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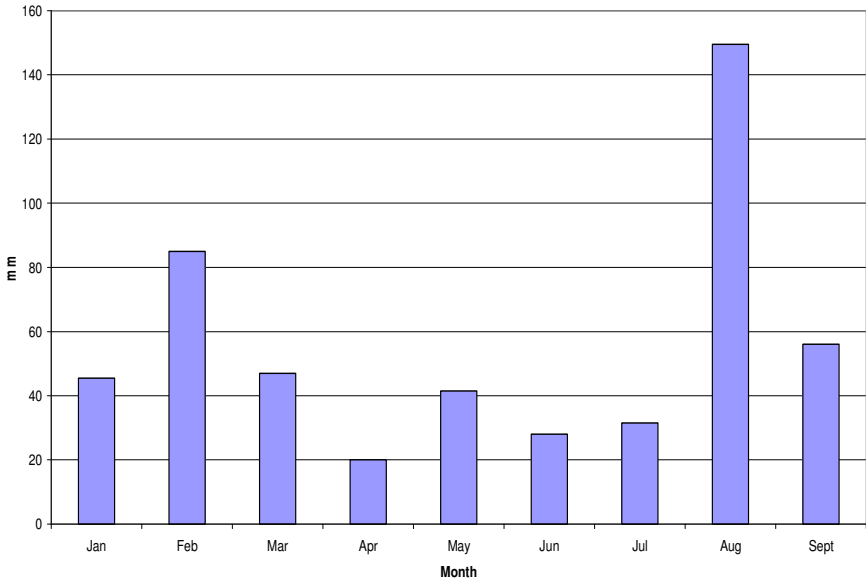
Secretary Mrs Jane Lay, The Gleanings, Marlin Square, Abbots Langley, WD5 OEG
01923 447281 email leon.lay@ntlworld.com

2010 DECEMBER & JANUARY 2011 **NEWSLETTER**

**CHRISTMAS SPARKLE
SOCIAL EVENING
16th DECEMBER**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
20th JANUARY 2011
Starting at 7.30pm not 8pm**

Rainfall 2010



Rainfall January to September 2010

As can be seen from the chart, confirmation that we had a very dry start to the year just when we needed moisture for those very young seedlings and then an extremely wet period through August when we should have been enjoying the harvest. Of course this view is biased toward the vegetable plot but even so it meant very sad looking lawns through the BBQ season. All in all a very challenging year – Chris Bromwich
Many thanks Chris, it makes interesting reading.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO SHOW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP CARD WHEN
PURCHASING AT THE DEPOT**

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PAY BY STANDING ORDER? This is a much easier way of paying your subscription and will guarantee you pay the lower rate of subscription, so please contact Myles on 262685 or myles11@talktalk.net who will give you the bank details necessary to set this up.

DEPOT REFURBISHMENT

Have you visited the Depot recently? What a transformation!

We have almost painted the whole of the walls and metal beams, just a small patch over the cash desk to do. Most of our unwanted guests have gone, even the spider eating spiders! It really is a much brighter place to work in. We have purchased 3 large units, but joined together make 5, to put the stock on. We are buying in new plastic boxes to put the loose fertilizers and bird seed in.

We have been very lucky in more ways than one. We are very grateful that the Parish Council has completely rewired the whole Depot! Unbeknown to us the electricery turned out to be dangerous and those of us who had been painting could have got a very nasty shock!

We still have to find room for the big role of bubble plastic and the canes but we are nearly completed. In the spring we hope to have a grand opening, so watch this space for the date.

This project has been very time consuming for your committee to do as they have only been able to do the work in the evenings and may I point out that no member has offered to help, so far.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please put this in your new diary for THURSDAY 20TH JANUARY STARTING AT 7.30pm. Joyce Davies is standing down after 13 years from our Press Secretary so I hope one of you will come forward to take her place.

NOVEMBER QUIZ NIGHT RESULTS

I am sorry I was not able to make this function but I was at the AL Cricket Club presentation evening at Hunton Park.

Great evening although there was mild "panic" when the food failed to arrive at the allotted time but we just ran the next question round while food was sorted, apparently there was "trouble 't kitchen" as the cookers had to be run at a cooler temperature which in turn meant cooking in smaller batches which obviously took longer. However when it eventually arrived it was still a very good supper. Everyone seemed to enjoy the level and range of questions with only a few remonstrations over the answers. In the early rounds the leader board was so close we thought that we would have to use the marathon round for the first time to decide 1st and 2nd place but as time went on the scores drifted apart and the eventual winners were "The Carnations" with 62.5 followed by "The "A" Team" with 59. For the last position we did have to use the marathon to decide if the "Sound Bites" or the "Meercats" would take home wooden spoons and here the "Meercats" triumphed. The full results will appear on the web site soon

Please note our next one will be held on **March 11th 2011**, so please put this date in your diary.

