



LOOKING AT THE PHOTOS *Tom has sent me and the articles different people have written,*



The courgettes were prolific this year - this is one picking in August!

*there's a definite 'harvest' theme to this newsletter. Now that the harvests of the important crops that will be stored over the winter are in, we are seeing just how good a season it has been for growing this year. (To be fair we already had a pretty good idea, as you will have seen from the shares recently!) In **News from the Field** we hear from Will about how bountiful different crops have been. Gareth's report from the **Fruit Field** tells a similar story. The Food and Drink Festival was a successful event for us with a lot of trial shares bought and we've had a record number of new subscriptions over the past few months and are going into the winter with our number of veg*

*members looking much healthier than they have all year – find out who's new in **Arrivals**. It's been a busy year for **Events** – you can read about what's happened since the last newsletter. There are also updates from our partner projects: **Canalside Community Bees** and **The Willows Care Farm**. And the usual **Members' Notices** and **Small Ads** are at the back. I hope you haven't been caught out in any of the recent deluges, and as well as enjoying the fruits of our fields, are able to enjoy the other things that autumn brings.*

Ali, October 2013

NEWS FROM THE FIELD – by Will Johnson

Would you like the good news or the bad news first? Very well, the good news it is. We harvested the squash crop last week and after weighing it all in (perhaps the most colourful job of the autumn) it turns out it was quite a good year for squash. We have 3000kg this year which is almost exactly a hundred times the 2012 harvest (or non-harvest). Even compared to our previous heaviest yield (1500kg in 2011) it's still, well, a bit overwhelming. As well as great growing weather this summer, we perhaps did well due to conditioning the ground with a lot of organic matter in the spring (green waste from Severn Waste in Pershore). We also cleared the field drains last winter and we made sure we got good germination from the seed by placing the module trays in our heated propagator. Germinating squash seed seems to have always caused problems in the past and got us off to a bad start with the crop, so this season proves what a difference it makes when you get those things right.



The squash harvesting team

The good news about the bad news is that the bad news isn't actually that bad. Although Paul has done an amazing job of getting as many shelves as possible onto the walls of our insulated

storage space in the new 'yurt', we still only have room for about half of the crop (which, of course, in any other year thus far would have been adequate). There are a few options as to where they can go (we could build another temporary storage space, or they could go into a volunteer's already heated house) but ***please let us know if you have any ideas.***

It is a time of year to plan what can go into the share for the next six or seven months. We have good harvests of potatoes and onions already in storage, and outside it looks as though everything has done at least adequately and it has been a particularly good year for cabbages, Brussel sprouts and beetroot. The crops for spring harvest (purple sprouting broccoli, cauliflowers) are looking big, strong and healthy, despite it being a bumper year for cabbage whites (I really wish their caterpillars wouldn't poo on our food, but I'm not sure how we can stop it happening – we already net these crops to try to keep the butterflies off).

The summer crops in the tunnels (tomatoes, cucumbers) are slowing down but we have planted all of the winter crops (salads, pak choi, spring greens and more) now and they seem to have established well. Now that the autumn onion modules are in the ground the only big planting job left is the garlic on Saturday 9th November. Then we can relax a bit. We're starting to feel like the chance of disaster for this year has almost passed and we can officially say, '2013: A Good Year.'

Will, 21st October 2013

Buying extra veg? Consider getting a larger share size and investing further in Canalside. Get in contact with Ali if you aren't sure what the options are.

FRUIT FIELD – by Gareth Davies

Wassailing the orchard in the winter must have done the trick as we've enjoyed an abundant harvest of a wide variety of fruit over the summer (rhubarb, many berries and currants, plums, melons, figs, grapes and now autumn finds the team harvesting a lot of apples and some pears both from our own orchard and from our members' trees. Thanks to those who offered fruit, some of which has been stored and will be given out over the coming months. We hope that, if you managed to come down on the apple day, you also got to taste the delicious juice



Late September fruit share



Ellie Brown with September melon harvest from the polytunnels

from the windfalls- some of which will hopefully be turned into cider for our winter wassailing and pruning days! Look out for our work days over the winter if you don't want to miss out!

