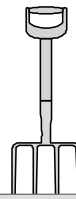
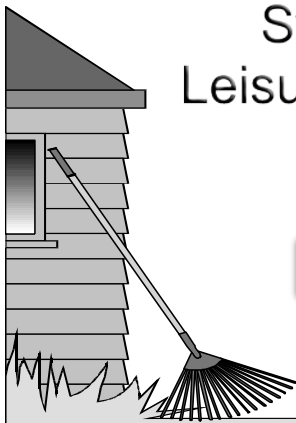


Swindon Allotments & Leisure Gardens Association

Registered Charity no. 1138814

Newsletter Autumn 2022



Chair's report



Show news

Schools participation

Children's activity report

Coach Trips



& much more!

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

At the time of writing this report it feels like Autumn has come rather suddenly after an incredibly difficult Summer gardening-wise. The drought and heat put paid to quite a lot of plants and limited the flowering of many others. Our own lawn still looks a sorry sight though it is gradually regaining its greenness.

It has been interesting to see how plants themselves react to heat. The dahlias in our garden, for example, really objected to the excessive sun and heat and only produced minimal blooms. Watching the wild fires springing up in various parts of the country made me think about what we were doing to the planet and the need for us to reconsider our life styles.

Salga has had some lovely events, including a great Horticultural Show and a very successful Coffee and Cake morning at the shop as well as a lovely outing to the RHS garden at Wisley. All this, in addition to our monthly meetings and some excellent speakers.

The shop is doing well and feels like a community meeting place as much as a shop. If any of our members have yet to visit the shop I'd encourage them to do so. There is a lot of expertise among the gardeners there and they are always happy to share their ideas. It is open on Fridays and Saturday mornings from 10 am to 12 noon. We have a great team of helpful volunteer staff who have wide knowledge. At present we're still only accepting cash or cheques because card readers require wi-fi. However, technology moves on and John, our Treasurer, is keeping this under review.

Last Winter we kept the shop open one day a week as a trial but the committee have decided that this year we will open on Saturdays only from the 29th October until the 17th December. We will then close and re-open on Friday and Saturday mornings on the 10th February 2023.

Finally, I'd like to remind you of the benefits of the Salga seed scheme. The King's Seed Catalogues are in the shop for collection. The scheme offers a 45% reduction on packets of seeds. Glenys, who does a huge amount of work administering the scheme, needs the order forms back by the 12th November.

Best wishes to all.

Cindy Matthews

SWINDON PRIMARY SCHOOLS GARDENING COMPETITION 2022

The Primary Schools gardening competition is held annually to help meet one of SALGA's charitable objectives by advancing education in horticulture and promoting, encouraging and improving horticulture.

This year we emailed 69 Primary Schools including special schools in the Swindon Borough Council area asking if they would like free seeds and wanted to take part. 33 schools responded and were sent 6 packets of seeds that were kindly donated by King Seeds and SALGA members. Josie Lewis sent out nearly 200 packets of seeds!



As well as sending out seeds, some schools visited the allotments to find out more about growing plants and gardening. Many thanks to members who helped with these visits.

The 10 schools below entered the competition by sending in photographs of their plants and gardens. We were particularly impressed by the entry sent in by Eastrop Infants School. Each school that entered received a £15 voucher to be spent at the SALGA shop.

Bridlewood Primary School
Chiseldon Primary School
Eastrop Infant School
Ferndale Nursery and Primary School
Greenmeadow Primary School
Lainesmead Primary School
Millbrook Primary School
Robert le Kyng Primary School
St Francis CE Primary School
Tregoze Primary School

Results

Overall Winner -	Eastrop Infant School, Highworth
Best vegetable planting-	Eastrop Infant School,
Best fruit planting-	Lainesmead Primary School

**Best floral planting-
Highly Commended-**

St Francis CofE Primary School
Millbrook Primary School
Robert Le Kyng Primary School

School staff have many demands on their time and the judges, Chris, Josie and Janet were impressed that the schools found time in their busy day for gardening. Furthermore, weekends and school holidays mean that there are often times when pupils and staff are absent to look after the plants. So apart from planting things which will produce a crop or flower when people are in school, the unpredictable climate brings another challenge that school gardeners have to overcome.

