



THIS NEWSLETTER SEES THE END OF A BUSY SUMMER *of activities on the*



The squash harvesters, with their colourful bounty of winter squash and pumpkins

*farm and the culmination of the harvest of crops that have mostly yielded very well. Read more about both the fruit and veg harvesting and other activities in the fields and polytunnels in **News from the Veg Field** from Will and **Update from the Fruit Orchard** from Gareth and Amy. We've had all kinds of activities for members to join in with, whether that be helping with the big harvests, celebrating the season with a feast or preserving some of our crop to take home. You can see what people have enjoyed doing in **Events** and see what future events are in the diary. There are also the regular updates about **Site Developments** and the **Education Project** as well as news from our partner*

*project: **Canalside Community Bees**. As we move into the colder, darker months, the veg share is changing and the events slow down, but we hope you might join us for our big winter work task and social on Saturday 8th November, or one of our work mornings which will continue through the winter every Wednesday and Saturday (10am-1pm) apart from between Christmas and New Year.*

Ali, October 2014

NEWS FROM THE VEG FIELD – by Will Johnson

It is at this time of year, the middle of the autumn, that we get our results and assess what kind of year it's been out in the fields... in simple numbers! Last week we weighed in the squash crop (2300kg – a very good yield) and this week the maincrop onions (over 2500kg – a super yield). In the next week or two we will walk over most of the land and get a feel for what we can expect to harvest from the other crops between now and next summer. The cabbages are easily



The big weigh-in - every squash is included!



Grading and bagging onions - a huge job which lasted over two months

counted accurately, but crops that stay underground until they're needed (carrots and parsnips, for example) need to be estimated based on lifting a sample from a measured area. These estimates have proved in the past to be very reliable and so we can quite safely say that just like the squash and onions it has been a very successful year for beetroot, celeriac, parsnips, carrots and swede (though

the swede are a bit on the massive side, which can cause a problem when trying to share them out...!). The purple sprouting broccoli and the spring cauliflower plants are looking excellent and should provide lots of food in March, April and May. The leeks were checked by leek moth caterpillars and we had to cut them back twice but they should provide a good quality, if a little reduced, harvest.

The only crop that has been disappointing this year has been potatoes. Our ten plots are all slightly different sizes and it was the turn of the potato to be on one of the smallest plots this year. They also got blight at the start of the summer which meant that we had to take the tops off them a lot earlier than usual. This was necessary in terms of preventing blight affecting the tubers and preserving the crop we had at the time, but it does mean that the plants cannot photosynthesize for several weeks during the longest days of the year and the result is that we have harvested a lot of small potatoes that would otherwise have been two or three times the size and weight. It has not been disastrous, but instead of harvesting 4000kg we would have like five or six thousand, ideally.

Overall, though, a great growing season.

The tunnels are all gradually transitioning from summer crops to winter – we are now harvesting the very last of the tomatoes, peppers, aubergines and cucumbers and are starting to harvest the leaves that we planted at the end of the summer. In the next week we will plant the last crops of the year inside the tunnels (broad beans – a new polytunnel crop for us, previously only grown in the fields here – and garlic for harvesting next May and June), having transplanted the final outdoor crop of the year last week (over-wintered onions).

A very dry September followed by a very wet fortnight at the start of October made it a challenge to get clover, rye and vetch established on the ley plots. These are important non-food crops for preserving and building fertility. It was also a challenge to make good quality beds for the onions as well, but learning from previous mistakes, attention to detail and a touch of the 'make it happen!' mentality has meant we've managed it, just.

Will, 23rd October 2014

UPDATE FROM THE FRUIT FIELD – by Gareth Davies and Amy Willoughby

The nights are drawing in already and as the leaves blow off the trees we can reflect on a good year in the orchard in which the top fruit trees are becoming more mature and bearing a lot more fruit. We hope that you are still enjoying the range of apple and pear varieties which, on the whole, fruited well this year and that you enjoyed the plums and soft fruit earlier in the season. It is certainly good to have fresh distinctive varieties of fruit to eat as it becomes



Leeks, here pre-haircut with caterpillar damage, but now growing back free from leek moth caterpillars



Sharing out sweet chestnuts for the fruit share

available through the year, and we are starting to harvest enough to be able to issue "single variety" shares, so that you can all become more familiar with our orchard favourites! The soft fruit was less abundant this season, but the 2014 project to establish a dense ground cover underneath the tree canopies should also increase soft fruit yields in years to come.



