

Burley Model Allotments



A potted history of
Burley Model Allotments
and a few of our favourite pot fillers.

Burley Model Allotments

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The site, originally a quarry, was acquired by the Leeds Corporation with major assistance from the Wade's Trust in February 1892. By the 1930's several hundred huts and greenhouses of varying sizes had been erected and endeavours by the Allotments Committee to clean up the site were not successful.

St Michael's Allotments Burley - March 28th 1948



Above is a aerial view of the original pre-war allotments [admittedly taken in 1948 - but nothing had at that point changed]. Proposals to call upon certain tenants to demolish dilapidated greenhouses, etc. in 1938 and 1939 were abandoned on account of the period of emergency and in 1955 the Committee took the decision to clear the site entirely and establish Model Allotments. Notice to quit was served on the old tenants and the site was empty by November 5th 1956.

The site was then bulldozed from end to end and the piles fired [this probably accounts for the amount of melted glass to be found on site]

New roads were constructed and water laid on. The roadways were given rubble foundations from brick, salvaged from the old constructions on site, surfaced with red shale. These have now grassed over giving a very pleasing appearance to our site - the original shale surface can be seen best near the hut.



The lower road in 1962 looking from Plot 90. South toward Summers Hill and North towards the bar

The water to the site comes in from Beechwood Crescent and is distributed by a 3" main across the site with stand pipes to taps at roughly 50 yard intervals. This means that most people are within easy reach of water. We also harvest the run-off water from the sets of lockers - as the soil is neutral to alkaline this is valued by growers of Blueberries and other acid soil loving plants as the tap water is also fairly well to the alkaline side of neutral now!



The upper road in 1960 looking North toward Beechwood Crescent. (Taken from Plan 38639)



Picture from 1980 Leeds City Council Archive

The rear of the hut (formerly the front) showing the garden and newly planted trees.

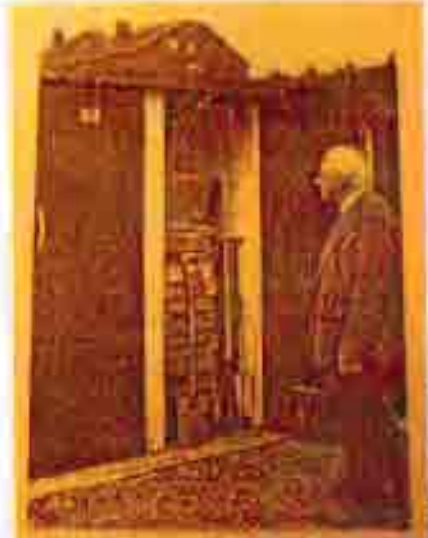
The original topsoil [rich in potash from the fires] was supplemented by imported topsoil and then redistributed across the future plots. Further amenity was added by the construction of five sets of lockers [for the storage of tools] and a hut. The hut has outer walls of Cedar wood [originally polished] and provides us with WC facilities, a meeting room and our store space - now enlarged by the purchase of a container.



Picture from 1980 Leeds City Council Archive

The front of the hut (formerly the rear) showing the 'loading bay'

The concreted area to the rear was originally laid out as a garden and what is now the back of the hut was the front. The raised area at what is now the front was intended as a loading bay and was at the 'rear' of the hut!



There are 100 lockers in total, each measuring 3' by 2' and are rented to the plottolders who have the greatest need.

The site was originally surrounded by a "4 foot unclimbable iron fence" and matching gates which were complemented by a

The lockers in front of Plot 10. The plottolder said 2/6d (25p) for a locker space when this photo was taken in 1960.

Picture from 1960 Leeds City Council Archive

privet hedge. As can be seen from the photographs taken in the late 50's the hedge did little to protect the site from vandalism - but in those days was probably not needed. The current hedge is maintained at a height of around 6 foot with newly raised gates to match. The maintenance of the hedge on the outside is by Leeds City Council and the inside by the plottolder adjoining that section of hedge.



