

AHS Newsletter No 111 November 2020

Dear Member

We are experiencing very challenging times and the corona virus is affecting our personal, family and community lives. We hope you are keeping well and are still able to enjoy participation in some of your favourite activities.

You will recall that in Newsletter No 110 for August 2020 we explained why we had to cancel all of our 2020 programme. We also reported on the successful picture gallery, trophy returns and the plant and produce sale (a successful enterprise which raised £224 in spite of the road closure. Many thanks to all who contributed). Another plant sale will be planned for April 2021. We also explained why some costs continue to be incurred in an attempt to keep the club active.

Your committee has continued to discuss the options for our Society using Zoom and by email. With the latest Government guidelines and restrictions we feel it is not possible to resume meetings safely. It is impossible to predict the future regarding the Covid situation and so we have decided to delay indoor society activities until later in 2021. We will be contacting you via email, and the society's website is being regularly updated with our latest news. Newsletters will continue to be posted out to members without internet access.

Membership subscriptions

Regarding 2021 membership subscriptions, decisions will be made once we are confident that a programme can restart.

Events

We feel it is unfair to plan events and keep cancelling them, and so we have taken the decision to delay the restart of meetings in the Northcourt Centre until the Autumn. It is hoped that the short break to Devon can take place in August, followed by the Autumn show in September, and then a full Autumn program. Firm dates will be published as soon as possible.

Do you ZOOM? Would you like to? Our April speaker has offered an online talk about the 'Gardens of Japan' which he visited with his partner. If we have sufficient numbers interested in 'Zooming' one evening in April I will arrange it. Please email David on the_bingleys@yahoo.co.uk if you would join in.

Autumn Show 2021

Please retain your 2020 Autumn Show Schedules as we will make very few changes for 2021. They will be available on line so don't worry if your schedule has been recycled. We will also print a few for those without internet access.

Macmillan Cancer Fund

Many, many thanks to everyone who has donated to Macmillan Cancer Support. I am delighted to tell you that I have today paid in £645 to Macmillan, a fantastic amount which was only achieved with your generosity. This would have been my 16th year, started after the death of a very dear friend who was helped by Macmillan. This is the highest amount raised in any one year since I started. Last year it was £532.85. Thanks for your help. Regards Angela.

Member's recipes (Thanks to Linda Berry)

Apple Cake

Ingredients:

225g unsalted butter
350g Self Raising Flour,
1 teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch of salt
120g sultanas or raisins, soaked for 1-2 hours in water or apple juice
150g caster sugar
75g toasted hazelnuts, roughly chopped
450g cooking apples
Grated zest of 1 lemon
3 large eggs
Demerara sugar for dusting.

Preheat oven to 180°C Gas mark 4, 350degF (reduce for a fan oven).
Grease and line a 20cm loose bottomed cake tin
Mix flour, cinnamon, salt, and butter until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
Add caster sugar, drained sultanas, lemon zest and nuts.
Peel, core and chop the apples then add to the mixture.
Beat eggs lightly then add to the mixture and stir until all combines.
Tip into the cake tin and bake for 1 - 1 ¼ hours or until firm to the touch.
Cover the cake if it starts to brown too much.
Whilst still hot sift over the demerara sugar, let it cool in the tin.
Serve for tea or as a pudding with cream.

Chilli dipping sauce

Ingredients:

300ml cider vinegar
300ml orange juice
480g sugar
3 red Jalapenos or cherry bomb chillies
5 garlic cloves, chopped

Put all the ingredients in a pan over a low heat. Once the sugar has dissolved simmer until it turns dark and syrupy. Pour into sterilised jars. Kept cool it will last for months.



Dobies Seeds

Dobies offer members a discount of 50% off seeds, and 15% off everything else. If you have received a catalogue please use the unique code GD1223G. You can also order on line by going to their web site www.dobies.co.uk. If you want a catalogue (limited numbers) or you have any problems with this please contact David or Barbara on 01235 521337. Last season's member savings were approximately £660.

Gardening Tips (Thanks to David Bingley)

When cutting cabbages, make a cross cut in the top of the stem that is left in the ground. This encourages the growth of small cabbages on the stem.

If you have grown or purchased Wallflower plants (seed sown in July) now is the time to plant them out into their flowering position. Somewhere you can appreciate their scent. They also grow well in larger pots underplanted with bulbs.

It is not too late to prune your Gooseberry and Redcurrant bushes, removing older vegetation to allow an air flow through the bush (reminder to self - time to do my own!)

If you have a Gardening Tip please email it to ieshepherd1941@gmail.com and we will try to include it in a future newsletter.

Picture Gallery

Many thanks to all those members who contributed. They were great for brightening up what has been a pretty difficult period for many people. We would like to repeat this as follows.

Topics: 1. Autumn 2. Winter 3. Festive season.

1 picture per person per category please. Closing date 30 Dec 2020.

Please send pictures to winter@abingdon-hort-soc.org.uk They will appear on our web site at www.abingdon-hort-soc.org.uk/winterphotos

Items for sale

Members are invited to use the Newsletter to sale or donate items of gardening interest. Please send anything of interest to ieshepherd1941@gmail.com . Bear in mind that editions are intermittent but usually produced 4 times a year.

Quiz

We are again indebted to Barry for his work to produce another quiz. The challenge of Quiz No 5 is attached for you to attempt. It will keep your brain ticking over! As always answers will be sent out later. Thanks Barry.

Keith Wakefield

It was with great sadness that we received the news that one of our most long standing members, Keith Wakefield, had died on 1st September.

Keith and Vera were loyal members of the Society for many years, supporting the shows, outings and the holidays. Keith regularly received awards at the shows for his produce grown on his beloved allotment and was awarded the Ledger Rose Bowl on many occasions for his beautiful roses. The outings will not be the same without him, something that he and Vera enjoyed very much.

Keith will be greatly missed and we send our sincere sympathies to Vera and their children, Alan and Jane.

(Notes from an interview with Keith in 2011 follows).

Keith came to Abingdon when he was about 7 years old, eventually working at the MG plant for around 26 years. Many of the staff were allotment holders in the early days.

Keith was a member of AHS since about 1994. He told me that he joined the club after seeing information about it at (he thinks) a fete at Long Furlong School. Perhaps another member might recall how that happened? He was involved when the club talks were held in the Roysse room with shows in the main hall. Later the shows were held in the Trinity Church Hall. He was happy with the move to the Northcourt Centre. The introduction of the Summer holidays by Ann Marie was much appreciated, Keith and his wife have enjoyed them.

He was a member of the West End Allotment association for a long time, and gardened on the site at Marcham Road. The allotments were originally on the Tesco store site; he told me that the current rent was £10 year (plus £2.50 for a locker), but no doubt that has changed! The fences round the allotment no longer prevent deer from jumping over and causing problems. He was a keen grower of dahlias (but unfortunately lost most of his tubers in the 2009/10 winter and had to start again), using Growmore and chicken pellets to get good results. Farmacyard manure now costs £90 a load, which was too expensive (even if you were happy that there were no weed seeds in it, or the scares about contamination with pesticides and bacteria are not a problem).