



The Potting Shed

December 2009 - Issue No. 4

Poppleton Community Railway Nursery

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We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.poppletonrailwaynursery.co.uk

Special events for 2010:

Plant Sales

The dates for the Plant Sales at Poppleton Nursery are as follows:

(Opening and closing times will vary due to the different times of the year).

Spring

Saturday 27th March 2010
Opening - 10.00 until 15.00

Early Summer

Saturday 8th May 2010
Opening 10.00 until 16.00

Summer Sale

Saturday 3rd July 2010
Opening 10.00 until 16.00

Autumn

Saturday 9th October 2010
Opening 10.00 until 16.00

Christmas

Saturday 11th December 2010
Opening 10.00 to 15.00



Our July 2009 Nursery Plant Sale
Quality Plants at low cost

PLANT SALE

Come and join us on the
12th December 2009.

On sale will be:

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS
HOLLY WREATHS, SHRUBS
HYACINTHS, CARDS, CANDELS
& TERRA COTTA POTS

Refreshments include:

~ Tea ~ Coffee ~
~ Christmas Fruit Punch ~
~ Mince Pies ~

A Happy Christmas from all at the Poppleton Railway Nursery

Welcome to our latest publication 'Issue 4' of The Potting Shed
December 2009

A Good Report - by Paul Botting

Since our last issue of the potting shed we are very pleased that a number of people have filled positions that will help the nursery immensely.

- 1) A steady flow of people have become volunteers and are now helping out with jobs at the nursery.
- 2) Welcome to David Thompson who has taken on the job of membership secretary for the organisation.
- 3) A volunteer will now take minutes at our future general meetings.
- 4) One of our members has taken on the large job of repairing the Potting Shed.

Donated Items: Poppleton Railway Nursery has received many free gifts, several UPVC double glazed windows, tools, wood, a carpet, door curtains to help keep the work shed warmer and RR Donnelley donated materials to repair the greenhouse staging.

York House has become members of Poppleton Railway Nursery and will be supporting some people who are recovering from head injuries to work on the site.

Helmsley Walled Garden has been in contact with us and is interested in the nursery propagating shrubs and perennials for them.

York Cares has offered to develop a project to turn the rubbish area behind the hedge into a multipurpose area, with seating, raised beds and some garden space for stock plants.

Northern rail have agreed that the nursery can adopt Poppleton Railway Station garden and will buy the bedding plants, from PCRN (*We will maintain the station garden*). Northern Rail has also asked if at some time in the future they could buy plants from us for their other stations.

Several Preserved Railway Stations have been in contact with PCRN about buying bedding plants from us.

The Plant Sale we had in October raised almost £300 with a steady stream of customer visiting the site.

Thank You to the volunteers who run the sales on behalf of PCRN. They have raised over £2000 so far this year.

We would also like to thank a host of volunteers who with their valuable skills in building, web design, electrical work, plumbing, and boiler renovation have all given their skills generously.

Membership. Just a reminder to our members that their membership is due on 1st January 2010, for those who joined after September 2009 subscription is due 1st January 2011.

Poppleton Nursery at work - by Bob Brook



Bob clearing the PCRN railway Line
For more info see Railway heading



Boiler B2 for Greenhouse G1
See building Restoration

Building restoration

This had proceeded gradually since the last issue. The old office and mess room roof has been re-felted, but when we cleared the drifted soil from the base we found the wood work was in a very bad condition. A start has been made on completely renewing the field side of the shed which will be followed by remedial work on the rest. This should put it in great condition to use again. The old wagon bodies need a lot of work, S1 the tool shed has been re-felted and a start made on painting. S2 the royal carpet shed has had its roof patched pending a total re-felt but the woodwork on the doors needs complete renewal.

Some work has been done on S7 the shed on the loading dock, but roof work and a total re-felt are urgently required.

A start has been made on testing the boiler and heating pipes for Greenhouse G1. The boiler is still workable after years under water, but needs some repairs, as do the heating water pipes in the greenhouse. Anyone with experience in this work?

The greenhouses are steadily being repaired G10, G12, G1, G2 and part G3 are done. G4, G5 and G6 are useable but repair work is needed on the corridor that joins them, which leaves us with G11 to complete. At present the wooden house G7, G8 and G9 will be left unrepaired.

There has been a lot done and we thank those volunteers who have helped, but there is more to do and any help would be welcome.

Railway

The full length of the track has been cleared and is all useable, and the one wagon we have is being used to move loads round the site. Repairs to the second wagon are underway, it has been stripped right down and a start made on de-rusting, hopefully we will be able to start painting and getting it back together soon.

Work needs doing on some drainage and other tidying up jobs, and we hope to go to Ripon in a few weeks, to find bits of a point which Neil Clayton has said we can use, it came from Poppleton (we also hope to have a play on his railway!). Installing the point in the summer will be an interesting task, but then we will need some rail to extend.

At present there is no funding available for the railway, so we hope to arrange a special event on the sales day on the 8th May 2010. Details in the next issue but help to organise would be useful.