The orchard is now looking good going into its fourth season. Over the next few seasons, as well as caring for the trees and soft fruit, the team will be concentrating on getting ground-cover plants in place as the trees begin to bear significant quantities of fruit. The idea is that the ground-cover will hopefully help to keep the grass and weeds in check so reducing the amount of labour we need to look after the

orchard. If you want to learn about pruning and ground-covers come along to our workdays which will be advertised in the weekly emails. Otherwise feel free to come up and walk around the orchard to see how it has changed over the last few seasons. The map inside the door of the collection space shows you how to get there.

As the winter draws close the fruit share will diminish in size as we begin to rely on stored apples (eaters and cookers) as well as the fruit we managed to freeze during the summer glut period. If anybody knows of any walnut trees where we could collect nuts this would make a welcome addition to the share but otherwise, fruit share members: keep a look out for information on how to pick up your frozen fruit! We will also be forcing some rhubarb to bring on fresh fruit as quickly as we can in the new season but (especially in the dark mid-winter period) you will also need to hold in mind the gluts that will come along in the next season.

Gareth, 18th October 2013

NEW ARRIVALS...

We welcome a large number of new members to the Canalside community, with all these people having joined recently: *Ruth Leary · Linda MacDermott · Kerstin and Tony Tudge Erica Moody · Maartje Pel and Pietro Micheli, and family · Camilla and Damian Huber · Carola Lange · Bartosz and Magdalena Zielinski · Guy and Elaine Barker, and family Ben & Elaine Heaf · Marcin Jurdzinski and family · Hilary and Scott Wilson and family · Camille Maumet and Cyril Rohr · Sherrie Mascord and family · Teresa McKinnon Rachel David and Andrew Gibbs · Rebecca Earle and Matthew Western · Martin Eyles ·*

We are pleased to welcome back to the area, and back to being veg share members again, *Sarah and Steven Hunt* who have returned to Leamington with their two small boys, following 18 months living north of the border in Scotland.

We also welcome two new workshares to the team:

Andy Forbes joined the team in the summer, having arrived in the area on his canal boat shortly before; he was drawn to Canalside by its proximity to the canal. He told me that the workshare was perfect for him as he has more time than money, and says it's good to work for his veg. He enjoys the social aspect of the workshare and the opportunity to chat with people as he works in the fields. It is Andy who has been putting on the films recently in the woodland fire pit by the canal, with John Liddamore, one of our long-standing workshare volunteers.



Andy Forbes



Dave Male

Dave Male joined more recently, although he has been eating Canalside veg for years, at the Veggie Table Cafe in Bath Place. The cafe shutting helped to provide him with the incentive to get involved and carry on eating our delicious vegetables! Among other things he is enjoying being part of a community scheme and learning how long it takes to grow things. He is a firm believer in engaging with the community, other than the community we are all part of by virtue of where we live, and feels Canalside is an important way to do that.

...AND DEPARTURES

In August we sadly said goodbye to *Linda Palmer* who had been a member of Canalside since 2009, and had spent the final 2 years as a workshare. She has moved to Bristol to be nearer her daughter. Just before her departure she talked about much she would miss Canalside and her Saturday mornings working with Will and Paul. She was planning to get involved with a similar

scheme near Bristol. Her positive spirit will be missed in the fields on the Saturday work mornings. We wish her well in settling into her new home, and finding a place in another CSA community!

SITE DEVELOPMENTS – *by Ali Jeffery*

With the hard work involved in getting the new collection space up and running in the early part of the year, things have been fairly quiet on the site development front as people try to catch up on their personal projects! However, two things have been completed in the past week.

Firstly we now have a proper path into the pole barn. We knew this would be essential so that veg share members would not have to cross a mud bath to get to their veg during the winter, and the recent rains have meant that it is already needed. The work was started during the Challenge Network day in late September (read more below in the Willows Project update), and was completed last week. To get to the pole barn you can now walk on hard core all the way from the car park via the track at the bottom of the car park. Don't forget to turn left between the willow fence and the greenhouse, onto the hard core path!

I hope this will mean that anyone coming in clean clothes will have a more straightforward visit to get their veg share.

As Will has already mentioned, we now also have a store full of squash. You can see this if you look through the door (the light switch is next to the entrance to the veg collection space). Please ensure that the door is kept shut, as squash need to be stored at room temperature, so it's important to keep in the store the heat given out by the freezers.

