

THE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 14 DECEMBER 2013

OF KING HENRY'S WALK GARDEN

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Welcome TO THE WINTER ISSUE OF THE KING HENRY'S WALK GARDEN NEWSLETTER

This Saturday: the KHWG Winter Fair



KING HENRY'S WALK GARDEN

WINTER FAIR



Saturday 7th December 2013 11am - 3pm



Visit St Nicholas in his woodland home
Delicious homemade food and drinks
Seasonal games & children's activities
Wreath-making & carol singing



Chestnuts roasting on an open fire, mulled wine and delicious homemade lunches - these are just some of the delights on offer at KHWG's Winter Fair on Saturday 7th December, 11.00-3.00pm.

St Nicholas will be in the woods waiting to greet visitors and give out traditional wooden gifts. There will be seasonal games and craft activities for children, as well as the ever-popular wreath-making workshop with plenty of help for first-time wreath-makers. Members of KHWG will be selling crafts they've made with an emphasis on stocking-fillers with a nature theme, and the last few pots of honey from KHWG's bees will be on the produce stall, along with jams and jellies made by members.

Entry is free and all are welcome.

Kick off your festive season with a visit to this quintessential community event!



FROM PLOT TO PLATE

RECIPE Spiced apple & plum chutney

Ingredients

Juice of 2 oranges

1.5 kg peeled chopped and cored apples

0.5 kg stoned and chopped plums

350g raisins

750g light Muscovado sugar

2 large onions chopped

1 star anise, broken up

½ a tall cinnamon stick broken up

2 teaspoon mustard seeds

2 teaspoons ground ginger

Pinch of mace

Pinch of nutmeg

700ml cider vinegar.



Equipment

At least 10 8oz jars, washed sterilised and warm from drying in an oven when the chutney is made.

Method

Pop all the ingredients in a large jam pan bring to the boil slowly, stirring to release all the flavours and make sure that the sugar is dissolved. Boil for 5 minutes and reduce heat to a simmer for about 45 minutes until the mixture thickens and becomes pulpy. This can take longer depending on your pan and stove!

Cool slightly, but fill warm jars whilst mixture hot, but not scalding. Keep in fridge, scoff in a day.

TIP Have a large freezer bag ready with the juice of the 2 oranges in, so that as you peel and chop the apples you pop them into the bag with the juice. It stops them oxidising straight away and makes it easy to weigh them. Good for the plums too.

VOLUNTEER SESSIONS

On a Saturday, once a month, Andy and Nicola organise a morning's work to try to keep on top of all those jobs that need to be done in the garden. In November we cleared a couple of small trees blown down by the storm; raked the lawn clear of leaves; planted snowdrops and bluebells in the woodland; and began to rub down the woodland bench, before the rain set in with a vengeance and we had to retreat to the hut for tea and chocolate cake. Everyone is welcome to join us – you don't need to be a member – and we'll provide tools and guidance. The next session is on Saturday 14th December, 9am till 12. Why not give it a try?



News from the committee

The sixth growing season at KHWG has been a great one. Starting late, the plants actually seem to have benefited from the long winter, and crops were generally excellent. Even the dreaded tomato blight stayed off long enough for many of the tomatoes to have been harvested first.

Here on the committee we're always looking at ways to enhance the garden, and plans currently in the pipeline include replacing the pond railings with a more permanent, less visually intrusive barrier; improving lighting so that access to the garden after dark is safer; and redefining the lawn edges that have got lost in the flower beds.

We were concerned to learn that our neighbour, the Eastern Curve Garden in Dalston, is under threat of redevelopment. Find out more on the Dalstonist website <http://dalstonist.co.uk/question-mark-hangs-over-eastern-curve-gardens-future> and the Curve Garden Website <http://dalstongarden.org/>

London needs more community gardens, not fewer!



Talks, walks and workshops

Throughout the year The Garden Classroom organises a programme of talks and workshops at King Henry's Walk Garden aimed at grown-ups and families.

Last year they included sessions on vegetable growing, urban bird watching, growing food plants in containers, planting and looking after vegetables, beekeeping, natural beauty products, ice cream making, and group singing.

This year we are again putting together a varied and interesting range of topics that should appeal to gardeners, foodies, and crafters alike.

Kitty Travers of La Grotta Ices will return for her 5th visit to present her mouth-watering ice-creams. She effortlessly blends unusual flavours and regales her audience with background stories to enliven each demonstration.

New workshops include Jams, Jellies and Cordials, Natural Pickling, Solstice Bugs and Bees and an A-Z of Gardening History.

We are always happy to tap into the talents of our garden members and key-holders. Andy Parkinson will be hosting an all day Baking event and new



plot-holder Stephanie Irvine, a Master Gardener, has offered to host a Vegetable Growing for Beginners course.