Community Payback Scheme

From the first meetings on the Nursery project held at the NRM, the Probation service has been represented, and has continued to show an interest in helping on the Poppleton Railway Nursery site.

We have had good reports of the Community Payback teams working at various locations in Poppleton including the church and Community Centre. After discussions with the probation service, including assurances on the type of offender who would be helping, we decided to accept their offer of help one day a week. Since October a small group of up to 4 people with a supervisor have been working on the site. We have been impressed with the clearance work they have done, and the attitude and interest of those attending. We will continue to use them while we can find jobs.

Nursery Archive

As you may be aware, a large amount of paper work was left on the site by Jarvis. We decided going through it was a task for wet and cold winter days! So we have made a start. Jarvis has told us they do not require anything but will arrange for secure disposal. We have had a visit from the Archivist at the National Railway Museum who has given us helpful

advice. There are a few things he has seen already which he has suggested go to the Museum for proper storage. We will also keep anything we think is relevant or interesting for the future. Is there anyone out there who would be interested in helping sort through this paper work?

Become a Volunteer / Member

If YOU would like to become a Volunteer or a Member, then give us a ring or find out more on our website.

Did you know?

The Poppleton Nursery was not the first one in York to use a narrow gauge railway? A fruit nursery near Clifton Green had a fairly extensive system in the 1890's. We have some details if anyone is interested.



After having some panes of glass replaced Greenhouse G12 is now ready for use



Greenhouse G7 & G8
A volunteer has power washed the glass panes removing moss and a build up of grime



A lovely summer display of plants

The Potting Shed New Look

We hope you enjoyed reading the new look Potting Shed.

A few thoughts from Stephen Lee

We now seem to be at the stage of having the nursery ticking over, more or less successfully, and more or less in good enough shape for us to go into our first productive year. I always think that one of the seasonal rites in modern recent history is potting-up the hyacinth bulbs, and putting them in the dark. As a child I remember during and immediately after the war my dad actually making bulb bowls by warming shellac 78rpm records in the oven, then burning his fingers trying to shape them. (They came with a neat water drainage hole in the middle!) These would be filled with 'bulb fibre', fine leaf mould, often collected during that other cheerful pre-Christmas chore of chestnutting in Richmond Park. Daffodil and narcissus bulbs would be set; I just don't remember hyacinths in those days. Perhaps like bananas they hadn't been invented.

But I digress. We are coming to the stage where we really need to have individuals capable of championing particular projects. As a not-for-profit, or, in the future, a charity, PCRN shall probably act more as a host and facilitator, than as a doer. I may be wrong, and it really doesn't much matter if things turn out differently. I think that what is needed now is someone, or two or three people who believe passionately that Poppleton needs, say, a weekly pensioners' tea afternoon, or a mum & toddler coffee morning, and then to set out and achieve that aim, with as much help, in whatever shape as is possible from other members.

As always in these affairs, projects change shape and morph into other things, that's one of the joys of voluntary work, and of reacting to the changing input of individual clients and client groups.

The Potting Shed

A favourite Christmas joke:

What do you call a person who is afraid of Santa Claus?

Claustrophobic!

We also have the paradox, that, actually Poppleton isn't that deprived. It is not peopled by kids aimlessly seeking mischief, and, for example, were we to start a soup kitchen, I doubt we'd have any takers... Also, too, although our initial ideas will be predicated on the nursery, on horticultural skills, and on raising funds by the sale of plants that have been grown from seed or propagated by our client groups, this does not mean that we have to achieve our charitable aims through our cold frames and greenhouses alone. If someone wanted to develop, say, an unwanted tool collection and refurbishment group to supply tool kits to impoverished trainee craftsmen in any quarter of the world, that's possible. All that is needed is for someone to get together a small group of friends to plan on setting up such a group, and, Hey Presto, you've got a project...

I would guess that any sensible group of smart people could come up with twenty zany ideas, of which one or two could fly. So, there it is, all you have to do, when they show 'The Great Escape' again this Christmas, is to turn off the box, put the walnuts to one side and engage your nearest and dearest in spirited debate about what you as a family could do using some of the resources of the Railway nursery and its membership. So, come on, guys and girls, it's not rocket science. If you are going to have your traditional family Christmas day row, let it stem from a useful debate about future projects for the Railway Nursery.

Winter at the Nursery - by Paul Botting

As the leaves begin to change colour and the days become shorter, it is time to start organising the garden for the colder months ahead. Indeed, winter is fast approaching bringing with it a host of frosty mornings and chilly winds: without the proper preparation, gardeners will soon find that any hard work carried out in the warmer months will be wasted and the garden will quickly start to lose its summer charm.

Preparation for spring is on the agenda and the sowing next month of sweet peas and lobelia seed closely followed by fibrous rooted begonias. We will have to find a well insulated place on the nursery to germinate these seeds, a bit of trial and error in our first year. The seed and plant catalogues have been well thumbed and our order for next year's plants will be going in soon. We are still propagating hardwood cuttings, building up our stock of hardy nursery shrubs and perennials.