



Flitwick Gardeners' Association

Issue 104

Summer 2017

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 19 th August	FGA 40 th Annual Show
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

Dougie Rees - FGA Life Member

Douglas Richard Rees, otherwise known affectionately within the FGA as Dougie, was born to an ordinary working class family in Mid Wales in June 1926 and died in Hitchin on 30th April this year, aged 91. His father worked with horses on the land, and after leaving school Doug followed in his footsteps. Soon after, he joined a police force in Wales, but eventually transferred to Bedfordshire because he said he needed to be busier. He rose through the ranks in his new force, becoming affectionately known as 'Rees the Police' and served across the County and between uniform branch and CID. This all culminated in his promotion to Detective Chief Superintendent and Head of force CID. He remained in this position until his retirement from the police. During his service he was part of or led a number of high profile investigations and was involved in many more. Of note he was the first officer to interview the female victim of James Hanratty, the man who was convicted of the A6 murder at Clophill, and Doug was part of the Bedfordshire team investigating the Great Train Robbery. After leaving the police service he became Head of Security at Jaegar for several years.

From an FGA perspective Dougie was always a willing helper where he joined the Monday Mob, who ensure there's enough stock for sale of own pack goods at the Seed Box. When he decided to make an entry or two into the Summer Show I helped him to choose the exhibits and he enjoyed some success straight away. Over the course of years that friendship blossomed. Over that period he won The Banksian Medal and the National Vegetable Societies Silver medal.

The past couple of years he suffered from ill health and moved from his home in Flitwick to Hitchin to be closer to family. He leaves behind his wife Beryl, two sons, a daughter and a host of grandchildren.

Amongst other things Dougie Rees will be remembered for was his love of family, gardening, singing in the police choir, ready willingness to help others cheerfully and his wonderful Welsh smile.

One of nature's real gentlemen and sadly missed for his efforts for the FGA and his good company

David Coulson and David Empson

Syd's Snippets

As you are aware the FGA is a member's society, run by members for its members. The Officers - Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Trading Officer along with the Executive Committee are elected each year at the AGM to run the Association on your behalf. Every year due notice is given, but very few attend the most important meeting of the year and this year was no different with just 8% of the membership attending and most of those were the current officers and committee members.

We can only therefore assume that we are doing what you require but despite many calls for volunteers to come forward we have not had much response. Some have come forward to volunteer for till duties and to assist in the running of sections of the trading areas and this is much appreciated. However we have had no response in recruiting key holders and at present are down to just 6 and this is to cover every Friday evening and Saturday afternoon from the start of February until the end of November. With this reduced number we are often struggling to find anyone who is available to open the building and guide the till helpers through the session and on occasions we have not able to open at all.

So unless we can quickly resolve this matter, do not be surprised that when you arrive the Seedbox will not be open. This is not our fault it is yours; for we are doing what we can. It would only take 3 - 4 volunteers for either a Friday or Saturday once every 5 – 6 weeks to resolve this situation. If we know in advance that one of the six of us cannot be there we will post a note on the gate, but often due to various reasons that occur at the last minute, we will not be able to do so.

Therefore if you arrive and we are not open it's your fault for not putting yourself forward. Please do not abuse those on duty as they are doing their bit.

In summarising, instead of complaining think, put your name forward, come and have a trial period for an hour or so alongside someone experienced and you may, as many in the past have found, it can also be an enjoyable experience.

In the meantime enjoy your gardening.

Syd Pye – Chairman



Spring Show 2017 Report

Warm weather in February and March made me wonder if there would still be any daffodils still in flower - so just in case we were short of entries I forced the judge to suffer tasting my own homemade Bedfordshire Clanger. I didn't need to put her through this ordeal as on the day there were not only plenty of daffodils and tulip and they were again all high quality exhibits. Thankfully too there were also some members that were better cooks than me (I even managed to pick up a few tips on how to improve my cooking for next year!!) and there were also a lot of excellent homemade cakes for the refreshments as well.

Thank you to everyone that helped at the show, brought in exhibits, donated raffle prizes and cakes and to those that came to look around.

Our Annual Show in August will be our 40th - so let's see plenty on exhibits in all of the classes and especially I'd like to see members putting entries in who do not normally show. There are enough people around to help you with your exhibits, if you need it, and classes especially for those that have not won a class previously if you're concerned about going up against people that regularly show. Look out for the show schedule that should be available in July to see what classes you could enter.

