

Well first of all I would like to congratulate the show team who put on such a wonderful show.

This was the magnificent display which greeted the visitors

I supplied the celery and the blanch leeks. And thereby hangs a tale of why I had not entered my leeks in the show.

A cautionary tale. Back in 2010 I was infected with Lyme disease whilst walking on the New Forest. I was also reinfected in 2013 and even after several long courses on antibiotics I was left with chronic fatigue syndrome. And unfortunately during the run up to the show I was feeling rather below par. This led me to withdraw from a few classes as I knew that I would not have the energy to lift all the vegetables. Of course this also impinged on my ability to attend the social function in the evening. So my apologies that I did not get to meet members and old friends. My allotment neighbours Ann and Bob said they thoroughly enjoyed the evening. Ann was the lady selling the raffle tickets.



Some of the veg I managed to lift.

Morning Star Celery

If I were to grow celery for show once again, I would certainly choose Evening Star. Much better colour.



The celery took up most of the floor area in the car. Being transported home from the allotment for cleaning.



Pendle Improved leeks ready to be wrapped up for the show



The interbranch trug competition



First place went to Midland Branch with Southern in second. But in all honestly there was not much to separate all five regions, which I imagine gave the judges a hard time.

One class I would love to have entered was the pot leeks. 'If only mine had not rotted in the trench'.



But the pair that won were quite outstanding. They measured 219 cubic inches, an amazing size for this time of year. Well done to Allan Manning. And also very well done to our former chairman Barry Newman on his 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the class.

On a bed of course sawdust my exhibition onions are only just starting to ripen. Hopefully some of these will make it into the September shows.



### Looking ahead

The runner beans grown for seed have had the foliage removed. This will help them to ripen up. Only the best shaped beans with the right length will be kept.



Its time to trim the leek heads for vegative reproduction



I usually get this job done on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

After their haircut, all the seed pods have been removed

In a couple of weeks the heads will be full of grass, 'mini leeks'. These were my two best leeks from last year. A few years ago my Pendle strain became infected with yellow streak virus. I am reselecting stock from leeks that have grown clean. But I will no longer sell leeks to exhibitors for exhibition purposes. Though it is strange that on our allotment site the leeks show little sign of the virus. Its hard to explain why.



### Keeping up with growing and Sowing

Another row of calabrese is planted out. Variety **Iron Man**. As soon as I do this I know its time to make the next sowing. The ground was treated with Vitax Q4 and Perlka to combat any clubroot that may be present. The plants are spaced 18" apart, given a good watering and a sprinkle of slug pellets. Then they are covered with a fine mesh net secured to the ground. The biggest problem at the moment is the surfeit of butterflies we are enjoying. Good for them but not so for our brassicas.



Another row of calabrese is planted

### Carrot sowing for an autumn and winter crop



A row of French beans was lifted from this greenhouse border. Just in time for me to sow a row of carrots. **Carisma** is fine for an August sowing. The glass will ensure quick germination and stop the cats from using the bed as a luxury loo.

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The **Zenith** tomatoes are being trained across the greenhouse eaves. Grown this way I can get ten trusses on a plant. Just keep them well fed.

### East Meon Village Show



I am now well into another season of show judging. And one of my favourites would have to be the East Meon Village Show set in a picture perfect area of natural beauty. As well as some very good vegetable exhibits there were some outstanding flowers. My selection for best in show went to a superb vase of hydrangea. If you are in the area next year look it up. It's a Sunday show and well worth a visit, if only to sample the lovely cakes on offer.

Well for me it's onto the next show.

John Trim