**DON'T FORGET TO FEED THE BIRDS THIS
WINTER. OUR DEPOT IS OPEN EVERY
SATURDAY MORNING 9 – 10 AND STOCKS A
LARGE RANGE OF WILD BIRD FOOD AT VERY
REASONABLE PRICES.**

Mixed seed	85p	Feeder seed	80p
No waste mix	£1.80	Peanuts	£1.70
Sunflower seeds black	£1.30	Niger seed	£1.30
Sunflower seeds stripy	£1.25	Fat Balls	6 for a £1
Sunflower hearts	£1.90		

Note - Prices can change with new stock

CHRISTMAS BBQ

SATURDAY DECEMBER 18th

Starting at 9am – 10am

**COME AND JOIN US FOR COFFEE, TEA OR
MULLED WINE,
with a hot mince pie**

Last opportunity to buy bird food in 2010 !

TO ALL ORCHID LOVERS!

Ivens Orchids Limited is going to close. You may have noticed when to buy orchids from Aylett's as well as other nurseries they have the Ivens Orchids labels on them.

**They are holding a pre Christmas Open day on
SATURDAY 11TH DECEMBER 10am to 4pm.**

If you would like to attend please telephone them on 01727 863178 or info@ivensorchids.co.uk.

The address is Great Barn Dell, St Albans Road, Sandridge, AL4 9LB (this is just north of St Albans on the way to Wheathampstead)

No credit cards are accepted so you must take cash or a cheque book with you.

Ideal for Christmas presents so see you there!

**THE COMMITTEE WISH YOU A HAPPY
CHRISTMAS AND A SUCCESSFUL
GARDENING NEW YEAR
CHRISTMAS SPARKLE EVENING**

Come and join us on this festive evening

Cheese, cheese, and cheese
Cheese tasting from the British Cheese Council

Mince Pies
Hot refreshments

Bar Raffle

Games
Good company

Fun
Best dressed festive man and lady competition!

STARTS AT 8PM

Yes I know the weather is bad at the present but hopefully the wind will stop blowing from the north and east, and our Gulf Stream will take over from the south west to bring warmer temperatures. You could stay wrapped up cosy in the warm indoors or here are some ideas for doing in your gardens when it gets a little warmer -

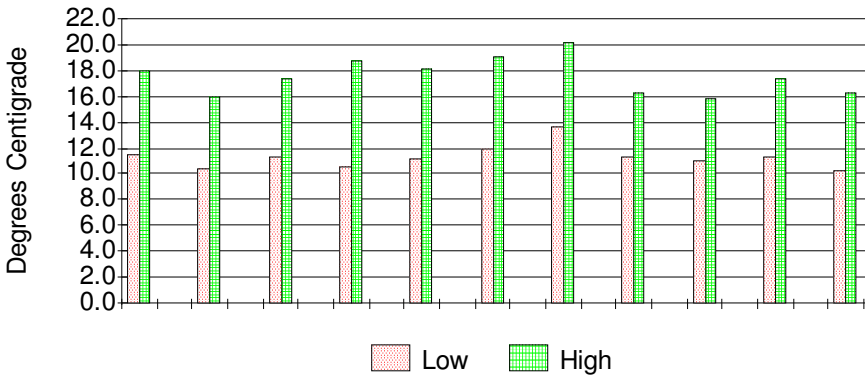
IDEAS FOR WORKING IN THE GARDEN

- Prune wisteria side shoots to 10-15cm from their base, and tie in leading shoots to create a framework
- Rake up fallen leaves that could be sheltering slugs, but leave some piled up for the hedgehogs, toads and frogs to shelter in
- Cut down dead perennials, or if they have seed heads on them leave them for the birds to feed on.
- Plant bare root trees and deciduous hedges such as beech and privet
- Trim autumn-flowering heathers