Colin Stennett
Show Secretary

2017 Annual Show Photography Classes

The classes for the 2017 Annual Show on Saturday 19th August are:-

103 Flitwick	104 Gardens
105 Ruby	106 Anniversary

The Children's photography class subject is 'Something / Someone old'

TRADING REPORT SUMMER 2017

As I sit here listening to the reports of the London attacks having got back from playing golf and waiting for the Manchester concert to start I think my gardening is a bit more in context. I'm not worked up over the rate at which weeds grow, but I am intrigued at how fast the lawn grew once it had a good dump of rain. When I worked I found that getting down on the allotment gave me a great relaxation and on many occasions it was there that I came to terms with many things and thought through many issues and problems, nothing changes I shall be there tomorrow!!!

Well how about the FGA? Things are progressing and we still have no clear future vision so carry on regardless. Oh yes I'm still trading secretary but if anyone wants to take it over please do (sorry a bit of a dream there).

The Food and Ferts and Killer areas have been smartened up and excess stock placed on sale at 30% discount. String/Wire/etc. will soon receive similar treatment. Keep watching for water goods to be looked at it's my next target.

Many members noticed that we seemed to have a large amount of potatoes left on the rack late in the season. This was due to the fact that Woburn Sands Allotment Society who normally buy some £400 of potatoes did not do so this year and did not have the decency to let me know of this fact until it was too late for me to amend the order. We have one other very large order and I've already got their re-assurance that they will be ordering from us for next year. I will be reducing our order to try and ensure that we do not have so many left to throw away, not least it hurts me to waste them.

I'm also pleased to be able to say that FGA are doing what we can to assist Rod Mayhew welcoming some refugees to Flitwick and in particular as they are taking on allotments on Steppingley Road plots. We welcome them to Gardening in the UK and will continue to do what we can to assist, I hope their enthusiasm is infectious.

Well a very short report this time which reflects the fact trading is becoming more under control and a shared job thus reducing the amount of work I'm doing. My last comment is that there are still other areas which I would love assistance in managing do see me if you think you can assist.

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

Great Gardening

Jim Godden

FGA Trading Secretary

AGM Report 2017

We had a total of 18 members, out of a membership of 301, attend the AGM at the Rufus Centre and all were welcomed by the Chairman. The reports for Trading, Membership and the Show Committee were in the Spring magazine and taken as read. The treasurer was unable to present the unaudited accounts for 2016 due to problems making them balance. He did however present some high level financial information to the meeting and said that both the accounts and his report would be available for the next magazine.

In his report the chairman thanked all those that helped with the running of the association and its shows, including the till helpers and the Monday mob. He especially thanked Jim and Dave for all their hard work over the year.

We now have a few people coming forward to look after 'trading areas' within the Seed box - taking some of the pressure off Jim.

A discussion took place on the fact that we're still short of people to take on a 'key holder' role during the Seed box trading times. This means that there may be times when we will not be able to open or support events that we have done in previous years, such as Open weekend / Plant sales and the Flitwick Carnival. Carolyn and Alan Kirkdale were welcomed to the Executive Committee as new Magazine editors and the rest of the Executive and Show Committees were elected unopposed. It was stated that the association needs people to take on a more active role in the Association otherwise we may not be able to continue - so please think about how you could help and talk to someone on the committee about it.

Colin Stennett
Secretary.

Treasurer's Report 2016

The trading turnover was again down on last year, caused by the difficult trading conditions at the Seedbox which has meant a drop in our surplus to £213 after all expenses.

Stock Levels are down and the trading team are again working to reduce them further.

Staffing the Seedbox is getting harder all the time, we are training one or two new till operators but we still need more help.

Members have improved on the issue of using their cards for small transactions, please continue to bear in mind there is a cost to the FGA when using cards. I do not want to instigate a charge like some businesses are doing, so please pay cash for any transaction under £10.00.

The issue of my resignation as Treasurer is still ongoing, so I am reluctantly continuing in the role until a replacement or assistant can be found.

David Pateman
Treasurer

Flitwick Gardeners' Association
DRAFT Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2016

2015		Expenditure		2015		Income	
£		£	£	£		£	£
19,332	Purchases	12,586		15,130	Sales- ~ General	12,367	
1,009	Plus Creditors 2016	548		1,910	~ Potatoes	1,977	
(1,461)	Less Creditors 2015	(1,009)	12,125	2,910	~ Seeds	1,673	
(38,169)	Less Stock-Current Year	(36,383)		1,643	~ Plants	1,777	
38,367	Plus Stock-Previous Year	38,169		21,593		17,794	
19,078		13,911		1,055	Plus Debtors-Current Year	1,055	
760	Trading Expenses	449		-	Less Debtors-Previous Year	(1,055)	
32	Trading Assets-Depreciation	28		-	Plus Dividends & Discounts	-	
2,778	Trading Surplus for Year	3,406					
22,648	TOTAL	17,794		22,648		TOTAL	17,794

