



'The Potting Shed'

August 2014

Issue No.25

Come and join us on the
13th September from
10.00am - 4.00pm
For our Heritage open
day

Shrubs, perennials and
alpines will be on sale.

There will be
refreshments and our
volunteers will be on
hand to tell you the
nursery history

POPPLETON COMMUNITY RAILWAY NURSERY

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Charity Number 1148341

Company Registration number
06211163

Our next open day is on
4th October from
10.00am – 3.00pm.

Needs list

Thanks to those people who regularly bring us plant pots. We have plenty for the time being, so please don't bring us anymore for now. We would be grateful for any garden plants, shrubs, perennials that you no longer want. We can split them and grow them on for the nursery sales. Also we need carrier bags and candle ends, garden tools, woodworking and engineering tools. Small items can be put in the crate over the fence at the nursery if we are closed. Or contact us on email or phone.

Membership

If you would like to become a member please forward your subscriptions to the membership secretary. A form can be downloaded from our website: subscriptions are: £10 Corporate £5 full membership £2 for students unwaged and over 60's To cope with the postage costs if you cannot supply an email address the minimum subs rate will be £5. For people who do not have an email address and can collect newsletters from the nursery the £2 rate will continue.

Send forms to: Membership Secretary at the Nursery address

Silver Birch branches

I wonder if any member has any silver birch branches about the thickness of an arm. We are looking ahead to Christmas and need some silver birch logs to cut up and decorate. Contact the nursery if you can help.

Situations Vacant

The nursery urgently needs to find a replacement Membership Secretary. If you have office and/or computer skills and can spare an hour or two a week, then this could suit you. For more details, please get in touch asap!

Graham Collett

Company Secretary

Going Wild!

Anybody who has spent time at the nursery through late spring and early summer can't have failed to notice the abundance of wildlife enjoying the current warm spell. It has been a very productive year for the birds with at least one family of Robins





and one family of Wrens fledging from the hedgerow next to the engine shed,



a family of Coal Tits have also successfully nested in the bird box in the Pine Tree and have been very busy feeding close to the nest for the past few weeks.



Chaffinches, Greenfinches, Goldfinches, Goldcrests and Dunnock have also been frequent visitors to garden area of the nursery and a family of Pheasants have made one or two of us jump as they sprung out from the field edge. One of the reasons for the abundance of birds is the great variety of insects and invertebrates, some of which are gardener's friends and others are not so much, but, as a nature lover it is great to see them all

providing a good natural balance. Without the "pests" we would quickly lose the birds and predators that feed on them and without the pollinators we would have no plants in the first place. Over the past few weeks there has been an amazing number of Small Tortoiseshell Butterflies around the plant sale area and along the field edge, these little beauties have had a hard time over the past few years but have really bounced back this year. We have had a vast array of pollinating Bees and flies, Bumblebees of all types, Honeybees and Hoverflies, there is also a harmless Leafcutter Bee nesting in the rotten wood on one of the cold frames and we had a visit from a very large Southern Hawker Dragonfly one Thursday evening. Unfortunately the pair of Kestrels that were present through most of the winter in the trees at the end of the site and often seen hovering over the railway line don't seem to have hung around for the spring but I have made a nestbox to encourage them to stay next year, should they return, as they are a great natural alternative to mousetraps. Anyone who is interested in finding out more about the creatures they see around the site or anyone with ideas for encouraging

wildlife and giving nature a home, please feel free to get in touch with Tim Brook who will hopefully be able to provide information and coordinate any ideas. Photos by Tim Brook – More can always be seen on the Nursery's Flickr page

<https://www.flickr.com/groups/poppletonrailwaynursery>

Tim Brook

Manure

If anyone has any local contacts we really need a free load of manure delivered to the nursery to improve the soil condition in our garden. Please let us know by email if you know anyone who can help

PCRN Wildlife

Working at the nursery, one is often surprised, and delighted, by the wildlife one finds. A few weeks ago, looking round plants in the shop area, I found some spectacular caterpillars chomping



away at the verbascum plants. They were 6cm long and black and white and yellow. Some wild mullein plants in the cold frame area were also being eaten – not surprisingly as verbascum is a mullein. We found that these



were the caterpillars of the mullein moth, which also likes buddleia. In the same area, a Garden Tiger moth was found. It must have just emerged from its chrysalis as it was pristine upper wings marked like a giraffe, very dark brown and white, under wings wings with black spots. Said to be common but I've never seen one before.



This week another volunteer discovered, to his cost as he got stung,, a wasp nest in a compost heap, and on the same day a field mouse nest was uncovered with three babies whose mother quickly removed them to safety. One thing we don't like is the large brown foreign slugs, which are quickly liquidated! What would you find if you came to work here?

