



**SUMMER HAS SUNG ITS LAST SONG** – *the last blast of warm air in early October brought with it the end of the prodigious quantities of plums and apples that the summer nurtured. We are really feeling the cooling of the year now, even though in sheltered spots the leaves are holding on with their greenness and making the months seem less advanced than they really are. Read on for the latest **News from the Field** from the growers and an update on the **Fruit Field** to hear how everything is growing and what is to come in the weeks and*



*Plums for the fruit share*



*Dried beans ready for a winter veg share*

*months ahead of us. There's news from the tail end of the summer which continued to be busy with continuing work on the **Infrastructure** in the social area, our annual stall at **Leamington Food and Drink Festival** which saw a number of new members join us, more visits as part of the **Education Project** and an exciting weekend of camping and activities for the **Autumn social**. More of these and a few photos in this newsletter, along with further details of the upcoming **Winter social** and the **AGM**. Don't forget the **Members' Corner** and **Small Ads** at the end – you might find that one of our members can provide exactly what*

*you've been looking for! I, for one, am enjoying the opportunity to slow down a bit, brought by the nights closing in and the days getting shorter and colder. I hope you can too, along with the new seasons' veg!*

*Ali, October 2011.*

### **NEWS FROM THE FIELD** – *by Will Johnson*

A pretty cool August (temperature wise...) and hot September and October have made things interesting. The first big harvest of the season took place in August; we brought in a tonne and a half of onions - less than we thought we would and less than we'd like - which are now dried and in store, though we're holding onto most of them to go into the share in leaner months ahead. The potato harvest went well in September - we must have brought in about 9 tonnes - although the hot autumn weather has meant some of them have started to chit (to try to turn into a plant again!) which is rather worrying as chitted potatoes don't store. Hopefully the cooling down of the past week will continue and typical autumn weather will set in.



*A crate of potatoes ready for storage*



*Many hands made light work of the potato harvest*

Colder weather would be welcome for other reasons. The prevailing mild temperatures have meant insect pests on the brassicas have not been checked as they would with more seasonal weather. The temperatures have meant most of the over winter tunnel crops have established well, though if they go to seed (as they will if they're too warm) they will not keep producing the leaves that we need for winter salads so on that front lower temperatures would be a good thing.

As usual in veg growing, some things have benefited from adverse weather. A sunny September was just what was required to ripen up most of the butternut squash. We had a good

squash harvest a fortnight ago and did it all in one work morning, bringing in over a tonne of colourful squash.

The pace slackens on the farm at this time of year (hooray!) and most of our energy is focused on making the most of our polytunnels (of which we have 7 this year) and harvesting roots from outside. Next up is beetroot and celeriac harvest, though we'll leave carrots, parsnips and leeks outside.

## FRUIT FIELD – by Gareth Davies

An enormous vote of thanks goes to all those who have volunteered their surplus fruit to the project over the last few months. This has enabled us to start a limited fruit share which we have been offering since August. We have collected and stored a large number of apples and have had a good variety of cherry plums, plums, damsons and gages to fill the share as well as the apples, pears and quinces. Grapes have also been a star feature.



*Damsons for the fruit share*



*Harvesting for late summer fruit shares*

And we have also offered some 'novelty' wild harvested fruits like elder and crab apple which I hope stimulated people into trying something different. We hope that you have enjoyed receiving this fresh local fruit and finding ways of using it. We are currently mainly offering stored apples in the share but expect that we will have the odd novelty item such as sloes and walnuts available from time to time over November. After this we will take a break until the rhubarb comes in the spring when we will be re-launching the fruit share scheme over the whole season (and beyond!).

The trees in the orchard have put on a spurt of growth towards the end of the summer and into autumn despite the dry(ish) weather thanks to the thick layer of mulch and straw around the trees keeping the moisture in and the



*The fruit share, ready for collection*

weeds away. However the leaves are now beginning to drop and we are preparing to get the orchard ready for winter. Over the next month or so will replenish the straw mulch where necessary and will get some guards up around the trees to keep the resident muntjac deer away from the bark over the winter. Look out for work mornings to help us do this once work drops away on the veg fields. Much of the soft fruit will be entering its first (hopefully) fully productive season and we will be offering fruit shares from spring on the back of this. So if you want to enjoy fresh seasonal fruit with your veg prepare to sign up for a fruit share! We will be announcing details in the AGM and hope that you are going to come along and let us know what you think of the fruit to date and how you would like to see the share develop.