- Collect fallen rose leaves that could carry diseases over to next season
- Plant new roses
- Transplant shrubs or small trees
- Finish planting tulip bulbs
- Hang bird feeders over rose beds to attract birds to pick off overwintering pests
- Winter prune apple trees
- Prune away stems of autumn-fruiting raspberries at soil level
- Prepare sites to plant new fruit trees and bushes, by improving soil with lots of organic matter
- Hoe bare areas to remove weed seedlings
- Use straw to prevent soil freezing around parsnip or cover with fleece.
- Take hardwood cuttings from currants and gooseberries
- Net cabbages and other brassicas to protect them from pigeon damage
- Place forcing jars over crowns of seakale
- Continue winter digging, adding spent mushroom compost to improve the soil
- Follow weather forecasts closely to ensure you're setting greenhouse heating accurately
- Prune both indoor and outdoor vines
- Dig up rhubarb, pot up, and place in total darkness under a giant bin to force an early crop
- Thoroughly clean glazing inside and out before putting up bubble polythene for insulation
- Sow hardy annuals, like calendulas, in pots for early displays
- Check bulbs, corms and tubers in store for signs of rot
- Water the plants in your greenhouse sparingly in winter, taking care not to splash water around
- Pick yellowing leaves and dead flowers from plants
- Open greenhouse vents on warm days

11 Years compared 2000 - 2010

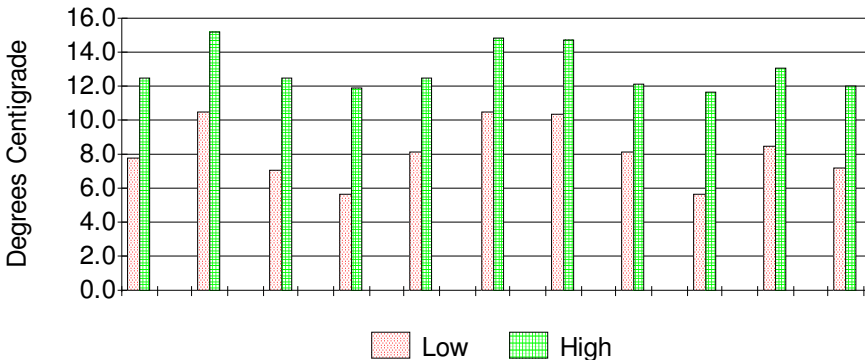
Average September temperatures



Eight of the corresponding 10 years were warmer. For a daily comparison, the eighteenth of the month and the two days of the last weekend, were colder than the nineteenth of March which is still officially winter!

11 Years compared 2000 - 2010

Average October temperatures



October 2010 is below average for both night and day temperatures for the 11 years, with only 2003 and 2008 being lower with markedly colder nights. The first real frost of winter was on the 21st. PS In 2008 we had 1.5 inches of snow at the end of the month!

DEPOT DUTIES

December and January are the quietest months for depot sales (mostly birdseed!) when we need a Committee Member + 1 helper only at the Depot. Those on duty over this period are:

DEPOT	ROTA	
Organiser	Pat Colwell	pandkc@ntlworld.com
December 04	Pat Colwell (443721)	Vince Watts (291210)
December 11	Joyce Davies (263489)	Anne Richardson (07888723594)
December 18	Bryan Ellis (444529)	John Noonan (266921)
December 25 & January 01	Shut! Stock up with bird food on 18th December Myles Darbyshire (262685)	
January 08	Jo Bromwich (443758)	Julia Maslin (274421)
January 15	John Merry (264802)	Alan Wragg (443277)
January 22	Jane Lay (447281)	Tony Pink (268574)
January 29		David Winn (673154)

To help with any swapping of duties, telephone numbers are given in brackets, but if you make a mutually agreed swap, please let Pat Colwell know so that he can keep an accurate record. Being on duty involves 1 hour's duty on a Saturday morning, only once or twice a year. There will always be a Committee Member on hand, to give guidance.

Many hands make light work! So if you are willing to join the list of volunteers to help serve in the Depot, please let either Jane (447281) or Pat (443721) know as soon as possible so that I can get the next list in the February Newsletter

The next duty list will be issued in the New Year, covering the months Feb to June 2011 – many thanks Pat Colwell

URGENT – PLEASE SEND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES TO -

leon.lay@ntlworld.com

Several members still have not sent me their email addresses. If in doubt pleased send them to me again. If you change your address please let me know as well!

MANURE

If you know of any other places to get manure please let me know so that I can pass the information on.

From our Depot – horse manure per bag

For delivery -

Dave Birkin Tel: 01442 832997 - £30 for a 5 tonne load. It is a mixture of horse and cow manure and is 18 months old.