The judges found that the most successful gardens were those where the planting was carried out close to the classroom so that the plots and containers are easy to tend. Even better is when gardening is closely linked to the school curriculum as at Eastrop Infant School.

**Eastrop Infant School use crates
as planters**



**Eastrop Infants School's sunflower and
height chart**

Well done to everyone who took part this year and in 2023 we hope to provide schools with more help to spread our passion for gardening and increase the number of entries.

Chris Cossey and Josie Lewis

SALGA HORTICULATURAL SHOW 2022

CHAIRMANS' REPORT

This year the annual show returned to Pinetrees Community Centre on Saturday 3rd September. The weather was dry and, despite it being a very hard year to grow any flowers and vegetables due to the extreme heat and hosepipe ban, there was still a good turnout of exhibits. Handicrafts and Domestic classes were also well supported with some very good cakes and homemade crafts exhibits.

The children's classes went well this year and my thanks to Holly for running a special treasure hunt for the children around the hall which was enjoyed by lots of young families and grandparents too.

At just after 8.30am people had already started to arrive with their exhibits and proceeded to set up on the tables that had been neatly arranged for them to stage their produce. This continued until 11am when the hall was cleared as the judges arrived to check and score the exhibits.

The judges scores are loaded on to laptops which we then use to calculate the winner of each individual trophy and prize money. This process can take up to 3 hours.

While this was taking place our catering team of Sandra Carter and Christine Stratford, along with Jessica Way were starting to serve the first of many coffees and teas, along with the cakes which were kindly made and donated by members.

The entrance hall was very busy with three stalls including Wanborough Herbs, some new members joining at the membership stall, and the raffle sales table. Raffle sales were particularly good this year helped by some very good and generously donated prizes. This included a £50 Seed and Potato voucher (donated by Pennards), a Honey Basket and a recycling shed made by our friends at Enterprise Works at Gypsy Lane, to mention a few.

The hall was then reopened for the public viewing at 2.30pm. The location, refreshments, increased publicity and of course the vibrant exhibits attracted a lot more people, both SALGA members, and non-members from a wide range of ages. A number of new members joined

SALGA on the strength of the show. Throughout the day members of the committee engaged with the exhibitors, and have taken on board and will discuss everything that was raised to them in relation to the show at future committee meetings, ready for next year.



Our good friend Ben Prater from BBC Wiltshire Sound made a welcome return to present the trophies and raffle prizes. Ben also spoke to members at the show, making recordings which he then used on his radio shows, providing valuable publicity for SALGA for quite a few days afterwards.

The first prizes to be given out were the school trophies, and this year this competition was organised by Chris Cossey and Josie Lewis who had taken some great pictures while judging, and who put a lot of work into the competition which made it a great success. It was good to see the children from Eastrop Primary School collecting their cup for winning the overall competition. Hopefully they will continue their individual interest in growing and be the future exhibitors.

Ben Prater who was assisted by his young son finished awarding the trophies, and then drew the winning raffle tickets, including his own with which he won some jars of honey from the Isle of Wight. If you listened to his BBC show this became quite a humorous topic of conversation for the next couple of days on whether he should have collected it or put it back, with lots of public interaction!

A highly successful day which had a warm community feel came to end shortly after 4.30pm when everyone started to remove their exhibits and take their winnings home.

My thanks go to the many people that help set up and run the show without whom it would not be possible to have such a good day. Please put the date in your diary for next year's show on Saturday 2nd September 2023.



Mick Carter

AWARDS: WINNERS 2022

R.H.S. BRONZE MEDAL

Awarded to the most meritorious exhibit in horticultural classes F1-F58 & V1-V50

Holly Barrand

R.H.S. BANKSIAN MEDAL

*Awarded to winner of highest amount of prize money in horticultural classes F1-F58 & V1-V50.
(Past winners in 2020 and 2021 are not eligible in 2022)*

