

WAGS News

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held at **Centre 70** on **Friday 12 April 2013** at **7.30pm**

Agenda

- 1 Apologies
- 2 President's opening remarks
- 3 Minutes of previous AGM
- 4 Chairman's report
- 5 Treasurer's report
- 6 Trading Store report
- 7 a Membership fee 2014
- b Band concert 2014
- c Autumn show 2014
- 8 Election of Committee Members
- 9 Any other business – **to be notified to the secretary in writing at least 14 days before the AGM**

To be followed by a buffet @ £4.00 per head. **Buffet to be booked by 6 April** via the Store or wagsnews@gmail.com



The **2013 subscription rate** is £4.00 per household – valid from January 2013. To **renew** your subscription, please complete the form on the reverse (p. 7) and hand it in to the Store. Please include an **email** if you have one, especially if you live outside Wallingford. As well as the newsletter in electronic format (and colour, where available), you will receive other occasional news. New members are welcome to join at any time.



Next issue: July 2013

Deadline for copy: 1 June 2013

Copies available in store: 30 June 2013

Please send contributions to Frances at wagsnews@gmail.com

Printed by Albry Printing, Wallingford



WAGS News

April 2013



Wallingford Allotments and Gardens Society
Affiliated Member of the Royal Horticultural Society No. 10572234

News online at: wallingfordags.blogspot.co.uk



WAGS Plant Sale ~ Saturday 11th May

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Trading Store at Centre 70 **open to members only**
Every Saturday and first Sunday in the month: 10:00 – 12:00
(except August)

Annual subscription £4.00 (per household)

The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Society.

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WAGS Committee 2012/13

President	Peter Atkins (ex officio)
Chairman	Colin Timmins
Treasurer	Richard Guppy
Secretary	Sam Timmins
Store Manager	Colin Timmins
<i>Asst Store Manager</i>	<i>Vacant</i>
Show Secretary	Sandra Halstead
Asst Show Sec.	Toni Littledale
Newsletter Editor & Membership	Frances Watkins wagsnews@gmail.com
Trips Organiser	<i>Vacant</i>
Committee*:	
George Small	Ivy Small
Joyce Stickley	Bernard Thorrington

* *there are vacancies on the Committee*—please contact any of us if you have an hour or so a month to spare and could help us run WAGS. No expertise required!

Feeding the inner gardener

If you would like to join us after the AGM for the buffet and a glass of wine (cost £4), please confirm by 12pm on **6 April**, in the Store or wagsnews@gmail.com

WAGS 2013 Diary

Friday 12 April	Annual General Meeting (see page 12)
Saturday 11 May	Plant Sale (see page 8)
Sunday 11 August	Band Concert
Saturday 14 September	Autumn Show

Visit wallingfordags.blogspot.co.uk for up-to-date news, or contact wagsnews@gmail.com to receive this Newsletter in PDF format, as well as occasional eNews. This is also the email address to write to if you have opted to receive this newsletter by email, but are still having a hard copy delivered – there may be a problem with your email address.

WAGS News

Discounts

Discounts are currently available at the following businesses (if you ask first), on the production of your **CURRENT** WAGS Membership Card, which must be shown before the transaction is started:

- Goring Hardware**, Red Cross Road, Goring – 10% on gardening products
- Norman Cox & Partners**, Scotts Common, Checkendon – 5%
Most items, but check at cash desk – NOT with any other offers
- Root 1**, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell – 10% *Mondays and Tuesdays only*
Shrubs, herbaceous plants, pot plants – NOT with any other offers
- Toad Hall**, Marlow Road (Fawley Court), Henley (Mon–Fri) – 5%
Most items except fencing and machinery – NOT with any other offers
- Wears Nursery**, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell – 10%
Shrubs, plants, trees, alpines, composts, bark and fertilisers
- Woodcote Garden Centre**, Reading Road, Woodcote – 10% on plants
- Yarnton Nurseries**, Sandy Lane, Yarnton, Kidlington – 10%
excluding items already discounted, purchases in restaurant or franchises

[List subject to revision]

WALLINGFORD ALLOTMENTS & GARDENS SOCIETY

Membership Application / Renewal 2013

Please complete – **print clearly** – and hand in to the Store.
Membership fee: **£4.00** (per household)

Name:

Address*

.....

