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WINTER HAS BEGUN TO SHOW ITS FACE with the first heavy frosts this week freezing the water pipes and some of the last fruiting vegetables in the polytunnels. Find out in Dom's *News from the Land* how things have been going more generally in the fields and orchard during this transitional time from summer crops to winter ones. We have a huge number of new and returning members to welcome in *New Arrivals* – maybe you will recognise a

name from elsewhere!

There's news of the autumn visits on the *Education Project* and if you have been unable to come to recent *Events* you can read about them here. We have an update from *The Willows* – the care farming project which works on site – and the usual notices and ads from members. I hope you are staying warm as the temperature drops. Happy reading (hopefully somewhere cosy!).

Ali, November 2016



Some of the butternut squash harvest

NEWS FROM THE LAND – by Dom van Marsh

As field-scale veg growers, we are very much reliant on our tractor. Although by conventional UK agricultural standards we operate on a very small scale and use a relatively high proportion of hand labour, a helping hand from Mr Diesel is nonetheless essential in cultivating 10 acres of field crops. So, it was the grower's worst nightmare when the reverse shifter fork in our tractor's gearbox snapped back in September. After an intensive crash-course in navigating Warwickshire's affordable tractor mechanic community, two and a half weeks of waiting, and settling a four-figure bill, our beloved Massey Ferguson 230 finally returned to us with shiny new gear cogs, an exhaust pipe transplant and



Our poorly tractor, on its way to visit the Tractor Doctor

various other refurbished bits and pieces.

After the initial panic, I'm pleased to report that our operations didn't suffer too much, mainly thanks to one of the driest autumns in recent memory, which allowed us to carry out our final field cultivations of the season much later than usual with no problem at all. The farm team also learnt lessons in patience, adapting to tricky situations, and how to ring up your landlord to ask to borrow their tractor! It also allowed us to reflect on our reliance on fossil fuel-powered machinery. While the tractor was in intensive care we rattled through much of our autumn tunnel work, and I'm pleased to say that nearly all our overwintering / spring-harvested polytunnel crops are all in the ground (and already in the share too, in the case of the oriental salad leaves).



Polytunnel hoeing



Planting up overwintering salad crops

Speaking of salad, another challenge we have faced recently is a shortfall in lettuce production – caused partly by slug attacks on one late batch of lettuce, and an oversight in sowing another batch back in the summer. We have therefore been trying to keep a salad portion going in the share every week with higher proportions of rocket and oriental brassica leaves (tatsoi, mustard, mizuna), chicory-type salads (radicchio) and even “weeds”! I refer to chickweed (*Stellaria media*), a prolific weed in most cultivated soils across the UK, which fortunately happens to be

both edible and absolutely delicious, with a delicate and subtle flavour. Its botanical name refers to the fragile white flowers which resemble clusters of a thousand tiny stars. We have gone from spending hours separating the chickweed from the salad leaves, to leaving it in with (I feel) great results. Now all we have to do is persuade Canalside members to eat dock leaves and couch grass....

We have also enjoyed putting the harvest from the orchard in the share in recent months. Out of dozens of plum trees in the orchard, only 3 produced a decent crop, but what a crop! We picked over 3000 plums from just those 3 trees, so please pay your respects to Marjorie's Seedling, a plum variety renowned for its very late flowering and thus its ability to dodge frosts of the sort which struck back in late April. We have also put a lot of storage apples aside to add to your share in the winter months when we hope you will particularly appreciate fresh fruit, and the windfall and scabby apples from the orchard were picked for juicing at the Open Day, which was a great success.



Ripening apples



Fractal vegetable

The other highlight of the autumn season for me has been the romanesco. This astounding vegetable, whose hypnotizing whorls nourish the eyes as much as the tastebuds, has however provoked a minor controversy amongst the farm team: our seed suppliers Tamar Organics list it as a broccoli, yet others insist it should properly be considered a cauliflower, and I certainly feel that its botanical characteristics are far closer to the latter. Still, as this county's most revered bard almost wrote: "What's in a name? That which we call a broccoli / By any other name would taste

as sweet". The infinite spirals of the romanesco reflect the beauty of the entire natural world, from a snail shell to a galaxy. And for the diner, it transforms the appearance of any dish, yet also has a nutty flavour that in itself makes a meal. Having recently re-read Gulliver's Travels, the Lilliputian conflict over how to crack a boiled egg weighs heavy on my mind, and I would hate to see Canalside torn apart by a futile dispute over nomenclature, so in the spirit of compromise I propose that from now on we do the sensible thing: reclassify romanesco as a type of brauliflower.