*Come and press apples with us!*

Before that you are also welcome to come along to the social on the 19<sup>th</sup> November to press and/or bake some of the surplus apples we have on hand and at the same time find out more about the orchard. Hope to see you there!

## NEW ARRIVALS

A warm end of summer welcome to baby **Bori** who was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> September – a daughter for **Zita and Laszlo Szoboszlay** who joined Canalside in August. May Bori thrive on the bounty of the land and have a long and happy life. We look forward to meeting her and seeing her grow over the months and years to come.



*Baby Bori Szoboszlay*

Welcome also to the many families, individuals and couples who have joined the project this season – new members from somewhere in the region of 30 households. We hope you will enjoy the veg and community of Canalside for many years to come. Thank you to everyone who helped to get all these new Canalsiders on board!

## **SITE DEVELOPMENTS** – *by Tom Ingall*

Well things have calmed down a little bit on the site since the last newsletter. We've refrained from putting up any more large buildings, poly tunnels or compost toilets! We're now looking at the finer details of work that needs to be done on and around all of these larger projects that we've been working on over the spring and summer.

The main exciting development that has happened in the last few months has been the construction of our very own clay earth oven housed inside the new pole barn.



*Mud, mud, glorious mud!*



*Getting mucky!*



*The perfect sized person for sweeping out the sand from the mould!*

We ran this as a weekend workshop at the beginning of August and had a fantastic turn out throughout both days. Led by Dan Britton who has been instrumental in building clay ovens all over the country we were led through the stages of constructing a mould out of wood and sand and then adding layers of cob followed by insulation material and then more cob. By the end of the first day the initial layer of cob had been applied and the mould was burnt out over night leaving a solid dome that was added to during the final day. Over the

weekend we cooked pizza in an older clay oven that Dan had built years before on the farm. It was a very informative weekend that has already led to at least one oven being built – by Graham and Michelle Parton!

It was an experimental design that we constructed at CCF and we were still fine tuning it during its inaugural use over the Autumn Social Camping weekend. It worked fantastically though, cooking over 80 jacket potatoes and 150 pizzas over the course of the weekend.

As I mentioned there are lots of jobs still needing to be completed on the site over the next few months as well as slightly bigger projects coming up too so if you'd like to offer your help in this way rather than on the veg fields you'd be very welcome, just contact me directly: [tom@canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk](mailto:tom@canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk)



*Applying the cob*

## **EDUCATION PROJECT** – *by Ali Jeffery*



*A veritable rainbow of vegetables to try!*

October saw our second round of visits by children from the two primary schools in Rural East Community Forum that engaged with us in our Community Forum funded establishment year of the project. Radford Primary School's year 1 class paid us a return visit to find out the names of a wide variety of vegetables, what they taste like and where they grow.

We made the decision to use the newly constructed pole barn, as 8am on the



*Careful examination of Romanesco*

morning of the visit had not a puff of wind. Unfortunately by 10.30am, the wind had got up to the point that picture cards were being blown around and everyone was starting to feel the effects of being in the wind. The children did brilliantly at focussing and engaging in the different activities despite the sensory assault that the wind gave us! A walk round the fields gave everyone a chance to get moving and warm up, and each child helped to find one of the vegetables they had tried. Sadly the year 3/4 class from Our Lady and St. Teresa's Primary School was unable to return to see how their courgette plants had fared over the summer. In their stead came the Reception class, who enjoyed the wind-free environment of the main barn for most of the activities! Here *Sarah Matthews* – one of the Canalside members who volunteered for one of the visits – gives her perspective on the visit:



*Harvesting sweetcorn*

Canalside's participation and impact on the surrounding villages.

It was so worthwhile helping with the education project and I would recommend it to anyone who has some time on the day to participate. We had a group of Reception children (age 4-5) from Our Lady and St Theresa's school in Cubbington who came to join us. They were very interested in learning about vegetables: from their names to how they taste. There were some mixed reviews of the latter, but some of the children were very keen to try new things. Walking around the farm and allowing them to help with a little harvesting was a positive way to connect their known experience of vegetables with the mainly unknown experience of where they come from. It was a great help that both the class teacher and one of her helpers run their own allotments, so they were very 'on message' with what we had to say. Overall, a good way to increase



*Cutting a broccoli head*

Enormous thanks to the dozen or so members who helped out with getting the site ready for the visits, washed and chopped vegetables for the snacks, helped the children to engage in the activities and generally assisted in making the visits go smoothly. These visits would not be possible without the input of our members. If you are interested in getting involved in future visits, please look out for emails in the spring – our next visits won't be until after the winter now.

