gardening Society.

If you do set up a Standing Order or you change your email address (and are receiving your newsletter by email PLEASE let me know: nina@nrlearning.co.uk

COGS FUNDING – REMINDER

Talks: Members - £1 per meeting, Visitors - £2.

These are probably the smallest charges of any local Society!

Speakers and Meetings

We are always looking for suggestions for speakers. If you have any idea for speakers or visits, please let one of the Committee know.

Raffles

A reminder that these are held at every meeting except May and October. Any good items, especially bottles, good plants, and ‘gifts’ are welcome.

Also at meetings:

Surplus, Gluts, whether plants or produce or no-longer-needed useful garden things, are also welcome. People can help themselves (for a small donation) – but please take yours home if no-one wants them!

COGS is having tea (and coffee!)

This Autumn the committee has decided to have a trial run to offer tea and coffee at our meetings, after the speaker. We felt it would be a good opportunity for everybody to have a chance to talk to one and other, to discuss gardening tips, successes, seeds or anything else – we won’t be patrolling to check that it is only garden talk!!!

Initially the committee will provide the tea and coffee from the funds, but donations will be gratefully received. We will review it at Christmas and depending on your feedback and funds, we will make any changes in the New Year.

A call for contributors

We would welcome interesting and relevant pieces by members, which we can print. Do you have some special ‘tips’ or advice gleaned from your own experience, which you would like to share? If so do send, in first instance to penelopejohnstone@yahoo.co.uk or you can discuss at one of the meetings.

Oving Scarecrow Festival – Saturday 17th May

Some of us may already know this annual festival. For the first time, COGS had a small stall, sharing with Transition Chichester at the ‘Plant Exchange’. Julia for TC demonstrated planting in small plots, and COGS had leaflets etc and shared in the exchange of plants. The scarecrows were scattered throughout the village, some of them very innovative, and there were a few other stalls near ours. It attracted sufficient attention to consider this a useful venture.

Petworth Community Garden

For our April meeting, Kate Brickell from Petworth came to tell us about the development of the Community Garden. This began in 2005 when Kate, after training with Garden Organic, decided to start a garden for the use of everyone. She took over two allotment spaces, which now nine years later have been transformed. She showed us numerous pictures of the beds during their development, people working there, and the buildings for which grants were obtained.

There is a large and well appointed shed – almost an outside room – and compost toilet built with Lottery funding.

A group of us visited at Kate’s invitation, in July, and were given a great welcome. The place looks at first quite large, as there are sheds and some trees – giving useful shade on a hot afternoon – but has been skilfully planned to make the most of the space available. A small area is for children to play, and the raised beds are high enough to be accessible for disabled people. The ‘shed’ has facilities for cooking, and Kate’s team produced for us home-made soup, cake, scones, and tea. As the emphasis is more on community involvement than on production, they have acquired another nearby allotment which is used for crops. Altogether a magnificent achievement.

Trees and Walls Walk

Our other outdoor visit this year was a guided tour of parts of Chichester with which we may be familiar – but without always observing. On 14th August Anne Scicluna, one of the City Guides, took a group from the Cathedral, along West Street, through the Bishop’s Palace Gardens, pointing out memorable trees, such as the Wollemi Pine and the Dawn Redwood. She also gave us some fascinating glimpses into the history of our city. Along the walls, we viewed Westgate Fields from the bastion, then continued along North Walls to Priory and Jubilee parks and ended by the Roman Walls and New Park. (There is a booklet about the City Tree Trail, available from the Tourist office).

Weald and Downland Countryside Show

This year the very popular show will be held on Saturday and Sunday, 11-12th October. We are taking part again, as it has proved very interesting and enjoyable, and useful for COGS, in the past couple of years. We shall therefore be very grateful again for any help on those days.

Anyone helping gets a free entry, and time to walk around and sample the various exhibits and events of the show.

This year, the Transition Green Fair unfortunately clashes with the first day of WDOAM. As COGS do support TC, we would like to have a small stall at the Green Fair as well.

We have now almost enough helpers at both events; but if you are going anyway, do call at the stall to encourage us!

Seed Swop – Get Saving Now!

Saving Seeds is something which COGS people will probably already be doing right now, at the end of such a hot sunny summer – despite the rain later.

At a meeting at Tuppenny Barn on 1st August, convened by Ali Beckett, preliminary plans were made for a “Get Sowing Saturday –

Seed and Seedling Swop”, to be held there on Saturday 28th March 2015.

COGS will take part, and we might have our own small stall, but are not sure about that yet. There will be other stalls e.g. willow work, garden bric a brac, compost information.