For collection – don't forget to take your fork/spade and bags

a. Mansion House stables (opposite the AL School entrance on the Bedmond Road) also provides horse manure for free to collect. You have to go there when someone is working at the stables and ask if you can take some. They usually will be pleased to see you!

b. There is a house on the right hand side going down Chequers Lane, before the bridge, where you can acquire manure.

c. There are stables run by Debbie Randall (07721327763) on the A405 on the same side as Burston's. Due to the dual carriage way you need to go past Burston's, over the next small roundabout to the big M10 roundabout, come back on yourself about 100yds BEFORE you reach the next small roundabout (Park Street/Tippendell Lane) the stables are on the left hand side. The stables are usually open each afternoon between 2 – 3.30pm and often on Saturday mornings. The manure is usually well matured. Note you must telephone Debbie BEFORE you go as she is not always there.

NOVEMBER TEMPERATURES

I cannot squeeze November's temperature chart in but 2009 was just about the warmest of the 10 years and 2010 has by far been the coldest daytime temperature and only 2005 had colder nights!

From 15.5C at the beginning of November down to -0.5C at the end!
What a difference! What will December bring I wonder?

ALLOTMENTS FOR ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH RESIDENTS ONLY

Would you like an allotment to grow your vegetables on?

The season runs from October to September. You can get whole plots, ½ plots and ¼ plots. There are 3 sites – Jacketts Field (Rep Sally Sanderson), Manor House (Rep Chris Bromwich) and Kingsfield (Rep Les Clarke). Look on the Parish Council web site for more information www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk or speak to the Reps or phone the Parish Council office on 01923 265139. If you have already on the waiting list don't forget to keep phoning or visiting the PC to check whether your name is nearing the top of the list.

The Parish Council are looking at opening another site for gardeners in Primrose Hill area, so watch this space. At least there will be car parking and water will be available. Have you any views about this proposal? Would you be prepared to work an allotment at Primrose Hill? Please telephone to Parish Council to book your plot.

FLOWERS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

If you need flower arrangements for any occasion at prices below the florist shops contact Jo Bromwich on 01923 443758. Please note - Jo does not provide flowers only.

WEB SITE – www.algs.org.uk

Our web site has lots of useful information and we are regularly updating the site. If you want to contact us by email use - contactus@algs.org.uk.

Maybe you want to sell something, email us on contactus@algs.org.uk and we can sell it for you or let Jane know on leon.lay@ntlworld.com and she can put it in the Newsletter. Don't forget not everyone has an email address. (01923 447281)

SPRING SHOW SCHEDULES

These will hopefully be available before the AGM

PROGRAMME FOR SOCIAL EVENINGS AND OTHER EVENTS IN 2010/11

Held in the

Manor House Sports & Social Centre, Gallows Hill
Lane, Abbots Langley (opposite Popes Road)

Meetings start at 8pm (unless otherwise stated)

Doors open at 7.30

**If you have any ideas for future talks please contact Jo Bromwich on
01923 443758**

DECEMBER 16 **CHRISTMAS SPARKLE MEETING** British
Cheese Council – cheese tasting

2011 JANUARY 20 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 7.30pm

Plus David Empson “What the Judge Saw”

FEBRUARY 17	Lisa Owens – “The Restoration of Wrest Park”
MARCH 11	SPRING QUIZ NIGHT
MARCH 17	Graham Pavey – “Patio and courtyard Gardens”
MARCH 26	SPRING SHOW in Henderson Hall
APRIL 21	Ivan French – “Arizona in bloom”
MAY 19	Jill Wright – “The Culinary & Medicinal use of herbs”
JUNE 11	CARNIVAL STALL
SEPTEMBER 10	AUTUMN SHOW in AL Community Centre
SEPTEMBER 15	
OCTOBER 20	Martin Brooks – “Life as a Park Ranger in Abbots Langley”
NOVEMBER 17	Rob Hopkins – “The work of Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust”
DECEMBER 15	Ferret Racing!!! (TBC)

GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME – guest entrance £1

Abbots Langley Travel Club 2011:

Proposed trips:

- Long weekend in Barcelona - 6-9 May 2011
- Coach outing to Cottesbrooke Hall Plant Finders Fair - Saturday 25 June 2011
- Long weekend in Northumberland - 23-26 September 2011

Contact Kate Macnish on kate.macnish@btinternet.com or 07880813739