



Head teacher Eileen Bhavsar enters into the spirit

Harry Potter mania reaches Garden Suburb Junior School

Harry Potter mania reached Garden Suburb Junior School on June 25. There was a superb special Harry Potter assembly featuring Year 5 pupils. Harry Potter activities continued throughout the day in

literacy and numeracy lessons, ending with a book fair. Children and adults came to school dressed as Harry Potter characters. An enjoyable day for everyone.

KATHY BRODBECK

Teachers Karen Cartwright, Vicky Bennett and Jane Clepner play their parts



Summer gardening

It really has been another strange start to my gardening year, once the snow had gone it was warm and wet, ideal weather for bringing things on but has the side effect of making them go over too soon. Gardening is so fickle. My garden was one of the four gardens on the guided tour (Yes, I wanted the garden to be at its best at the end of May). Yet again, the tulips in my tubs were long gone and I already had my pelargoniums in situ. One big difference this year were my roses – they had already started to bloom. The event itself was very successful with over 80 (hopefully) satisfied customers and mercifully no rain (The omens were not good), enjoying four somewhat varied gardens. The event raised money for the North London Hospice and the Gardeners Benevolent Society. I'd like to thank Carol, Jack, Sorrel, Anne and Raymond for their support.

Another 'gardeners' social gathering was held in Wordsworth Walk at the garden of Doc. Hosta. A very pleasant evening, masses of great plants, particularly slug-free hostas along with a varied selection of preserves and all for such a worthy cause – the North London Hospice, for the uninitiated. I was very intrigued to see on the docs. allotment an amazing way of growing potatoes in black sacks! The sack is slowly rolled up when you earth up. Each sack can produce up to 20lbs or more so – one for the self-sufficient among us. I think Monty Don copied this method as he demonstrated it on Gardeners World recently. The big benefit being that the

potatoes are restricted to growing in the sack and not spreading all over the garden.

The Horticultural Society had a wonderful day out in June organised by yours truly. The sun shone and showed the gardens at Bennington Lordship and Great Miunden House, both in Herfordshire, at their best. The delightful gardens were both quite different but with plenty of specimens to keep us gardeners happy for hours.

On a slightly sadder note, I regret that we did not have an Open Garden Sunday in July. My pleas fell on deaf ears. Unfortunately, only one person volunteered their garden – such a shame as it was so good last year.

With regards to my pride and joy. I have been following the advice given by previous lecturers on the feeding and watering of my roses and clematis and it has certainly paid off. My clematis have never looked better, the roses a close second. Just contrast that to the major disaster I've had with my seed cultivation programme. I'm tempted to give up Rudbekia Chokee Sunset (such vibrant autumn colour and such a success last year) as they were decimated totally. This coupled with the five spindly plants of Patrinia Scabiosa, a plant I spotted last year at Great Dixter and for which I had great expectations. It is too soon to tell you whether they will survive let alone prosper!

It's the flower show on Saturday and as I am writing this article we have just had the most amazing downpour of rain – this seems to have put paid to my rose entries so it looks like no cup for me!

I'm sure those of you who have followed the development of my allotment will be pleased to know that I think my broad beans are worthy and I am putting them up against the legendary Veg. Grower. This has not been without trauma. They have been smothered in blackfly but, with swift treatment, it has not unduly harmed my crop. My runner beans and French climbing beans are slowly climbing their wigwams as desired – the Lollo Rossa lettuce looks pretty good too. The onions could be better but I'm told it's early days. Even the carrots are coming on – still, they'll probably get whitefly and then it will be back to Marks for me! My pal and co-allotment holder threw in the trowel so, now I have the whole site to develop...I'll keep you informed.

If August gets hot, don't mow the grass too low and please give pots and containers plenty of water. You would be surprised at how much you need. Keep dead-heading and remove any

old foliage to prevent disease, especially the roses. There should be quite a lot of seeds to collect in September. This is a good and inexpensive way of building up your plant collections. September is also a good time for sowing herbs – a most welcome arrival in winter and early spring.

