



Flitwick Gardeners' Association

Issue 105

Autumn 2017

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 7 th October	Autumn Show
Thursday 23 rd November	FGA Quiz

Flitwick Gardeners' Association

We are an association run by members, for members. Our aim is to promote gardening in Flitwick and the surrounding villages.

We have a members' shop, The Seed Box, where we try to stock useful items including seeds, tools and chemicals at very competitive prices. We also have a library and a small range of loan equipment.

We run shows, organise an annual quiz and run the occasional trip to visit a garden. We're always pleased to welcome new members and always looking for help in running the Association and activities. We'd love to hear from you – just a few hours here and there would make all the difference.

How to find us

The Seed Box is situated behind the site of the old Flitwick Leisure Centre on Steppingley Road, MK45 1TH.

For security reasons there's currently a temporary fence around the old leisure centre in Flitwick. The entrance gate has been fitted with a padlock that works with an allotment key. Please be sure to close and lock the gate behind you every time you use it.

When The Seed Box is open for trading a committee member will remove the padlock and then secure the site on leaving. We ask everyone to be vigilant to ensure no unauthorised persons enter the site.

The fence is a temporary measure until Central Bedfordshire Council decide on a more permanent means of fully securing the site until it is sold.

In the meantime we will endeavour to keep you updated on the situation as soon as we hear of any proposals.

Seed Box Opening Hours

Friday	7.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. (Feb to Nov)
Saturday	2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. (Feb to Nov)

Telephone

Outside of these hours you can always leave a message for us on the answering machine on **01525 717289**.

Email addresses

General enquiries etc.	enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk
Magazine	newsletter@flitwickgardeners.co.uk
Show info and entries	fgashow@flitwickgardeners.co.uk

Website / Facebook address

Facebook Group	https://www.facebook.com/groups/flitwickgardeners
Website	www.flitwickgardeners.co.uk

Executive Committee

Syd Pye	Chairman and Rota Coordinator
Colin Stennett	Secretary and Show Secretary
Dave Pateman	Treasurer
Jim Godden	Acting Trading Secretary
J-P R Carter	Deputy Chairman and Show Committee
Laurie Arnold	Seeds and Deputy Trading Secretary
Kath Stennett	Membership Secretary and Show Committee
Ian Holman	Deputy Secretary and Show Committee
Alan Kirkdale & Carolyn Kirkdale	Magazine Editors
Ann Lutley	Publicity Officer

Show Committee (not mentioned above)

Dave Empson
Cliff White

Honorary Life Members

Dave Empson, Linda Pitts, Syd Pye, Cliff White

Syd's Snippets

Another summer is nearly over and from the results seen at the Annual Show many of you are gathering in the efforts of your hard work so let's hope the weather continues with the combination of rain (not too much) and hopefully some more sun.

Still nothing to report on the Seedbox situation and Central Beds have agreed to keep us updated on any changes.

We are still looking for till operators and more importantly key holders, as stated previously both posts would involve once every 5 – 6 weeks and full training is available.

When on duty myself a couple of weeks ago one of the till helpers actually said how much they have learnt and put into practice some of the many tips they have heard other members chat about when at the Seedbox and that has helped them improve their plot and reap the results. So doing that odd duty may enable you to improve your skills and enjoy yourself at the same time, food for thought as they say, so why not give it a try.

Happy Gardening and hope to see you at the Autumn Show along with your biggest and heaviest crops

Syd Pye – Chairman

Membership renewals for 2018

We hope you are enjoying your membership of the Flitwick Gardeners' Association and will want to continue to be a member for many years to come. It is now possible to renew your membership for 2018 for only £2 (there is an additional charge if you require your magazine by post). Of course if you renew now your membership will be valid until the end of December 2018 and you will be helping us by spreading the work of processing renewals over a longer period.

We look forward to seeing you at the Seed Box soon!

Kath Stennett
Membership Secretary

FGA Quiz

Do you fancy a fun evening out entering a light hearted general knowledge quiz, with very few difficult questions and definitely no hard questions about gardening (or maybe none on gardening at all). Then why not join us on Thursday 23rd November when the FGA Show Committee are organising a quiz in Flitwick Village Hall. The quiz starts at 8:00pm and finishes around 10:00pm, with admission from 7:30pm.

It is for teams of 4 people and costs £12 for a team and includes sandwiches, cakes and tea or coffee. People are allowed to bring their own food and drink, including alcohol.

If you're interested in entering a team please drop an email to: -

enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk or call me (phone number 01525 716982).