EDUCATION PROJECT – *by Ali Jeffery*

This half term has been busier for the education project, with three classes from local primary schools visiting the farm and learning about where vegetables grow. The children all had a chance to join in with the usual activities that relate to the theme 'Where does it come from?', including handling a wide range of different vegetables that are ready to harvest in October, tasting many of those vegetables and going on a vegetable hunt round the fields to find and harvest some of the vegetables.

Two classes came from the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 of St. Peter's Catholic Primary School in Leamington. The children enjoyed a lovely sunny lunchtime in the social area having a picnic on the grass. This was the first time a class has stayed for lunch and it worked very well. Some of the children had only been in school for about 3 weeks and their teacher commented that it was a wonderful first school trip for them.

The Reception class teacher from our Lady and St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School visited for the third year running with her new class of children who had also only had a few weeks' experience of being in school. The weather was colder, with a bitter wind, and we kept warm on



The squash in their new home - kept warm enough, they should keep until next April



Discovering new vegetables!

our vegetable hunt by doing star jumps and other exercises every time we had to stop!

As always, massive thanks to all the Canalside members who volunteered during the visits. Their help enables us to be able to offer the vegetable snack for these autumn visits, which I believe enormously enriches the children's experience on the farm. I also hugely appreciate the help that members give in setting up for the visit and supporting me in delivering the activities.

Visits have now finished and will restart from 1st April next year. I will contact local primary schools in early 2014 with information about the free visits we offer. If you would like to arrange for your child's class to visit, please ask me for some information to pass onto the class teacher.

EVENTS AND SOCIALS – by Ali Jeffery

Events have continued, with one each month, attended by members of all ages.

August – jam making workshop and picnic lunch:

This event was a joint Action 21 and Canalside event, with participants coming through Action 21 and from the general public as well as from the Canalside membership. The group raided the abundant crops of soft fruit in the fruit orchard; the pickings were then used to make a variety of types of jam, and blackcurrant. Everyone went home with several jars of delicious jam. Thanks to Team Fruit for their hard work organising this event.



Making blackcurrant jam

September – potato harvest, and camping and activity weekend with bring-and-share lunch and harvest feast:

Our annual event was changed a little this year to include a harvest feast. Despite abysmal weather, a number of families braved the rain and set up their tents on the Friday evening. Singing in the pole barn was enjoyed led by Julian Shortman, with a fire basket for some welcome warmth. The potato harvest progressed well on the Saturday morning. Saturday afternoon brought a range of different activities, including willow working, origami boats and green woodworking. A hard-working team set to, led by Will, preparing a feast to celebrate the successful growing year.



Will tending to the harvest feast

On Saturday evening, around 50 people gathered in the pole barn to feast on the harvest. This was followed by the launch of the origami boats onto the canal, carrying tealights, and music and relaxation round the fire. Thank you to everyone who contributed activities and cooking for the weekend. Particular thanks to Will for planning the feast and leading its preparation.

October – apple juicing and pumpkin carving day with soup lunch:

At this joint Action 21/Canalside event, a delicious lunch of pumpkin soup was enjoyed by a number of members and a family who came through Action 21. In the afternoon, busy-ness filled the site with pumpkin carving and apple juicing, from which some was enjoyed

straightaway, and some was put in a container to make cider to wassail the fruit orchard with in the late winter. Another great event organised by Team Fruit.

2014 socials calendar

In November, the steering group will start putting together a social calendar for next year. If you would like events to continue with the same frequency, your suggestions and help to organise them will be much appreciated – all the staff and steering group members who lead social events, including the annual summer party, do so in a voluntary capacity and appreciate being able to attend them when they aren't leading them and can relax like everyone else. ***If you have an idea for a social event that you'd like to help bring into being, we'd love to hear from you*** - please email Ali (mail@canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk) before the 10th November, so that your suggestions and ideas can be included in the steering group's discussions.



