

Baldernock Gardening Club; February 2022: Dudley and Eunice visited and we await Franklin, Gladys and Herman.

Good afternoon Everyone,

February has been a rather meteorologically turbulent period with little opportunity to venture safely out into the garden. There has been the odd good afternoon and the one really glorious day, yesterday (Saturday), when stepping out and getting to grips with a soggy patch was possible. Fortunately, we have not suffered the damage that other parts of the country have experienced or watched trees topple, but the first task, when in the garden, is to pick up all the dead and weak tree branches scattered throughout the beds and the moss lawn. I have sufficient wood to satisfy kindling needs for any wild camper; lighting the wood would be a problem as it is all somewhat damp! The snowdrops have survived and continue to brighten up pockets of the garden with their startling white blooms. The cyclamens have spread well over the past year and there are now groups of them enlivening areas around the feet of trees, with the winter aconites also adding their rich butter yellow to the increasing colour hue. The sturdy hellebores, which always look so sad and defeated when it is cold, are standing proud against the gusts and provide that profusion of beautiful flower heads, so modestly bowed towards the earth, that help to lift the garden and provide that promise of more to come. The pots of iris reticulata have performed pretty well this year, whilst those in the ground have drowned. It has been a wet and windy month, but so far we have had a remarkably mild winter with many of the plants showing signs of activity about two weeks ahead of last year, according to my photographs. We could do with a cold spell, but I do hope it doesn't come too late, as it did last year and which damaged quite a few specimens who wrongly reckoned everything was okay. The birds continue to devour all the feed available and I spotted and counted 15 long-tailed tits covering the feeders like locusts the other morning. Yesterday in the garden, I was accompanied all afternoon by a robin who inspected every bit of earth I disturbed and by the end of the day we were on first name terms.

Our meeting on 2nd February in Baljaffray Church Hall was a lovely occasion as it was the first time in 2 years that so many Club Members were able and willing to meet together. We were fortunate, and fittingly I think, in having Nicola MacNaughton, the Bonnie Gardener, as our live speaker, to give us all her insights into how she plans and designs her gardens. There were a few of us, myself most definitely included, who realised that maybe they should have consulted Nicola first before laying out their gardens (unfortunately I don't think Nicola was even born when I began planting things in the wrong place at Crossburn!). She provided us with so many practical and inspirational ideas and she also proved to be a most willing triallist for our first ever live performance. There was a slight problem with the sound, which will be sorted by **Wednesday 9th March** and hopefully this time all the necessary cables will be on site for setting up, thereby causing fewer heart palpitations for the projectionist.

So, our next speaker on **WEDNESDAY 9th**

March at 19:30 is **Paula Murdoch**, Head Gardener at

Glasgow's Hidden Gardens. Paula will be describing the history of the garden since its opening in 2003, the ethos and the visions underpinning its work, how Paula gardens in an environmentally friendly and chemically free manner and how the gardens help the local communities. It is amazing how this garden has grown and developed over that past 18/19 years and it will be fascinating to hear Paula's story, so, do come along to Baljaffray Church Hall on **Wednesday 9th March, doors open at 19:00**, for what should be another excellent talk. The talk will be available on Zoom for those who don't wish to venture out or are having to babysit or dogsit. There is **NO NEED** to register for the talk if you are planning to be a member of the real audience, but **you must register if you wish to use Zoom**. A reminder will be sent out a week before the talk, giving Zoomers plenty of time to register. The Committee and I look forward to seeing even more of you in the Hall and there is plenty of room for everyone.

On **Wednesday 6th April at Baljaffray Church Hall** our speaker will be Douglas Cameron, who did so much to raise the profile and success of Milngavie-In-Bloom and the winning of a Beautiful Scotland Gold Medal in 2019. The volunteers continue to create colour and beauty for the benefit of all who live or visit Milngavie and it will be interesting to learn how Douglas helped to fashion this success.

This morning I went down to Cloberfield, except it was all under water. I have no recollection of seeing the Allander so full.

Thank you to all those Members who have answered Marie Lees's call to help with the Tea Rota. She has had a marvellous response, which is good news for all of us who like a cuppa and a chat. Your Committee has again been working hard behind the scenes arranging Speakers for the session September 2022 to May 2023 and, at the moment of typing, five of the available seven dates have been filled. It is a varied selection again, with at least two talks slightly outside the norm. As to arranging Club Outings, Sandra and Caroline Preacher are beavering away. One of our target sites was Cluny House Gardens run by John Mattingley, but unfortunately the garden suffered severe damage during Storm Arwen, losing some precious trees and shrubs and making the gardens unsafe for a visit. John has opened a CrowdFunding appeal to help pay for the repair and to which the Club is considering making a donation. Should anyone wish to donate personally, then all the details are on Cluny House Garden website. As soon as Sandra and Caroline have confirmed visits, you will be advised.

It is just under three months until our **Annual Plant Sale on Saturday 14th May 2022**. It is looking increasingly unlikely that Milngavie Town Hall will be available this year, therefore it is virtually certain that our one and only annual fund raising event will be held in Baljaffray. There are still some logistics to be worked on for that to be finally confirmed, but in no way should those interfere with you all selecting your

choicest cuttings and divisions to tempt and delight our prospective purchasers. If anyone is in need of plastic pots, let me know as without a doubt there will be plenty lying around in garages or greenhouses.

That's it for this month and I look forward to a full house on **Wednesday 9th March for Paula Murdoch's talk**. Remember there is no need to ping an email to say you are coming, but if you are Zooming, then you can ping an email. The sun has just peeked out, so another chance to don the waterproof clothing and potter about in the drier bits of the garden. Stay safe from Covid and falling trees. The days are getting longer with Spring itching to raise our spirits.

Best wishes

Willie



