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Two hundred year old allotment site

Allotments

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The oldest allotments in England celebrated their bicentenary last week. The six acre site at Great Somerford became the site of the first allotments after Rev Steven Demainbray appealed to King George the Third to spare some land for the poor people in the parish. There are still fifty working allotments at the site and traditions from long ago are still enforced, contracts are renewed every Easter Tuesday after each owner's site has been inspected.

The allotments are still free to locals, as they have been since 1809 but locals produce a much wider variety of crops than the original oats, wheat and roots for feeding livestock. Allotments have come a long way since their earliest forms, but they still provide a great healthy pastime to the many people who still want to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

One Response to "Two hundred year old allotment site"

1. **Jill Shearer** Says:

March 31st, 2009 at 12:51 pm

As the author of a book on the country's oldest allotment site, it's lovely to see the Great Somerford Plot mentioned here. Can I just point out a couple of things: Great Somerford's were not the first allotments (there were a handful of earlier allotment sites recorded before 1809), but they are almost certainly the oldest continuously worked allotments in the country. Also, I'm afraid I was misquoted in the press - Stephen Demainbray didn't in fact appeal to George III, but he used his economic power as the local collector of tithes to secure some land for the poor agricultural labourers in his parish.

If anyone is interested to find out more about the early allotment movement and the Great Somerford site, which is unique and special in many ways, do have a look at my book, The Poor Man's Best Friend, details of which can be found at <http://www.resourcefulwriter.co.uk/51401.html>

This looks like a really interesting blog - I'll be back.

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