Bumper plum harvest in September

Since the beginning, the orchard and fruit shares have been run in parallel with the vegetable shares; however, with the start-up funding now all used up, it's time to do some serious head scratching to work out how Canalside can bring the orchard into the 'core' of the business. This process was started at last January's AGM, and strong ideas are emerging, but we still have lots of heads to scratch (we'd like all Canalside members to be consulted on this – watch out for a questionnaire heading your way). We are therefore planning to stop the fruit share at Christmas (Ali will be in touch about changing your standing order)... but don't panic, fruit will be back on the menu by the time the rhubarb is ready. As a result, fruit share members will receive their entire frozen fruit ration between now and Christmas, so come

prepared for frozen fruit every week or two!

If anyone can't wait for the questionnaire and would like to give feedback on the fruit shares, please feel free to contact Ali or Gareth directly. We will be presenting the new fruit and veg business plan at the AGM on Tuesday 27th January 2015, so please come along and hear all about it.



Magali Fowler, fruit workshare, picking apples in September

Gareth and Amy, 28th October 2014

NEW ARRIVALS...

It's been an incredibly busy time over the past 3 months for new arrivals – several tiddly-dots have arrived on the Canalside scene and an unprecedented number of new members have joined following on from their trial veg share.

Back in August, **Jacob** was born to members **Roz and Jamie Lloyd** – a baby brother for 2-year old Harper. Roz told me that Jake is a very healthy baby and Harper is proving to be a great big sister who is brilliant at helping her parents look after Jake.



Kai, Emi and Mika

Emi Daisy joined **Tomo and Becca Sugisaka** and big sisters Mika and Kai, and on 20th September. Becca told me she had a really empowering home birth and feels complete with her three girls. So far everyone is adjusting well and Emi has already been to Canalside several times, and each time has slept really well there!



Harper and Jake

Veg members **Lucy Hawker and Ben Moore** were thoroughly

relieved at the appearance of their baby boy on 15th October, after 55 exhausting hours of labour! Baby Hawker-Moore was un-named at the time of going to press, but Ben was hopeful they would manage to whittle down the name choices before 42 days were up.



Baby Hawker-Moore

We wish all these families, new and enlarged, happy times as they get to know their new arrivals and look forward to seeing their little ones thrive within our community and later on our delicious produce too!

We've had a record-breaking intake of new members which has resulted from very successful promotion of Canalside during the summer at the Peace Festival and Food & Drink Festival. Thank you to all existing members who helped us with that! We welcome the following new members who have joined the scheme in the past 3 months:

Gwyn & Terri Evans and family · Ed Lowndes · Angus & Arianna Alton and family · Chess Lawson and family · Ingrid Vilain and family · Kristy Potter & Ben Wilson Eleanor & Hamish Sutcliffe · Ann & Rob Collins and family · Claire Duhazé and family · Laura Schwartz · Carol Barnes-Burrell & Matt Burrell and family · Chris Beeny Elizabeth Moreton-Smith and family · Julia Beart and family ·

...AND DEPARTURES

Back in September, we said goodbye to *George Hardwick and Fan Lebel* as they left Leamington with their daughter Freya on the next step of their life's journey. They have been stalwart veg members for several years and have both added immensely to social events over the years, in particular at the summer party with the annual appearance of the Magic Pan rustling up pancakes for all and sundry, but also cooking up a storm of the soup, curry or even Smartie covered cake variety for various events through the year. They will continue to be social members, and we hope to see them at next year's summer party, at the very least, perhaps with the Magic Pan in tow. We thank them for enriching the life of our community and wish them every success in their future plans, which they ultimately hope will take them to Devon.



George working the Magic Pans!



Although she's not leaving Canalside fully yet, this seems like a good time to acknowledge the hard work of *Eleanor Brown* in the fruit orchard. Eleanor came to the farm just over two years ago, and since starting as casual labour in the fruit field has gradually come to be the one who is most often in charge of the fruit harvest and working with the fruit workshares in the orchard. Although she is continuing her work as a veg workshare, Eleanor has stepped back from her role in the fruit orchard to allow her the space to consider what she will do next. We thank Eleanor for her huge input and hard work which have contributed massively to the delicious fruit shares which have been given out over the past two years.

