

SCHOOL NEWS

Although we might not be able to compete with the Best Front Garden in Marcham competition, I hope that you have all noticed the improvement made to our school by having pots and tubs cascading with flowers. I should like to thank Mrs Kingsbury and Mrs Johnson who, together with thirty willing workers from Anson Class, have taken on the role of School Gardeners. Here is a sample from a big batch of 'thank-you' messages sent to Millets, who provided the material:



*Dear Millets,
Thank you for the pots, they are very nice. Thank you also for the plants and compost, they blend in perfectly and make the school look lovely. They also make the school look inviting. We look after them every day so the water doesn't evaporate.
Yours sincerely, Bertie Turney*

*Dear Millets,
Thank you for the plants. We planted them in the lovely pots. We put them around the school, now it looks pretty. We watered them nearly every day because we care for them, but hopefully Mrs Sandal waters them on Saturdays and Sundays. We have looked after them and now they have grown. Thank you Millets!
Yours sincerely, Meghan Louise Rollinson*

We have been flexing our muscles as well as our green fingers, enjoying the fun of Cluster Sports Days. Here is a report from two Year Six children:

*On Thursday 10 June, we (Key Stage Two), went to Dry Sandford for the Cluster Sports Day. There was a range of activities and schools there. This meant we could try things we hadn't done before and mix with children we hadn't seen before. It was great!! We enjoyed doing most of the activities and lots of people excelled, like Joe Richardson who got 8 seconds on the football- ball-dribble, and Tom Tierney, who got 6.08 seconds on fifty metres running. The boys were funny doing the hula with hoops, and even though golf is a leisurely sport, some of us took ages in the putting. Also, loads of us picked up penalty points trying to get through the obstacle course.
All in all, it was a brilliant morning, and great fun.
Emily Jefferies and Kathleen MacNee*

THANK YOU
A huge thank you to the many villagers who deposited their Tesco vouchers with us. We have had a tremendous response this year, and so will be able to 'cash in' and get a new computer, video and software for our children.
LESLEY CLARK.

BLOOMING BARGAINS

How many people must have fallen for those impulse buys when visiting a garden centre? I've certainly made that mistake. The usual mistake when buying plants is to purchase something that looks good, without giving enough thought to whether it's actually suitable to our particular garden. Sometimes we don't even consider whether there is actually room in our garden for this new introduction. Some garden centres make a fortune out of our impulse buying, with some of them even actively encouraging us to buy things like summer bedding before Easter. They know full well that these tender plants will be damaged, perhaps terminally by late frosts. They also know that we will return a second time to buy the replacements for planting out in May, when they should actually be planted. The best way to buy plants is to go to the centre with a definite idea of what you want, and where it is to go when you get it home. Don't give in to temptation when you see those magnificent displays put on by the garden centre. As far as the best place to buy them, well, newspapers and magazines often have bargain plants sales from time to time. This is a good way to get a wider selection of plants that you would likely find at your nearest garden centre, especially if finances are tight. But you should approach with much care; the colourful descriptions can often stretch the truth somewhat. Another drawback is that they can arrive at a time that is inconvenient to you, or in some instances, damaged.

If you have a complaint, write immediately to the supplier, and if they view your complaint to be valid, they may issue a credit note toward another order. But as you can't view before purchase, there is always a risk involved, and if the plants are not as strong as those in the garden centres, you have no grounds for any complaint whatsoever. It was a bargain offer, so don't expect top-notch plants to arrive at your door.

Supermarkets are cheap and convenient places to pick up plants, but the down side is that they are often kept in a climate that is too hot for them. They have often dried out, and haven't received any care or looking after. Local garden centres allow you see what you are buying, and have a varied stock of plants available, which are suitable for growing in the local area and can be planted all year round. It's also easier to get refunds or replacements if the plant dies and it isn't your fault. You also know that the plants have been cared for prior to you purchasing them. The drawbacks are that they are usually much more expensive and are located out of town so you will need transport. Sometimes it is also time consuming travelling around to find those unusual species that garden centres don't always stock.

However and wherever you buy your plants though, don't be tempted by those impulse buys. But only that which you really need and can actually grow successfully within your plot. Keeping the rule in mind that 'You get what you pay for!'

STUART MABBUTT

ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB presents **CANTERBURY TALES** adapted by Phil Woods with Michael Bogdanov, at the UNICORN THEATRE, Medieval Abbey Buildings, Abingdon. Wed 7 July – Sat 10th at 7.30 pm. Pre-show entertainment in the Unicorn Gardens from 7pm. Tickets: £6.50 (concessions £5.50) from Modern Music, High Street, Abingdon, or from Ticketline 01235 524538.



Illustration by kind permission Geoff Laws