Colin Stennett
Show Secretary

2018 Annual Show Photographic classes

103	Friends	104	Open Country
105	Grand Designs	106	Sports Report

The children's photographic class will be Transport

Free while stocks last!

Once again we are giving away daffodil bulbs (with a pot, bulb fibre and a set of growing instructions) to children or grandchildren, who are under 16 years old, of members for growing on through the winter and early spring to be exhibited at the Spring Show next year.

We are using a new variety this year in the hope that more bulbs will still be in flower at the Spring Show. These bulbs are FREE so let's encourage the next generation of gardeners. To claim, please come to the Autumn show or collect from the Seed Box after the show – provided the rush is not too great and they have not all gone – and don't forget to bring them along to the Spring Show.

Colin Stennett
Show Secretary

AUTUMN SHOW SCHEDULE – Saturday 7th October 2017

FLITWICK VILLAGE HALL

SHOW RULES

The rules of the Annual show shall apply throughout the show, **with the exception of Rule 2.**

An Exhibitor may show up to 2 entries per class in the Autumn Show.

Entries **via email to: FGASHOW@Flitwickgardeners.co.uk** or complete the form later in the magazine and send to:-

The Show Secretary – Mr Colin Stennett, 10 Salisbury Road (Contact No: 716982)
or bring it along to the show.

Children may enter any class, and in **classes 1 to 12 and class 40** their entry will be judged as a Children's class.

Staging of exhibits 12:30 pm to 2 pm.

Judging 2 pm to 3 pm.

Open to the Public 3 pm – **FREE**

SCHEDULE

CLASS

HEAVIEST AND LONGEST

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Heaviest Marrow |
| 2 | Heaviest Onion |
| 3 | Heaviest Beetroot |
| 4 | Heaviest Carrot |
| 5 | Heaviest Cabbage |
| 6 | Heaviest Potato |
| 7 | Heaviest Tomato |
| 8 | Longest Runner Bean |
| 9 | Largest Sunflower Head |
| 10 | Heaviest Parsnip |
| 11 | Smallest Ripe Tomato |
| 12 | Freak Vegetable |
| 12a | Heaviest Crop of potatoes from 1 tuber supplied by the FGA |

The Jonathan Wilde Cup - Heaviest Parsnip

VEGETABLES

- | | |
|----|--|
| 13 | Five Potatoes - White - One variety |
| 14 | Five Potatoes - Other than white - One variety |
| 15 | One Cauliflower |
| 16 | Three Carrots |
| 17 | Two Leeks |
| 18 | Two Parsnips |
| 19 | Five Tomatoes |
| 20 | Any other Vegetable – 2 or more items |

NSALG Trophy – Most points in Vegetable classes

FLOWERS

- | | |
|----|---|
| 21 | Three stems of Spray Chrysanthemums |
| 22 | Three Dahlias - Cactus or Semi-cactus |
| 23 | Three Dahlias - Decorative |
| 24 | Three Dahlias - Ball |
| 25 | Three Dahlias - Pompon |
| 26 | One Dahlia - any variety |
| 27 | Three Roses – any variety |
| 28 | One Pot Plant - Flower |
| 29 | One Pot Plant - Foliage |
| 30 | One Pot of Alpine |
| 31 | One Vase of Flowering Shrub |
| 32 | One Vase of one distinct kind of flower |
| 33 | One Vase of Mixed Flowers |

Cliff White Trophy – Best exhibit in Flower classes

FRUIT

- | | |
|----|---|
| 34 | Four Dessert Apples |
| 35 | Four Cooking Apples |
| 36 | Four Pears |
| 37 | Nine individual Soft fruit - of any one kind |
| 38 | A Bunch of Grapes |
| 39 | Any other fruit, including nuts, not covered in any other class in the schedule |

PUMPKINS

- | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|
| 40 | Heaviest Pumpkin |
| 41 | Decorated / Carved Pumpkin - children |

ENTRY FORM

Flitwick Gardener's Association Autumn Show Entry Form. Ring the classes you intend to enter (and put a '2' next to a class if you intend to put 2 entries in that class)

Members Name..... Membership No.....

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	12a						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25						
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
	36	37	38						
39	40								

Partner's Name.....

