



Newsletter Spring 2008

www.bathorganicgroup.org.uk

A Short Rant From the Chair

Dear BOGgers

Welcome to yet another spring and another spring newsletter. This is the first newsletter I have undertaken and it will hopefully be the last. My first task is to thank Gill Ruffles for all her work on the previous issues. Until you've actually tried to produce a newsletter you would have no idea how much work goes into it. So thank you Gill on behalf of all the other BOGgers.

The Seed Swap happened again this February and again this February the same people turned up and swapped an enormous and delightful selection of seeds. To be honest, despite the presence of some wonderful cakes, I was utterly dispirited. One of the easiest and most effective things a gardener can do to take forward the idea of local organic reliance is to save and swap seeds. And yet barely 10 per cent of the BOG membership turned up. It would seem that the majority of you would rather buy the F1 hybrids and continue to line the pockets of the multinationals that ultimately own the seed companies. Or, are we the BOG committee doing something wrong? Wrong day, wrong venue, wrong idea, who knows? So, before we abandon the Seed Swap completely let me know what you think.

'Growing Green' is nearly upon us again, one of the nicest and most social events in the organic gardening calendar. This year as well as opening the BOGarden to members and public we will be running the very exciting 'Square Meal' project in the Flower Show itself. We could still do with a little more help, so if you have an hour or two free over that weekend please contact Tim as soon as possible. More details of the project can be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

pip pip

Peter Andrews

2 Partially Compost Mentis



Tour of Barley Wood Walled Garden

Sunday 1st June - 12 noon - followed by Sunday Lunch (optional- I think it's around £7.00)

Barley Wood Walled Garden and Cafe overlook Wrington and the Mendip Hills, just up the road from Bristol Airport. The beautiful 2-acre Victorian kitchen garden supplies fruit and veg. for The Better Food Company - a well known organic food company that deliver boxes to a wide local area. Phil Haughton has offered an hour's tour to those interested - this will be £15.00 (split between those attending) plus the £2.50 entrance fee each.

I will book Sunday Lunch for those who would like it but I will need to know how many by May 25th at the latest. I am not proposing to hire transport - I know some energetic souls plan to cycle - but hope that people will organise their own transport and/or share lifts. More details about the garden can be seen on the web at www.walledgarden.co.uk/ (though I couldn't access the site - Ed)

Please email me: via the website or phone me on xxxxx xxxxx to let me know if you want to come. I will need your contact details, whether you want/could offer a lift (I will try to put people in touch with each other but can't promise to guarantee a lift) and to know if you want lunch

Rosemary Alvis.

Richard Needs Help to Rebuild a School

Last summer I was able to take part in a volunteer programme based in Ghana. The placement involved teaching in Adotey Dawhenya, a small village about an hour away from Ghana's capital, Accra. It was a great opportunity for me to experience an African way of life and also a good way to gain valuable teaching experience.

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Dates for your Diary 2008

Farmers Markets

Our Farmers Market Stall takes place on the first Saturday of the month April to December. This is your chance to sell your surplus produce and plants - to find out how to earn a little cash for yourself and the BOG coffers call Pauline McGrath on 01225 xxxxxx. If you would like to help on the day - and help is always welcome - please phone Sheila Blethyn on 01225 xxxxxxxx.

Growing Green

Monday (of the Bath Spring Flower Show) 5th May
11am to 4.30pm

We open the garden to the public today from 11am – 4.30pm. Members help out with serving refreshments, selling plants and showing people around the garden.

We do like the garden to look especially good for this day so if you would like to help out please contact either :

Sheila Blethyn : 01225 xxxxxx : xxxxxxxxxx@tiscali.co.uk

Matt Lewis : 07967 xxxxx: xxxxxxxxx@yahoo.co.uk

Tour of Barley Wood Walled Garden

Sunday 1st June - 12 noon

followed by Sunday Lunch - see over for details

Southstoke Plant Sale

2 - 4.30pm 7th June

The annual opening of John Brookes wonderful garden to the public - BOG will be running a plant stall.

Organic Alternative - Food Fest (OAFF)

Saturday midday 20th September

All members who enjoyed last year's event will be glad to know that we are holding another one this year.

As we now have a gazebo, the eating area is dry! Everyone please bring food and drink to share.

This time we are incorporating it with a potato tasting. The idea is that we also bring some cooked potatoes so that we can taste the difference between the varieties. Of course it would be helpful if you can label them and then they can be compared. It will be interesting to see if the same type of potato which is grown in a different area tastes the same. Otherwise shop bought is fine but please note the name.

Apple Day

18th October

This is now held all over the country and ours will take place either at the Farmers Market, the BOGgarden, or Broadland Orchard but we will put up a notice in the garden nearer the date or email you. Enjoying yourself is compulsory.

Annual General Meeting

29th November

This will probably be held at The School Room in Widcombe Studios over the road from the garden, but you will get the usual Renewal and AGM notice towards the end of the year with our next Newsletter.

