

Hello one and all,

The barber, to whom I paid a visit last week, reported that there were only two patches of home cutting that would take time to recover, unless I wanted him to sort the damage immediately by allowing my hair to be cut very close to the scalp. I declined as I thought I could live with the damage, which I couldn't see, and the modicum of hair covering I have would be better than having a ten-pin bowling ball on my shoulders. It was a relief, though, to have a proper haircut, as it was to escape to North Berwick for a couple of days, stay in a very pleasant and ultra clean hotel, walk the virtually empty beaches on the west side of the town in beautiful weather and end our stay with the about the best fish and chips I have tasted. Freedom at a social distance and a different four walls was quite liberating and stimulating.



Since that period of day release, the rain has fallen and drooped all the tall plants in the garden, as can be seen by the campanula (wonderful musky scent), which was standing proudly tall the day before. Having mentioned the rain, on the four occasions when members visited the gardens at Crossburn over the past three weeks, it rained every single time. Lovely on each morning, then Scotch drizzle misted us all like plants in a greenhouse as soon as a visitor appeared. As one esteemed member commented, "Does it ever not rain at Crossburn?" Well yes, it does stop as long as no one visits, but it was a real pleasure to see some of you after so long. If more wish to visit, then please contact me and a time will be arranged, but bring a brolly. Speaking of garden visits, Nancy Stevens states that members are welcome to visit her terraced territory any Friday up to the end of August between 2:30 and 4:30 p.m.. No refreshments will be provided, but there is outdoor seating to have your carry-out picnic. Parking is available at Bearsden Station and Nancy's garden steps have been repaired! Other members have also offered up their gardens for inspection.

I am wondering if I am imagining happenings in the garden, but the rowans (those still alive!) are full of red berries, a cherry tree's leaves are turning and I am sure one of the acers is also turning. Could they be showing their autumn colours early as they were early in leafing in the gorgeous spring? The late summer flowers are now displaying their wares with the astilbes (recovered from their late frosting in May) full of frothy colour, the crocosmia lucifer dazzling with their fiery red sprays of flowers, the clematis with huge discus sized white blooms, delphiniums still upright thanks to proper support and the verbascum, along with many other late season plants, just beginning to flower on their long, and so far upright, stems. After a period of relatively muted colours, it does lift the spirits to see the variety of colour once again invading the garden, and in my case, in a rather higglety pigglety manner. The roses, too, have had a splendid and long summer flowering, though the recent rain has had its browning effect on the white blooms. It is the time of year when I often get the feeling that the garden is so full that I am losing control of what is happening, but then again the weeds are pretty well hidden! The dragonflies are beginning to appear, which is always a wonderful sight to see the flashes of iridescence flitting across the garden. Frogs are also croaking that is in making a noise, not dying!

We **will** be having our first meeting, with a speaker, on 1st September 2020 come what may. Our first two speakers scheduled for September and October have confirmed they are willing to give their talks via Zoom, if, as is increasingly likely, that proves necessary. The speaker for **September 1st** will be **Mathew McGowan of McLarens Nursery on the “Environmental Challenges in Horticulture”** which will cover issues like peat free compost, use of insecticides and plant importation. On **Tuesday 6th October, Syd House’s talk will be on “A Nation of Tree Planters”**. Full details of what will be happening will follow in August and if it is on Zoom, the Club will subscribe to the longer version of Zoom and instructions will be sent out to everyone on how to log on and what the protocols will be. The Chairman has to learn these first! If we do find a Hall that is open and is big enough, then a decision will be made as to whether we use it in September or wait until October, but whatever, put **7:30 p.m. on Tuesday 1st September into your diaries NOW!**

By the end of this month Subscription renewals will have reached you. We are urging all members, where possible, to pay by BACS (if you have mobile or internet banking this is a relatively easy and painless exercise). The subscription has not increased so you are still getting amazing value for only £15.00 p.a. and once all restrictions are cleared, the Christmas Party could be quite an event! As always, I encourage you to renew as quickly as possible and all of us look forward to the evening when we can all meet up again in person.

Throughout this period of strangeness when we have been confined to our houses and gardens, the mental saviour of most of us, I have endeavoured to keep in touch by inflicting a twice monthly Newsletter upon you. This is the last of the inflictions as I now think it appropriate to revert to the monthly ramblings, except where there is something important to relate, like how to use Zoom. Talking of Newsletters, I attach the Newsletter from Milngavie in Bloom; this is a real Newsletter and well worth the read to understand the breadth of the work undertaken. Anyway, it is time to go outside and tend the soggy plants. I really do look forward to seeing as many of you as is possible on 1st September, whether it be in the flesh or a postage stamp size frame on a computer screen. In the meantime, continue to enjoy every minute in your gardens as they have sustained us through these past four and a bit months.

Stay safe, keep well and best wishes

Willie