## **SOCIALS** – by *Caz Ingall*

### *Recent socials*



*The potato harvesting crew*

So... a wee socials update for you, looking back over the last few months and into those hazy summer days. Trying to work in one social event (and newsletter) per quarter, the main focus of our efforts this season was the very successful **Canalside Camping Weekend**, held on the 17th/18th September. As ever within the history of our socials, we managed to stay pretty lucky with the weather, with only a couple of mild rain showers throughout the weekend. A number of brave families started pitching their tents on the Friday, and by Saturday lunchtime we had a veritable camp-

site set up. The potato harvest was absolutely amazing, and with such a massive workforce going for it for the whole of Saturday morning, we were able to get all the tatties in, in record time.



*The Earth Oven getting the heat up!*

The earth oven's maiden voyage into mass cooking went (thankfully!)

smoothly, and we cooked up an absolute feast of baked potatoes to feed all the hungry workers plus a large number of other folk who had turned up for the weekend's activities. We calculated to have fed well over 100 people the first lunchtime which felt pretty epic at the time. I don't think Tom left the side of the earth oven for much longer than a quick drink and bite to eat all day on the Saturday (and most of Sunday too), so along with Richard, who kept the rocket stove stoked, was very much to thank for providing the means with which to feed ourselves. The afternoon saw a range of activities happening, from willow lantern making, to apple juicing, green woodworking, and metal working - everywhere I looked, people were busy doing something! The lantern parade that followed in the evening was just beautiful - all the amazing creations floating gently around the veg field, while Bruce led us in singing 'This Little Light of Mine'. Magical...



*The creation of the beautiful willow lanterns*

The evening that followed saw most people sitting around a roaring fire, listening to an array of fine musicians as they sang and played their various tunes. A particular highlight for me was some of the youngest members of the gathering starting off the open mic session with their beautiful offerings - mostly (if not entirely) recorder tunes - fantastic. Brought a tear or two to my eye, I have to say! Huge thank yous to everyone else for their contributions.

The oven continued to do us proud on Saturday evening and Sunday lunchtime serving up a MASSIVE number of pizzas. We had two truly brilliant teams of pizza 'preparers' working non-stop on both days without whom the whole thing would have been a complete mess! And the workshops continued throughout Sunday too, with more metal working, green woodworking, friendship bracelet making, and wild food walks. Enormous thanks again to Gizmo, Blair, Ali and Neal for all the time and energy they put into their various activities.



*The magical lantern parade*

The feedback we had from the weekend was all good, with many calls to 'Please do it again next year!'. As I said at the time, I'll need a bit of time to recover, but I'm sure we'll try and make this into an annual event. In all, it was a brilliant pilot - we



*Paper hanging to dry*

learned many lessons from the whole thing, what is realistic, what isn't, what we could do differently next time, but I do think overall it was a huge success. And yes, I am starting to recover now...



*The youngest juicer helps Ali*



*Gizmo on the pole lathe*



*Metal working with Blair*

### *Upcoming socials*

Our next social is coming up soon - **Saturday 19th November**. We'll be focussing on the garlic harvest in the morning, and then doing some (rather late) pumpkin carving and also making bird feeders

into the afternoon. AND of course, cooking up another storm of baked potatoes in the earth oven, along with a yummy and wholesome pumpkin curry. *If you haven't done so already, do let us know if you're planning on coming, so we know how many we need to feed!*

Tom and I are actually away for a few weeks over Christmas now, so we'll miss the usual mince pies and mulled wine for the Christmas pick up (Saturday 17th December) but I'll be sending out a message nearer the time asking for anyone that could possibly help sort all that out in our absence...

As for dates next year, yes, I must get onto those!! At the AGM this year we'll be looking at the socials in general and ways in which we can make them a bit more manageable. One idea we have is to get a committed team of people together who can jointly organise the events, making them less dependent on the same small group of people each time. So, bear it in mind if it's something that tickles your fancy...

