

## **Baldernock Gardening Club: June 23 Newsletter: Likely to be the hottest day of the year....so far.**

Good morning one and all,

The sacrifices one makes for the Club. Instead of smothering myself in Factor 50, here I am ensconced at my desk in the garret, as the sun beats down through the Velux and my right index finger is battering away at the keyboard to "compose" the monthly ramblings on Club activities.

Most members are still recovering from their amazing exertions and displays of Olympian stamina at our successful Annual Plant Sale earlier this month. To think that was only just over two weeks ago and already members are telling me what they plan to pot up for next year's sale. That is dedication for you and wonderful to hear, as the Sale is so important to the continued success of the Club. I have to admit, my wife and I were completely bushed at the end of what was a long and constantly active day, so we may well have to begin training at the gym earlier next year!

Isn't this weather wonderful? It is just so lovely to have the warmth and to see the garden really come to life. One worry is, of course, the lack of rain, which is not the usual complaint in Milngavie. Those with ponds are worried at the decreasing water levels, so we fret about drought, we rage at too much rain, we wail at too much wind and have nightmares about a late frost. Gardens are a constant cause of concern at the same time as being incredibly therapeutic. The garden at Crossburn is looking pretty colourful at the moment with irises, candelabra primulas, astrantias, azaleas and meconopsis all performing perfectly. The flower buds on the poppies are profuse and if they all burst open together, I could have quite a spectacular display (as long as the rain stays away!). The peonies, too, are heavy with flower buds and they are always such a joyous plant to see in bloom. My small fernery, all of eight ferns, is doing well with the much reported upon tree fern being extremely dominant. I can't quite get

over the fact that last year it had one frond and now it looks like a tree fern. As to the local wild-life, there is not much to report. The visitors to the bird feeders have been pretty mundane, though the ducks have created a pathway from the pond to the feeders as they make the journey at least ten times a day. Though I may not have seen as many birds on the feeders as in past years, I have heard them and identified them on a new app I have discovered thanks to Melanie Reid of the Times. The app is called Merlin and it allows you to record the bird song in and around your garden and then it tells you what bird is singing. I haven't seen goldfinches on the feeders for months, but they are singing in my trees. I have not, as far as I am aware, seen a chiffchaff, but I have recorded it. If you haven't got this app, I do recommend it as you get a great deal of pleasure from it.

In May, apart from the Plant Sale, we had our very well attended AGM, followed by a passionate talk from Dougie Boatman of Scotplants, whose love for plants really shone through his talk. It is sad to learn that Dougie is retiring shortly and giving up his business. We wish him a happy retirement. Our next event is for **MEMBERS ONLY** and is the Summer Social being held in the two gardens at Crossburn on Wednesday 14th June from 18:30. Whatever invocations you each use, please call upon them daily to plead for a lovely, dry summer's evening, with a slight warm breeze to deter the feasting midges so that we can all socialise in the fresh air and balminess of a Milngavie Mediterranean evening! I think we all deserve it. Full details about the evening will be issued shortly to all those coming. There is a waiting list of members wishing to come, so if you have your name down and discover that you can't come, please let Marjorie Thorburn know as soon as possible. The residents of Crossburn are looking forward to welcoming you on the night.

As many attendees at our meetings know, our venue at Baljaffray Church has one drawback in that the sound system is less than perfect. Also, few of our speakers fail to appreciate that if you don't speak into the microphone, your voice is not amplified. I have been advised by the Church that a new sound system is to be installed over the summer

and that clip-on mics will be available. Apparently, I will have to attend a training session on the new system, so I am very hopeful that the only major bugbear with our venue is going to be resolved in time for the start of our new season in September.

The other day I received a telephone call from Mr. Somerville, who has lived in Old Kilmardinny House on Milngavie Road for the past 70 years (I am presuming he inherited the property from his parents). Mr. Somerville has a plot of land on his property, which he has used for growing vegetables for many years, but he is no longer able to cope with it. He had heard good things about our Club and he is wondering if any member or members would be interested in using it as a sort of allotment. I do not know, at this stage, if he intends to charge a rent - my suspicion is that he won't as he just wants someone to make use of the plot for their own horticultural purposes. If any member is interested, please contact me as soon as possible and I will then advise Mr. Somerville and arrange a suitable time for a visit. I will try, too, to get some more information.

Well, that is the 2022/23 season nearly complete. Our next meeting is on **Wednesday 13th September at 19:30 in Baljaffray Church Hall. Our speaker will be Melissa Simpson, who is Head Gardener at Dumfries House.** This will be a tremendous start to what should prove to be another excellent year of varied topics and excellent speakers. I will subject you to one more newsletter late on in June, then I will leave you in relative peace throughout July and most of August.

I look forward to seeing many of you on 14th June, but until then enjoy the sunshine, enjoy your gardens, enjoy the scents from the plants and to identifying the bird-song on Merlin.

With best wishes

Willie



P.S. A Member has kept hold of one of our BGC Aprons after the Plant Sale. Would they please remember to hand it to Marjorie Thorburn either at the Summer Social or at the next meeting in September.







A very busy Plant Sale about 15 minutes after doors opened. The blur is Elaine Shearer moving very fast!