

## Keeping in Touch – May 4<sup>th</sup> 2020

Hello again,

The cherry blossom fell from my trees in the last few days, but at this time of year there is so much going on in the garden and so much green around us, you can't be sad for too long.

**KITBITS** - (I've stolen this title from Pam Hutchinson, thought it was a good heading for the info section)

Tricia Fraser sent in the following which might be of interest:

"I follow Noel Kingsbury on Facebook and since he can't run garden masterclasses for now, he's putting videos of some famous gardeners online so I have just been watching Fergus Garrett talking about what they are doing at Great Dixter at the moment (mostly it's what they are not doing as they are not open). There's a whole variety of these talks available (I have only watched a small part of Fergus's talk so far but will return to it and the others in due course). The link to these videos is: <https://www.gardenmasterclass.org/blog-and-podcasts> . At the moment they are available for free, though there is a donate button at the bottom of the page."

This is a really interesting video in which Fergus shares his drawings and plans for layered planting, it gave me some great ideas for some areas in my own garden.

My daughter sent some information in which she thought might be of interest to us, sadly it's too late in sending it through for this year. Did you know that the first Saturday in May is International Naked Gardening Day? There are videos on YouTube giving you advice on how to go about things, for instance, don't prune your roses or cut hedges, you can wear footwear and ensure you make direct eye contact with your immediate neighbours to avoid any embarrassment. So shall we make it a date for next year? Perhaps the diary entry will look like this: Saturday May 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 – stay indoors!!

## PLANT IDENT

Pam Hodgson's daughter-in-law is beginning to develop a garden in Stratford upon Avon and saw this shrub in a nearby garden, she wants to know what it is so she can buy one. Anyone any ideas? Viburnum of some sort?



Jim Chandler asks “Can anyone verify or me the name of the shrub which we inherited with our garden, It is perhaps a *Deutzia gracilis* but I am far from certain. It is now flowering profusely in the front hedge as illustrated and has a further division we are currently trying to train up the front of the house.” Send your answers into [tonifrascina@outlook.com](mailto:tonifrascina@outlook.com) and I’ll publish in a future edition.



## GROWING FROM SEED

Growing from seed is very satisfying and as I said last time, you never know what you are going to get. Here's a couple of examples. Firstly Barbara Dygnas has grown an aroid from HPS seed, she doesn't know its name.



Paul Forster grew this dianthus, *D. sylvestris bertisceus* from seed. He says its “a lovely thing, elegant and refined”



## OTHER PHOTOS

Another splendid aroid from Barbara, *Arisaema nepenthoides*, certainly makes a statement.



A lovely specimen from Kathryn Barnes, she says "I am so pleased with my auricula this year! I bought it at least 10 years ago at a tiny little nursery near the Bowes Museum in County Durham. It was always a bit sulky but survived the move to Sheffield and then produced a daughter. I have no idea of its official name having lost the label in the house move."



The Bowes Museum is worth a visit if you've never been. We came across it by chance one November years ago travelling up to Barnard Castle for a long weekend. Driving along an A road in County Durham we suddenly came upon what looks like a French Chateau. It was built by ancestors of the late Queen mother, a Bowes Lyons couple who were great art lovers, childless and wealthy. They did the grand tour and bought a huge amount of art work on their travels which they housed in a museum styled on a French chateau, for the education of the great unwashed. It is absolutely stuffed with great works of art, the most curious of which is a large silver clockwork swan. This is wound up twice a day when the swan does a 60 second routine pulling a fish out of a pond. We sat with a small crowd waiting for the show to start and the seat next to me taken by a lady in full geisha costume and makeup, including little wooden sandals and white silky stockings. All I could think about was how on earth she kept her feet dry and socks so brilliantly white in the late autumn drizzle of County Durham!

I digress....

Weigela next, from Hugh Reid, *W. middendorffiana* 'Toffee Cream' which Hugh says evokes 'a fond memory of the fantastic Logan Botanic Garden in our favourite part of Scotland'.



Chris Hibberd also sent in a photo of her 4 year old *W. middendorffianna* which has flowered this year, it is so similar to Hugh's plant I haven't featured it (sorry Chris – Hugh got into my inbox first).

Julianne Porter set in a couple of pics, one of another viola from the Jack Willgoss talk last year, it's got a great name *V. 'Butterpat'*. Her second photo, *Tulipa 'Ballerina'*, one of my favourites and I think a tulip which will come back year after year, it certainly does if it's in a pot.



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From Decie Needham, a camelia with one of the grandest names ever *C. Comtesse Lavinia Maggi* and an unusual flower.



And finally, Ruth Ludford took this when 'walking round the garden made me realise it is a rainbow of colours'. Very much an image of the moment don't you think.



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#### **NEXT TIME**

More plant ident, camassia, rare trees in flower and some penstemon.

Cheers all,

Toni