



# BUTT FOR YOU!

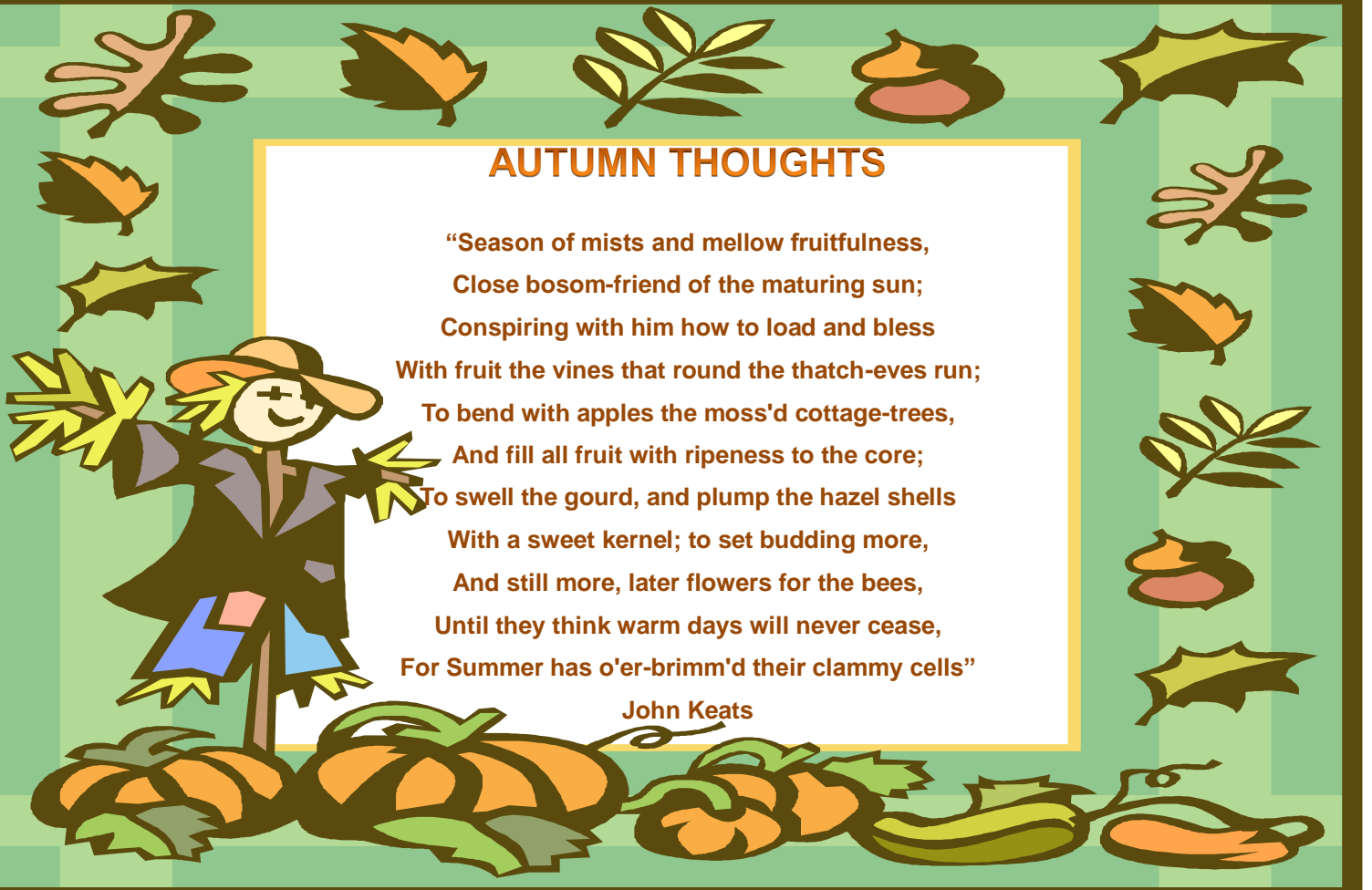
## Butts Piece Newsletter

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### AUTUMN THOUGHTS

“Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells”

John Keats

The summer is almost over and our thoughts will be soon turn to Winter and Christmas. This summer has been a particularly fruitful one and with luck the harvest will continue into late autumn with a further abundance of food to store for the winter, whether it be in its' original form, or chopped cooked and frozen or bottled or made into jam or other preserves. Hopefully there will be plenty to display at this year's Produce Show which is on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

Remember that some crops such as brassicas and onions can be overwintered so it's a good idea to plant a few during the autumn months for lifting in the spring. Savoy cabbages will last well over the winter and some

tender young spring green is always welcome. Garlic can also be planted for harvesting next year.

Can we just remind everyone however, that rotting vegetation can lead to vermin taking up residence so please remember to tidy up this autumn and place unwanted produce into the compost or remove it in the rubbish.



## TIPS FOR AUTUMN GARDENING

- Spring clean the greenhouse before the first frosts
- Dig and manure empty beds
- Sow winter salads under glass
- Plant soft and tree fruit
- Dig up potatoes and store in paper sacks in a frost-free shed
- Pick and store apples
- Start to winter prune fruit
- Wash pots ready for spring planting
- Order seed catalogues for next year

## WINTER SALAD

Good drainage is essential for growing winter salad as the seedlings will freeze if the soil is too wet. Choose a sheltered, sunny position when deciding where to grow your salad as it's important that the seedlings are protected from cold winter winds.