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	12a						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25						
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
	36	37	38						
39	40								

Child's Name..... Age..... 41
Child's Name Age..... 41
Child's Name..... Age..... 41

TRADING REPORT AUTUMN 2017

The Summer Show was last Saturday and I'm busy growing my entries for the Autumn Show see elsewhere in this magazine for details. In terms of trading I'm already well into planning for next year! The potatoes and onions and summer bulbs are ordered and when I've sent this off I'll be organising the first ever meeting of a FGA trading committee soon for us to start planning the details of our order for the December delivery. So in many ways we will have decided where FGA trading is going to the very end of 2018 very soon, why do I feel that time is all screwed up and so I'm never quite sure what day it is.

Having mentioned the December delivery I invite members to order specific or bulk items they require and receive a considerable discount from the usual FGA (already low) prices. For instance if you wanted a pallet of compost I can order it for you take delivery and temporarily store it in our compound, you will pay up to 30% less than our normal prices but in return I will request that you arrange to collect it from us reasonably quickly. Do you want a specific or special tool? How about a specific food for your plants?

Equally if you are likely to want a considerable amount of something throughout the year let me know and I can make sure we have it in stock. In the same way I only know if we don't have something you require if you tell me. A good example this year has been Chempak Calcium where I totally underestimated the amount required and ran out. Unfortunately as FGA is taking all the risk I cannot offer a discount unless you want to take a complete order and can collect it reasonably quickly.

If you wish to discuss anything you want please see me ASAP and certainly before mid-November as that is when I will be finalising the bulk order with our suppliers. Our autumn sowing bulbs have started being delivered! This autumn we have the following for autumn sowing onion - Radar, Garlic - Germidour Pink, Tete a Tete and Daffodil - Cheerfulness. Shallot - Jermor, elephant garlic, three colours of prepared hyacinths, and a small range of Narcissi are ordered and should arrive soon. Finally we also have a different variety of narcissi for the children to grow for the spring show in 2018, as soon as the packs are made up. Think of us if you want any of the above I hope we are very competitively priced. Whilst on autumn sowing we have broad bean Aquadulce in stock and I'm hoping to get some bulk green manure and an autumn sown pea for sale in the near future.

Those who have visited the Seed Box on the last couple of weeks will have noticed the lack of any seed display. Our 2017 unsold seeds have been returned and we are expecting the 2018 stock to arrive soon, we will, as always, put them out for sale as quickly as we can. Whilst on seeds we are expecting Dobies catalogues soon hopefully with their normal, very generous, discount for societies, so do come and help yourself to one.

The seed potato and onion order form is on back of the magazine and available in the Seed Box. This is little changed from last year except that the red onions will be sold in 250g packs, as these are usually a smaller set than, say, Sturon this should minimise the number that members don't use. I've also stopped doing Golden Wonder (low sales) and removed Snowball onion sets as they do not seem to grow well in our soil

and do not store that well either. As previously I will do my very best to fulfil all orders received by the end of November but I can only meet orders received after then from what is already ordered. The potatoes are being delivered before Christmas and weighing up will be carried out in early January for orders to be collected from mid-January.

We have for some time been trying to increase the number of helpers for the Seed Box. For the till and general helpers rota we now have a reasonable number of volunteers but can always use more, however we do still struggle for key holders, although there may be one new recruit (he says hopefully), please see us at the Seed Box if you can help

We have received some comment about early closing on a Friday evening, I hope you all agree that one or two people a long way from the road with no lighting other than two energy efficient flood lamps is not a good idea. As a result if we are quiet we tend to shut when we have not had a customer for 20 minutes or so. If I'm the designated key holder it is even more likely we will shut at about 8.45 as I have to get to the chippy before they close, keep us busy until 9.00 and I'll have to phone my order in. The possibility of changing opening hours has been discussed but we decided to keep them the same for the time being.

Whilst discussing opening hours A NOTE OF CAUTION, if the gates onto Steppingley Road are not open do not tailgate an allotment holder. There was at least one occasion where a member was let in by an allotment holder who was leaving, who became 'locked in', fortunately he had a mobile phone number for someone who let him out but!!! A good clue is that if the lock is on the gates we are not open! Even if the gates are open we always try to remove the lock to ensure you have access.

Outside of our opening hours (Friday 1930-2100, Saturday 1400-1600) assume we are not there!

For those of you not keen on lugging compost or operating the till we do have a general tidying, compost hauling, re-stocking, etc. session most Mondays (well when we are busy anyway) may you be able to give an hour sometimes on a Monday afternoon (2-3pm)? If you could assist, let me know on a Saturday and join us. Unless you are an allotment holder and have access, we will need to let you in, so it helps if I know you are coming.

