



Flitwick Gardeners' Association

Issue 111

Autumn 2019

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 5th October	Autumn Show
Thursday 28 th 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.

Seed box Opening Hours

Friday	7.30 pm to 9.00 pm Feb to Nov
Saturday	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm Feb to Nov (closed on Show Days)

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

Colin Stennett	Secretary and Show Secretary
Jim Godden	Chairman
Leonie Coverley	Treasurer
J-P Carter	Deputy Chairman and Show Committee
Laurie Arnold	Seeds and Deputy Trading Coordinator
Kath Stennett	Membership Secretary and Show Committee
Ian Holman	Deputy Secretary and Show Committee
Alan & Carolyn Kirkdale	Magazine Editors
Ann Lutley	Publicity Officer
Sue Titchener	Seed Box Rota Coordinator
Vacant	Trading Coordinator

Show Committee (not mentioned above)

Sonia Corfe

Honorary Life Members

Linda Pitts, Syd Pye, Maryan Pateman, J-P Carter, Jim Godden

Annual Show 2019

Another sunny August day in Flitwick and a judge states that it never rains on our show day and as usual, a number of members brought some wonderful items to the show, which filled the hall in the majority of classes. Another judge was heard to 'complain' that we are making life difficult for him to do his job with the quality of entries in his classes.

It was so good to see the majority of the tables covered in excellent vegetables, flowers, fruit, home produce, handicrafts and photographs. It was also pleasing to see a number of entries in the novice's classes and the children's classes.

A good number of people came to look around when we opened to the public, as well as to enjoy some excellent cakes made by our members. My thanks to all those that exhibited, helped in whatever capacity and to those that just came along to support the show.

Colin Stennett
Show Secretary

FGA Quiz

On Thursday 28th November 2019 the Show Committee are organising a quiz evening starting at 8 pm with admission from 7:30 pm and finishing around 10 pm. It is NOT a quiz all about gardening things, but a light-hearted general knowledge quiz with the aim of everyone enjoying themselves. The cost is £12 for a team of 4 people and this not only covers entry to the quiz but also sandwiches, cakes, tea and coffee. People may also bring their own food and drink; including alcohol. If you can get a group of 4 people (they don't have to be FGA members) and fancy joining us for the evening, please contact me via email (fgashow@flitwickgardeners.co.uk) or call me (01525 716982) by the middle of October so that we have some idea of the number of teams.

Photographic Classes - Annual show 2020

The following are the adult photograph classes for 2020:

103 – Red 104 - Green 105 - Blue 106 - White

The Children's photographic class is Food

TRADING REPORT Summer 2019

Yet another year of great promise seems to have become a rather dry period. I do wonder at times if Flitwick exists in a rain hollow. In the last week I've been to Sandy and driven through a mini-monsoon and flash floods, but rain in Flitwick was approximately zero. I've played golf near Bedford twice with 20 minute showers each time. For the second year running my lawn is struggling to show any green, not really having recovered from the 2018 drought.

On both my allotments and home garden I cover most items to keep the birds off. Based on our sales of nets and other items for protection, I suspect I'm not alone with birds eating anything they can, to get moisture. Winter brassicas seem to be particularly at risk, but we still have netting etc. for sale if you need any.

Earlier this year we had Metaldehyde based slug pellets on special offer as they were to be banned. Eventually a court challenge to the ban was successful so I have been able to continue selling the remaining stock. I expect the relevant Government department to try again, so I will not be restocking. The only product on FGA shelves affected by the ban would have been Doff Blue mini pellets. It has been a favourite of our members, so now is the time to buy, if you want some. We do have other pellet options and barrier deterrents available for protecting your plants from slug damage. Every year I offer substantial discounts on compost if anyone wants a complete pallet. Should you be interested, please contact me.

Whilst discussing compost, I apologise for running out of your favourite compost; Clover Multipurpose and professional. As we buy a complete lorry load each December, I will not be restocking this late in the year. We have New Horizon organic multipurpose compost and a small amount of Arthur Bowers Multipurpose available, but when they are gone that's it folks until the delivery, sorry.

There seems to be a lot happening in the wholesale potato market with the owners taking over all marketing for the Sarpo range of potatoes and our prime wholesaler changing their range. As always there are new products on offer and some old favourites return and demand for varieties changes as new items become available. An excellent example of this is Picasso, which is a Son of Cara (I believe). It certainly grows, looks and tastes very similar.

The main impacts on the FGA range are :-

- Anya, Estima, Osprey, Pentland Crown and Sarpo Mira have now gone from our list for next year
- Epicure and Majestic will be ordered from an alternative supplier
- Added Casablanca; a white general purpose potato which apparently makes excellent chips!
- Added Setanta, as it appears to be good and reasonably received in our trial this year.

A sad fact of life is that wholesale prices creep up every year. We have managed to absorb price increase for several years, but it is now necessary to raise the 3kg price to £3.75, although the price for 10 tubers is unchanged. The price of shallots rises 10p, but onions remain the same at £1.00. The order form is in this magazine, or available at the counter in the Seed Box. As always, if you pre-order I will do everything I can to ensure I get what you want.

Next year we will also be trying a red shallot, following many requests from members, so do try them and let me know if you think they should be retained on our list.

The observant amongst you will have noticed the fruits of our labours as we rationalise stock. I apologise for a few 'stock outs' this year and we will try to learn from these. There is however, a need for us to continue rationalising and we have agreed a broad outline of what and how to rationalise most other areas. We have identified items that will not be re-ordered and will eventually disappear, but in every case there will still be an alternative offered.

