

# ELTHAM AND AVERY HILL GARDENS SOCIETY

Website: [www.eahgs.org.uk](http://www.eahgs.org.uk)

## NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2023

The summer and the warm weather seem to have finally gone now; the nights are drawing in, the clocks going back and it looks like rain, rain, rain for the next week or two. Time to finish the autumn planting, tidy up and get on with seasonal tasks like cleaning and sharpening the tools.

### THE EAHGS COMMITTEE

The Committee has a voluntary membership generally of around twelve officers and ordinary members. Details are listed on the website. They manage the Society for you, run the trading shop and the annual show and produce the seasonal newsletter, which is put together by the Chairperson, Barbara Crowe. We thought you might like to know more about each member and have included a new newsletter feature MEET THE COMMITTEE which we hope you will find interesting.

The Committee is NOT involved in ANY Council or site matters.

### SHOW REPORT – Mike Hill, Show Secretary

A big thank you to all involved in our 70<sup>th</sup> annual show at St Mary's on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, visitors, competitors, judges and committee members. The weather was kind to us, and the turnout matched that of previous years. There were 220 exhibits from 25 entrants. It was pleasing to see four new faces amongst the usual competitors. We are always happy to welcome new members. The standard of exhibits was high in all classes, floral, vegetable and domestic. The potato growing challenge, new this year, proved very popular. We shall repeat this next year when the show will be on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September. Photos from the show can be seen on the EAHGS website gallery.

### WILDLIFE

In addition to the little robins flitting between plots at Pippenhall, a couple of buzzards can often be seen circling high above the allotments and to the north by the golf course. Some ploholders have also wondered if they have seen a red kite which would be a very exciting sighting, Those of you with garden birdfeeders may well attract the usual sparrows, great tits, blue tits and robins, as well as magpies, but you may also get some green parakeets which tend to scare off some of the smaller birds.

### TRADING – Pat and David Middleton

#### Seed Potatoes

You can place your orders for seed potatoes in the shop at Pippenhall Allotments on Sunday mornings from Sunday November 5 until Sunday November 26. Please check the noticeboard at Pippenhall and the Eltham & Avery Hill Gardens Society website for varieties that can be ordered and price per pound. Minimum order of 1lb of any variety and payment with orders please.

#### Shop Closure For The Winter

Just a reminder that the shop will close for the winter on Sunday November 26 and re-open on Sunday February 4 2024.

### SITE REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION – Pat Middleton

For the attention of members with allotments at Pippenhall Allotments

Just a few reminders:

Item 6 of your tenancy agreement

“Paths shared with neighbours. You are responsible for looking after the nearer half of the paths on and around your allotment. Paths should be 47.2cm/18” wide. If there is no path next to your allotment you should make one” It was noted on a site inspection that many paths were not being maintained and plants and foliage were growing over some paths making access impossible. This is in breach of your tenancy agreement. It was also noted that items were being placed on paths. These paths cannot be used for storage of items or for dumping foliage etc cleared from your plot.

Your plot number needs to be clearly visible. Please see your tenancy agreement.

### Thefts from plots

I have had reports of produce being stolen from some plots e.g. apple trees stripped of apples. If you see anything suspicious please report it to the police and myself. My mobile number is on both noticeboards at Pippenhall.

Plot holders are not permitted to go onto another plot for any reason without the plot holder’s permission.

## **MEET YOUR COMMITTEE**

### **DAVID BURNIE**

#### How long have you been on the committee and what is your role?

Not quite the most recent addition to the EAHGS committee but certainly a newcomer. I came on to the committee in 2021, but I do not have a specific role, so generally try to help wherever I am able. It is great to be able to contribute in a small way to a small local society and it is certainly true that the more people that are involved the easier it is for everybody.

So far my involvement has been low-key, assisting with unloading deliveries for the allotment shop, helping with the Annual show and supporting the people who do the real work for the Society. I am forever grateful for the people that run the shop – you just never know when you might need an additional bamboo cane on a Sunday morning!