SITE DEVELOPMENTS – by Tom Ingall

We've a few different plans for the site over the coming months. We're so close to our ultimate vision of the site now, but one or two things are still to be put in place.

The main one, which is a very exciting prospect, is to have a good quality 'field' kitchen. This would allow for all sorts of extra events and workshops to happen at Canalside over the coming years and it will really help the preparation of seasonal feasts during our socials throughout the year. The plan is to convert the old railway carriage that presently stands in the car park and have this positioned somewhere nearer to the pole barn. Money was raised during the summer party earlier in the year and work will be commencing shortly.

Inside the pole barn the cob render is very nearly finished on the straw bale wall and soon we will look to finish this space outside of the collection room and have some large notice boards arranged on the wall for the community to make use of.

On a sadder note we've had some security issues over the last couple of months with some thefts and we've taken the decision to invest in a small shipping container to act as a lock-up for all our tools and valuable items around the site.



Workshare, Rebecca Knight, applying render to the pole barn wall

EDUCATION PROJECT – by Ali Jeffery



The vegetable matching game

We have had an extremely busy few weeks on the education project with seven classes of four to seven year olds visiting Canalside with their class teachers for activities on the theme 'where does it come from?'. Of the 175 children many were visiting a farm for the first time, and for the three Reception classes it was their first ever school trip!

With each class, we (a total of fourteen Canalside volunteers and I) took a tour round the fields and polytunnels. Going on a 'vegetable hunt'

engaged the children with finding out what was growing where, and we asked questions to encourage the children to think about which part of the plant we eat, where the vegetable grows (above or below ground) and what kind of environment the plant needs to grow. The weather mostly enabled us to do a full tour that took in both the fields and polytunnels, although the last two visits were rather cold and windy, and we had regular jumping-up-and-down stops to warm up during our 'welly walk'.

In the pole barn the children had a chance to learn the names of a dozen or so vegetables, some of which were totally new to them (e.g. Romanesco). We passed these round the circle for everyone to have a sensory experience of each vegetable, with smelling, touching and looking all encouraged. That experience was completed with a vegetable snack to taste a number of the vegetables we had looked at.

As always, thank you so much to all the volunteers, without whom it would have been impossible to provide the snack, and who provided invaluable support during the sessions as well. The next visits will be from the start of April 2015, so if you're interested in helping out in

the future, look out for details next spring, once I've got some bookings.

We especially love to have visits from children who live in the local area – Leamington, Warwick and surroundings – so if you would like your child's class to visit, or have friends who are interested in their children coming on a school trip to Canalside, please take a flier from the hook next to the noticeboard in the collection space. You can pass this on to the class teacher – it has full contact details, and sample visit outlines for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes.

EVENTS – by Ali Jeffery

Our events have continued apace through the late summer and into the autumn, with members of all ages getting involved with harvesting, preserving and celebrating our produce as well as telling others about the scheme.

August – jam making:

SKILLSHARE

In August, just before the raspberries disappeared off the scene, members and non-members spent a sunny afternoon picking fruit and the evening making a variety of types of jam. This was run by the fruit team, in collaboration with Action 21's 'Skillshare' programme.



The delicious end results



September – potato harvest and camping weekend:

This annual event drew a wide range of ages to help with the potato harvest, with the tractor and potato lifting doing the heavy work (although the lifter needed a certain amount of coaxing to cooperate!). The weekend kicked off with two films – *The Illusionist* and *The Horseman on the Roof* – enjoyed by campers and evening visitors. Thanks to John Liddamore for organising this. Several tens of people, with lots of children of all ages, enjoyed a harvest feast in the pole barn on the Saturday evening, cooked by Will and a team of volunteers.



Members Matt and Mandy, discussing... our beautiful aubergines?

Leamington Food & Drink Festival publicity stall:

This event, with enthusiastic member volunteers telling the public about what we do at Canalside, broke all previous records of trial shares. We ended the weekend with about 15 new trials veg shares, many of which are now converting to subscribing members meaning we go into the winter with healthy member numbers.

