

December 2017

# MAGA

## MARTIN WAY ALLOTMENT NEWS



### NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

After the special Self-Management newsletter I hope you will enjoy this more light hearted Christmas Newsletter.



Thank you to the brave volunteers who helped clear 2 plots for letting. One group got together and spent a morning on plot 44, others worked independently and in smaller groups to get paths wood chipped and rubbish cleared on plot 136. Both of these plots have now been let thanks to volunteers, as well as Jane and Simon who have been busy this autumn organising and carrying out 4 sessions of plot lettings with 18 new tenants signing up. Please help to make the new tenants feel welcome.



Some of you may have noticed posts with white tops around a number of plots. These were put in by Simon and Andy, who carefully measured the boundaries of some vacant plots. The posts were put in to mark the boundary of where the new plot holder could cultivate to and also show where the paths were. This has been done in response to new tenants frequently asking where their boundaries were and how much they were supposed to leave for a path. We also tell new tenants that the paths need to be wide enough for someone with a loaded wheelbarrow to walk down, i.e. around 1m wide. It was disappointing that 4 of these posts disappeared before the plots could be shown to prospective new tenants. If you see any of these on a plot please do not remove them!

If you would like to help in any way in the future please email us on [committee@maga.org.uk](mailto:committee@maga.org.uk) or talk to any committee member on their plots. There are jobs which can be done on any day on your own or with other people. It worked well with the clearing of the 2 plots above, so please let us know if you would be able to help like this in the future, even if it is only for a couple of hours. There is a plot map showing who is on the committee and their plot location on the notice boards. It's a good way to get to know your neighbours and contribute to our allotment community.



If your plot is all tidy and ready for the spring have you thought about improving the paths around your plot? Maybe you could clear the grass or level the paths off so that passage between plots is safer and easier for your neighbours. **Maybe a thought for a new year's intention-beautiful paths all around Martin Way!**

Finally wishing you all the best in this Winter Season, and many happy hours of gardening in the New Year.

Jadzia

MAGA Chair – plot 50



MAGA Martin Way Allotment News is produced 3-4 times per year by Committee members and volunteers.

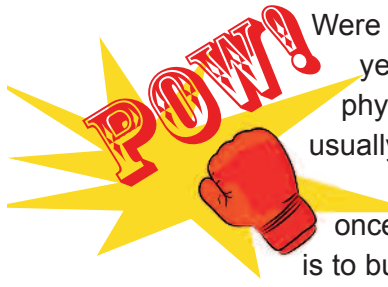
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To provide a submission for the next issue, please email [ivorstocker@sky.com](mailto:ivorstocker@sky.com)

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# FIGHT THE BLIGHT



Were your tomatoes affected by blight in 2017? It seemed to be an especially bad year for it. Blight is caused by a highly contagious air-borne fungus called phytophthora infestans (phytophthora is the Latin name for 'plant destroyer') which usually occurs in late summer when the conditions are warm and damp. It causes blackening of the leaves and stems and rotting of the fruit and, unfortunately, once the blight takes hold, there's nothing you can do to stop it and all that remains is to burn or bag up the affected crop as soon as possible and dispose of it (on the

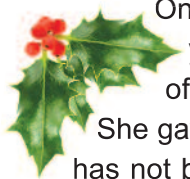
non-green waste, please). If you leave an affected crop, you risk the spores spreading to other crops/plots; the same fungus also causes potato blight (which caused the Irish Famine in the 19th century), so you could lose your potato crop too if you don't act quickly.

There's no chemical control for blight but there are several varieties of tomatoes which have been bred to resist blight (though no variety is totally immune). These include **Ferline**, **Crimson Crush**, **Mountain Magic** and **Losetto**, all of which will be available in the **MAGA Shop** in 2018.

Margaret



## VISITOR FROM AFAR



On our first day of opening the shop this year we had a surprise visitor. Some of you may remember **Anna Whelan**.

She gave up plot 101 sixteen years ago and has not been back to see the allotments until now.

She asked after several plot holders that she remembered and we were able (as well as we could) to tell her if they were still allotmenting. We showed her around and she was amazed at the changes. She said that when she had her plot the shop was just a hut and there were no toilets.



She could hardly believe all that has been achieved since she left.

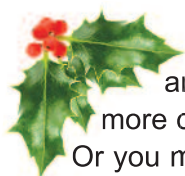
She said she was so pleased that we were continuing to flourish and asked us to pass on via the Newsletter her best wishes to everybody. She is now enjoying country living and growing amid beautiful scenery (and ferocious winds) on the Orkney Islands.

Kay Prior





# OUR CORNISH CONNECTION



I've been meaning to send this to the Newsletter for some time, but have only now got around to it. I know that some of you have connections with Cornwall and I expect many more of you have happy memories of holidays spent there, or perhaps you are a Poldark fan. Or you might have watched the detective series called 'Wycliffe' that was also set and filmed in Cornwall. The original books that sparked the TV series were written by a born and bred Cornishman, **W J Burley**, who by the way, was my husband's biology teacher. Anyway, enough of that, Cornwall fan or not, I hope you find the following interesting.