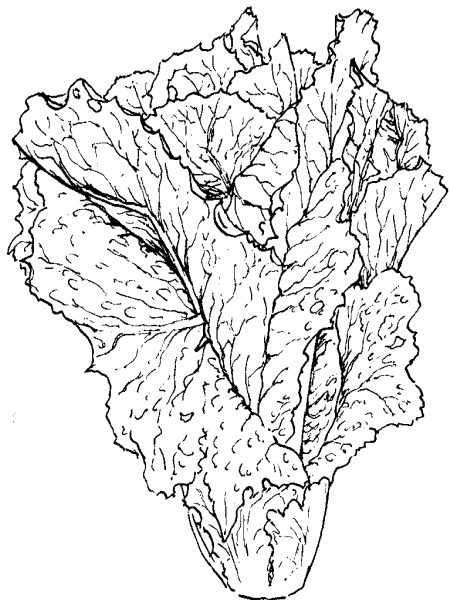
Trading Hut

Saturdays until June 28th
from 10 - 12

This is your chance to buy essential supplies seed compost, fertilizers, seeds, netting, root trainers, etc etc at ludicrously cheap prices.

Volunteering on the BOGarden

All welcome every Saturday or Tuesday from 10-1



Richard Needs Help to Rebuild a School (continued)

My placement allowed me to immerse myself in all aspects of Ghana's vibrant culture. I was looked after by the chief of the village and his wife, who prepared my meals each day - Corn, (the chief was a corn farmer so there was a lot of this!) rice and the best mangoes you could ever taste. I worked Monday to Friday teaching in a small primary school. The school was literally made of sticks and bamboo with only three or four unqualified teachers to deal with one hundred and fifty students. At weekends I was able to travel throughout Ghana, I went on a safari, walked through jungle canopies on rope bridges, and relaxed on the beaches of Kokrobite.

It was a great experience but I was in no way prepared for the poverty that I came across. Many of the students from the school could not afford the fees, (£4 a term), and the school was in such a poor condition that some parents didn't even want to send their children there.

I am currently fund-raising and in September this year I am planning to go back to Ghana with the money we have raised. I recently ran the Bath Half Marathon, raising over one thousand pounds for the school. Hopefully by September we'll have our target of two thousand pounds.

If anyone wants any more information, don't hesitate to email me, Richard McMahon, on:
xxxxxx@swan.ac.uk

The BOG Square Meal Project

Following on from an idea by BOG member Matt Lewis the Square Meal Project has started on a journey to help more people and youngsters in particular grow their own organic food.

We all know how enjoyable, rewarding and environmentally crucial it is to be able grow your own food. So now it is up to us to help to make this an exciting and valued activity for the next generation. The idea behind the Square Meal Project is to

inspire and encourage young children to participate in growing a small amount of their own food (enough for a square meal) and to demonstrate how this can be done without the need for a big garden or any special tools or expertise.

The Square Meal Project will be launched at the Bath Spring Flower Show, where BOG will have a stall in the City Farm marquee.

A small group has been working on the project and have so far come up with a) a colourful leaflet setting out the idea of the square meal "challenge", and simple step-by-step instructions, that children can follow, for growing their own square meal ingredients in all types of containers and b) plans for the stall as follows :-.

On the stall, as well as lots of copies of the Square Meal Project leaflet, there will be activities for children such as getting them to colour a paper cup, plant a nasturtium in it and take it home for free. 1500 nasturtium seedlings have kindly been provided by the Parks Department. While the children are occupied we can engage the adults with the Square Meal Project idea.

There will be live demos of how to create a simple vegetable garden in a container, with examples of the "here is one I did earlier" variety; a display of the types of containers that could be suitable; a display board showing a large map of the BOG plot, pictures of people "working" and relaxing at the BOG garden – including as many as we can get showing children's activities; information leaflets about BOG and much more besides.

However, the launch is just the beginning and will serve as a fact finding event for widening the scope of the project. We hope that this could lead on to many more Square Meal Project activities. Regular workshops for children could be held at venues such as the BOG garden, schools, people's own gardens, etc. These of course would have to involve parents and/or teachers to supervise. If we can get enough interest, who knows, we might even be able to get some funding.

If anyone is interested there will be a meeting following on from the show to see how the project can be taken forward.

Help is needed with the Square Meal Project at the Flower Show – a couple of hours over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend would be great. Contact Tim (01225 xxxxxx) Also Tim's your man if you'd like to be put on the mailing list to find out more.

Dianne

'SHED OF STEEL' FUND

It would be splendid if a very little bit of your money moved from your bank to our bank and out into the BOGarden.

As the nicer weather (hopefully) comes upon us, the BOGarden has again become the meeting-place of choice of various youth looking for something to do and somewhere to go and various ne'er do wells.

This has meant that the shed where we store the kettle, the tools and so on has come under sustained attack yet again. This time it held out, just. But next time we may not be so lucky and we're not so well off that we can afford to lose the contents.

What we need is somewhere secure to keep our BOGstuff and a small half container made of steel is just the job. Sadly such a container will cost us about £1500, money we do not have. However collectively I think we could find such a sum. If each member put in £15 then taking into account poor student members or those with no money to spare we should just be able to do it.

I hereby open for donations the BOG 'Shed of Steel' Fund. Send cheques payable to 'Bath Organic Group' to myself, Peter Andrews at 19 xxxxxxxxxxxx. If you would rather pay by debit card phone me at work on 01225 xxx xxx and I will organise it.

Each donor can have their name written in permanent marker inside the Shed of Steel for all to wonder at their generosity.

for all the latest news, dates & pictures visit:
www.bathorganicgroup.org.uk