

FROZEN DELIGHTS

What can be better at this time of year than the taste of frozen raspberries from the freezer?

If you wasted a lot of your fruit and veg this year because they were maturing faster than you could eat them or give them away, then maybe purchasing yourself a good freezer is a way of storing more produce until later in the year.

It is true that some things don't freeze well at all, but raspberries really do freeze exceptionally well. The taste of raspberries isn't lost if you freeze them, and they can taste just as good as picking them straight from the plant itself.

Raspberries are very easy to grow compared with some other crops. Some produce their crop in July and other varieties fruit from September through to November.

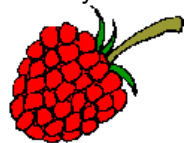
Raspberries in July fruit on stems produced during the previous year, where as the later varieties fruit on stems produced in the spring and summer of the current growing year.

Late fruiting types of raspberries are far more resistant to disease and fruit for a much more extended period of time than their earlier counterparts. Birds also like to eat the earlier varieties whereas they seem to leave the later ones alone. Perhaps because there are so many other fruits to be had during the autumn months.

Regardless of what type of raspberries you grow though, all that is needed to maintain them is an annual pruning to remove all fruited stems. The only other thing you need to do is tie any new stems up to wire supports so they don't snap off under the weight of the fruits.

Early fruited types need to be pruned after cropping with the canes that have carried fruit cut down hard to ground level. The new canes are then tied to wires.

With autumn fruited types it is even easier. You simply cut the whole lot down to ground level in winter. New shoots then grow up from the rootstock to give you a bumper crop later in the year.



Two of my favourite autumn fruiting raspberries are Joan J and Autumn Bliss; they are a trouble free companion to any gardener in any autumn garden.

So go on, buy yourself a new freezer in the sales, and enjoy the fruits of your labour into the cold winter months. Saving yourself money by reducing your shopping bill too!

Good gardening

STUART MABBUTT

Answers to the Christmas Crossword

ACROSS: 2 Glass 6 Hoe 7 Out 8 Allow 9 Bethlehem 10 St.

AGNES DOWN: 1 By candlelight 2 Great tit 3 Snow-shoe 4 Thumb 5 Steam

WI 90th Birthday Celebrations and Home Front Exhibition

18 September 2005

2005 saw the 90th Birthday of the National Federation of Women's Institutes. Denman College celebrated the occasion on Sunday 18 September with a special exhibition. As our editor had ventured rather further than the edge of the village, I sallied forth on the Sunday afternoon to report the event for the MAD News.

I was welcomed by Jayne Webley-Smith, *January 2006*



the events organiser who explained what was happening that afternoon, and invited to take some photos in the main house before the exhibition was officially opened. Jayne is part of the Senior Management team at Denman, along with Amanda Roach and Jennet Booth, both of whom were leading lights with the organisation and running of the exhibition.

In the main house there was a display of photos of Denman College from the 50s, 60s and 70s. In the beautiful Livingstone room there was another, larger display of photographs showing the WI's involvement with the Home Front during the Second World War. There were photographs of Denman College during the Second World War, when it was used by the Air Ministry.

Back outside, WI members, and in some cases, their husbands, were arriving by car and coach, and were congregating by the main house ready for the grand opening of the exhibition, and the cutting of the Birthday cake. Members had come from all over the country for the occasion.

An opening speech was made, and the cake was cut by Barbara Gill, the Chairman of the NFWI. I then went around the rest of the buildings where there were various other displays.

There was a display of needle work and flower arrangements in the Teaching Centre. Here also were photographs of the Royal Family's involvement with the WI since its instigation in 1915, and a display of costumes and pictures from the WI's National Drama Festivals, beautiful costumes made by members over the years.

An up to date display showed the WI's involvement with world issues, funding projects in the Third World, as well as descriptions and pictures of the WI's involvement in world issues, for example the 1934 Peace Rally in Brussels, and the Freedom From Hunger campaign in 1967.

I went into the Home Economics Centre where there were cookery demonstrations going on throughout the afternoon. I confess I didn't stay long here, the room rather reminded me of our Domestic Science room when I was at school!

Various accommodation areas were open, delightful rooms, I particularly liked the rooms in the main house, but those in the new buildings looked very cosy. It was interesting listening to conversations as I went around, especially in the accommodation, quite a lot of the ladies had been to courses at Denman and were taking friends, also WI members round to show where they had stayed, all spoke very highly of the courses and the accommodation.

Stewards and guides were on hand around the exhibition to talk about areas of interest and give details about the history of the house.

I personally believe, it would have been nice for, at least local people not involved with WI, to have been able to see the exhibition, perhaps being allowed in after the official opening. It would help to dispel the usual image of the WI as 'Jam and Jerusalem' I certainly did not know about the NFWI's involvement with world affairs before I went to the exhibition.

CHERYLL SEWELL