.....

Postcode Tel no.:

I would like to receive the Newsletter by email

Email [please print clearly!].

* If you live outside Wallingford and cannot receive the Newsletter by email, please collect your copies from the WAGS Store or provide a c/o address.

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Store News

While most people have placed their orders, it's not too late to bring your order in to the Store – there's **30% discount** on **seeds** and **10% discount** on **plants** ordered from *Dobies Catalogues*.

Most seed potatoes have now been sold; we have a few bags left so do come and see what's in Store - it's not too late!

As usual, we are also be selling onion (Sturon and Stuttgarter) and various shallot sets.

The WAGS Store stocks a variety of composts, fertilizers (by the kg), liquid fertilizers and tomato feeds, not to mention seed trays, string, labels, etc. at members' prices. We tend to stock up on those core items we know members need and value, but if there is something you need or you have an idea for something we should stock, please tell us.

We always welcome additional help – either on Saturday mornings – or maybe you are interested in helping to run the store on a more regular basis – please contact me at the Store or come along to the AGM.

Advance notice: the Store will be CLOSED on 3, 4, 10, 17, 24 and 31 August 2013

Colin Timmins Store Manager

St George's Day Celebrations

WAGS hopes to be at the St George's Day Celebrations on Saturday 20th April, to increase awareness of the society and the benefits of membership. Do stop by to say hello!

If you introduce a friend on the day, who joins WAGS, we will thank you with a free packet of seeds (until we run out!). We will also have some beautiful *Primula auricula* plants (photo) for sale, looking at their best in April/May.



WAGS News

Chairman's Piece

It's been a cold start to the year, but the spring flowers are here at last. 2012 was great for the flowers, they loved the rain, but much harder on some of our veg. So let's hope 2013 is good for our vegetables too!

The society has a number of events this year which I hope you will support and enjoy. They are a great opportunity to meet up with like-minded people, ask questions, share ideas and discuss the challenges we all face combating bugs, weather and 'never enough time to..!' The first event is the AGM on April 12th, where we want to hear your ideas for the society.

As you all know, WAGS provides catering at its events during the year. We are looking to find a few people willing to give just an hour or two a year to support your society. So if you can help with shopping, food preparation, serving or clearing up please do contact our Secretary Samantha at vauxhall52@sky.com.

Members who go on our trips have always enjoyed them and they are very good value. We are looking to visit RHS Wisley in the Spring if there is sufficient interest, so please sign up in store if you think you would like to go. If you can help as trip organiser, please contact me in the store.

Look forward to seeing you on the 12th.

Happy Gardening!

Colin Timmins

WAGS News

The September Show

The show this year is on Saturday 14th September.

To give you all time to take those beautiful photos, get creative and practice your cooking skills, here are the titles for Art, Photography and Crafts, together with the 2013 Children's classes.

Section F: Specialities - Open to all

We are removing the bread class this year to make room for two new classes

- A round of shortbread (copy of recipe to be included)
- 6 decorated cupcakes, themed to welcome a Royal baby

Section I: Art & Craft - Open to all

- Art entitled "Fruits of the Earth" (Any media painting, i.e. oil, water colour, pencil drawing, pen & ink etc. or mixed media)
- A hand made item not exceeding 60 cm x 60cm (24" x 24"); no height restriction.

Section J - Photography - Open to all

Colour Print entitled "Blooms"
Colour Print entitled "Fruits of my labour"
Colour Print entitled "It made me laugh"
Colour Print entitled "Contrast"
Colour Print entitled "Outdoors"

Maximum size of print 18 cm x 13 cm (7" x 5"), un-framed, un-mounted.

Section K - Children

Our judges have chosen a *recycle* theme this year, very appropriate in the current economic climate!

