

# Hempland Lane-Heworth Allotment Association



## Summer Newsletter 2013

### Hot from the Hut!

#### Committee Members

Name		Plot
Ellen Bradbury	Committee Member	9
David Brinklow	Site Secretary and Treasurer	14
Phil Copley	Secretary	89
Gayle Enion-Farrington	Chair and Publicity Officer	34,35
Ulrike Manara	Minutes Secretary	40
Lisa Tindale	Committee Member	59b
Lorraine Wood	Shop Manager	64
Dave Wood	Shop Manager	65
Ann-Marie Knowles	Committee Member	16
Available !	Easy Access Plots Rep	?
Nigel Collinson	Committee Member	65
Mark Farrington	Website Administrator (not part of the committee)	35

Would you like to represent the Easy Access Plots? If so please speak to a committee member

DID YOU KNOW that we have 154 plots let with 141 tenants. We have 8 empty plots (20b, 46b, 51a, 536. 54b, 58a, 97b and 117) and no one currently on our waiting list. If you know anyone who wishes to have a plot see David Brinklow.

**VOLUNTEERING SUNDAYS** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in every month started in May. Due to rain, then sunshine the grass and weeds are growing faster than some of our vegetables. For our next volunteer day 11<sup>th</sup> August, we are asking anyone with a strimmer to come along (with their strimmer) and strim as much or as little as they can along the paths and entrances to the site. From Whitby Avenue, to the wildlife garden and around the perimeter of all plots to the footpaths crossing the site. We also need to clear empty plots. For anyone else please report to the Allotment Shop between the hours of 10am - 12noon, where you can choose from a wide range of jobs that need to be done on the site. From planting seeds on the spare easy access plots (the produce of which will be sold in the allotment shop), to weeding, painting, ground clearing etc. Jobs ranging from 30 mins to 2 hours - whatever you can spare - still giving you time for your own plot. Associate Members also welcome to get an idea of what allotmenting is about.

## News from the Chairperson

Well we have had a dry spell, a wet spell and it looks like summer has arrived, but for how long? By now you should have most things planted but maintaining it now is the key. Here are some suggestions :-

### Fruit and vegetables

#### Vegetables

- As early crops are harvested, e.g. shallots and garlic clear the ground then sprinkle with organic fertiliser before forking it over thus re - using the space. Hoe regularly between rows to keep down weeds.
- Sow vegetables such as main crop carrots, lettuce, Spring cabbage, kohi rabi, turnips, endive, chicory, oriental leaves including Chinese cabbage, pak choi and white radishes. An early variety of peas can be sown in July as they will be ready late Summer / early Autumn.
- Keep all crops well watered. Erratic watering will make vegetables tough and tasteless and some will set seed prematurely.
- "Stop" outdoor tomatoes (end of July) by nipping out the very top of each plant. This diverts all the plants energy into ripening the remaining fruit.

#### Fruit

- Once you have picked all your strawberries, clear strawberry beds by cutting all plants down to 2 inches (5cm) from the ground. Rake off all the rubbish and then sprinkle organic rose or tomato fertiliser over the area before watering thoroughly.
- Harvest raspberries, redcurrants, blackcurrants and gooseberries.
- Prune fruit trees and bushes at the end of fruiting.

Finally, if you haven't heard already I wanted to let you all know that Mark and I are expecting our first child. This little one has been a long time coming and we have to admit that Mark being 40 years and myself approaching 39 years, we may feel a little old at the school gates when that time comes, but the love will never be any less. Baby is due 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014, so we will have to do a bit of careful planning regarding our next AGM, but news of both events will be discussed in the winter newsletter.

Gayle Enion-Farrington, Chairperson

### Technology



Allotment database and MailChimp system. I can confirm that we have 70 members and 9 associates on the database that receive mail messages. Should you wish to get a message to all allotmenters via this system, please email [gayle.farrington@btinternet.com](mailto:gayle.farrington@btinternet.com) and it can be sent to everyone on the database.

For latest newsletter and diary information please visit [www.hempland-lane-allotments.com](http://www.hempland-lane-allotments.com)

## Vandalism and theft



We know that there is an ongoing problem with vandalism and theft on the allotment site. Recently some sheds have been burnt down. The Neighbourhood Policing team are patrolling the site but it is very difficult for them to catch the culprits. We have discussed CCTV but neither the police nor Allotment Officer at City of York Council feel that the quality of any footage will be good enough. We are however setting up an allotment watch and ask you all to come to our Summer Fete and BBQ on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2013 10.00 - 14.00 to meet our local Police Community Support Officer and discuss their plans.

In the mean time please report any vandalism to David Brinklow Site Secretary Tel: 421979

## Allotment Watch



### Think about the following:

Do you really need a shed?

Secure your shed and keep away from footpaths

Remove tools that are not regularly used.

Remove matches, petrol and other flammable material from the shed.

Visibly mark your tool - call 01904 669072 (Crime Reduction and Community Watch Office)

Fit an alarm to your shed - £8 through allotment watch scheme - call 01904 669072

Plant brambles or roses at the front of your plot to deter trespassers entering your plot.

For more information please contact PCSO Katie Richards:  
[katie.richards@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:katie.richards@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk)

## Car Parking

Parking is at a premium on our allotment site so please park your carefully and be considerate to others. DO NOT park any cars in front of the Chippings, Manure Bay and Skips.



## Dates for your Diary - Summer Fete 2013

This year it will be held on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2013, 10am - 2pm. A scarecrow completion will be run again, so start your preparations!

Join our annual Summer Fete in front of the allotment shop. This is a free event for all association members and the local community. Bringing our community together, sharing successes and failures of the season so far and friendship and laughter over a few drinks!