Holly Barrand

N.V.S. SILVER MEDAL & CARD

Awarded to the most meritorious exhibit in vegetable classes V1-V50

Holly Barrand

PERPETUAL ROSE BOWL

Highest number of points in 'Show'. All classes

Holly Barrand

THE VEGETABLE CUP

Highest number of points in 'Vegetable Section' classes V1-V50

Trevor Jenkins

THE ERNEST BRIGHT ROSE BOWL

Highest number of points in 'Dahlia Section' classes F1-F10

Joanna Adomsta

THE EDDIE JEFFRIES CUP

Winner of Chrysanthemum Class F11

Joanna Adomsta

GLADYS PLUMLEY SHIELD

Highest number of points in 'Flower Section' classes F20-F28

Holly Barrand

THE REMEMBRANCE CUP

Highest number of points in 'Pot-plant Section' classes F31-F40

Michael Salter

W. RIMER PERPETUAL SHIELD

Highest number of points in 'Domestic Section' classes H1-H14

Shirley Forrester

SWINDON ALLOTMENT SHIELD

Highest number of points in 'Handicrafts Section' classes H31-H41

Sarah Hill

SKIPPER CUP

Highest number of points in 'Fruit Section' classes F51-F58

Cindy Matthews

SMALL CUP

Highest number of points in 'Wine Section' classes H21-H23

Sandra Carter

TOOMER CUP

Best exhibit in 'Floral Art' classes H51-H52

Dianne Slater

GREEN-FINGER TROPHY

Winner of Novice class V61

Nathan Coles

D & T BROWN CUP

Awarded to Children's classes C1-C7

Jessica Way

CHAIRMAN'S CUP

Winner of Salad Class V39

Alan Stevens

ALICE MORROW POSY BOWL

Winner of Posy Class H53

Shirley Forrester

T4 CAMERAS CUP Photographic class

Elizabeth Strange

THE SCHOOLS TROPHY

Winner of the Schools Garden Competition Eastrop School

Best Vegetable planting Eastrop Primary School

Best Fruit Planting Lainsemead Primary School

Best Floral Planting St Francis CofE School

Highly Commended Millbrook Primary School

Robert le Kyng School

SALGA'S AUTUMN SHOW CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY

This year the show committee trialled a children's activity at the show to help fulfil one of SALGA's charitable objectives: of learning about and encouraging involvement in horticulture.

It was a scavenger-hunt-style activity where children searched out picture clues of plants whose first letters made up the name of a vegetable. Each child entrant handed in their questionnaire to receive their 'treasure' which



was a choice of small handmade toys (knitted mice being the favourite of many!) or hand decorated notebooks and pencils. In addition, each child could choose a small succulent in a pot to care for (of a robust variety!) With the help of volunteer hand-crafters and succulent enthusiasts we were able to make the prizes as eco-friendly as possible (recycled materials and no plastic). Many of the parents commented that it gave them a chance to have a much better look at the show while their children were so engaged and that they particularly appreciated in these times that the activity and prizes were free of charge.

The activity questionnaire also finished with an open question: "What is your favourite thing at the show and why?". The question elicited some surprisingly lengthy answers with an underlying theme in over half the questionnaires of a desire to get into growing things. Typical of the comments was this one from a young boy: "I have never seen one of these in real life... I wish I could learn to grow them".

The children's activity tables also had some fun exhibits for all visitors to explore, all donated by SALGA members. For example, snake-like tromboncino squashes with wiggly eyes, and an open fig with the question "how are fig 'flowers' pollinated?" (Google the answer if you dare!). Visitors also enjoyed discussing the companion plants on display on the table, such as the intriguing Shoo Fly (*Nicandra physaloides*) with its purple flowers and black and gold Chinese-style lantern seed pods. Visitors were excited to take away free seeds to grow some themselves.

The children's judge was one of the people helping at the activity tables stall, so it was a chance to chat encouragingly to child exhibitors about their entries. The activity tables were also a focus of general chat about exhibits, the rigours of the growing year and the show, and it prompted

some great suggestions about additional classes. The show committee always welcome feedback and each suggestion about the show was carefully noted and presented at the Show Committee's review meeting in the week following the show. Each non-member that engaged with the table, often with gardening questions, was encouraged to join the club. There were also pre-loved gardening books and pot holders for sale, with proceeds (50p each) going towards show club funds – everyone enjoys a bargain!



The children's scavenger hunt and activity table proved an effective way to increase visitor engagement with the show and the club, and to get some great feedback, not least from some budding gardeners of the next generation. A similar enterprise will be repeated at next year's show, so any donations of small succulents or offers of small handicraft toys, or fascinating plants and funny vegetables would be most appreciated.

