



Tilehurst Horticultural Association

Newsletter April - June 2016

Dates For your Diary

23 April	Beanpole Day Plant Stall at Caversham Court Gardens
28 April	Talk by Brian Bedwell – Presentation of Flowers and Pot Plants for Show followed by Gardeners' Question Time together with Ken Tudgay in the Village Hall
2 May	May Bank Holiday Shed Opening 10.00 a.m. until 12 noon at Gratwicke Road
26 May	Plant Exchange 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall
4 June	RBH League of Friends Fete Plant Stall at Victoria Rec.

Membership Fees for 2016 are now due!

75th AGM – Dig for Victory

Around 70 members gathered at the Village Hall on 11 February 2016 to celebrate a special occasion – our 75th AGM. It was in 1941 as a result of the Dig for Victory campaign in World War II, that a group of gardeners and allotment holders formed what was originally the Tilehurst and South West Reading Allotment Holders Association. The real need then was to obtain lime and fertilisers, which at that time was difficult for individuals, so a trading association was formed. The Association is still today a thriving organisation, with sheds for the purchase of gardening supplies, together with winter talks, plant stalls and, of course, a well-supported Summer Show.

At the AGM, the appointment of a new President of the Association, Lynne Jones, was confirmed. During 2015, our previous President, Alec Simmons, had retired because of ill-health and he was unfortunately unable to attend this evening; it was, however, announced that a new trophy had been purchased in recognition of his contribution to the success of the organisation. This trophy, the Alec Simmons Trophy, will be presented to a winning exhibitor for the first time at the Summer Show on 6 August 2016. Alec has also been given Life Membership of the Association.

It was also announced that Edna Shepherd has decided not to continue arranging trips. As thanks for her contribution in arranging trips for over 15 years, she was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

A further presentation of a plaque, together with Life Membership of the Association was given to Ray Haines, who has relinquished the role of Trading Secretary, although he will remain in situ until a successor can be found.

Finally, the Chairman, Joan Macphee, announced her own retirement. Later in the evening she was also presented with a plaque and an arrangement of flowers.

Terry Bryant was proposed and elected as new Chairman and took over the chair of the meeting.

The theme of the social evening which followed the business of the Annual General Meeting was "Dig for Victory" and members rose to the occasion by dressing in 1940s style, with music and refreshments appropriate to that time. To the strains of Glenn Miller and in a Village Hall decorated in red, white and blue, they enjoyed Spam sandwiches and Lord Woolton Pie, accompanied by sherry and local ale.



To set the scene, Tilehurst historian, Mike Cooper, gave a short talk to illustrate life in Tilehurst in 1941 and there was interesting discussion about the

Trading Sheds - Opening times -

Sunday - Gratwicke Road: January (from the 3rd Sunday), February, August, September, October & November 10.00 – 11.00hrs - March- July 10.00 – 12.00hrs - December closed.

Saturday - Oak Tree Road: February & September – 14.00 – 15.00hrs, March – July 14.00hrs – 16.00hrs. Closed all other times and for the whole month of August.

nurseries and market gardens which, next to the potteries, were significant employers at that time.



The 75th Anniversary cake, made by Christine Imber, was cut by our new President, Lynne Jones, and member Edna Shepherd. Edna has been an active member of the Tilehurst Horticultural Association since 1956.



There was a display of wartime memorabilia, loaned by Alec Simmons, including a gas mask, a crystal radio, and an accumulator and photographs of old Tilehurst. We also had on display photographs and documents from the early days of the Association.

This formed the basis of an entertaining table quiz and the evening concluded with a free raffle. Prizes were generously donated by Greenfingers.com, Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants, Hare Hatch Sheeplands, Justseed.com, Peter Nyssen Ltd, Primrose.co.uk and Whetman Pinks Ltd.

Members also received the floral arrangements, made by Julie Crawford, as raffle prizes.

Beanpole Day

This is to be held at Caversham Court Gardens

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10.00 a.m. until 3.00 p.m. on 23 April. We will have a stall once more at this ECONET event and plant contributions are welcomed. If you plan to attend, then just bring them along, if not, then drop them off before the day at 24 Wendover Way. Please do your best to label the plants. If you could spare an hour or so to help at the stall, that would be appreciated – phone Pauline Tel. 9453658 or e-mail tilehurstha@gmail.com

Plant Exchange

26 May in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. Do come along for a social evening and leave with some plant bargains! Entry is just a plant (or more) and £1.00. Your surplus plants may be just what someone else is looking for.

RBH League of Friends Fete

The League of Friends of the Royal Berkshire Hospital Fete is on Saturday 4 June at Victoria Recreation Ground, Armour Road, Tilehurst. The opening hours have been extended this year, 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. All offers of help to man the stall and donation of plants will be extremely welcome. Please contact Sylvia Hickman if you are able to spare an hour or so of your time on the 4 June 2016. We look forward to seeing you on the day.

Oak Tree Road Shed Opening Hours

The committee would like to thank the helpers who responded to the request for feedback on the opening hours. The responses were mixed so after careful consideration it was decided that no changes would be made this year but that the matter would be kept under review.

Trading Secretary

As mentioned in the AGM report Ray Haines has agreed to remain in situ as Trading Secretary until a successor can be found. We are looking for someone to take on the ordering and pricing of stock, and to arrange deliveries. Whilst we currently place orders over the telephone, we would like in the future to look at internet options, so would ideally like our new Trading Secretary to be comfortable in this environment. Orders are placed 5 or 6 times per year and there is plenty of support from an established team of helpers. If you are interested in taking on this role, or would like more information, please contact the Secretary or email tilehurstha@gmail.com.