Income & Expenditure Account

352	General Expenses	103	2,778	Trading Surplus	3,406
-	Memorial Garden @ Seed Box	-	289	Stalls	52
1,226	Show & Social Expenses-see overleaf	851	780	Subscriptions	799
-	Redecoration & Repairs	40	1,256	Show & Social Income (see overleaf)	761
1,300	Rent (Inc. Amortisation) & Insurance	1,374	8	Other Income- Bank Interest (less Tax)	9
299	Magazines & Printing	536	15	~ Equipment Loans	8
224	Fire Protection/Alarm Contract	231	-	~ Bank Compensation	-
62	Affiliations	62	9	Cash Differences on Till (nett)	-
337	Telephone	374			
-	Gratuities	-			
290	Sponsorship & Advertising	663			
694	Bank & PDQ Charges	561			
-	Cash Differences on Till (nett)	27			
351	Net Income to Accumulated Fund	213			
5,135	TOTAL	5,035	5,135	TOTAL	5,035

Charity Account

-	Distribution During Year	-	96	Income for the Year	-
691	Balance in Hand	691	-	Bank Interest (Less Tax)	-
			595	Balance Brought Forward	691
691	TOTAL	691	691	TOTAL	691

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2016

1,042	Creditors	548	1,106	Fixed Assets	581
33,491	Accumulated Fund B/F	33,842	38,169	Stock at Cost	36,383
351	from Income & Expenditure Account	213	1,055	Debtors	1,055
39,000	Development & Contingency Account B/F	39,000	13,599	Cash at Bank- Current Account	15,623
691	Charity Account	691	19,505	~ Deposit Account	19,514
			691	~ Charity Account	691
			450	Cash in Hand	447
74,575	TOTAL	74,294	74,575	TOTAL	74,294

Notes: 1. No provision for tax liability has been made in these accounts.

Breakdown of Assets and Depreciation - 2016

Show and Social Committee Assets and Depreciation

<u>Item</u>	<u>Purchase Date</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Yrs Dep</u>	<u>Previous Dep</u>	<u>Current Dep</u>	<u>Current Value</u>	
Voice Amplifier	10/24/2013	£ 35.89	5	£ 21.89	£ 7.00	£ 7.00	
						£ 7.00	£ 7.00

Trading Committee Assets and Depreciation

Pallet Truck	11/16/2015	£ 144.00	5	£ 32.00	£ 28.00	£ 84.00	
						£ 28.00	£ 84.00
Seed Box Lease (Lease to be amortized over it's 20 year life)	Sep-98	£ 9,800.00	20	£ 8,820.00	£ 490.00	£ 490.00	
						Total Assets	£ 581.00

The Show and Social Committee also hold in stock for use next year the following items:-

Show Rosettes	£ 350.00
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Bank Reconciliation

Current Account Statement	£15,631.25
Less Uncleared Cheques	£ 75.00
Plus Credits not yet entered	£ 67.00

£ 15,623.25

High Interest Business Account - Trading & Charity

£ 20,205.49

Show and Social Events

<u>Event</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>
Spring Show	£16.28	£94.40
Summer Show	£84.70	£286.25
Autumn Show	£2.49	£137.40
Invitation Quiz Night	£39.83	£243.00
Village Hall Fees 2016	£298.25	
Rosettes	£403.00	
Voice Amplifier - Depreciation	£7.00	
Totals	£851.55	£761.05

D J Pateman 01.01.2017.
Hon. Treasurer.



Calling all gardeners – we request your help!

MYHarvest (Measure Your Harvest) is a new project in which gardeners can be involved, to help estimate the contribution of home-grown fruit and vegetables to UK national food production. Finding out how much food is grown at home is key to providing evidence to support the use of land for growing in urban areas, and promoting benefits to food security, healthy diets and wellbeing. Jill Edmonson and Roscoe Blevins (from Houghton Conquest), researchers at the University of Sheffield, are working with the RHS and the National Allotment Society to ask gardeners and allotment holders to provide information on the space given to edibles, and their yields. This will help them understand how much allotment and garden space is needed to ensure access to suitable land and food growing for UK cities and towns' increasing populations.

Take part at: www.myharvest.org.uk. You can also follow the project's progress on Twitter (@MYHarvestUK), Facebook (/MYHarvestUK) and Instagram (@MYHarvestUK).

If you are unable to go online, further information is available at The Seedbox. This includes a list of vegetables and fruit being surveyed, an explanation of the simple measurements to be taken and tally sheets. Details of your harvest can be returned there and will be passed on to the University of Sheffield.

Your help with this exciting project will be much appreciated.

Rosalind Blevins