#### Why, where, and how do you garden?

I inherited my love of gardening from my father who maintained a large vegetable plot in his country garden, and I had always wanted to take on an allotment but while I was still working I just didn’t think I had the time to do it justice. I was very lucky to get a plot at Pippenhall just before I retired from my job with Contemporary Dance Trust, a dance charity based near Euston. Naturally it took a few seasons before it felt anything like under control (and let’s be honest who can say that their plot is ever under control?) but it has provided me with many hours of enjoyment and at least a few fresh vegetables to bring home for the table. My neighbouring plot – holder refers to it as a “Mr McGregor” plot with its neat and orderly rows – perhaps my professional life as an accountant makes it almost impossible to plant things in anything other than straight lines. I try extremely hard to garden organically but slugs and snails sometimes push me over the edge. (Plot 10A if you want to check it out).

#### What do you do when you are not gardening?

Away from the allotment I am an active musician, playing the viola in the local Sidcup Symphony Orchestra, and enjoy playing chamber music and attending concerts, particularly at Wigmore Hall.

Art classes and a continued involvement with a couple of dance charities, along with my grandchildren have meant that retirement has not exactly been an excuse to sit with my feet up, but the allotment has certainly been one of the highlights of stopping work.

#### What is the one thing you would say to anybody about gardening?

Remember that you never are never finished. Whatever you do nature will start undoing it as soon as your back is turned!

## **HERE AT GLENLEA – Our Special Correspondent**

You may remember I was doing a trial with a 70% coco 30% perlite plus a little mealworm poo. Nutrition was the Hydroponic A & B. My Taster in Chief said the taste was fine but the yield was very poor. So that's a No No. They advise that you can re-use the compost so I am now growing 2nd crop potatoes in two containers; one with nutrition by potato fertiliser from the shop and another from ECOTHRIVE. We shall see. This year I have been overrun with snails absolutely destroying all my plants. One trial which looks promising is to put a lime barrier around the plants. So far so good.

## **INTER SOCIETY TROPHY – John King**

This year we held it just at the Mottingham Show. Derek gave the edge to the Mottingham exhibit by virtue of the flowers entered by Dora and Susie. Annabel gave Barbara's strawberry jam the best. So I decided that it was a draw.

## **INTER SOCIETY LIAISON – John King**

I have been on three outings recently, one with the Bexrose Society to RHS Hyde Hall. I persuaded them to do a pickup at Mottingham Village where we could find free parking (as opposed to £25 per day to park in Bexleyheath). This gained them seven additional bums on seats which they were pleased with as it is difficult for any society to fill a coach.

A second trip was with the Bexleyheath Society to Kings Seeds at Kelvedon in Essex. We heard how all the technical work and final seed packing is done at Kelvedon but the seeds are grown by small farmers in Italy. In the afternoon we visited RHS Hyde Hall.

The third trip was with CABAHS (Charlton and Blackheath Amateur Horticultural Society) to RHS Wisley where I saw quite a few areas I didn't see last year.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

We're very lucky living in Eltham to have Eltham Palace and its beautiful grounds and gardens to visit so conveniently. But have you ever wondered about the private garden that shares the ancient palace wall? Well, here is an opportunity to find out more. **EAHGS will hold its AGM on Friday 22 March 2024** and after the business of the meeting, which shouldn't last more than about 30 minutes, Mrs Ruth Cornett, the owner of The Gatehouse, has kindly agreed to give us a talk on her garden, particularly the rose garden. So, although it's a long way ahead, put the date in your diary and look forward to a fascinating evening.

## **MEMBERSHIP – Brian Greenwood, Membership Secretary**

Just a reminder that the latest EAHGS Membership (Yellow Membership card) runs from 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024. Our thanks to those who have renewed already.

For those that haven't renewed yet, you can do so at the Pippenhall shop on a Sunday morning between 10.00am and 12.00 (noon). Annual membership remains at £5 for Ordinary members and £3 for Seniors. The old Blue membership cards have expired and are no longer valid.

### **THOSE REMINDERS AGAIN:**

**SEED POTATO ORDERING at the shop from Sunday 5 November – Sunday 26 November.**

**Check the website for varieties and prices.**

**EAHGS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING with talk by Mrs Ruth Cornett: FRIDAY 22 MARCH 2024, 7.30PM**

**2024 ANNUAL SHOW: SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> September 2024**

**To keep in touch with all the Society's news, shop price lists and many other items of interest, log on to:**

**[www.eahgs.org.uk](http://www.eahgs.org.uk)**