Children aged 5 to 8 years (i.e. have had their 5th Birthday but not their 9th on the day of the show)

- 3 biscuits decorated with recycle theme (biscuits can be shop bought)
- An article of clothing for a doll or teddy made from recycled material
- A collage of a fruit garden, made using recycled materials (max A4)

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If you are coming, please don't forget to think of WAGS and sow a few extra seeds and bring the seedlings to the sale.

Bring your surplus plants to the Store on the evening of Friday 10th May (between 6 and 7 pm) or before the sale on Saturday morning. Please label your plants clearly for the benefit of buyers!

If you have ½ hour or more to spare on the Saturday morning to help, we would welcome you with open arms and a biscuit!

Look forward to seeing you.

P.S. If you buy, please remember to return the trays/pots so we have something to grow next year's plants in.



Trip to Wisley in 2013?

Since WAGS is affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society, we can arrange to visit the RHS gardens at Wisley for relatively little cost, entry being free once a year. So many of you enjoyed the trip in the Autumn last year, that we thought of running another trip in spring, to see a different aspect of the great gardens there. In April, Cherry blossom, daffodils & other spring bulbs, magnolias and camilias, spring rock garden plants like pulsatilla, dog's tooth violet, primula and epimediums should be in bloom.

So far, only a handful of people have signed the list in the Store - its' on the back of the till - not yet enough for a coach load. If you are interested in going to RHS Wisley again, please come and let us know, and perhaps you could indicate preferred date(s) too. Ideally, we need someone to help coordinate this, though the Committee will help with the booking and coach hire, if needed. Let us know if you are interested in doing this.

Time is running out - please get in touch with the committee if you are interested in helping!

WAGS News

Spring Plant Sale

WAGS Spring Plant Sale will be held at the Store on Saturday 11th May 2013. Sale starts at 9am. Proceeds of the plant sale are used to help run WAGS and cover some of the costs of the Autumn Show.

There will be a good display of beautiful annuals and young vegetable plants full of potential. We will also have a good range of perennials for masses of summer colour, all kindly grown by members of WAGS.

Annuals will include:

- **Geranium** (Pelargoniums) in a choice of 6 colours: Deep rose, salmon, orange, white, pink and red
- **Petunia** - Red, Blue, Cerise, Purple and White (frost hardy!)



- **Verbena** - masses of deep red, pink and white flowers
- **Lobelia** (trailing) - Mixture of mid blue, light blue, white, carmine, purple, mauve and lilac



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- The Recycle Monster - A vegetable decorated with recycled materials

Children aged 9 to 12 years (i.e. have had their 9th Birthday but not their 13th on the day of the show)

- 4 cup cakes, decorated with a recycle theme
- Upcycling! (Any old article of clothing that has been reinvigorated by dying, sewing, altering)
- A seed tray garden of an allotment, using recycled materials (max 25x40cm)
- Landscape collage using recycled material (max A4)

DAHLIAS

Finally, our judge has made a change to many of the Dahlia classes; they are now 3 blooms of one CLASSIFICATION (e.g. small cactus) but can be **one or more** CULTIVARS. This will make it easier to find 3 good blooms within a classification.

The complete Schedule comes out in July and will detail the new titles for Floral Art.

If you would like any advice on showing, or have any questions about the schedule, please do give me a call or email.

I look forward to seeing you on Show Day!

Sandra Halstead
Show Secretary



Tables for Hire

WAGS now owns 10 trestle tables, which are available for hire at £5 per table, or £30 for all 10. Each table is 6 ft by 2 ft (183 × 61 cm) and folds in half to 3 × 2 ft.

Please contact George Small for further details:
georgesmall68@yahoo.co.uk

RHS Advice for Spring

As we are a RHS affiliated society, WAGS members can take advantage of the wealth of information available from them (ask Sandra for details). The RHS web site (<http://www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/Grow-Your-Own/Allotments>) is also a mine of information. Whether you're growing in allotments, gardens or raised beds, all the practical knowhow you need from RHS experts is at hand to help you grow your tastiest fruit and vegetables ever. Here are a few RHS tips to get you started:

Soil preparation

If you didn't get round to it in autumn or winter, it makes sense to prepare as much ground as you can, as early in spring as possible, to get it ready for sowing. Digging in well-rotted organic matter will help improve soil structure and moisture retention, but not all crops (especially roots) like fresh organic matter in the soil.