You may have noticed that we have managed to get several new people to open and run trading sessions. It has certainly put my wife into shock if I'm suddenly around Friday evenings or Saturday afternoons. We can always use more help, so please see me or Colin to discuss how you may be able to assist us.

New Season seeds from Fothergills are expected soon along with Dobies 2020 catalogues.

Finally I have confirmation that we will have the following on sale from this weekend:

- Broad Bean - Aquadulce, weighed to order
- Green manure - Phacelia

- Green Manure -Forage Rye
- Over wintering white onion sets
- Over wintering red onion sets
- Over wintering Garlic - Germidor.

Great Gardening

Jim Godden FGA Temporary Trading Co-ordinator

Chit chat from the chair

Having had time to get my feet under the table, figuratively at least, I'm surprised at the response to becoming Chairman of the FGA. Thank you to all who have offered their good wishes to me.

Over the years there seems to have been endless requests for additional assistance. I am delighted at the number of people who have stepped up and made offers of help, giving us a better core of helpers to move forward.

Inevitably I follow with 'we can always use more people,' but at least I have comfort for the future. Here's a list of the key areas where you may be able to assist:

- Join the committee. We normally meet on the first Monday of most months.
- Help with the planning and running of our three shows each year and an autumn quiz.
- Join the Monday Mob. When required, a small group of us get together at the Seed Box on a Monday afternoon to fill 'own packs', carry in compost, stock shelves, tidy up, etc.
- Help with Trading on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons either as a till operator or as a key holder.
- Support our events. In particular the FGA quiz with a team of 4 (no gardening questions).
- Support our shows.

All offers of help gratefully received (of course).

I'm writing this just after the summer show. Thank you to all those who assisted on the day and made it such a success. Of course, all the organisation in the world only goes so far, so may I congratulate all those who put in as good a set of exhibits across most classes, as I can remember. Many who came to view told me how impressed they were with what they had seen. A highlight of 2019 was the quantity and excellent quality of the tomatoes. It was an experience to observe the judge making his decision.

Continuing on show matters, the date of our next show is Saturday 5th October. I encourage you to look at the classes and if you have anything at all to enter, come along between 12.30 pm and 2.00 pm with your exhibit and we will help you from there.

One item I have inherited, is assisting with the Flitton and Greenfield Potato race. For several years our previous Chairman, Syd Pye co-ordinated this and the FGA provided seed potatoes for distribution to local childrens' organisations, including schools, to see who can grow the greatest weight in a pot provided. Roland Taylor and I have then attended on the day, to turn the potatoes out of the pots, riddle off the compost and weigh the potatoes. The worst part of the day is that we always seem to be next to the barbeque!

Finally, I have no news regarding the possible move of the Seed Box, but I just hope we have reasonable warning.

Jim Godden
Chairman

Please remember to renew your membership

You can now renew your membership for 2020. Please come along to the Seed Box before it closes at the end of November.

Kath Stennett - Membership Secretary

AUTUMN SHOW SCHEDULE – Saturday 5th October 2019
FLITWICK VILLAGE HALL
Admission FREE

SHOW RULES

The rules of the Annual show shall apply to this 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 to 10 Salisbury Road or at the show.

Children may enter any class, and in classes 1 to 12 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 – 4 pm

SCHEDULE of CLASSES

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 - Jonathan Wilde Cup
- 11 Smallest Ripe Tomato
- 12 Misshapen Vegetable
- 12a Heaviest Crop of potatoes from 1 tuber supplied by the FGA

VEGETABLES - NSALG Trophy for most points in the following classes

- 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 Three Onions
20a Any other Vegetable – 2 or more items

FLOWERS Cliff White Trophy – Best exhibit in Flower classes

21 Three stems of Spray Chrysanthemums
21a Three stems of single stem Chrysanthemums
22 Three Dahlias - Cactus or Semi-cactus
23 Three Dahlias - Decorative
24 Three Dahlias - Ball
25 Three Dahlias - Pompon – not to exceed 55 mm diameter
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

FRUIT All fruit shown with stalks - except apricots, nectarines, peaches, blueberries, citrus fruit and nuts. Leaves may be used to decorate

34 Four Dessert Apples (not to be polished)
35 Four Cooking Apples (not to be polished)
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

Flitwick Gardeners' Association
Telephone - 01525 - 717289 (24 hour answerphone)
Pre-Season Potato and Onion Sets Order Form – 2020

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 2019 will be telephoned to advise when they are ready for collection.

Number of Packs		3 Kg (10)	Total cost
3kg	10 seed		

“First Earlies”

.....	Duke of York (RED)	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Epicure	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Casablanca	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Foremost	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	International Kidney	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Maris Bard	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Lady Christl	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Pentland Javelin	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Rocket (EARLY)	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Swift (VERY EARLY)	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Winston	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....

“Second Earlies”

.....	Charlotte	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Kestrel	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Marfona	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Wilja	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....

“Main Crop”

.....	Cara	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Carolus	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Desiree	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	King Edward	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Majestic	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Maris Piper	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Picasso	£ 3.75	(£1.60)	.....
.....	Setanta	£ 3.75	(£1.60)
.....	Vales Sovereign	£ 3.75	(£1.60)

Salad variety

.....	Pink Fir Apple	£ 2.35
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“Onion Sets and Shallots”

.....	Golden Gourmet Shallots (0.5 Kg)	£ 1.70
.....	Red Gourmet Shallots (0.5 Kg)	£ 1.70
.....	Red Sun Shallots (0.5 Kg)	£ 1.70	.....
.....	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	.....

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

BALANCE DUE **£

For F.G.A. use **Telephoned**