Some time ago I couldn't remember the allotment website address, so I typed in the word '**MAGA**' and up came **MAGA, the Cornish Language site**. This was quite a pleasant surprise to us as Andy, my husband, comes from Cornwall and is regularly perusing old maps showing Cornish hamlets, forgotten footpaths, strange place names, old mining sites and anything Cornish.

As we couldn't find the meaning of the Cornish word 'maga' using the online dictionary, Andy emailed to ask for a translation, at the same time explaining that we are an allotment site in London called MAGA. Not long after we had a reply from **maga.kernow**. The chap said he thought the Cornish word maga was quite fitting for our Association as it means 'to develop or nurture'. He then wished us '**oll an gwella**' which translates as '**all the best**'.

**Kay Prior**

**Meaning of Cornish word MAGA : to develop or nurture**

## I working on my allotment

There have been some wonderful clear days recently and I was on my plot on just such a morning, under a gloriously blue sky, contemplating the all too numerous jobs to be tackled when, drifting on the slight breeze, I caught the unmistakeable whiff of horse manure! Oh good, I thought, that is one job I can immediately tackle - so off I go with my barrow to the steaming pile!! As I plodded up and down I reflected



on how lucky I was to be able to add such goodness to my plot at no cost... not just in terms of money, but also in terms of organising its delivery. The same goes for scooping up piles of wood chip to create paths across my plot; being able to fill up the water butts for easy watering, or popping into the shop for some extra canes, a net or those seeds I meant to buy. I love working on my allotment - it's such a pleasure digging, hoeing, planting,

pruning, training and watering... even keeping the weeds and slugs at bay has its moments!! And all of this is made so much easier when I can use the facilities provided. **So, thank you to all those who give of their time and energy to manage and organise our allotments - without whom my little plot would be significantly worse off!!**



**Anne de Silva - Plot 86A**

# FORGOTTEN FRUITS

## Book Review

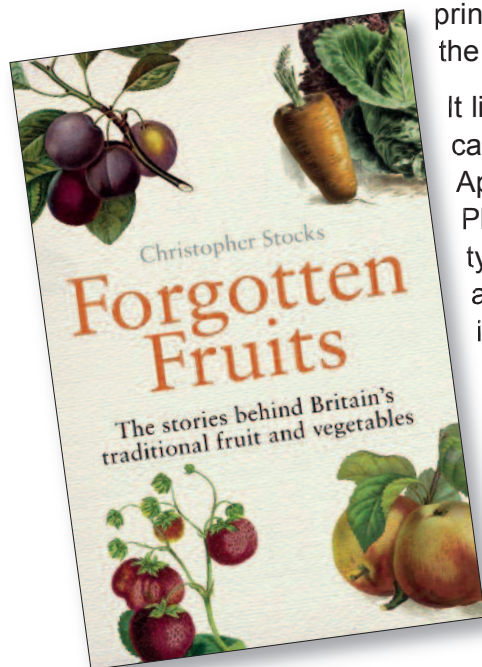
I've just been reading a very interesting paperback book about old varieties of fruit and veg that I picked up somewhere, possibly in the Shop this summer. It is 'Forgotten Fruits' by Christopher Stocks and tells the stories behind Britain's traditional fruit and vegetables. It was first published in 2008. It may still be in

print, but if not it's worth looking on the Internet for a second-hand copy.

It lists the fruit and veg in alphabetical order starting, of course, with Apples and finishing with Turnips. Please don't think it's a dry textbook type read. It's not. I found it absolutely fascinating. So much information packed between the covers - social history, anecdotes, natural history, places to visit and much more.

This little book really does have a lot to offer. I can definitely recommend it and I hope you can track down a copy.

**Happy reading.**



**A guide to Britain's traditional fruit and vegetables  
1st by Christopher Stocks (ISBN: 9781905211807)  
from Amazon's Book Store**

## PUMPKIN FEST



As in previous years, the last event of the year was the Pumpkin fest. This was a fun evening and is fast becoming a very popular event with a lot more children attending this year. Over 100 people turned up to enjoy the delicious home-made soup, sausages and burgers and the drinks on offer. The carved pumpkin competition was very popular

especially the children's category. We were even treated to some fireworks which were kindly brought along by a member for all of us to enjoy. As can be seen from the photo, the bonfire was a great success too, so much so that after all the wood had been used, green waste not cleared by idVerde was also added to the flames.



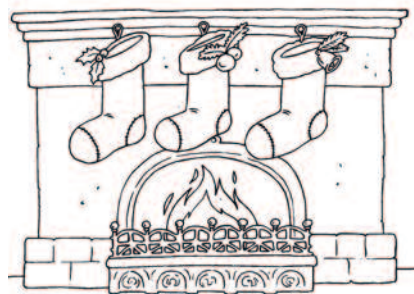
*Winner - Carved pumpkin  
Children's Category*

## CHOICE

allotment's  
winter delights  
we all keen  
braving blizzards  
facing gales  
frozen fingers  
alpha heroic  
double digging  
breaking ice!  
star gazing!

or

allotment's  
winter delights  
we all keen  
at home  
snuggled in hyggelig  
front of warm fire  
yule log blazing



sweet music  
drink in hand  
hibernating  
until late spring's  
sun's shining  
butterflies flying



*pmcmanus*

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