

## Baldernock Gardening Club: January 2022 Newsletter: Mild, mild winter.... so far.

Good evening one and all,

The photograph below, taken by Jane Logan, captures the Club's new residence in Baljaffray Church Hall at about 19:15 on Wednesday 12th January. The live audience numbers were not huge, around 25, but here are the early arrivees settling down in their comfortable chairs and looking at the Zoomers who have logged in beside the Cross. The overhead projector located up in the rafters beamed the growing number of log-ons, whilst the built in speaker system boomed out the rattle of tea cups and inter-zoom conversations. Once everyone was muted by the "host" our guest speaker's image was large on screen and his talk was clearly heard by all in the Hall. I can assure you, we have plenty of room for many more attendees, even with continued social distancing. It was an excellent evening and all the technology worked without a hiccup: no guarantees that will always be the case!



Our speaker was Gary Carroll, of Cranesbill Nursery, on Hardy Geraniums and he certainly knew his subject and all 500+ varieties. Having had the encyclopaedic knowledge of all the Snowdrop varieties from Michael Myers in November, Gary provided us with a similar in-depth look, but at least there was more of a discernible difference between one geranium variety and another. It was a fascinating talk and, judging by the emails afterwards, enjoyed by many of you. Gary allowed us to record his talk and the Chair advised all in the audience this was going to happen and urged them to be on their best behaviour. He then missed the first

minute of the talk as he forgot to press the record button! You just can't get reliable operatives these days. Anyway, the recording worked and those who used it were grateful. Gary was the first speaker to allow us to record their talk and if we can do it again, we will.

So, Gary was our first guest speaker to grace our new Hall, but **Nicola MacNaughton, the Bonnie Gardener**, will be our first speaker to actually appear in front of us to give us our talk; she will be our first "live" speaker since Kevin Hughes in March 2020. Nicola will be talking to us on

## **WEDNESDAY 2nd FEBRUARY 2022 at 19:30 in Baljaffray Church Hall.**

Nicola, who is a regular member of our audience, lives and works locally as a Garden Designer with a focus on the plants, hence her talk being entitled "**Designing with Plants**". She is a trained horticulturist and has a Diploma in Herbology from the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh. The reason she set up the Bonnie Gardener was "to help people discover how they can make the most of their gardens and outdoor spaces, in a way that is mutually valuable for wildlife, and in a way that is manageable and sustainable for that individual or family too". The talk will be given in person in the Hall, but we will also be broadcasting it via Zoom at the same time (even more new tricks to be mastered!). Now that Covid restrictions have been relaxed, it would be wonderful to have even more of you turning up to enjoy the new facilities.

As things are not completely back to what we used to do, I am still asking those wishing to attend the talk, either in person or via Zoom, to pre-register. A reminder notice will be sent out next week, but if you wish to attend on **Wednesday 2nd February** you are very welcome to do so as from receiving this Newsletter. **Please indicate clearly whether you are attending in the Hall or via Zoom.** All those coming to the Hall are asked to take a Lateral Flow Test that day and to wear a mask in the Hall when moving about.

The committee is meeting this week to begin the process of selecting and inviting Speakers for the 2022/23 season starting this September and we have quite a wide list from which to make our choices. We will also be beginning preparations for the **RETURN OF THE PLANT SALE** on Saturday 14th May 2022. Hopefully, Milngavie Town Hall will have ceased being a Vaccination Centre by then, but if it continues to be unavailable an alternative location has already been arranged. So, regardless of the venue, Members may start selecting cuttings from all their choicest plants and making them ready for sale. You have just over 16 weeks to

select, nurture and temptingly pot your horticultural masterpieces and remember, no peat!

The Committee will be working, too, to arrange Club Outings during the late spring and summer and to organise the Summer Social. The life of the Club is beginning to return (fingers crossed that another letter from the Greek Alphabet doesn't mutate) and we can truly reacquaint ourselves with the enjoyable socialising and the all important chat.

As to gardening up here in Crossburn it is stirring on the good days, but the gardener hibernates again on the dark, damp days. It is so mild that plants are thinking it is approaching Spring; they may be in for a shock. But plants like clematis are leafing, rhododendrons are heavily budded, tulips are thrusting their stems out even before the daffodils, pink pulmonaria is flowering and a few of my snowdrops are on the cusp of opening. Last year, we had a relatively mild January and then the frosts came and if you remember, everything that survived was about two weeks late thereafter. I fear a similar situation this year, but maybe not. With great nervousness I have planted a Dicksonia Antarctica or a tree fern. When it was delivered the poor delivery driver staggered and weaved towards the kitchen door carrying this very heavy log; I then had to get it to where it was to be planted. A rounded "log" on a pallet carrier on soft ground is a comedy experience Buster Keaton or Mr Bean would have exploited and enjoyed; I didn't at the time always see the humour! It is now in the ground with straw in its crown, fleeced and waiting for Spring and as it only grows by about 3 cm each year, it will be a good few years before it starts to cast shadows. The bird feeder has been colonised by a very chirpy group of long tailed tits, with a few tree sparrows forcing their way through. The owls have started to hoot at night, the geese honk noisily every morning at around 7:30 as they fly past in their masses and a fox was barking the other night. It is peaceful up here when it is dark!

That's it for this month, but I will send out a short reminder next week about **Nicola MacNaughton's talk on Wednesday 2nd February 2022**. In case anyone asks, Gary Carroll will NOT be reprising his talk on 15th February, his original speaking date. Enjoy the new found freedoms, but remain careful, keep safe and warm and make February 2nd your night out for the month. It will be much better than Clubbing!

Best wishes

Willie