The programme begins in late February with a selection of growing courses: Salad Growing and Planning A Small Vegetable Plot amongst others.

Be sure to look in the KHWG leaflet that will be distributed locally throughout February next year or pick one up at the garden when you visit. There you'll find detailed descriptions of each workshop and our annual seasonal events. Book early and secure your place.

Bee successful

Hive liaison officer Amanda explains why the KHWG honey is in such demand

It was a wonderful warm August evening when Andy and I met bee-keeping mentor Ian Bailey at the garden. After such a hot summer, the bees had been especially active, and there were a couple of full 'supers' for us to harvest.

Two days before we met, Ian had inserted a porter bee escape between the brood box - the deepest box at the bottom of the hive where the queen lays brood, and the supers - smaller boxes in which the bees store honey. The Porter bee escape allows the bees working in the upper sections of the hive to exit via the brood box, but they are then unable to get back to their stores. This enabled us to lift off the bee-free honey-laden supers, retire to the hut and close the door.



The wax-sealed frames then had their caps removed with a carving knife, before four frames were put into a drum and the honey spun into a bucket. This was then filtered through a sieve to remove any undesirable bits of bee or wax before bottling.

We had the biggest crop of honey of honey to date - 21kg!



LEFT a golden treasury: jars of KHWG honey; **ABOVE** the slow filtering process

It is absolutely delicious, and tastes unlike any of the pasteurised honey you can buy elsewhere. Many can taste mint, elderflower or lemon. The 90 jars went on sale at the autumn event and at Newington Green Market where it proved very popular.

Hurry if you want to buy a jar - the last few will be on sale at the winter event.

THE GARDEN CLASSROOM



As The Garden Classroom celebrates its fifth year, we look back at what we have achieved radiating from our education hub at King Henry's Walk Garden. Since its creation in 2008, The Garden Classroom has delivered over 15,000 two hour outside-the-classroom learning experiences for local primary and secondary school children in Islington and Hackney. TGC now offers topics across the whole curriculum including science, food growing, literacy, numeracy, history, and drama operating from 6 sites with King Henry's Walk Garden as its main base.

A review of feedback from users rates TGC's service as 92% "very good" to "excellent" which is great news and shows that working closely with our local communities and stakeholders leads to delivering a service that is highly regarded.

Looking ahead to 2014 we're focusing on our next project which is to deliver a third World Book Day programme to KS1 pupils and we are pleased to be part of Isling-



ton's Word Festival for the first time in the spring. Samuel Rhodes pupils continue their course on 'Land Maintenance & Plant Care' on Fridays. As reported at KHWG committee meetings we are busy beaver away trying to secure funding to continue TGC's pioneering service for the next few years.

Sadly, Edel Fingleton leaves The Garden Classroom, moving on to Thames 21 in Lee Valley to a full-time role. Edel will be sorely missed as she has been a fantastic team player having co-ordinated the main education programme this year. She has been a huge asset to the organisation. We wish Edel well with her new post and look forward to working with her again in the future.

TGC will be launching a new video on vimeo and youtube in forthcoming weeks, following on from the film recently released 'Project Wild Thing'. Watch this space!

Grab a taste here: <http://vimeo.com/user14388890/review/80366950/640a60034a>

To find out more about goings on at TGC, have a look at TGC's Annual Report.



TOM HARRISON

A combination of bossy-child syndrome and distracted parents have left me running the family plot over the past year. I inherited impressive herbs and not a few firm opinions about what to grow. The result is a confused, but determined novice gardener; still trying to distinguish his bulbs from his beetroot, but delighted and excited when anything grows. I've been particularly grateful to the many more experienced folk who've taken the time to give me much needed advice for growing and, most importantly, cooking.

Only since I returned from university have I really become aware of the garden as a place to enjoy. I feel relaxed there, probably because I can't rush my food - having to wait months for things to grow puts a meal into perspective, and really slows the world down for me.

But there are times when rushing about is good too, and apple pressing is one of them. Helping out with the various festivities is a highlight for me, especially when I can swap any apple juice for the best pizza in town. Meeting so many more neighbours is an added extra, of course.

It's fantastic then to be able to continue helping out as newsletter editor, which I hope slightly makes up for not always been around for the more regular Saturday work sessions. Having just finished a degree learning about sustainability, it's an opportunity for me to start my quest to change the global food system, one community garden at a time. (As the old adage goes, think global act local.) But of course it's not just about local food, and I like to imagine that in time the King Henry's Walk community might branch out, so that as well as making incredible pizza and apple juice, we start to see local renewable energy and local currency even. I look forward to getting to know more neighbours, and particularly to sharing more produce and ideas.

Finally – a call to anyone who would like to contribute to the newsletter. Maybe you have a gardening tip or recipe you would like to share with us? Email khwg@khwgarden.org.uk or post suggestions through the letterbox. Thank you.