Picture from 1960 Leeds City Council Archive

The main entrance from Lasky Place in 1960 looking towards the hut

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Burley Model Allotments - Spring 1998



Some pictures by Don Mellor

Don was one of the first tenants of the new allotments in 1957 - being allocated Plot 90. He is a life member of the Association and an RHS judge. He often judges our shows and has only recently given up Plot 90a to concentrate on his own garden.



The original greenhouse on Plot 90 (taken in 1962)



Some of Don's favourite lilies



The replacement greenhouse on Plot 90 (taken in the '80s)



The Blue Ribbons award for 'best exhibit in show' given at the first show after the remodeling



A flower arrangement by Don in August 1963 which won him a First Prize



Pictures and artefacts supplied by Don Mellor

Some well-tried Allotment Show winners

Redcurrant Jelly



6lb redcurrants
1lb granulated or preserving sugar to each pint of juice

1. Pick off the fruit into earthenware or glass jars or a Pyrex bowl, cover with a heatproof lid and put into a slow oven (150°C / 300°F / gas mark 2) until the juice has run well.
2. Turn the redcurrants into a jelly bag or muslin and leave over a bowl to drip overnight.
3. Measure the juice and weigh out the correct proportion of sugar (metric just doesn't work for this).
4. Spread the sugar on trays and put into a slow oven to make it as hot as possible without colouring.
5. Heat the juice to boiling point but do not allow it to boil.
6. Draw the pan off the heat and stir in the warmed sugar gradually. Keep stirring until all the sugar has dissolved.
7. Skim if necessary and pour the jelly into warm clean dry jars. Cover and tie down when cold.

Tim's green tomato chutney

2lb green tomatoes
1lb onions, sliced
1lb apples (weighed when peeled and cored) sliced
¾lb sultanas, washed
1¼lb brown sugar
1oz caraway seed
¼ ginger root, skinned and finely chopped
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 clementines, finely chopped

3 green or red peppers, chopped
1½ pints white malt vinegar
1oz mustard seed
1oz salt
4 cloves garlic

Put all ingredients in a preserving pan and simmer slowly for 2-3 hours until thick. Turn into jars and seal.

Shallot Confiture

MAKES ABOUT 1.2KG / 2.5lbs

675g/1.5lb shallots, peeled, root end intact
100g/3.5oz sea salt
1 litre/1.75 pints cider vinegar
450g/1lb sugar
1.5 teaspoons cloves
2 cardamom pods, crushed
1.5 teaspoons caraway seeds
1 long strip of lemon zest
1 cinnamon stick
2-4 dried red chillies, crushed
good pinch of ground chilli



- Day 1: Put the shallots in a non-metallic bowl, sprinkle with sea salt and add enough water to cover, stirring to dissolve the salt. Put a plate on the shallots to submerge them, then leave for a day in a cool place.
- Day 2: Drain and rinse the shallots and dry on paper towels. Pour the vinegar into a pan and stir in the sugar. Place the spices, except the ground chilli, on a square of muslin and tie into a bag. Add to the pan with the ground chilli and heat gently, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Raise the heat and boil fairly hard for 10 minutes. Remove any surface scum with a slotted spoon. Add the shallots and simmer very gently for 15 minutes. Remove from the heat, cover and leave overnight.
- Day 3: Slowly bring the shallots to the boil, then simmer gently for another 15 minutes. Remove from the heat, cover and leave overnight.
- Day 4: Slowly bring the shallots to the boil once more then simmer gently until they are golden brown and translucent. Pack into warm, clean, dry jars, taking care not to trap any air pockets. Cover with vinegar-proof lids and seal. Store in a cool, dark, dry place for at least 2 months before eating.

