

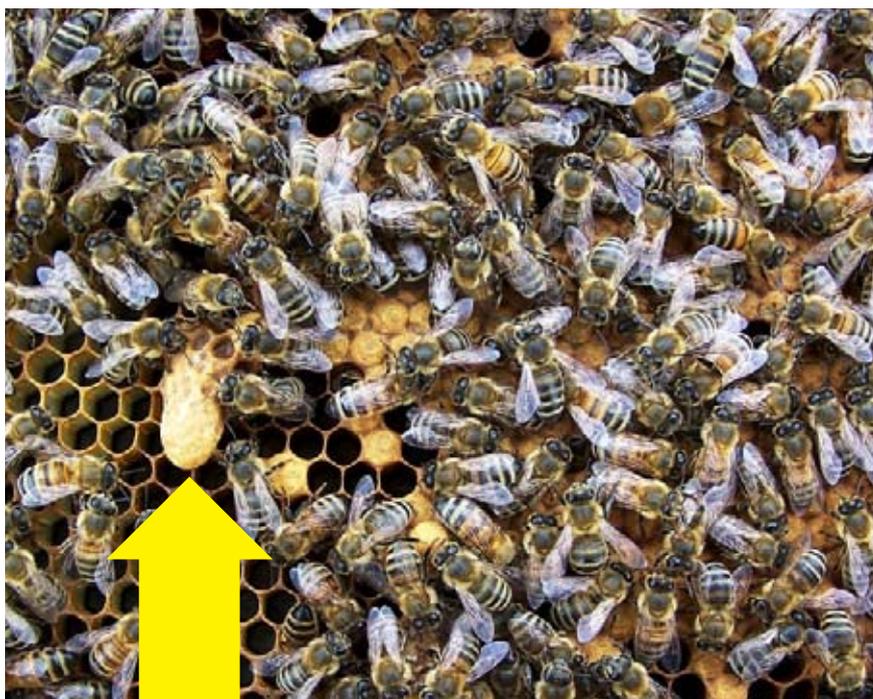
Welcome... to the eighth edition of the King Henry's Walk Garden Newsletter



BEE UPDATE

By Amanda Hall

The bees have issued several swarms this month. We were quite surprised by the first one in May as Andy, Richard, Louw and myself had checked the hive only the night before. What we had failed to spot were two ENORMOUS queen cells the size of fingers on one of the frames. These are a sure sign that the old queen is preparing to leave the hive to start a new colony elsewhere. For our convenience we tend to check the hives in the early evening, the trouble being this is when the bees are back after a long day searching for pollen and nectar and the cells are more difficult to spot when there are several thousand bees trying to hide them.



This is an example of a queen cell, the egg will start life as a normal worker, but it will either be laid or moved by workers to a prepared larger chamber and pumped full of royal jelly. About 16 days later the

new queen will emerge and prepare to go on her nuptial flight. The old queen will have departed by then though; we found her and about 10,000 bees in a nearby ash tree and Ian deftly trapped them into a card-

board box before putting them into a brand new hive. There have been three swarms in total this month, but aided by the warm weather Ian is hopeful we will be able to harvest our first honey soon.

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Work will begin shortly on construction of our new storage shed in the compost corner. This should provide us with enough space to store the tables, chairs and other equipment needed to run the events and other activities at the garden. It will also mean that the greenhouse can revert to the use it was intended for, i.e. growing plants! Thanks to plothead Shaun Maclean for helping us with this project.

KHWG on Facebook

We now have nearly 40 people "liking" King Henry's Walk Garden on Facebook and contributions to the KHWG page are starting to come in. If you're on Facebook and haven't visited KHWG page yet, have a look and leave a comment. We'd like to make the page another valuable way to communicate with members and the outside world.

New email database

We are currently working to create a new email database to make our communications with you more efficient. This will be set up over the next couple of weeks.

SHUT THE GATE!

Several people have reported the gate left open. Please make sure you check it before you leave by pulling it closed until it catches. Thank you.