Love and warming winter blessings to you all, Caz x

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

This year's AGM will be held on *Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, 7.30 for 8pm, in Radford Semele Village Hall*. The evening will include the usual once-a-year opportunities to hear a round up of the Canalside year and where the project is heading to in the coming year. It will also, this year, offer an opportunity to share your vision of where Canalside is heading and what you'd like to see happening in the project in the coming years, as well as your thoughts in relation to other key questions:

1 - Vision for the future – It is roughly 5 years since the inaugural meeting for the establishment of Canalside. ***Apart from providing veg and fruit as we do now, is there anything else you would like to see happen or to be created at Canalside in the next 5 years? If so what?***

2 – Engagement – ***What do you think we can do to engage and involve everyone more in Canalside (volunteering, socials, AGM etc, any other ideas)?***

3 – Socials – At the moment, the organisation of socials does not feel very sustainable. The planning and running of them mostly fall to a small handful of people (mainly Caz) receiving some support from members during the event and for setting up and packing away. We are keen to change this in 2012. ***How can we organise socials in the future to make them more sustainable?***

We'd love to see as many of you as possible at the AGM itself. If you aren't able to be there but would like us to know your vision and thoughts around the above topics, or if you'd like to share your thoughts beforehand, you can do so:

- by going to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NFYQKGL>
- by picking up a paper copy of the questions from the yurt
- by responding to the email about the AGM

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

We have now had more publicity posters printed. Can you help to get these out into local public spaces? Perhaps you know of a school, shop, village hall or community centre noticeboard that doesn't have one of our posters! Perhaps your house has a window that faces onto the street. If any of these is the case, please take one from the envelope in Ali's pigeon hole, to get put on the noticeboard. If you are unable to get the poster put up for any reason, please return it so that it can be placed somewhere else.

**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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Pregnant women required to enable me to practice my 'Hypnosis for Childbirth' training. This involves 4 to 5 sessions, 1 or 2 with partner, to learn hypnosis to help you to have a relaxed pregnancy and birth. Further details Cathy Bell, Embracing Change Therapy, 07815 030673.

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Members' Corner continued on next page

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**Songlines Community Choir  
invites Canalside Members to their  
5<sup>th</sup> Legendary Winter Concert on Sat 3 Dec**

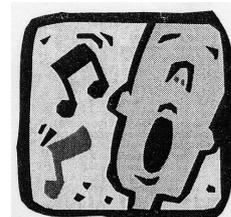
(8pm, St. Mary's Church, St. Mary's Road, Leamington).

The 100-strong chorus will be singing their usually wonderful eclectic mix of sumptuous harmony songs - everything from Nigerian chants and old-time gospel, to Lennon and McCartney.

Our annual concert is always an uplifting event - we hope you can join us.

Tickets on sale now at Gaia (£5 / £3 kids). Please email Bruce for more info:

[bruceknight.voice@virgin.net](mailto:bruceknight.voice@virgin.net)



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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 advertising in future newsletters.

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## Acappella Songs of Freedom and Joy

**an uplifting and inspiring singing workshop led by Helen Yeomans**

10:30-4:30, Sat 4 Feb 2012, Dale Street Methodist Church, Leamington Spa (CV32 5HL)

Helen Yeomans is an award-winning songwriter and workshop leader in the UK and abroad. Many of her songs have been sung by choirs all over the country. Her compositions often have a bluesy/gospel/spiritual edge to them, and are always highly original and wonderfully uplifting.

Cost for the day £24 (only £20 if paid by 21 Jan 2012)

**For full info, please email [bruceknight.voice@virgin.net](mailto:bruceknight.voice@virgin.net)**

or phone Bruce on 01926 778454

**Places are limited – our workshops normally sell out. Advance booking essential.**

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**Forest Schools** use the calmness and space of woodland to help children grow socially and emotionally while doing exciting, risky, activities safely.

There are now sessions in Leamington and Warwick.

For more information contact the forest school practitioner,

Keir Mitchell: 0781 3934597 / [keirmitchell@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:keirmitchell@yahoo.co.uk).

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Small Ads continued overleaf

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Music Together Kenilworth: Fun, educational, live music for your 0-5year old. Music for all the family to sing and play together. Saturday classes at 10am at the Methodist Church Hall, Priory Road, Kenilworth. Free trial class. **Special offer:** Come to November Saturday classes for just £2 per class, provided space allows. (Normal price - £50 per 12 week term)

Contact: [musictgetherkenilworth@gmail.com](mailto:musictgetherkenilworth@gmail.com); 07503 906468;  
[www.musictgetherkenilworth.co.uk](http://www.musictgetherkenilworth.co.uk)

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