Holly Barrand

KINGS SEED ORDERS

The Kings seed catalogues are available in the Shop at Pickards Field. The scheme offers a very good discount at 45% on packet seeds plus onion and shallot sets. All members can take advantage of this offer and others that are shown in the catalogue. Paperwork showing all the necessary details and order forms are with the catalogues. Simply fill in the order forms and send the this to Glenys or drop the order into the Shop by 12th November.

You can pay by cash or cheque or why not pay electronically direct into the SALGA bank account. The Shop is open on Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12 noon to the end of October. You will need to watch out for November opening times when they are announced. So get ordering today.

 **KINGS SEEDS**
The people that know about seeds

OUR VISIT TO RHS WISLEY



Thirty-eight members and friends came on the September coach trip to the Royal Horticultural gardens at Wisley that was arranged by Marilyn Stott. SALGA, as an affiliated Association, is allowed one free group visit each year to one of the four gardens in the RHS portfolio. This makes for a reasonably priced day out.

The gardens lie beside the A3, just south of the M25 in the postal district of Woking, in Surrey. Our Association was last there about five years ago, when the weather was somewhat better as I recall. The other RHS gardens are at Harlow Carr in Yorkshire, Hyde Hall in Essex and Rosemoor in Devon. SALGA has been to all three in the past but, being further away, this has always been as a “day out” incorporated into one of our five-day holidays. Having said that I’m told that the Wroughton Garden Club made a day trip visit to Rosemoor earlier this year.

Leaving Swindon just after 9.00 a.m. we arrived at eleven and were surprised to find another Barnes coach already in the car park. Beyond junction 10 on the M4 the large overhead information displays had all been illuminated with “London and Windsor delays possible until 19th September”, a sign of what was expected in the run-up to the royal funeral. It was raining when we arrived so, after the inevitable trip to the toilets, most people headed for a coffee. I’m sure the whole entrance area has been revamped and become much more “commercialised” since we were last here. Outside as well, particularly within the curtilage of the gardens, there’s now extensive paving with seating and tables for “al fresco” dining. The shop area is much enlarged too, with all the plant sales moved down from the original building. Changes are planned for the original building as well with the old laboratory destined to become a visitor centre.

The original Wisley building is somewhat confusing. I believe it was built in the early 1900s but in a style to make it appear much older. Many reclaimed materials were incorporated in the construction for the same reason. The land was first acquired by George Fergusson Wilson in 1878. It was actually gifted to the RHS in 1903, by which time it was owned by Sir Thomas Hanbury. For instance, the old laboratory dates back one

hundred years, but the canal which seems so integral to the building and graces its frontage to the gardens, was only designed by Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe and constructed in the early 1970s.

Fortunately, the rain soon eased up and our party began to disperse. Some had booked for a conducted walking tour. I did the tour five years ago and knew it would be beyond my walking capabilities now because of the hill. In fact, Marilyn had asked for the route to be tailored to the age and abilities of our group. So, by using the less steep paths they did all manage to get to the high ground and the views therefrom. Alternatively, I could have opted to use one of the self-drive electric “buggies” that are available free of charge but heeding the urging of my chiropractor I decided to walk instead.

I started by the canal immediately in front of the house where a Lagerstroemia standing about five feet tall in a very sheltered position was in full bloom. The water lilies in the canal still had plenty of blooms, particularly the yellow ones, while the surrounding box hedges were interspersed with hibiscus shrubs displaying either delicate pink, blue or rose flowers. A couple of young, (immature), moorhens were pottering about, quite unconcerned by the passing people.



Just as I was moving on a grey heron flew in and landed on the lily pads. I think it was also an immature because I couldn't see any black plumes on its head. If the moorhens had been younger and smaller, they may have been at risk of becoming the heron's lunch, but as it was he just sat on the lily pads, watching for a fish to swim near. I wasted a good quarter of an hour waiting to see him strike, but nothing happened so I moved on, following the stream down the valley, (gully almost), with the alpine meadow rising on my left and the Oakwood area to the right. The Oakwood was formerly known as the wilderness or something similar but was renamed as a memorial to George Fergusson Wilson. It includes not only oaks but many other fine mature forest trees and is threaded with footpaths.