MEET
THE
PLOT
MATES

HELEN AINSWORTH & SHERRY MORRIS

I was really looking forward to interviewing Helen Ainsworth. Not only did Helen complete a degree in agriculture, but she works for DEFRA, so I was sure to get some fantastic insider growing tips. I was a little surprised when she explained that after attending her first workshop at KHWG on how to play your plot, she was completely intimidated at the prospect of managing her small space. It suddenly all seemed so complicated. Helen mused, 'Growing up, my mom had a huge vegetable patch and she never made it look difficult. I rang her up in a panic asking, 'Mom, what's crop rotation?' Her advice to me was: 'Just bung something in and see what happens.' And that's pretty much the philosophy I use! It's a lot of fun.'

Helen's mom seems to know what she's talking about as there's quite a lot happening in Helen's plot. Her broad beans are tall and healthy looking, she was gifted with peas which have been a great early success and she's happy to trade and supply tarragon to anyone who needs it. She gave away her huge rhubarb plant after discovering she didn't really like it, and has replaced it with a black currant bush. She's hoping for another bumper crop of parsnips and used her own spinach in a delicious spinach pie she served when hosting a party at KHWG to mark a special birthday.

Helen laughs when she talks about the birthday bash. 'When I told people the party was being held at my allotment in a shed, several of them rang to ask if they should wear wellies. I had to explain, 'This is Islington, darling! The 'shed' has a microwave, sink and fridge. No wellies will be required.' She adds that all her guests were very impressed by the garden and had no idea such a pretty, tranquil place existed in the heart of London. The party was a great success with much merriment and Moscow Mules.

Helen tries to work on her plot at least once a week and is a huge fan and regular attendee of the monthly Thursday evening wine club. She encourages me to come along and talks so enthusiastically about it that I'm sold. She also raves about a recent Mexican cooking workshop she took by a woman named Sophia and promises to send me a recipe of sweet corn and courgette salad. It's clear from our chat that Helen really enjoys her plot and spending time at KHWG; we could probably talk all night, but it's Wednesday—Apprentice night—and we both have to get home.



Marinated summer fruit

During a stroll around the garden the other day I noticed the number of currant bushes laden with ripening fruit as well as berries. This is a really delicious simple recipe for any ripe summer fruits, use whatever you have to hand. Serves 4.

INGREDIENTS: 500g or 16oz of mixed summer fruits – for example strawberries, redcurrants, raspberries, blackcurrants, or gooseberries

Hull the strawberries and remove the currants from their stalks, put them in a bowl and douse them with either Cointreau or a little icing sugar with the juice of 4 passion fruit and 2 oranges. Stir very gently and then cover and put in the fridge to macerate for

an hour – don't leave it longer than this or the fruit will go 'woolly'. Garnish with a sprig of mint and serve with natural yoghurt or ice cream (my favourite is home made mascarpone ice cream flavoured with orange).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

DON'T FORGET SUMMER FETE & OPEN GARDEN SQUARES WEEKEND 11TH - 12TH JUNE 2011

This year there will be loads of activities for children - more than we've ever had before - at the **SUMMER FETE on SATURDAY 11TH JUNE**. As well as the popular duck dipping, treasure hunt, slug the slug, human fruit machine, coconut shy and tombola we'll have a new flowerpots game, a pegs challenge, a buzzing bee game and sieving for gemstones. For adults there will be a plant stall, craft stall, freshly made pizza, teas and home made cakes, a raffle - and of course you're welcome to join in with the kids' games too. Farm Direct are offering a huge organic veg box as the prize for the Guess the Weight of the Marrow game. And this year, mindful of growing families and shrinking bank balances, we're offering parents with



Hannah wins on the coconut shy!

under 12s the chance to buy tokens to spend on games - which will give better value than spending cash. Please tell all your friends to come along to the fete which runs 12.00-4.00. As one Mum said last year, "We planned to come for an hour but stayed all afternoon, there was so much to do!"

OPEN GARDEN SQUARES WEEKEND runs for the whole weekend between 10am and 5pm. Both offer free admission and are open to all – do bring your friends and neighbours.

NATIONAL GARDENS SCHEME

Wednesday, 6 July 6-9pm

This is the first year we are entering the National Gardens Scheme, entrance will be £5 and will include a glass of wine. There will be classical music courtesy of Jenny, and canapes courtesy of Nicola, Caroline and Amanda. We are keen to make this a well attended event – all money will go to the NGS nominated charities so bring your friends and anyone you think would be interested in seeing the garden.