

CHAS'S ROCK'N ROLL ALLOTMENT

LIKE flowers but I've never felt the need to want to grow 'em like I've felt the need for wanting to grow vegetables. I did have a pretty good go at flowers once though.

Created a lawn too. In the early 1960s me and my brother Dave decided to give our mum's overgrown back garden, where we lived, a serious going over.

He got in first with: "Bagsy I do the vegetable plot." So I was left with the flowers and lawn. I didn't mind. I knew I would eventually get into growing food but in the meantime I got stuck in and I enjoyed it.

I dug it all over and sowed a lawn and with my girlfriend's dad's (Joan's) guidance I bordered it with alyssum and lobelia and Mum's suggestion, French marigolds. All things brand new to me.

One patch of weeds about 6ft by 12ft I never got around to

'Got a weedy area? Mow it and get a lawn'

weeding or grass seeding so I just kept mowing the weeds down only to make a marvellous discovery. Keep mowing down the weeds and they will eventually give up and give way to grass leaving you with a smart lawn. The weeds don't like their heads being continually chopped off (that's why I carry a Dutch hoe at all times) but the grass likes a regular short back and sides.

When the allotment I have now was getting started it was suggested by some to put weedkiller on the weedy pathways between the plots. Don't, said I. Just keep mowing it. The weeds will give up, and they did.

The most marvellous grassy paths now border the plots. Got a weedy area you don't know what to do with? Keep mowing it and you'll end up with a lovely lawn.

I do have a favourite flower though. It looks good and it tastes good. The nasturtium. It seems



Picture: LUKE SANTILLI

to grow anywhere and thrives on poor soil. Water it well but don't feed it too much or it won't flower.

My mum grew some years ago and had a spread of lovely green leaves all over her garden but no flowers. I'd just started to grow some myself then and had read up about 'em.

Found out Mum had been feeding 'em rose fertiliser, she stopped and they started to flower. They were content to produce just leaves when they were being well fed but starve 'em a bit and nature will hurry 'em on to complete their full cycle so that they can reproduce.

So I said it tastes good? Yep. The leaves taste like peppery watercress and you can pickle

the big pea-size seeds as substitute capers. To ward off scurvy, sailors used to grow them on board ship years ago as instant access to vitamin C. The beautiful, vivid, multicoloured flowers you can eat too, if you want. They look great on a special salad.

If you decide to grow 'em though keep your eye out for caterpillars and blackfly and zap 'em as soon as you see 'em. I put these pests in the category of gittles.

Life is good. Still love getting out there and playing the piano and love getting round the allotment to grow me stuff but not all things do I continue to want to do. No more do I wanna

dance around drunk with the lampshade on my head for instance. Does this mean that at last I am beginning to mature?

● *Chas & Dave: All About Us by Chas Hodges is out now (John Blake, £7.99). Forthcoming Chas & Dave gigs: Pavilion, Bournemouth, tonight; Harlequin Theatre, Redhill, October 10; Martlets Theatre, Burgess Hill, October 11; Bedford Corn Exchange, October 16. Also, An Audience with Chas Hodges (hosted by Goodmaze and Shed), when you can come along and ask your own questions. October 26, Corringham Hall, Corringham, Essex (0844 561 7107)*



Did you know?

by Mitchell Symons

AMERICAN COMEDIAN RODNEY DANGERFIELD DIED 10 YEARS AGO TODAY. HIS EPITAPH WAS "THERE GOES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD". HERE ARE SOME OTHER GREAT EPITAPHS... SAY THEM ALOUD!

Beneath this stone lies Johnnie Scott Who lived like a fool and died like a sot, But it is needless to argue Whether he was so or not; He as a man was despised, And soon will be forgot.

Here lays Butch, We planted him raw. He was quick on the trigger, But slow on the draw.

Here lies Ezekiel Aikle Age 102 The Good Die Young



REMEMBER: Comic Rodney Dangerfield

Here lies Johnny Yeast Pardon me For not rising

Here lies Lester Moore. Four slugs from a forty-four. No Les. No more

Here lies the body of Jonathan Blake Stepped on the gas Instead of the brake.

Here lies the body of our Anna Done to death by a banana It wasn't the fruit that laid her low But the skin of the thing that made her go.

THIS WEEK'S PONDERABLES

- The Small Faces song Lazy Sunday was inspired by Steve Marriott's arguments with his neighbours. He decided to sing it in an exaggerated Cockney accent after a member of The Hollies claimed that he had never sung a song in his own accent.
- The average British woman owns 22 items of clothing she never wears.
- The extremely lazy jumping spider waits absolutely still until its prey walks into its jaws.
- Henry VII was our only king to be crowned on the field of battle.
- A squirrel can use its tail as a parachute if it falls from a tree. The tail can also be used to cushion a hard landing.
- It was only last year that "being an incorrigible rogue" ceased to be a criminal offence.
- Frédéric Chopin said that the middle section of his Nocturne in F-sharp minor should be played as if "a tyrant commands and the other asks for mercy".

THIS WEEK'S IMPONDERABLE: WHY DO WE LET OUR HAIR DOWN WHEN WE'RE RELAXING? In 17th and 18th-century Paris, members of the nobility were obliged to wear elaborate hairdos, stacked preposterously high, which took several hours to prepare. At the end of a long day's intriguing and ingratiating at the Palace of Versailles, they would go home to relax and the first thing they would do? Right; they would let their hair down!

WISE WORDS

Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind. (John F Kennedy)
One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors. (Plato)

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Rupert

And The Fire Bird EPISODE 34

Rupert is so distressed by what has happened to Pong-Ping that he can hardly move. As he stands wondering what to do there is a faint rushing sound and yet another great bird glides down to him.

This one is quite a different shape and not so fierce looking. Rupert stares and screws up his courage to speak.

"Please can you help us?" he cries. "Could you fly after that great bird and make it bring my pal back? It would be terrible if it dropped him!"



"Please help us!" begs the little bear, And tells his tale in great despair.

To order the **Rupert Annual for 2015** No. 79 (out now) at £7.99 with free UK delivery, please call **0871 988 8370** or send a cheque/PO to The Official Classic Rupert Bear Shop, PO Box 200, Falmouth TR11 4W; or order it online at classicroperbearshop.com. UK delivery is free.

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