Dom, 1st November 2016

NEW ARRIVALS... – by Ali Jeffery

It has felt like a very busy season this summer, with lots of new trial members throughout, especially from our two publicity stalls. There has been a high uptake of subscriptions by people finishing their trials, and we're just seeing the fruits of the trials from the Food and Drink Festival as those people complete their 8 week introductory offer. We welcome into Canalside the following summer and autumn arrivals to our community:

- *Meghan Hutchins & Roland Hobbs*
- *Tom & Jenna Bowen and family* • *Katrina Swatton* • *Maureen Nicholas* • *Becky Wylde* • *Mark & Dina Paine* • *Dennis Talaga* • *Anna & Pete Walford and family* • *Andrew Webb* • *Rebecca Cresswell* • *Friso Jansen & Sarah Lester* • *Sumithra Konduru* • *David & Kara Weir*
- *Logan Kistler* • *Sandy & Jon Wiles* • *Claire Viney & Russell Coleridge* • *Roselyn Ware* • *Amy Crowther and family* • *Serban & Mihaela Marfa and family* • *Doug & Ria Jowle* • *Carrie Worrall* • *David & Pat McDonald* • *Pat Forster* • *Sarah Dekany* • *Joanna Todd* • *Paul & Debbie Gulliver* • *Aude Dubost and family* • *Sharon & Dave Highway*



Returned workshare, Liz Allen

What a bumper crop!! We hope you've had a chance to introduce yourself to a new member to help get them settled.

As well as all these new arrivals, we have had some familiar faces return to us, after taking a break from muddy carrots for big life events or living away from the area. Welcome back to:

- *Maartje Pel & Pietro Micheli and family* • *Justine Doe and family* • *Liz & Blair Allan and family* •

Not only is *Liz Allan* enjoying Canalside's bounty once again, but she has also rejoined the field team as a workshare volunteer. She has told me that she's so

glad to be back and is enjoying the workout and the veg too.

We also welcome a small arrival into our community: share members **Gabriela and Bogdan Alecsa** have a new family member. Gabriela told me: Sasha Octavian was born on 7th October, weighing 9lb 7. He is already settled and his big sister Sofia is already looking after him.

Sasha with big sister Sofia



EDUCATION PROJECT – by Ali Jeffery

This autumn has seen two classes visit the farm. They were the two year 2 classes at Lillington Primary School, and their visit fed into (quite literally) their harvest assembly, and science work.

We were lucky to have a dry day for the visits, and we did the usual activities matching real vegetables to models, drawings and photographs, before going on a vegetable hunt around the fields. The children enjoyed seeing the tractor working in the fields and having a go at harvesting different types of vegetables when we found them.



A sensory exploration of vegetables!



Broccoli in so many ways!

The teachers took a big bag of vegetables back to school and the children prepared them during their science lesson the next day to taste. One of the teachers told me that the beetroot was surprisingly popular – this didn't surprise me, having seen many classes delight in beetroot's ability to stain fingers, teeth, tongues (and hopefully not too many clothes)! The school rabbits and guinea pigs feasted on the leftovers and leafy tops!

Many thanks to Justine Doe for her support during the visits, and to Graham Williams and Sally Hunt for their help with getting the site ready.

The education visit season will restart on 1st April 2017. If you would like your child's class to visit during the summer term, please take a flier from the collection space to pass onto the class teacher. Bookings should be confirmed 4 weeks before the visit.

If you are interested in helping with future visits, and enriching the experience for the children, in



We found a carrot!

the spring, look out for emails giving dates of booked visits.

EVENTS – by Ali Jeffery

As always, the autumn is a busy time at the farm, and this year was no different, with a publicity stall, an open day and several members' social events! If you didn't make it to any of our recent events, we hope you will be able to come to one in the near future.



All ages helping out at the stall

September – Food and Drink Festival stall:

The wet weather that started the weekend didn't seem to dampen the enthusiasm of the members who helped on the stall, and as the sky dried, the footfall increased. We finished the weekend with 9 households having signed up for a trial share. Thanks to everyone who came along to help promote what we do!



Making corn dollies

– potato harvest and camping weekend:

It remained dry for the weekend of our potato harvest, allowing people to bring in the spuds all day on the Saturday and enjoy other activities near the fire in the afternoon after a wonderful shared lunch. We had our big harvest supper, featuring baked potatoes of course, along with hearty veg cookups. The biggest delight of the weekend was a fabulous harvest loaf, with harvest mice rolls – they elicited much ooh'ing and aah'ing!



*^ Harvest loaf and harvest mice rolls
< The spud picking team (photo: Tom Ingall)*

October – apple pressing and CSA open day:

There were apples aplenty at our apple pressing day, and lots of keen participants of all ages who joined in with making juice. Polytunnel 1 served us well as a shelter with enough space and a suitable floor for mess! The CSA network open day which ran alongside attracted some interest from non-



*^ Enjoying fresh juice
(photo: Tom Ingall)
< Chop, chop! (photo: Tom F)*

members too, despite the wet weather.



*All sizes helping to operate the press
(photo: Tom Foulerton)*



Setting up the press (photo: Tom Foulerton)

November – beetroot and bonfire social:



What a whopper!