Chopping apples ready for pressing at October's event

Upcoming events in the rest of 2013:

Nov: Sat 9th – garlic planting and bring-and-share lunch, CSA workshops

Dec: Sat 21st – mulled wine in the pole barn during the final collection of the year

Jan: Thurs 23rd – AGM in Radford Semele Village Hall, 19:30 for 20:00 start

CANALSIDE ON FACEBOOK

Since earlier this year, Canalside Community Food has had a Facebook page. During recent steering group discussions we have decided it will be more appropriate to switch to a Facebook group, as this will be a better forum for members and others to engage in discussions about Canalside and the veg and fruit, and to share ideas with other people. If you have already liked our Facebook page, you might like to now link up with our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/149186125282409/>. We hope that any member would feel able to begin to answer questions posed by visitors – you can direct them to the website/me (Ali) if you don't know the answer to any question.



CANALSIDE COMMUNITY FOOD - PARTNER PROJECTS' UPDATE

Canalside Community Bees, by Kath Pasteur

Another beekeeping season has passed and this one ended on a sweet note with a harvest of 140 jars of delicious golden honey. Members got 2 jars and could buy up to 6 more at just £2 each. Unfortunately there will not be enough to extend sales to non-members so if you like honey you should join for next year's harvest!

We had our AGM on Thursday 17th October with a great turnout and a fruitful discussion about how to improve the club. From now on we will meet regularly: monthly on the first Saturday or Sunday of the month. On Saturday 2nd November from 1.30 til 4pm we will be cleaning up the honey frames to store over winter. We have also booked Chris Park to give a talk about the history and mythology of



Bee club member, Gloria Godfrey, helping to jar the honey

honey on Tuesday 26th November, 7.30pm upstairs at the Fox and Vivan pub in Leamington.

Plans for the coming months include building more hives, making balms from wax and honey, a candle making workshop, managing the nectar garden, and putting the roof back on our storage shed. The bees may stay indoors over winter, but we don't!

To join the bee club now for 2014 and get the rest of this year's membership free, email canalsidecommunitybees@yahoo.com for a form or find us on facebook.

The Willows Care Farm, by Ellie Brown

We are in full bloom since the last newsletter, with great feedback from service users and a project base nearly fit for the winter months!

A successful summer taster day for adults with special educational needs led to a regular day working with this particular group - we are looking to increase the group size so please let us know if you know of anyone who could benefit. Thanks to those of you who have made donations in return for flower bunches – one of the tasks we ran on the taster day.

Our ongoing relationship with *The Challenge Network* saw us host The Big Challenge where 55 teenagers stormed the farm for the final day of their summer project. Volunteers completed various tasks for The Willows and Canalside - thanks so much to our volunteers and particularly George who energized a huge group of teenagers into action on a Saturday morning!

October 17th saw the launch of our Winter 'Elf Scheme, after having secured lottery funding to run this ten week programme working specifically with mental health and addiction recovery services. After a wonderfully sunny autumnal day, participants' first impressions were that simply being on the land is reconnecting and therapeutic. Visitors routinely recognize the unique ethos and setting of the farm and welcome the opportunity to share in it, so we really appreciate Canalside and Leasowe Farm supporting this.

Please visit our blog and flickr page at www.thewillowsproject.org.uk for more news!

Don't forget our **Auction Of Promises Fundraiser** on **Saturday 2nd November**. Thanks to Canalside members who have made promises and we hope many of you can join us for what looks set to be a great evening!

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 (up to 6cm of column space)! Get in touch with Ali for advertising in future issues of the newsletter.

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Challengers digging the path into the pole barn, including the challenge of digging earth that is like concrete!



Sun 27th Oct - Bird Box Making at Foundry Wood. Come make a bird box to take home! Suitable for children age 10 and over (must be accompanied by an adult.) £5 pp.

Two sessions available – 11am–1pm & 1pm–3pm. Places limited booking essential. Contact: admin@arccic.co.uk



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Songlines Winter Concert, Saturday 7 December,

St. Mary's Church, Leamington Spa

FUNDRAISING CONCERT FOR WATERAID



Come and see local 100-strong community choir Songlines at their annual concert. No carols, but plenty of amazing harmony songs, performed with much gusto! Expect

songs from the Velvet Underground, Carly Simon, The Beatles, plus the usual mix of scintillating World acappella. It's always a warm and fuzzy event - we hope to see you there.

Tickets £5 / £3 kids, available from Gaia

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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 2014.

Deadline for ads with payment, and notices – Sunday 19th January.

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Canalside Community Food, Leasowe Farm, Southam Road, Radford Semele, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1TY. t: 07758 340491 e: mail@canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk
w: www.canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk

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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