Gill Duxbury

Security

Following a review of site security, the management committee are making arrangements for a new key cupboard to be located out of the main office. This will contain all the site keys so that volunteers can access all the usual areas. The

review highlighted that a better system was required for computer, safe and file security.

NHS partnership with Poppleton

It has unfortunately been necessary to make changes to this partnership, which means that the nursery has lost many hours of volunteer help. The link with these the mental health services is still in place but the time that mental health staff are onsite has been reduced. There is one group session on Friday morning and two sessions of individual work (Monday and Friday afternoons). We are still very much in a period of change and the committee are working to ensure the continuity of opening times is maintained and hopefully improved. We hope that some more of our current 111 members will feel able to spend a bit of time onsite lending a hand with the maintenance, and growing.

Jobs

We need people to volunteer to help the nursery with the numerous repair and maintenance jobs onsite. Woodworking skills, DIY skills, engineer skills, practical building skills are desperately required. Also if anyone would be interested in helping run our craft area please do contact us

Heritage Trail Project

A guide and map produced by the York University students team is being developed so that it can be finalised and printed (subject to the Management Committee's approval) in time for the Heritage Weekend. We are most grateful to the student team for their efforts.

Grants Update

I am pleased to report that we have been successful in our application to the City of York Council Rural West Ward who have kindly provided us with a grant of £500 towards a pavement stand and flag – both of which will help to let people know where we are and when we are open. We have also been successful in obtaining a £500 grant from the York Vikings Rotary Club. This will be put into our new van fund (see below). We are most grateful to both organisations for their generous help.

Open Days Posters and Leaflets

A new supply of the popular colour leaflet about the nursery is now available. Copies of the Heritage Open Day poster (13 September) will be available from the nursery on 27 August. Please help us by taking a poster to display or leaflets to hand out in your local area if you can. If you are a Poppleton Resident, please look out for our advertisement (courtesy of Burns Solicitors) giving details of the next two

Poppleton Community Railway Nursery



open days, in the next Centrepiece.

Hazel Collett Publicity Officer

Your Help is Needed for these Important Projects

We urgently need to obtain a replacement van to continue our sales at other locations. This is now critical, as we are about to lose the use of the current van. We are currently raising funds to complete the extension of our narrow gauge railway. To this end we have already allocated the proceeds from our St Crux sales day towards this project. We are also looking to renovate our wooden greenhouse (G7,8 and 9) to make it into a multi-purpose space. This will be very expensive to restore/rebuild and is becoming urgent to prevent further deterioration. If you can help, please offer whatever you can afford - even the smallest donations are most welcome. The nursery is now able to accept online donations. To make this possible, we have recently joined Localgiving.com, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to small local UK charities & community groups. The nursery has its own page at: <http://localgiving.com/charity/poppletonrailwaynursery>

Alternatively, you can send a cheque to the nursery or call in and see one of the officers. Many thanks in advance for your help.

Lloyds banking group and PTEG

We have been very fortunate to have had two organisations

carrying out an enormous amount of work at the nursery. The first group was a team of 23 very enthusiastic IT workers from Lloyds banking group who arrived at 9.30am on Thursday 24th July from Pudsey! It was a very hot and sunny day and they started off with bacon sandwiches to build up their strength for the tasks ahead. They were an amazing group and willing to do whatever we asked of them and were really pleasant to have around. They were given a list of jobs to choose from and divided the tasks between them according to personal preference and how energetic they felt! They divided themselves up into 5 groups and set to work.



By the end of the day one group had dug out an area for the new point for the narrow gauge railway and an area outside S9 for the installation of a concrete loading apron. A second group painted S7 with creocote and removed the paint from the engine shed ready for painting.



A third group took on the garden area and removed all of the dead poppies and weeds so that it was ready for planting. Group four weeded the poly tunnel area and set aside any plants that were in poor condition so that we could get rid of them. The fifth group tidied up, top dressed and potted on plants along the side of G11 and G10. A week later on Friday 1st August another group enthusiastic group of 5 people from PTEG arrived on site and carried on with a few more jobs from our very lengthy list! The three men in the group sieved and weeded a large pile of gravel which will eventually be used in a plant standing area and in the greenhouses and then set about removing broken wood from one of the damaged cold frames ready for repair. The two ladies in the group continued the work in the garden by weeding the path and patio area. We are very grateful to these two groups for choosing us for their community challenge work, by the end of the two days they had completed as much work in one as it would have taken us a couple of months to finish: for which we are extremely thankful!