There was a most attractive dusting of pink higher up in the meadow, which turned out to be cyclamen, while down by the footpath the stream fed into pools as it ran on down the slope. One pool held a shoal of small to medium sized carp, mainly common but including one or two koi. There were also more young moorhens foraging about but I didn't see the adult birds. The river Wey runs along the northern edge of the western boundary of the gardens, so perhaps the adults had gone over there to get away from the kids?

A little further along the alpine meadow gives way to a most attractive rock garden, accessed by a bridge across yet another pool. There was still a lot of colour here including a very much smaller version of the *Lagerstroemia* that was by the house. I was amused to see that its common name is apparently "With love babe". There was also a patch of those long tubular plants which catch flies, yellowish green with maroon markings. I find them fascinating. I saw some in the public gardens in Sidmouth in 2016. I think they're called *Serracenia*.

From here I followed a young couple round towards the glasshouse. They had a little lad with them, perhaps five or six years old. He was kicking out at those ground cover plants with coarse, fleshy leaves that you see in lots of parks. They may be called *Cordifolia* *Bergenia*. Anyway, he shouted "Look dad, cabbages!". Crikey! I thought. His school dinners must be even worse than ours were! There's actually a Learning Centre adjacent to the glasshouse, which was in use that day for a party of schoolchildren. There's also a relatively new statue outside, about ten feet tall, depicting three hares standing.



I stopped for a spot of belated lunch in the glasshouse café, including a small bottle of merlot before I made my way in to see the covered display. Very few of the exhibits in here are labelled, perhaps because they're not species you could grow in a domestic greenhouse. There's a living wall with labelling explaining how it's managed and a very large plant which everyone recognises as a banana. In fact, it carries a label to tell you that it's not! The plant I found most interesting had a great long twisted, spotted stem laying along the ground. The foliage at the end wasn't much but the trunk looked like a huge snake. It was labelled *philodendron* *selloum* and is native to South America. I left the glasshouse via the cacti

display which always leaves me cold although I find it interesting that Aloe Vera is used for some skin creams.

Just outside, the South African meadow was still showing some colour, particularly in the plants about knee high that I would describe as “red hot pokers”. A group of volunteers were working through the display, hand weeding and generally tidying up. We had an interesting chat and they told me that the botanical name for these colourful plants is *Kniofoia*, I’m not quite sure how you pronounce it! Unfortunately, that was when the rain started again, and it looked as though it had “set in”, so I headed back to the Tulip café, by the entrance, where most of us had a cream tea on order. On the way I noted a couple of stunning shrubs with very pale sage/green foliage and striking white flowers. They looked like large, delicate single poppies, except they were this startling white colour with yellow centres. I think the label read *Paeonia Lactiflora*, *Bian di Hong*, although I may have got that wrong and it may have referred to another adjacent shrub anyway.

The coach left the gardens at about 4.30. Phil was our driver for the day. He’s very popular with our members and many years ago, he and I used to belong to the same fishing club. As we neared the M25/M4 junction, Phil turned off to avoid the queue that builds up there most evenings. I thought we were going down the M3 across Chobham common, which would have given me an excuse to recount the renowned legend of the Chobham Treacle Mines, but he took a different route round by Virginia Water Lake in the Windsor Royal Park. In the dusk and the rain, I didn’t recognise where we were although I used to bike out there to fish as a teenager, carrying my “permit” which started with “His Majesty has graciously granted you permission to fish, etc., etc.”. It was King George VI in those days of course.

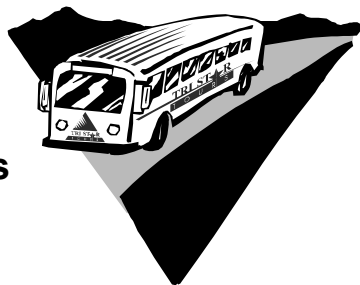
We arrived at Gorse Hill at about 6.30. It had been an enjoyable day out, despite the rain.



Don Reeve

PROPOSED COACH TRIP FOR DECEMBER 2022

Tuesday 6th December Visit to Birmingham Christmas Market



We last did this trip several years ago. Although the Christmas Market is the highlight, many people took the opportunity to do other things. Examples are: Christmas shopping, general shopping, visiting the new Library building and going up to see the view from the top, walking by the canal, visiting the Cathedral. This is an opportunity to do whatever you fancy.

Depart Gorse Hill: 9.00 a.m.

Depart Birmingham: 4.00 p.m.

