

Good morning Everyone,

Another simply gorgeous morning after a week of splendid gardening conditions. I should think that like me, some of you are feeling a bit sore in parts of your body you had forgotten existed after all the exertions expended upon cutting back, mulching, dividing, laying deep beds and discovering that your garden is still alive. The February frosts did cause some damage, especially to my ceanothus and my bay tree, both of which I hope will be recoverable, but other than that plants are looking healthy and appearing where they should be. There is an apparent green or red haze around some of the shrubs and trees as the blossom buds begin to appear and now we are told that looking at tree blossom and breathing in its scents are good for your well-being. So after a year of daily Covid walks for exercise, after your first dose of the vaccine for your health and being devoid of social company outside of your own "bubble", you should venture out to sniff your blossom or a neighbour's and tell all sceptical onlookers that it is for your well-being. On the other hand, I am not quite so enthusiastic about Monty Don's assertion that grass cutting is a male dominance activity and that grass should be allowed to grow unrestricted for the good of nature and my lack of misogyny (hopefully)! I don't have very much grass anyway; I have a good sized area of greenery, but it is mainly West of Scotland moss. But, yes, the garden is definitely springing back into life with the hellebores, the scillas, the first of the erythroniums, a few early daffodils and, of course, the rhubarb all adding splashes of welcome colour after the drabness of winter.

One of the pieces of good news is that we are officially in spring with the hours of daylight exceeding the hours of darkness and gardening programmes returning to the TV to replace endless and mind-bogglingly boring sessions of Master Chef. There are tentative signs of pandemic restrictions being lifted and we can all look forward to 5th April when we can queue outside of the hairdresser or barber waiting for a much needed haircut (I have not attempted the self cut this time around). It is a little shocking that it is over a year now since we were able to meet as a Club in a Hall and communicate other than by sitting in front of a screen. Zoom, for all its limitations, has been a life-saver as far as the Club is concerned and I am delighted to remind you that our speaker on **Tuesday 6th April 2021** is **Simon Jones**, whose talk is entitled "**Gardening on the Edge**". This talk will explore the three National Trust for Scotland's West Coast gardens at Inverewe, Brodick and Arduaine highlighting some of their interesting features, weaving in elements of climate change and paying due homage to those responsible for their creation. He will, then, focus on Arduaine's complex project to combat modern pathogens. Simon is the Regional Gardens & Designed Landscape Manager for the NTS covering the South and West Region of Scotland. He worked for several years at Edinburgh Zoo designing and constructing over 30 exhibits. I think we can expect a fascinating and interesting evening. As usual I will send out a reminder prior to the meeting, but should anyone wish to register now, then I am open for business.

Our meeting on **Tuesday 4th May 2021** will be our AGM, our annual evening of high drama, magnificent oratory and hopefully some information on what may be happening in the future. The AGM will probably start at 7:00 p.m. and then we will have a speaker at the usual time of 7:30 p.m. As I type, our speaker has not been inescapably tied down (we have a couple of choices), but as soon as they are, you will be advised. **AND**, dare I say it, if restrictions on gatherings outside are sufficiently lifted, we may, a slight may, have a chance for our Summer Social in June. Again, you will be kept advised with Marjorie and Colin once again feverishly preparing their garden on the scintilla of a possibility of a mass visitation.

Our in-house roving cultural ambassador, Nancy Stevens, has been successfully mining the speaking opportunities, via Zoom, at Garden and Horticultural Clubs around the length and breadth of the UK and beyond. She was speaking to the Kensington Gardeners in London, who are keen to increase the numbers at meetings. Their meetings are in the afternoon and there is a £5 charge. If you join in, you may be able to talk to others from across the pond! The contact details are:

website: kensingtongardeners.co.uk

contact: susan.vannoorden@ntlworld.com

Other news from the hard working, extra-curricula activities of members is that Milngavie in Bloom continues to look for volunteers as do Jane Logan and others, who have taken on the task of trying to create a garden at Gavin's Mill. For the former contact Sandra Wilson and for the latter it is Jane.

On this beautiful morning I have spent too long jabbing away at my keyboard with one finger, so it is time to get out and top up the vitamin D. Our gardens were a great source of sanity during the long months of lockdown last year and they will help us coming out of this long Covid restricted winter. Our gardens continually demonstrate that nature, whether it is plants or the wildlife, come back year after to year to provide us with many moments of awe and beauty. Stay safe, enjoy the regrowth in your gardens and hopefully I will see, on screen, as many of you as possible on **6th April**.

Best wishes

Willie