So do start saving extra seeds to contribute. They can be kept until the day or handed in earlier – and we can if necessary co-ordinate this at a future COGS meeting. Seeds should be clearly labelled, and you can add any notes on growing etc.

It is always interesting to visit Tuppenny Barn, we support their work and are glad to contribute to their activities.

There will be another meeting in January 2015 which one or more of the Committee will attend, and we shall keep everyone informed of any developments.

GARDEN SAFARI

It has been suggested that the idea of the garden safari be re-introduced into the COGS activities.

It is true that our monthly meetings are somewhat curtailed by time limitations on our use of the Basil Shippam Hall and of course they are not continuous throughout the year, naturally as the summer is the busy time in the garden.

As a result some members have expressed concern that there is little opportunity within our diary for simple social interaction, to the detriment of our aim to share knowledge and experience.

The garden safari, or something similar, might be a way of addressing these issues and enhancing our activities during the summer months.

Traditionally, participating members might open their gardens and/or allotments on one or two occasions each year and invite members and friends to visit, to see what is being done and exchange ideas, tips and technicalities.

The disadvantage of this arrangement is that it could concentrate too much into too short a time, visitors trying to make too many visits and participants unable to see others activities.

Another way might be to have more events, perhaps one a month, with fewer gardens on view each time. This way visitors would include participants from other occasions and with fewer gardens to see, make visiting and interaction more relaxed and rewarding.

There are no doubt many other possibilities and members are invited to contribute ideas they have but firstly your committee will need to know if members support the idea and if so at what level, participation or visiting.

Other issues to be considered include insurance, many household policies contain a third party element which may be sufficient. Hospitality would be at the discretion of host participants. Organisation, I would be prepared to undertake arranging the programme.

In the hope that the proposal will be well received, your committee look forward to hearing members views.

David Scott
Treasurer

The Yacon

I promised an update on the Yacon in the last Newsletter, but as I haven't harvested it yet, there's nothing much to say. It took a long time to get going this year but once the lovely warm weather arrived, it bushed up nicely. It hasn't had any watering. I've left it to its own devices and it hasn't appeared to suffer at all – although maybe it will have smaller, harder tubers as a result. When I do harvest it, my intention is to juice the tubers, so that I can make some syrup since it is reputed to be calorie-free.

Nina Guilfoyle

SOLSTICE SURPRISE

We worked all year on the house,
Restoration, insulation,
Conservation, decoration.
Around it, the garden,
Bramble tangle, nettles,
Ground Elder, Dandelion,
And in the centre, oddly placed,
A greenhouse,
Shattered glass,
Timber frame intact.
'Why there?' we wonder.
But in the spring, bluebells,
Shoots of Rhubarb,
Later, Coxes Apples and a scented rose.
Once someone loved this garden.

We visit on the shortest day,
Winter Solstice.
In the Hawthorn Blackbirds clack;
A Wren, mouse-like,
Scurries in the woodpile.
I dream of hens, raised beds, wild pond;
He, of a workshop,
A seat under the apple tree.
Frost-bright day closing,
The garden in thick shadow;
But one pale gold beam,
Still whisper-warm,
Sneaks between the rooftops
To light the old greenhouse.
Once someone knew.

Gina Carrington

'in future issues Gina and David will be writing about the (ongoing)
re-taming of an urban garden gone wild'.

Ten Years Ago

The Newsletter of September **2004** contained a short piece entitled ‘Congratulations’ – to Pat and Colin Adams, and to Elaine and Ganesh Kings. So we may now repeat Congratulations to these members on their tenth anniversaries.

In August 2004 a group of members went to Highgrove, but their visit was cut short by torrential rain; they were therefore offered a return visit at a later date. Two recipes featured; and a small announcement for the opening of an organic shop in the Buttermarket, which many of us will remember; we also know that since then the Buttermarket has been ‘madeover’ and has a very different feel to it.

(2014: Manuka, at the far end of North Street, is excellent for organic foods of all kinds; and we hear that a new small local and partly organic shop has just opened in St Pancras).

Transition Chichester continue their film evenings at the Basil Shippam Centre, 7.30 p.m. entry £5/£3 concessions.

Monday Oct 6th 7.30pm The theme of the evening is Local Food. Film **Local Food Roots** followed by TC Food Mapping project with some findings on local food. Guest local producers then tell the story of their local food journey. Delicious wares to try and buy.

Monday Nov 3rd 7.30pm Film **TRASHED: We buy it, we bury it, we burn it and then we ignore it.** What happens to all the trash we produce? Academy Award winning actor Jeremy Irons sets out to discover the extent and the effects of the global waste problem...and to discover the solutions.

Monday Dec 1st. 7.30pm..