Chocolate Courgette Cake

30g / 1 oz cocoa powder
3 teaspoons instant coffee granules
100 ml / 3 fl oz hot water
125 g / 4 oz soft brown sugar
250 g / 8 oz self-raising wholemeal flour
125 g / 4 oz self-raising white flour
125 ml / 4 fl oz vegetable oil (e.g. sunflower)
2 eggs
2 medium courgettes, approx 450g / 1 lb, finely grated
100 g / 3 oz plain chocolate, melted

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas mark 4 and line a 20cm / 8in square cake tin with greaseproof paper or baking parchment.
2. Dissolve the cocoa powder and instant coffee in the hot water and allow to cool.
3. Mix the sugar with the flours and stir in the oil and eggs. Add the courgettes and their juice, the chocolate and coffee mixture and the melted chocolate.
4. Turn the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 45 minutes to one hour, or until the top springs back when gently touched.
5. Leave the cake to cool in the tin for five minutes before turning out onto a rack.
6. If a double-chocolate flavour is required, ice the cake with melted white or milk chocolate.



Fruit Liqueurs

Traditional examples are sloe gin, cherry brandy, Cassis (blackcurrant) and bessenjenever (redcurrant).

You need:

a jar: with watertight lid (not a coffee jar, they leak)
Big enough to hold the fruit you have

soft fruit: (e.g. redcurrants, blackcurrants, raspberries, blackberries, damsons, cherries or a mixture)
Enough to fill the jar to about an inch (3cm) from the top

spirits: (e.g. vodka, dutch gin, white rum, brandy - 40% ABV)
nothing too strong-tasting or expensive!

sugar: for sour fruit, particularly sloes, add about a tablespoon of sugar per teacupful of fruit



Wash the fruit (don't wash raspberries). If using stone fruit, prick them with a darning needle or sharp knife, holding them over the jar to catch any drips. Put the fruit in the jar, leaving an air gap at the top. Add the sugar, if using. Pour over your chosen spirits, until the fruit is just covered. Seal the jar, and shake it well.

Place the jar out of direct sunlight but somewhere you will notice it. Every day, give it a good shake. The liqueur is ready when the fruit has given up all its colour to the spirits. This may take up to three months. Pour off the liqueur through a nylon sieve. Add sugar to taste, then place it in a bottle with a cork or screw top. Enjoy!

For cherries you can also do 'cherries in brandy' - for this use 36% ABV brandy (Netto's cheapest will do nicely) and don't damage the cherries. Cherries in large jar to the brim, 2 tablespoons of sugar to a 70cl bottle of brandy, add both and swirl round gently to dissolve the sugar. Leave until Christmas... Gently drain cherries and bottle the brandy. Eat the cherries with ice cream. Drink the brandy [now about 18% ABV] as an after meal warmer. Or just spoon the cherries and some brandy over stale chocolate log, add some squirty cream and think Black Forest!

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Previous from 1960 Leeds City Council (left)

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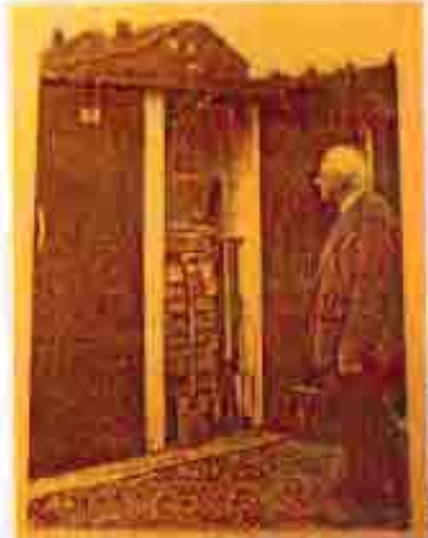
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To find out about the availability of plots on the site please contact the Membership Secretary at the address below. Alternatively, please download the application form available on our website.....

www.burley-model-allotments.org.uk

The allotments are located in LS4 between St. Michael's Lane and Lumley Road, Beechwood Crescent and Stanmore Hill.

Our annual Summer show



Burley Model Allotments Association

The Cardigan Centre,
145-149 Cardigan Road,
Leeds, LS6 1LJ