There will be a BBQ (bring your own items to sizzle and your favourite tipple). Salads and bread rolls will be provided. There will also be a tombola, and sales of produce, homemade jams, pickles and cakes, as well as the allotment shop. A representative from our local PCSO will be present to discuss Allotment Watch.

All proceeds raised on the day are put back into the maintenance of the allotment site, for the benefit of all.



All Welcome ☺



See you there and don't forget something to sizzle, sit on and your favourite tipple!

**Strimming Weekend 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> September 2013** - more details to follow nearer the time - just keep the dates free for now ☺



**ALLOTMENT SHOP - is open Every Sunday 10am - 12 noon. We look forward to seeing you there.**  
**If you have spare produce on your allotment, please donate it to the shop. Also proceeds help maintain the site and fund social events such as our summer fete.**

Do you grow outdoor tomatoes on your plot? If so, could you help with research into tomato blight? The Sárvári Trust project, based at Bangor University aims to:

- Learn more about the strains of late-blight that infect tomato and their relationship with potato stains.

- Develop new tomato cultivars with greater resistance to late-blight suitable for environmentally-friendly growing by gardeners in Great Britain and Ireland.

If you willing to take part in this project by collecting leaf samples, please reply to [afpe57@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:afpe57@bangor.ac.uk).



## DIARY OF A BEEKEEPER Part 3

by Nick Mansell

Based at Hempland Lane Allotments, York, North Yorkshire

Ask any beekeeper to sum up this past year and all will agree it has been disastrous. Cold wet weather is bad for flying insects and the shortage of nectar and pollen has meant many honeybee colonies have struggled to survive. When insufficient food is brought back to the hive the queen slows down her egg laying and existing brood will starve and die. In their natural desire to multiply queens will sometimes leave the hive with a large number of their offspring to try and set up a new colony in the wild. Before doing so they thankfully leave a new queen cell in the hive for a daughter to hatch and take over. This year colonies have been prone to excessive swarming which each time reduces the colony size by about half until they become weak and queenless. Some beekeepers clip the queen's wing or wings to prevent them flying off. Having not done this myself resulted in them swarming at least three times. The first settled on a neighbour's shed which I put back in their hive. The second disappeared towards the wild life area and a third settled in a bush outside our doctors surgery but by the time I got there they had moved on.

My colony was now so weak that I decided to unite what was left with a second colony I kept at my brother's farm. Bees will not tolerate newcomers which they recognise by their pheromones so the method I used was to place one brood box on top of the other separated by a couple of sheets of newspaper. I prick a few holes in the newspaper and it takes the bees about three days to chew their way through by which time they have become familiar with each other's scent and are accepted as one. If there are two queens then the stronger of the two will kill the weaker and her workers will unceremoniously dump her body out of the entrance.

In early summer I inherited 6 abandoned hives in a garden near my brother's farm. The owner had been in nursing home for about 5 years and had recently died. The neglected hives were decayed and disintegrating but amazingly three of them still contained flying bees. With the help of our local bee inspector we began the messy task of transferring them to new hives and then burnt their old ones which were full of debris, old wax and sticky honey. Having declared these rescued bees free from any disease I was optimistic this would be a bountiful year. I had now moved from one hive two years ago to five and started collecting empty jars ready for the harvest to come. In a bumper year a single hive can produce over 100lb of honey but the weather put paid to that. What little honey I did have was left intact for them to feed on after all they had worked hard to make it. However I could not resist taking off a few pounds for myself. Just enough for my breakfasts, over the coming season. In return I have given each of them a 2kg slab of sugar fondant to keep them content until early spring. Despite a disappointing year my bees have all survived and are now tucked up dry and warm for winter.

On a positive note I succeeded in passing my first beekeepers examination. An hour of theory followed by a practical test frequently interrupted by a violent thunder storm. Finally, despite a worrying decline in bee populations (not all due to the bad weather) a record number of new beekeepers are taking up the challenge. Beginner's courses are held every spring by your local association. Why not give it a try!

*Please note that this article was written just before winter 2012, but missed the spring newsletter but to a change in email address. It was however, such a good article it warranted publishing now, even though it comments on preparing for the winter.*

# Strawberry and Gooseberry Jam

## Servings

Makes 5-6 x 340g jars

## Ingredients

150-200g gooseberries, topped and tailed

1kg strawberries, hulled, large ones halved

750-1kg jam sugar with added pectin (the more sugar you use, the firmer the set of the jam)

15-20g unsalted butter (optional)

## Directions

Put the gooseberries in a saucepan with 100ml water.

Place on a low heat and cook gently until the gooseberries are tender but still holding their shape. This should take 6-7 minutes, depending on their size and maturity.

Meanwhile, place the strawberries in a roomy, heavy-based pan or a preserving pan. The fruit should be no more than a third of the way up the pan to allow for a rapid rise when a rolling boil is reached. When the gooseberries are cooked, add to the strawberries. Put the preserving pan on a gentle heat and add the sugar.

Heat gently, stirring, until the sugar has fully dissolved.

Then increase the heat and bring the pan to a full rolling boil (i.e. when the surface is covered with a mass of foamy bubbles). Boil for 8-9 minutes, without stirring too much, until setting point is reached.

To check for setting point, drop a little jam onto a cold saucer, allow to cool for a minute then push gently with your fingertip.

If the jam crinkles, setting point has been reached. Remove the jam from the heat and, if the surface is scummy, add a knob of butter and keep stirring until the scum has dissolved.

Pot into warm, sterilised jars and seal immediately.

Label when cold.

Unopened and stored in a cool, dry place, the jam will keep for up to a year.

Once opened, keep in the fridge or a cool larder and use within a few weeks.