As soon as the soil is dry enough, rake it level and make a fine tilth (finely prepared soil surface, produced by raking). Sowing can now begin. Unfortunately, the soil is often too cold in early spring for good results; if in doubt, wait until weeds begin to emerge. Once weeds germinate it's fair to assume that the soil is warm enough for veg seeds. Containers for vegetables can also be filled now with fertile compost ready for sowing as soon as the opportunity arises. Move the pots to a protected position to ensure the compost remains as warm as possible. Covering the container with glass or plastic will produce a mini greenhouse or cloche effect that will help speed up seed germination.

Sowing

Outdoors There is a wide range of vegetables and herbs that can all be sown where they are to grow from early spring onwards. Once the first sowings are a few inches tall it's time to make further sowings for continuity. Peas, for example, crop for about two weeks in summer, so to cover the period mid-June to mid-August, sow three to four times in spring for a constant supply. Salads, in particular, can go over quickly, so sow little and often over a long period.

As soon as seedlings are large enough to be handled, start thinning them out in good time to avoid problems with overcrowding. Where it is appropriate and where the seedlings are large enough, try transplanting some of the thinnings to fill in gaps. Discarding surplus seedlings may seem wasteful, but in gardening you sometimes have to be cruel if you want good results.

Tender vegetables such as French beans, runner beans and sweetcorn, can be sown in pots under cover in mid-spring, or sown directly outdoors in late spring/early summer.

Indoors ideally in a heated propagator or on a warm windowsill, in early spring sow aubergines, celeriac, celery, cucumbers, marrows, bell & chilli peppers and tomatoes. Courgettes, cucumbers, French beans, marrows, melons, pumpkins, squash and sweetcorn can be sown in mid- to late spring. These

tender, frost-sensitive crops have large seeds that give rise to big, fast-growing plants, so only sow when the date of the last frost is no more than six weeks away; otherwise, you will have plants spoiling to be planted out while frosts still threaten.

Before plants raised indoors can be planted out, they need a period of hardening off -slowly acclimatising them for 10-14 days to the colder, outside conditions. This can be done in a cold frame, or by moving the plants outside during the day and bringing them back in at night. Brussels sprouts, salads and summer calabrese, cauliflowers and cabbages particularly appreciate early planting out, even if a temporary fleece covering is called for in cold snaps.

Planting

Asparagus crowns and seed potatoes (first earlies towards the end of March/early April; second earlies and maincrop cultivars in April) and Jerusalem artichokes can be planted out. Onion sets, shallots and garlic can also be planted out in early March. Potatoes will need earthing up as they grow to increase yields.

Young plants of tender crops such as aubergines, cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes can be planted into greenhouse borders, pots or growing-bags in late spring. Those for growing outside, however, shouldn't be planted out until the fear of the worst frosts is over (this may be late May or early to mid-June), and after being hardened off first.

Growing

If frost and cold winds are a problem, covering crops with horticultural fleece or cloches can take the edge off the weather. Carrot and cabbage family crops, among others, will appreciate a fleece covering to prevent damage from pests, such as carrot fly and cabbage root fly respectively.

Some crops have specific requirements. Tall plants and climbers will need some sort of support. Peas need to be provided with sticks or mesh to climb up; broad beans often need support from stakes and string; climbing French and runner beans need tall bamboo canes for support.

Feeding

Most vegetable gardens need feeding in spring. Once the main winter rains have stopped, spread a granular general-purpose fertiliser at the manufacturer's recommended rate.

During late spring you may need to top up feeds for hungry crops. Many vegetables will benefit from liquid feeding in late spring, especially all those growing in containers.

Watering

With the soil still moist from winter you seldom need to water in early spring, except seedbeds, seedlings and young seedlings. Occasionally cold, dry winds parch the soil and then watering may be very helpful.

Crops growing in containers, especially growing-bags, will need to be checked regularly as they can dry out at any time of the year. As spring progresses, watering may be needed during extended periods of dry weather.