As part of the review of our stock items and levels we will be stopping Bowers compost, except New Horizon and John Innes items. To make room for re-organising the compost store room the price of all other bowers compost items will be heavily discounted until they are gone! If you can keep it dry it will be perfectly good for next year so do consider taking advantage of the discounts.

There is great progress in stock rationalisation for foods and killers, by the time you read this I will have put those items of lawn goods we are discontinuing on special offer. An owner for much of the string, ties and supports is trying to get to grips with the area and had already made many valuable observations, rather than wholesale discounting we will be concentrating on a core stock as we re-order. Tools are also to

be rationalised, the first victim is the Wolf Multi-tool range over time we will be discontinuing this, it may be wonderfully effective and save a lot of shed space but it is expensive, and a slow seller, when it's gone it's gone!

I've not yet reviewed pots and trays with the area owner but will, before placing the order. I currently expect to reduce the number of pot sizes considerably and may look at generally moving to black pots as they are so much cheaper than terracotta. More to follow on this area and the rest of the miscellaneous items scattered on the shelves walls and floor of the Seed Box. Who knows, eventually someone other than Dave Pateman and myself may know where most things are.

So finally a suggestion or more for sowing when you read this, spring cauliflower, spring cabbages, a winter hardy carrot, Chinese veg, winter green manure (dig in spring) and of course over wintered crops such as broad beans, onions, shallots (see above). How about looking at getting some crops going early for next year I'll be trying onions sown in pots in my cold greenhouse in January and probably trying a few other items after the success I had with the onions this year.

I hope to see you all at the Seed Box very soon. Great Gardening

Jim Godden
FGA Trading Secretary

2017 Annual Show Report

Whilst we might not have had as many entries as our near record breaking year last year, the hall was full of some high quality items and there were very few classes which didn't have at least one entry. Both the judges and the people looking around the show commented on how good the show was and I'm pleased to say that our shows do not seem to be in danger of disappearing, as has happened to a number of other villages / towns.

Whilst we did get some entries in the novice vegetable and flower classes it would be great to get even more next year and it would also be nice to get some more entries in the children's classes (which is open to children and grand-children of members).

Once again I owe a huge thanks to all those that helped in whatever capacity and to those who entered exhibits (and even greater thanks to those crazy people that did both) it made the day such a success and a great advert for the FGA.

Now let's hope that the weather is ideal to make things grow heavier and longer (or even strange shaped) in time for the Autumn Show.

Colin Stennett
Show Secretary

Flitwick Gardeners' Association
Telephone - 01525 – 717289 (24 hour answerphone)
Pre-Season Potato and Onion Sets Order Form – 2018

Name..... Address

Telephone.....F.G.A. Membership Number

Please reserve the following packs of Seed Potatoes and Onion sets for me when they are delivered. Orders handed in by the end of Dec 2017 will be telephoned to advise when they are ready for collection.

Number of Packs		Variety	Total Cost	
“First Earlies” 3 Kg (10)				
3kg	10 seed			
.....	.....	Duke of York (RED)	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Epicure	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Foremost	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Lady Christl	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Pentland Javelin	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Rocket (EARLY)	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Swift (VERY EARLY)	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Winston	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
“Second Earlies” (3 Kg)				
.....	.....	Charlotte	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Kestrel	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Marfona	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Wilja	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
“Main Crop” (3 Kg)				
.....	.....	Cara	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Desiree	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Estima	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	King Edward	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Majestic	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Maris Piper	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Pentland Crown	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Picasso	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Sarpo Mira	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
.....	.....	Vales Sovereign	£ 3.45 (£1.50)	.....
Specials varieties				
.....		Anya (Salad)	£ 2.35	.....
.....		International Kidney	£ 2.35	.....
.....		Osprey	£ 2.35	.....
.....		Pink Fir Apple (Salad)	£ 2.35	.....
“Onion Sets and Shallots”				
.....		Golden Gourmet Shallots (0.5 Kg)	£ 1.60	.....
.....		Red Sun Shallots (0.5 Kg)	£ 1.60	.....
.....		Red Baron Onion Sets (0.25 Kg)	£ 1.00	.....
.....		Sturon Onion Sets (0.5 Kg)	£ 1.00	.....
.....		Stuttgarter Onion Sets (0.5 Kg)	£ 1.00	.....

	+ Total number of packs		Total Due £.....
spud	sets		Less Deposit Paid £.....
			(Minimum Deposit 50p per pack)

BALANCE DUE £.....

For F.G.A. use Telephoned