

Dear all,

Gosh! It's September already, the nights are drawing in, the leaves on the trees are turning, the apples are ripening and the garden is looking generally soggy! Where have all those beautiful, long, sunny days of early lockdown gone? Maybe nature will be kind to us again as we rediscover the joys of pandemic restrictions and are re-confined to a greater extent to our homes and gardens. Last Sunday was a beautiful early autumn day and it was great to feel the sun on your back. It was also a lovely day, with the wind in almost the correct direction, for a small bonfire to rid myself of some woody debris and the start of planting bulbs for next spring. Despite all the recent rain, parts of the garden have refused to be



bowed by the weight of water and the buffeting wind, so the garden has retained quite a bit of the late summer colour. The rudbeckia, the phlox, geraniums and heleniums are all strutting their stuff. The garden does take on, though, a different hue with all the seed heads, the browning of the leaves and the starkness of some of the stems. As yet, the leaves have not started to fall from the trees, but when they do, I will have the immense joy of sweeping them all up! This is also the time of year when the fungi make their appearance, making me feel guilty when cutting the grass, especially in the parts where I tend to keep it a bit longer, if I forget to avoid the mushroom. I do my best, but....



The vegetable season is coming to an end for me; even the hyper-productive courgettes are giving up, but the potatoes, nematode protected, have done well and, so far, no horrible slug has slimed its way into the flesh. Every pot I move seems to disturb a sheltering frog. I have never seen so many in the years we have been here.

As many of you will have experienced and know already, our first Zoom Meeting did not quite go to plan, but for those who hung in there until the problem was sorted, we were given an excellent and most informative talk by Matt McGowan of McLarens Nurseries. Matt was extremely good and extremely patient as his host was virtually hyperventilating with a crashing computer and overriding log in details. All was resolved in the end. I am hoping I might persuade Matt to repeat his talk for those that missed it, or may wish to listen again, at a later date. As a postscript to Matt's talk and his mentioning of peat free compost, Members and subscribers may be interested to learn that Dobbies have introduced their own brand of peat free compost and it is cheaper than New Horizon.

Having navigated the initial meeting, you are now presented with **TWO** upcoming talks. Our scheduled talk on **Tuesday 6th October** with **Syd House's** presentation "**A Nation of Planters: The Story of how trees were introduced from 1600 onwards to help re-forest Scotland**" is very much on track. **I will send out details for this after the 22nd of this month.** Before Syd's talk, you are being offered an **EXTRA ONE** on **Tuesday 22nd September at 7:30 p.m.** Our very own **Nancy Stevens** will be Zooming onto your desktops, laptops or whatever with her talk on Elizabeth Blackwell entitled "**Delightful, Lovely, Deranged**". Elizabeth Blackwell was an Aberdonian lady with an unfortunate taste in men, yet still managed to produce "A Curious Herbal" in 1737. It is a merry Georgian romp and will be presented in Nancy's unique style. I will send out the details for receiving invitations within the next few days. So to recap: two upcoming talks; one on 22nd September and the other on 6th October, details on both to follow but both will start at 7:30 p.m., with log-in possible from 7:00 p.m.

The Committee is very pleased to announce the recruitment of two new members to its ranks. We are delighted, and relieved, to welcome **Marie Kotzur** and **Marjorie Thorburn** to join us in taking the Club forward from **January 2021**, when they will both be free of other commitments. We hope you are all in agreement as it allows the new Committee members to understand the way we "work" before some of those who have carried the burden for several years, retire to the back benches. We are still hoping to recruit one more and the persuasive techniques are ongoing!

So that is that for this Newsletter. As I have said two more sets of instructions will be forthcoming shortly and I look forward to seeing all those who wish to attend our meetings these times without mishap or interruption or panic. I think we are all going to have to accept that the whole of this year's sessions will most likely be conducted by Zoom, but if a vaccine is found, who knows how quickly normality may return. In the meantime, we still have the leaf mould collection season to look forward to, the planting of bulbs for next spring and general tidying up. There is always something to do in the garden, so continue to enjoy them and continue to avoid Covid.

With best wishes to you all,

Willie