October – apple juicing day:

Great fun was had by many members doing all kinds of things with apples – the smaller people present were highly creative in this! Some people chose to press juice to take home for conversion into cider and plenty of apple juice was drunk on the day. Thanks to the fruit team for organising this event and making the soup.



Bottling up apple juice

sauerkraut-making workshop:

Thanks again to member Erica Moody for offering to share her skills and knowledge of wild fermentation. A small group of members gathered to learn how to turn cabbages into sauerkraut, a method which increases its nutritional value and allows it to be consumed over a lengthy period.

Dates to come:

Nov: Sat 9th – big winter social – beetroot harvest, shared meal

Dec: date TBC – final social of the year

Jan: Tues 27th – AGM, venue to be confirmed

Want to be more involved? If you'd like to help out with anything specific, please let Ali know. Look out for details of how you can help in emails about each event. Also, if you have an idea for an activity that you can offer to other members, please get in touch with Ali to discuss (mail@canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk).

CANALSIDE COMMUNITY FOOD PARTNER PROJECTS' UPDATE

Canalside Community Bees, by Kath Pasteur

We had another successful year of beekeeping this year. There were LOTS of swarms in the spring and we increased our number of hives to 13 over the summer. We recently joined some together so we have 10 going through the winter and they are all stocked up with plenty of food to see them through to spring.



We harvested around 170 jars of honey which has equated to *Hiving one of this year's swarms* a maximum of 8 jars per member and everyone got a piece of cut comb too. We are thinking about winter activities now, like processing the wax and making candles. Please get in touch if you would like to join the Bee Club - you can join now in readiness for next year and enjoy a couple of months free membership! Email canalsidecommunitybees@yahoo.co.uk for details.

MEMBERS' CORNER Do you have any interesting projects, charity fund-raisers or other not-for-profit activities you'd like to promote to your fellow Canalsiders? If so, then this is the space for your free advert! Get in touch with Ali for advertising in future issues of the newsletter.

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TTIP and armchair activism: If you don't already know about TTIP, please find out about it! Although the issues are complex, maybe slightly dull, if we ignore them, then we are basically saying it's OK. The possible impact on organic standards might be of particular interest:

<http://www.arc2020.eu/front/2014/05/what-might-ttip-mean-for-organic-farming-and-food/>

There is a petition against the TTIP in the collection space – **please sign it**. If you think that signing petitions or donating to organisations like SUMOFUS, AVAAZ, 38DEGREES etc doesn't do any good, check out all the phenomenal successes on their websites. They have MILLIONS of members, and adding your signature does make a difference.

This is a plea to join them all!!! Stay informed and sign anything you are interested in. If you can, give them money so they can keep working for us. Armchair activism is the new black. I bet you that's what Swampy does these days...

<http://www.38degrees.org.uk/>

<http://www.avaaz.org/en/>

<http://sumofus.org/>

Kath Pasteur and Ali Jeffery



Join the Friends of Foundry Wood for a seasonal celebration on Saturday 1st November. Halloween themed crafts and entertainment

for all ages as well as food and singing around the campfire. 2:30 - 7:30pm. All welcome! More details on: www.foundrywood.co.uk



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SMALL ADS Do you have any business or money-making ventures you'd like to advertise to other members of Canalside? Then this is the space for you. Please contact Ali for future adverts.

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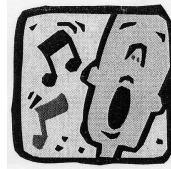
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Songlines Winter Concert, 8pm, Sat 6 Dec 2014

Your annual opportunity to come and support your local 100-strong community choir.

Always a warm and fuzzy evening.

Proceeds to local charities.

St. Mary's Church, St. Mary's Rd
Leamington Spa

Tickets £5 / £3, available from Gaia

Please email Bruce for more info:

bruce@naturalvoice.net

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Deeply relaxing treatments with Nikki will give you time to unwind, relieve stress and ease your body's aches and pains.

Treatments available Tuesdays & Saturdays at Neal's Yard Remedies, Leamington Spa.

To book an appointment with Nikki Cooper call Neal's Yard on 01926 832 685.

www.facebook.com/NikkiCooperMassageTherapies

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Link to our Flickr photos for a fuller selection of photos of the past 3 months:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/65686573@N02/sets/>

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Next newsletter due out end of January 2015.

Deadline for ads with payment, and notices – Sunday 18th January.

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