Samsara . "This spellbinding movie explores the wonders of our world from the mundane to the miraculous, looking into the unfathomable reaches of humanity's spirituality and the human experience. Neither a traditional documentary nor a travelogue, Samsara takes the form of a nonverbal, guided meditation."

Bring food to share afterwards for a pre Christmas celebration in full TC style..

Mon Jan 5th 2015 7.30 pm

2020 Vision : an uplifting film where exquisite images of the beauty of our planet bring us deep into connection with the Natural World we all depend upon and love.. Inspiring initiatives are already in place to restore ecosystems and return our Earth to health A 2020 vision for the recovery of balance to all living systems has to manifest because we CARE we just need to CARE enough

Mon Feb 2 2015 7.30 pm: Schooling the World "An impeccable and gorgeous piece of work... It shook me awake." ~ Joanna Macy
If you wanted to change an ancient culture in a generation, how would you do it? You would change the way it educates its children.
Schooling the World takes a challenging, sometimes funny, ultimately deeply disturbing look at the effects of modern education on the world's last sustainable indigenous cultures.

INFINITY FOODS

Next orders to Pat by Mon **1st December** please.
(cheques or internet transfer to be with Pat by that date)
Delivery on Tuesday **9th December** please collect asap
Any member is welcome to order and there is no minimum order

If anyone new is interested please contact
pat_adams@btopenworld.com or 01243 602713

The catalogue can be downloaded at
<http://infinityfoodswholesale.co.uk/catalogue/>

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HONEY: Did you know?

Mead, made from honey and water, is the oldest known fermented alcoholic drink.

Honeycomb was found in 3,000-year-old tombs of the Pharaohs – and it was still edible!

Bees convert the sucrose of nectar into glucose and fan it with their wings until the water has evaporated.

(from Waitrose Weekend)

COGS MEETINGS 2014-2015

September 29 Wildwood – Jo and Alan Waters from Halnaker will talk about their work with coppicing, with examples of their products.

October 27 AGM and Harvest Supper

As always, the AGM is fairly brief; we then have a shared supper. Please bring a dish to share (homemade and also homegrown if possible) and your own cutlery, plates, glasses. This is one of the highlights of the COGS year so do come!

November 24 Prof Gerald Blunden Emeritus Professor Portsmouth University

“The search for new drugs and other useful products from plants”

2015

January 26 DVD ‘Permaculture in Practice: ecologically sound living – by design’ followed by discussion

February 23 Martin Duncan, ‘Arundel Castle, Gardens and Projects’

March 30 Roger Parsons, ‘The National Collection of Sweet Peas’

(we hope to visit both Arundel Castle gardens and Roger Parsons’ sweet pea nurseries later in the summer)

April 27 tba

June 1 Plant Swop and Spring Fling (note: not in May)

Unless otherwise stated, Monday meetings take place at
Bassil Shippam Centre, Tozer Way, St Pancras, Chichester PO19 7LG
Meetings start at 7.30pm, doors open at 7.15pm

Chichester Organic Gardening Society was formed in 1992 as a local group of both the Henry Doubleday Research Association and the Soil Association.

Aims of the Society

To encourage the growing of healthy produce and beautiful gardens by sustainable and environmentally kind gardening methods.

To provide a focus for local gardeners and growers to meet those sharing their interest in gardening *with* nature, both for social activities and to discuss gardening and related issues.

COGS activities in support of our Aims

- A programme of regular meetings (indoors September to May, outdoors June to August) with speakers on gardening and related topics.
- Occasional visits to places of gardening interest.
- Promotion of organic methods at COGS special events and appropriate local shows such as those at West Dean , Transition, and Weald and Downland Open Air Museum
- Shared purchase and bulk purchase scheme for whole food cooking supplies to obtain discounts.
- Books available for purchase or on loan from our small library.

Membership costs £6.00 per household. The membership year runs from October to September. To join contact Nina Guilfoyle on 01243 776063

Your COGS organisers are:

Officers:

Secretary – Penelope Johnstone (01243 771881)

Treasurer – David Scott (01243 778689) d4davidscott@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary – Nina Guilfoyle (01243 776063) nina@nrlearning.co.uk

Organisers:

Speaker Secretary – vacant; temporarily filled by Committee

Bookshop/Librarian - Barbara MacGregor (01243 781849)

Infinity Orders – Pat (01243 602713) pat_adams@btopenworld.com

Publicity - Susan Sinnett-Jones (02392 341813) a3ssj@mac.com

Website – Tom Broughton (01243 530019) tom@chicogs.org.uk

Committee Members:

Pat Alderton (01243 822615)

Nina Guilfoyle

Penelope Johnstone

Susan Sinnett-Jones

David Scott

John Bennett (01243 781289)

www.chicogs.org.uk

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