Cost £20 (this includes driver's gratuity)

Wheelchair Users:

Please note wheelchair users or their carers need to be able to load the wheelchairs into the coach. Barnes coach drivers are not permitted or insured to help with this.

To book a place on this trip, please call Marilyn Stott on
01793 861657

SPEAKERS 2022/2023

October 20th Robert Biggs of Wanborough Nursery will talk about **“Growing Ornamental Grasses”** This local nursery has always been a good friend to SALGA in giving interesting talks and supporting our programmes. Expect some plants to be for sale!

November 17th Simon Brooks, Head Gardener for the National Trust at Avebury - **“Avebury Manor’s Garden, Past, Present and Future”**.

December 15th **A Christmas Party** with a Quiz . Fish and chips will be provided. Numbers will be needed in advance, so be sure to order in time.
2023

January 19th Jane Caudwell & Philip Bayley (SALGA members) will show how they have been making preserves and chutneys to use up seasonal produce. Samples will be on offer!

February 16th Charlotte Hitchmough **“Action for the River Kennet”**

March 16th In **“Patagonian Garden Plants,”** Dr Keith Ferguson will talk about plants we grow here coming from Chile, Patagonia and Argentina, showing them in their own natural scenery.

April 20th Millie Carmichael will talk about the **“Crop Drop”** project in her area where producers pass on surpluses to their Community.

May 18th **The AGM** and **“member plants sale!”**
So far so good! That is up to the May AGM!

We do have speakers largely on gardening topics though there is also an interest in local subjects, history, and the environment. Some of these subjects have been long in the pipeline. Not all speakers advertise. You may belong to another group and hear a speaker that would be worth us hearing too. Even on our recent day trip to Wisley, a young lady, a member’s daughter “volunteered” her favourite subject. Next we might be able to “persuade” her that we are a friendly audience. So be on the lookout! Your ideas are always welcome too! Let me know.

Irene Cooke

SALGA SHOP

Despite the problems caused by Covid lockdowns, the shop has continued to operate successfully. We are always grateful for the willingness of our members to volunteer, whether it be in the shop serving customers, helping customers to load their vehicles, weighing up goods from our bulk supplies of fertilisers or turning up in all weathers to unload delivery lorries.

Although there was an appreciable dip in income during 2021, the current year promises to result in turnover being back to pre-Covid levels.

We have a good mix of volunteers willing to help in the shop, which enables us to open on Fridays and Saturdays through the busiest months of the year. New volunteers are always welcome though, so if you can spare a couple of hours once or twice a month, please get in touch with **Sue Stevens**, who organises the shop rota for us.

We charge very competitive prices in the shop, usually cheaper than can be obtained elsewhere. Pressure on prices is significant this year as suppliers have been passing on some quite hefty increases – one example is the price of bamboo canes, the supply prices of which have gone up by nearly 20%. In putting up our prices, we have tried to absorb some of the costs but that can only go so far. We cannot make a loss on trading due to Charity Commission regulations but neither are we supposed to make excessive surpluses.

The shop and storage containers have been coated in a sun-reflecting paint so our volunteers can be more comfortable while working and our stocks are protected against becoming too warm while being stored.

Our old shop has been cleared out and efforts are being made to convert it to a more social space so that refreshments can be served if required and we can hold occasional events, such as the two coffee and cake mornings we have held (the last one was on Saturday 9th July) which we have combined with the facility to have tools sharpened.

Here's to a successful year in the shop!

John Edgerton
Treasurer

This article was written, but not submitted, for the previous magazine.

CURRENT SITUATION WITH SALGA SHOP

The Members only SALGA shop is operated by volunteers at the Pickards Field Allotments site. It is open during the main season on Fridays and Saturdays between the hours of 10am and 12 noon. From the first weekend in November it will be open just on Saturdays and will close down completely this year on Saturday 17th December for Christmas and New Year and will remain closed throughout January, opening again on Fridays and Saturdays – from 10th February.

The shop could not operate without a willing band of volunteers, who carry out a number of functions:

- Operating the till and taking money from customers;
- Sourcing the customers' requirements from the various storage containers at the site and assisting with the carrying of goods to their cars;
- Carrying out stock checks to assess requirements for future ordering from our various suppliers;
- Liaising with suppliers over ordering and the processing of invoices – ultimately the responsibility of the Treasurer;
- Unloading of suppliers' lorries at Pickards Field;
- Carrying out annual stocktaking at the end of the year.