A fine autumn day heralded the big beetroot harvest (a welcome contrast to some years where the volunteers have braved mud along with the wet and cold to help out). 500kg of purple beetroot 'Janice' were added to the sand clamp



Bringing in the beets

in the pole barn ready for using throughout the winter. A sumptuous feast of a shared lunch followed, with diverse contributions to accompany two seasonal soups: beetroot (of course!) and squash.

Upcoming events:

December: Tues 20th and Wed 21st – last social of the year – a cup of cheer in the pole barn

January: Sat 21st – mid-winter feast – from early eve, Radford Semele community hall

Events for 2017:

The steering group will be looking at the events calendar for 2017 over the next month or two, so that the January newsletter can list the dates of planned events for the year. If you have ideas about a workshop, social or other type of event that you would like to help make happen, please get in touch as soon as possible so it can feature in this list. Events can also be added as the year progresses, so if you have a thought later in the year about something you'd like to make happen, we'd love to hear from you!

COME AND HELP SHAPE OUR LAND PURCHASE!

Following a meeting during the potato harvest and camping weekend, which generated a lot of interest and support from members for the plans to buy the land we currently rent from the

Ingall family. A small group who have since met now invite you, a Canalside member, to a meeting at the **Star and Garter** pub in Leamington (4- 6 Warwick St, CV32 5LL) at **19:00 on Tuesday 29th November 2016** to hear about the plans and, crucially, contribute your ideas to the plan as we develop it. We are also looking for offers of practical support as we develop the trust and share offer- the more we can do ourselves the more of the money raised will go directly towards purchasing the land!



Meeting at the camping weekend

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting. If you cannot attend please please get in touch with the core team taking this on at info@canalsidelt.co.uk and let us know any thoughts you might have or any ways in which you can help. We will of course keep the membership up to date with developments, whether they are participating in the purchase or not.

CANALSIDE COMMUNITY FOOD - PARTNER PROJECTS' UPDATE

The Willows Care Farm, by Sybil Roberson

The Willows have enjoyed a great summer at Canalside and would like to welcome our new volunteer, Celia. Her arrival has been very timely as she has helped the team complete the poly tunnel and brought a new 'height' to the project.

Members of the Way Ahead organisation from Leamington have spent time with our Wednesday group recently and participated in a photographic tour given by Simon, and offered us a chance to share Angus' wonderful bird photographs.

Christmas is around the corner! and we have designed a colourful range of cards, based on Nature which will be available soon. There will also be additions to our natural organic care products too, Ylang Ylang moisturising skin cream and lavender soap. You will find all the Willows products for purchase in Gaia, Leamington and The Barn at Canalside; we are planning to have a stall at the winter market too.

Thank you to everyone for your support and we wish you a great festive season!

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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Interested in Setting Up a Cider Apple Orchard?

Two years ago we grafted 14 cider apple trees, which now will need their final home this winter. If you have the land (around 500m² / 1/8 of an acre, preferably with a sunny disposition), and can wait a few years for the first batch of cider please get in touch! We have the equipment and know-how for pressing and fermenting the apples – the land is all that's missing...

Contact Nanda and Dom via
broekhoester@googlegmail.com /
07510777927

Songlines Winter Concert, 8pm, Sat 3 Dec *St. Mary's Church, St. Mary's Rd,* *Leamington Spa*

You are cordially invited to attend the scintillating annual concert featuring Leamington and Warwick's finest community choir. Tickets £5 / £3 kids from Gaia, Regent Place, and there may be a few on the door. Proceeds to WaterAid. Songs from Africa, France, and beyond, plus a soupcon of acappella pop. Always a warm and fuzzy community event - see you there! Further info: bruce@naturalvoice.net

MEMBERS' CORNER (continued)

VOTE FOR US: Please could you vote for a project run by Canalside members offering Ecotherapy at Foundry Wood and hopefully at two new sites if we are successful. This supports people struggling with their mental or physical health to get outdoors and socialise.

Copy this link into your browser to register and vote:

<https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/voting/project/view/16-2238>

You do have to enter your email address but they don't bother you with spam mail afterwards. Many thanks Kath Pasteur

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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Lucy Bishop, *The Nutritional Therapist*

Do you **LOVE FOOD**? Are you also:

Fed up of **feeling tired** all of the time?

Or **bloated** & uncomfortable in your clothes?

Or wanting to beat those **sugar cravings**?

Whether it's **hormones** wreaking havoc with your body, **stubborn weight** you can't shift or **digestive problems** like **reflux, IBS or gas & bloating**, the right food can really help.

FREE DIET & HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Discover the tasty & enjoyable approach to food & great health – delicious & nutritious!

I offer practical, effective & enjoyable ways of making changes to your diet & lifestyle easily, coaching & motivating you through-out.

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TESTS also available:

- **Food Intolerance** Testing
- 'MOT' – vitamin & mineral deficiency & gut health.
- **Gut Flora & Parasites**
- Hormone tests including:
- **Thyroid Function & Adrenal Profile**

www.TheNutritionalTherapist.com

The Nutritional Therapist



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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 2017.

Deadline for ads with payment, and notices – Sunday #####.

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