

Woburn Sands Allotments Newsletter

February 2012

Peter Leadbeater

Members will know by now of the sudden death on 17th December, of Peter Leadbeater, a long time plot holder and Committee member.

Peter has left quite a legacy for us all and the Committee and other plots holders have been helping his bother Alan with some items.

Of Peter's four plots, one has been allocated and we have split one into two five pole plots. We have marked and re-established paths along the length of his plots. Our current waiting list request only 5 pole plots. We are reluctant to split another plot so we now have available two 10 pole plots adjacent to each other. If anyone is interested in these plots would you please contact Marie, please do this before the next Committee Meeting which is on 16th February.

Peter had three rotavators. One was rather old and has been handed on. Two are more modern. If anyone is interested in one of these would you please email Paul.

Over the years Peter had collected a variety of seeds especially from his giant pumpkins and he had purchased a number of flower and vegetable seeds for the coming season. These have been handed on to the Garden Club and will be available at the next Coffee Morning (which we understand is also a seed swap).

Alan Leadbeater has asked that any donations made for Peter's rotavators, seeds etc. go to the Allotment Society's funds. Once we know how much this amount is we will let everyone know.

Reflections on Peter's life were compiled by current and previous Committee Members for the Christian News and the article is repeated below.

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Field Matters

Those of you who ordered manure will know that we are having a problem getting it delivered. We hope that it will be delivered soon. If you do not want to wait any longer, please contact Marie so that we can arrange a refund. Once we have news of when it will be delivered we will let you know. (You might just hear the cheers go up!)

Gates

Tony, Dave and Phil, have taken on padlock patrol. Some padlocks are difficult to lock - sometimes you need to use a key to lock them. The padlocks are regularly sprayed with a silicon based fluid rather than WD40 which we have been advised against using. *Please do not leave the gates open as we have already had a theft from a shed this year.*

Valuables in Sheds

One plot holder had a strimmer and other items stolen from his shed in January. Please do not leave valuable items in you shed.

Driving on the Field

Please do not drive on the field. The water pipes are just 18" below the surface. In addition the ruts now appearing are difficult to flatten.

AGM

The AGM is at the Memorial Hall on 26th April at 7.30pm. The Agenda and Pole Charge letters will be sent out at the beginning of April. If you have any items you wish discussed at the AGM, please contact Marie. If you want to pay your Pole Charge the Hall will be open from 6.30pm.

Ron Hale who has been Chairman for the past few years has given up his allotment so will be standing down as Chairman.

If you would like to stand for the Committee please make sure you keep the date of the AGM available. If you would like any information about being a Committee member please contact any of the Committee.

SEED BOX

The seed box in Flitwick opens this month. Opening times are on our website.

Memories of Peter Leadbeater

Peter Leadbeater had a lifelong interest in the Woburn Sands Allotment Society. He had four, ten pole allotment plots which had already been dug over ready for the 2012 planting season and he was on his plots on the morning of his sudden death. Peter's garden consisted of greenhouses and cold frames where he grew vegetable seedlings and bedding plants for his friends and neighbours and had a stall for his vegetable produce outside his home.

Peter was a long serving member of the Allotment Committee, joining in 1989. He was very knowledgeable about the history of the field as the Leadbeater family have had plots on the Allotment Field since 1932. Peter and his brother, Alan used to be taken along to the field by his Father and his Uncle. Peter had his own plot in the 1960s and, when his Father died suddenly in 1972, he took on his Father's plots. Peter's knowledge of the field was very useful; when a working party dug drainage ditches a few years ago to solve problems of flooding on some plots, Peter guided the work and later drew maps for the allotment records.

Ralph Pusell says "I knew Peter for about 65 years. My first memories were when we were very young and all the local children played in the Chapel Street field, the field has long since been built over. We all went to school together and, as time progressed, went our different ways, Peter going into engineering at a company in Cranfield, where he became very successful. We would meet socially. Peter was a good darts player and we played against each other many times; I think honours were about even.

Peter's hobbies were all about nature and the environment, with a great interest in farming. We took on an allotment at about the same time. Both of us eventually having four 10 pole plots. I became chairman of the allotment society in the 1980s and at about the same time Peter also joined the management committee.

He was a great 'show grower' and entered

many vegetables in the Garden Club exhibitions with great success. Every year he won the class for large marrows and pumpkins. Peter applied his logical engineering mind to the growing of seeds and crops with everything very tidy and in neat rows. He was a very good gardener and will be missed on the allotment field."

Andy Malleson remembers "At one time Peter produced prize pumpkins. He told me that he got the seeds from a pumpkin grower in America. He won several prizes over the years for the largest pumpkin. I remember it took four people to load one prize specimen into the boot of his car. They used a piece of carpet to lift it without damaging it."

The Allotment Field holds an annual judging of the plots and Peter won the Best Plot of the Year award in 1988, 1989 and 1999. Throughout 2008 Peter wrote a regular piece for the Allotment Newsletter called 'A View from the Field'. This series of articles gives month by month advice on what to do on your allotment plot, with the added bonus of it being designed for Woburn Sands. This series is available on the Allotment Society web site and is a legacy Peter has left for us all. He will be sadly missed on the Allotment Field.

For several years Peter Leadbeater grew giant pumpkins on his plot. His heaviest two were winners at the UK Giants competition 1994;



they weighed 522.4 lbs and 471 lbs. (236.96kg & 213.64kg).

Compiled by members of the Allotment Society.