The shop operates, as does SALGA generally, under the auspices of the Charity Commission, which is why it is for members only, who generally benefit from prices lower than can be obtained elsewhere. Members are asked to show a current membership card before being served at the shop counter.

In the building known as the old shop we occasionally hold functions, such as the two successful 'Coffee and Cake' sessions held in March and July this year. We also hold our Management Committee meetings there when the weather is favourable.

We are always looking for volunteers for the shop for these various functions. The committee is currently running the shop between them and we feel we would appreciate someone willing to get more involved with the organisation side of things, including the lorry deliveries. If you feel you might be interested in this role, would you please contact the Chair, Cindy Matthews. The role would require occasional involvement, as and when new supplies become necessary.

John Edgerton, Treasurer

2023 MEMBERSHIP

Membership can now be renewed for 2023 at the shop, at meetings, by post, by email or included in the seed order if ordering seeds this autumn.

1. At the Shop at Pickards Field – Renewals and new members.
2. Electronically – using a Membership form submitted by e-mail to **deniswmatthews@gmail.com** and payment of the £5 by bank transfer. Membership cards can be collected at the shop. If you would like your card posted, please add an extra 65 pence to your bank transfer to cover postage.
3. By Post – Existing members, send me your name, address & a cheque for £5. New members, please complete a membership form which is below, or under “Membership” on the SALGA website **salga.org.uk**. A stamped and self-addressed envelope would be very welcome if you require your membership card sent to you.
4. At live monthly meetings.

We would very much like you to pay by bank transfer as our bank has introduced significant charges for cheques. Bank details: Salga Account **00020536**, Sort Code **40-52-40** and **include your name** as a reference. Please supply the following details for any new membership

Membership Number (for renewals).....

Name

Address

Post Code..... Telephone.....

E-mail address (please write clearly).....

Allotment site, (if any).....Plot number

GIFT AID If any member of the household is a UK taxpayer, SALGA asks that the membership is made out in that person’s name and the declaration below is signed accordingly. For every £5 subscription that is “Gift Aided” SALGA receives £1.25 from the exchequer at no additional cost to the member.

I am a UK taxpayer and would like SALGA to treat all subscriptions I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify otherwise, as Gift Aid contributions.

Date..... Signature

IF YOU HAVE SIGNED THE GIFT AID DECLARATION PLEASE GIVE
YOUR FIRST NAME IN FULL

.....

Denis Matthews, 28 Tithe Barn Crescent, Swindon SN1 4JX

A NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

Among so much else that we depend upon for survival, pollinators play an important role. Without them the vegetable foodstuff on which our animals and we depend simply wouldn't exist. Of all our native pollinating insects, bees are possibly the most important and certainly the best known.

Hornets are also pollinators here in Britain, particularly of ivy. However, they also feed on grubs and insects many of which are parasitic on our food crops. To that extent hornets are benign but, unfortunately, their diet can also include bees. Apparently, a few hunting hornets can absolutely decimate a healthy bee colony, which is very bad news for beekeepers. About six years ago, a colony of non-native Asian hornets was found in Gloucestershire. Mercifully, these were different from the Asian Giant hornets of east Asia and Japan which are over five centimetres long with a fearsome sting. Asian Giants have, however, now gained a foothold in the USA, so we might yet see them here.



“Ordinary” Asian hornets are of similar size to our wasps and are distinguished by their mostly black or very dark brown abdomen, (that's the pointy bit at the back). They also have yellow legs. Now a nest has been found again, this time over in Rayleigh, in Essex and their spread is being monitored by Defra, (the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs).

Even if they **do** become established in Britain there's no suggestion that they may be more of a threat to honeybees than existing predators and disease. Climate change may eventually turn out to be more harmful. However, it's something of which we should perhaps all be aware, the beekeepers among us most certainly are.

Don Reeve

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Website: www.salga.org.uk



Congratulations!

Jenny and Fred Bassett reached their Diamond Wedding anniversary on Thursday, 15th September. They were at our open meeting in Upham Road Church Hall in the evening and received the congratulations and well wishes of the members who were present. They've been SALGA members for almost fifty years to my knowledge. Denis may possibly have their original joining date in his records.