On the subject of herbs and herb lovers (there are a lot of you out there), don't forget that Jekka McVicar is giving a talk at the Free Church Hall on 28 October – a date for your diary. Tickets will be on sale nearer the time.

I will be ordering my bulbs over the next couple of months (July and August) for delivery October/November, starting to implement my colour schemes for the next year.

There is plenty to do in October, most of it is a general tidy up, cutting back perennials, clearing out annuals, maybe moving a few things that didn't quite work and, hopefully, a last trim on the hedges that we love.

Til next time, good gardening.

DIANE BERGER

“Enjoy the weather”

Summer arrived early this year and not just the British summer but sunshine, warmth and not too much rain. Another 3 months with less than average rainfall have, at last, reversed what seemed to be the trend for the first half of the year to get wetter.

This year, the total precipitation for January to June was just over 10 1/2 ins. This is the second lowest recorded in 24 years. The lowest total for the six months was noted in 1996 when there was under 9 1/2 ins. 1996 turned out to be the driest year since my records began in 1980. So, maybe our lovely summer will continue, however, beware of August as in 1996 it was one of the wettest on record!

Looking at the months in more detail showed that the inch of rain that was April's total, nearly all fell in the last week. With virtually nothing since March 8, this meant over 6 weeks with almost no rain. May's 1 1/2 ins and June's 2 1/4 ins were more evenly distributed. However, for a gardener who dislikes getting out the hose, it never seemed enough. Yet the lawn, which is organic and so full of weeds, is as green as ever and the gooseberries and other soft fruit are as luscious as could be. It is hard to tell what plants need so perhaps it is better just to put out a chair and enjoy the weather.

DIANA IWI

Point, v. to finish or repair the joints of (brickwork, masonry, etc.) with mortar or cement. Sp. in **Hampstead Garden Suburb** - only to be undertaken with tlc and after unbiased advice.

Is there any point in repointing?

Very often the answer is - probably not. Surveyors automatically suggest it, builders love to charge you for it, but the fact is most Suburb houses are built with fine handmade bricks, well laid by craftsmen. The mortar, usually made with lime is there to keep the bricks apart - not to stick them together.

Pointing may be needed on chimney stacks, exposed corners or water damaged walls. Lime mortar should be used.

It is flexible, moves with the house and if it cracks, will seal itself again, looking just right.

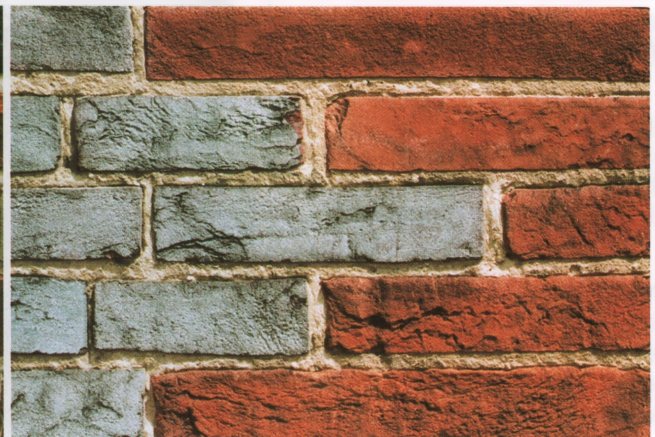
Any alterations to houses on the Suburb must be approved by the Trust and Barnet. Pointing needs Trust consent and we are happy to give impartial advice, free.



(Unpointed wall) Soft lime mortar weathers naturally, doesn't damage the bricks and has an open texture that allows them to dry out after rain.



(Badly pointed wall) Modern cement is stronger and rigid, cannot be removed without damaging the bricks and causes frost damage.



(Unpointed wall) Soft mortar encourages drying out, enhances the beauty of the bricks and makes them less liable to damage when a wet wall freezes.

-HAMPSTEAD - GARDEN - SUBURB - TRUST-

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