

## **Focus on allotments**

### **Smaller but still productive Allotment Stand at Harrogate Spring Flower Show 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 (Great-Britain)**

Following a bout of illness after all the very strenuous Allotment Show Garden successes last year I have decided to restrict myself to leaflet stands and just helping with the creation of Allotment Show Gardens when necessary.

So this year I simply produced a decorated leaflet stand for the promotion of Allotments at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show under the banner of Yorkshire Allotment Gardeners Federation and the National Allotment Society. There was also planting of seeds provided for the children. I also invited MyHarvest project Based at Sheffield University to join us, a project which could prove very beneficial to our allotment movement. They sent a team of volunteers to man their part of the stand which complimented the volunteers from YAGF. Their administrator Roscoe Blevins was a natural showman and fit right in to my rather extravert approach to the promotion of allotments. The combined stand worked extremely well as we could refer punters to both sides of the stand. The project collected details from many prospective participants.

And that was not all.....



The Stand



Roscoe and me



The Right Worshipful Mayor of Ripon and Mayoress, Dr Adrian and Robiana Morgan visit the stand.



Tony Heeson and me



GOLD again

## **Busy time at Harrogate Spring Flower Show**

In addition to erecting the Allotment promotion stand and manning it for the duration of the show, I was once again asked to do talks with Martin Walker, the creator of many of the Leeds City Council show gardens at Chelsea. The talks took place on the Kitchen Garden Magazine stage every morning. Martin and I are like chalk and cheese. He can refer to his professional horticultural expertise and I refer to very down to earth gardening on a shoestring with lots of props on display such as concrete reinforcing mesh for plant supports, scaffold debris netting for plant protection, plastic water pipe to make cloches and much more and all put together with quite a bit of Yorkshire humour and not forgetting the added comments about the benefits of allotment gardening. It seems to work very well with audiences standing in the aisles; so we must be doing something right.

On the Sunday morning I was called for a radio interview on the Radio Leeds, Tim & Graham Gardening Show. I have had some quite humorous interviews with these two about allotments before, in their studio, but this was being held in the corner of one of the flower halls. It was primarily about the promotion of allotments at the show and the MyHarvest involvement in the show and again it developed into a quite jovial chat with some light hearted banter. It was all good fun, but getting the message across about the promotion, protection and preservation of allotments and all the benefits they can offer.

## **Plans for the future**

I am hoping to do another allotment promotional stand with MyHarvest at the Great Yorkshire Show, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July again under the banner of the YAGF and the NAS.

*Phil Gomersall*