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### Salads to grow in the winter

Lettuce 'Artic King' - this large 'butterhead' lettuce is light green, crunchy and exceptionally hardy. Sow by mid September for best results, or later under glass.

Lettuce 'Valdor' - this dark green lettuce has a tight core of leaves and is very hardy. Sow in September and October for picking 10-12 weeks later.

Texsel Greens - also known as Ethiopian greens, this fast-growing salad plant can be sown until the end of October, or later under glass. The leaves taste similar to spinach and can be used in the same way.

Radicchio 'Treviso Precoce Mesola' - an autumn sowing of these seed will produce deep maroon leaves without any trace of the bitterness often associated with radicchio.

Endive 'CanCan' - a frisee-type of lettuce which is tough enough to survive the winter outside in milder areas or under some protection in cooler climates.

Winter Purslane - hardy, green and tasty, sow the seed of this salad leaf in August and September for salad throughout the winter

'Golden Purslane' - the more glamorous relative of regular winter purslane. The red stems of 'Golden Purslane' look wonderful against the golden leaves and will brighten up a salad bowl.

Salad Burnet - The leaves of this perennial have a cucumber flavour and are good in salads. Harvest frequently for a steady supply of tender leaves.

Corn salad - also known as lamb's lettuce. This salad leaf grows slowly, so plant the seeds as early as possible

Land cress – an excellent substitute for watercress, this plant can be picked around eight weeks after sowing. It's not entirely frost-resistant though, so cover the plants with a cloche or fleecing if the temperature drops.

## COMPOST TOILET

The Committee are proposing to use. The principle of this is that post by the addition of sawdust and We are hoping to raise funds for small community projects of we will need to raise funds.



source a compost toilet for plot-holders waste material is converted into com- the natural action of decomposition. through grants which may be available this type but may fall short in which case

It is felt that the addition of a toilet compost toilet is the obvious environmentally friendly and in keeping with the ethos of allotment gardening.

facility will be welcomed by many and the choice since it requires no plumbing, is environmentally friendly and in keeping with the ethos of allotment gardening.

**Postscript – EHPC have now agreed in principle to the Compost Toilet and will contribute up to a maximum of £500 towards the cost provided the Committee are able to raise the rest of the funds.**

## DOGGY DON'T

The Committee have received a ments. Could we please remind plot- lead within the allotment gardens ed and deposited in the very conven- Wilcher Close gate. Please remember it



complaint about dog-fouling in the allot- holders that dogs must be kept on a and that any fouling should be collect- iently situated receptacle close to the

is a term of your lease that dogs should be kept on a lead.



## JAMMING

Top tips for jam-making:

When making jam, always use fruit that's in peak condition, preferably slightly under-ripe, when the pectin content will be at its highest. Over-ripe or damaged fruit is not ideal - the jam will not set well and is likely to deteriorate rapidly. The amount of sugar you need to make jam depends on the amount of pectin in your chosen fruit, but generally the fruit-to-sugar ratio for traditional jams is 1:1 (ie. 450g/1lb sugar to 450g/1lb fruit). Coarse-grain white granulated sugar is best for jam-making as it ensures a good clear jam, but fine caster sugar can also be used. The coarse grains dissolve more slowly and evenly, giving a better result. Granulated sugar with added pectin is also available, but it shouldn't be necessary to use this. Instead, if using fruit with a low pectin content, such as strawberries, try adding some fruit with a higher pectin content, such as apples, damsons or redcurrants to improve the result. Alternatively, adding a few squeezes of lemon juice to low-pectin fruits will help them set.

The magical temperature in jam making is 104C/220F, also known as the 'setting point'. You can buy a preserving or sugar thermometer to test when jam reaches this point, but it's not essential. To test for setting without a thermometer, put a drop of the jam onto a very cold saucer (you'll need to put the saucer into the fridge or freezer first to ensure it's really cold). After a few seconds, push the jam with your finger. If the jam surface wrinkles then it has reached setting point and is ready. If it's not ready then continue to boil, testing every few minutes.

How to sterilise jam jars: wash in soapy water, rinse well and then place into a cool oven - 130C/250F/Gas ½ - for 15-20 minutes. Alternatively, use a dishwasher to sterilise the jars by timing the drying period so that the jars are still hot when the jam is ready to be bottled. As soon as you've poured the jam into the sterilised jars you should immediately cover the surface of it with wax paper discs. This ensures a good seal and prevents mildew appearing on the surface of the jam.

## RECIPE CORNER

### BLACKBERRY AND APPLE JAM

#### Ingredients

- 500g blackberries
- 500g cooking apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- Juice of 1 small lemon
- 1kg jam sugar

#### METHOD

1. Place the fruit and the lemon juice in a large heavy based pan with about 100ml water and simmer the fruit gently over a medium to low heat for 10-15 minutes, until tender and reduced.
2. Add the sugar to the pan and cook, stirring well until all the sugar has dissolved the bring to the boil and boil rapidly for 5 minutes.
3. If you have a jam thermometer, test for the setting point of the jam. If not use the saucer method. Once setting point has been reached you are ready to bottle the jam.
4. Stir the jam, then ladle into hot sterilised jars and cover jam with wax disc, seal and label.

There is currently 1 vacant plot available if anybody knows someone looking for an allotment at the moment.

#### YOUR CURRENT COMMITTEE:-

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