



NEWSLETTER

July 2019

Dear Members,

Our summer events began with a very enjoyable outing to Daglingworth House; you can see photos of this on our webpage (go to www.brimpsfieldvillage.org and look for our tab at the top of the page). It was followed by our Garden Party when, despite occasional showers, we were able to admire several lovely gardens in the village before the actual party in the Village Hall. A big thank-you to those members who shared their gardens with us; we appreciated all your hard work! And 'well done' to Jan Evans and Martin Phillips for their 'Trip Down the Allotment' displays; why not have a go yourself next year?

On the subject of 'having a go': it's nearly time for our **Annual Show, this year on Saturday 31st August**. The Schedule should reach you with this newsletter; you will also be able to view it via our webpage (see the link above), or collect a paper copy from the village phone box. We rely on members entering for the Show to be a success, so do look through the Schedule and think what you can enter.

We particularly enjoy having new exhibitors taking part; at least one trophy almost always goes to a first-timer! There's lots of advice and tips in this newsletter and in the Schedule itself, and people are on hand on the day to show you what to do. For those who haven't been to the Show before, I will just remind you (as a number of first-timers over the years have missed this) that it takes place in **Birdlip Village Hall** (behind the school), not Brimpsfield. Whether you're a first-timer or not, **PLEASE READ** all of the Schedule, especially the Rules, hints and tips, and this newsletter, and if there's anything you can't find the answer to, please ask me (my contact details are on the front of the Schedule) and I'll be happy to help. And **READ IT ALL AGAIN** before you bring your exhibits to the Show so that you know what to do!

Whether you enter or not, do remember to come along in the afternoon, from 2.30, to admire the exhibits and to enjoy tea and homemade cakes; prize giving is at 4pm and is followed by a charity auction of any exhibits that exhibitors would like to offer. We know that you will be keen to collect your winnings at the end, but please do wait until proceedings are over before doing that and taking your exhibits away; it's distracting to those taking part in the auction when exhibitors are packing up and going to and fro. We won't keep you late.

If you're going to enter, decide on your classes, fill up an entry form and get it to me by the deadline (and preferably earlier if you can). You can put the form and entry money in the post or through my letterbox, or phone/email the details and pay the entry fees on the day. Apart from the Children's classes, which are open to anyone below the age of 17, you need to be a paid-up member to enter, so if you haven't paid your subscription for the year, please include £3 (£5 for a couple) for that. Before you send your entry form in, make a note for your own use of which classes you have entered, and double-check that you have ticked the correct boxes. Our policy is not to accept new entries, or changes to existing ones, on the day of the Show; I am often lenient about this, but frankly it involves extra paperwork that I can do without on what is already a busy day and I reserve the right to refuse you. (It doesn't matter if you enter a class and subsequently decide you don't have an exhibit for it; we get several such entries every year, including some of mine!) I suggest you tick off the relevant classes in your copy of the Schedule, and bring it to the Show on the day so that you can quickly and easily

match up your exhibits with the correct class numbers (your exhibitor's cards will only have the class numbers on them), although copies of the Schedule will be available if you forget.

Make a note also of what you need to bring to the Show, for example how many of each type of fruit, vegetables or flowers, and whether you will need vases or plates ('a plate of ...' means exactly that, and you have to provide the plate). You will be able to get water from the hall kitchen, but you have to bring everything else yourself.

On the day, Birdlip Village Hall will be open from 8.30am for the staging of exhibits; you must have completed this and be out of the hall by 10.30am, when judging begins. I and the stewards will be available to guide you if you're not sure what to do, although exhibitors or their representatives should actually stage the exhibit themselves.

Here are some **tips** for specific classes. In **Section A**, it's fine for the contents in your 'tray of vegetable' classes to spill over the sides of the tray if they're too big to sit within it; arrange the vegetables so that they are all visible. For the best-tasting tomato class and the herbs class, place a slip of paper with the tomato variety name/names of the herbs alongside your exhibit; in the case of the tomatoes, this is so that other gardeners can see which varieties taste best (put the tomato on a plate).

Flower arrangements: the dimensions given for each class are the absolute maximum size; your arrangement MUST NOT be larger than this nor substantially smaller; this includes the size of the container. Only fresh plant material may be used – no dried flowers, ribbons, baubles etc, - except in class 24 (the 'exhibit' class), where you can also use props alongside the arrangement (within the maximum dimensions). In class 22, 'fruit' includes berries. And just to be clear, it is fine to use bought flowers (most people do), although obviously it is cheaper if you can use at least some of your own!

For **Section C**, make sure you've read the notes and tips in the Schedule about buds on roses; you must have the exact number of stems and blooms – no more and no fewer, or you will be disqualified. Late August isn't a good time for roses; keep yours deadheaded for the best chance of having flowers on the day, and remember that, if your roses peak early, you can put them, vase, water and all, in the fridge for a few days (they do it for Chelsea ...). You can persuade a partly-opened rose to open fully by cupping the bloom in your hand and blowing gently into the centre of the flower. Remember to bring a slip of paper with the variety name on it for class 25 (don't know the variety? - make it up).

As with the flower arrangements, the **classes in Section D** are not a test of your gardening skills; you may use bought fruit etc if you like. Check that contents of jars have not shrunk, that there is no mould, and that all traces of old labels, sticky patches or clouding have been cleaned off the jars (use white spirit or WD40). **Do your baking the day before the Show** (except for the gingerbread, which is best made a few days ahead); warm baking in a hot hall is not good for hygiene, and cutting into it while warm damages the texture and makes it difficult to judge. Bread, cakes and the like should be presented on a plate, whether the Schedule specifies this or not, and the quiche should be removed from its tin so that the pastry base can be judged. The best way to get both halves of your Victoria sponge the same size is to use two identical tins and, before baking, to check that they and their contents weigh the same. Gentlemen: for hygiene reasons, our judge asks that we keep your savoury tartlets cool until they can be judged; we will try to provide cool bags/freezer blocks for you to put your exhibit in, but if you have any of your own, please do bring them along and we will move them in and out as necessary.

Crafters: don't forget to provide a slip of paper stating how much of the exhibit is your own work, except where this is obvious. There's nothing at all wrong with using professional design, mounting or finishing services, not with decorating a bought item, but the judges would like to give credit to those who do the design or finishing for themselves or make the decorated item.

After the Show we hope to see you at our next event, our Coffee Morning on **Saturday 5th October** at 10.30 for 11am; the talk will be about the work of the Royal Agricultural University in Cirencester, and we hope to learn more about recent initiatives such as its vineyard!

Good luck and happy exhibiting!
Frances Ellery