

COLINTON GARDEN CLUB

NEWSLETTER

www.colingtongardens.org.uk



No 118
April 2017

Coming soon...

Monday 24th
April 8 pm

AGM
&
Members'
Arts & Crafts
Evening

See page 4
for details

Gardens of the
Royal Mile
Tour

In view of the
success of a
previous tour,
we intend to
organize another
in May or June.
Please contact
Susan Plag (p4)
to express
interest

Dear Club Members

The crocuses have come and gone, and as I write in mid-March, the daffodils are bursting out in great swathes all over town and cheering us all up during the rather cold weather. The rhododendrons are also beginning to bloom, and one can only marvel at the wonderfully intense colours and the varying sizes of the flowers to be seen in the gardens around this area of town.



The native Colinton cherry trees are doing particularly well this year, with their delicate pink flowers brightening some extremely dull days. The bullfinches always have a good go at my tree and seem to love tucking into the tiny blossom buds. I really don't grudge them their feast because they are so bright and colourful with their orange breasts and black caps and they hop around the branches clearly enjoying themselves immensely. Reports have also come in about the return of greenfinches and goldfinches to bird feeders in and around Colinton together with all the robins, blue tits, coal tits and the rest. Wrens and even thrushes have also been spotted. It is wonderful to hear the birds singing their hearts out now that Spring is finally here.

Lots to do in the garden, of course. According to Monty Don, the most effective and cheapest way to speedily multiply snowdrops is to lift and divide them now, just after the flowers have faded but before the leaves die back (*in the green*). The advantage is that you can put them where you want them and fill up any empty spaces. Snowdrops also of course spread naturally but this takes time. He says planting them as bulbs is tricky and that he once planted 1,000 bulbs and only 12 came up! I thought it gratifying that even experts fail sometimes.

I have just come back from a week in Spain where we had wall-to-wall sunshine and temperatures of 24°C. We visited a couple of private houses in Cremona (picture) about half an hour's drive north-west of Seville. You enter through...



...relatively small front doors - there are no windows looking out onto the narrow streets - and you pass through tiled entrance ways into beautiful inner courtyards with lovely terracotta tiled floors and apricot limewashed walls covered with jasmine. We saw quite large olive trees, lemon trees and decorative small palms in elegant pots. One house had a small swimming pool and the other an Islamic tiled fountain. Series of what look like washing lines stretched across the roof areas and we were told that these support the awnings that have to be put up in summer to protect both plants and people, as the temperature can go up to 40°C. This is a problem that we certainly don't have in Scotland. Roof terraces provide wonderful places to sit and look at the view over the rooftops as you watch the sun set and enjoy your glass of fizz. It was all very pleasant.

Let's hope warmer weather comes soon.

Elspeth

Congratulations to Club members honoured by The Caley



Some of the awardees - photo provided by Clive Davies

The Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society has awarded Certificates of Merit to Christopher Davies (ex Club Chairman, third from left) and Elizabeth Ferro (previous holder of several Committee posts, far right) for their 'highly regarded and significant contribution to horticulture and gardening in Scotland'. Ann Burns (second left), who has given talks to our Club, was awarded the Dr Andrew Duncan Medal. Awards were presented by George Anderson, one of the regular presenters of The Beechgrove Garden'. See

<http://www.rchs.co.uk/about-us/awards/>

Volunteers needed for Gardening Scotland 2017

Gardening Scotland takes place at Ingliston from Friday 3rd June to Sunday 5th June this year. As ever the organisers are looking for volunteers to assist with stewarding and liaison duties. Volunteers will receive travelling expenses, free entry to the show, special parking places, and snack meals and refreshments whilst on duty. If expenses are not claimed, a donation per volunteer is paid to our Club. Tours of duty are split into two overlapping periods each day: from 9.00 am until 1.30 pm and 12.45 pm until 5.00 pm. Any member wishing to volunteer should let Billy Wheelan know (538 4965) by Monday 24th April (date of the Club's AGM). Thereafter volunteers will be contacted directly by one of the Volunteer Co-ordinators.

Our compost ordering scheme

Garden Solutions wishes to thank all their recent customers; 62 orders to the value of £2700 were placed. Billy Wheelan

Scotland's Garden Scheme

**Sunday 2nd July from 2 – 5 pm at
21 and 42 Pentland Ave and 16 Gillespie Rd**

Caroline and Michael Pearson along with two neighbours are opening their gardens for Scotland's Garden Scheme. There will be a plant stall and teas. The admission charge of £5 gives access to all three gardens.

Herbaceous borders, rockeries, ponds and water features will be on show. If the weather is kind, plants to be seen will include *Carpentaria californica*, *Cornus kousa*, *Meconopsis napaulensis*, anemones, crinodendron, marsh orchids, Oriental poppies, salvias and a large specimen of blue abutilon. The Abutilon genus contains about 200 species and is positioned within the Mallow Family.

March at The Botanics

Behind the red pompoms of *Calliandra haematocephala* in the Rainforest Riches Glasshouse, I spied a striking bloom of *Aphelandra sinclairiana*, the Coral Aphelandra. The genus contains about 170 evergreen species native to Central America. Many of you will be familiar with *Aphelandra squarrosa*, the Zebra Plant, with its bright yellow bracts and white-veined leaves. *Aphelandra sinclairiana* is named after Andrew Sinclair, a Royal Navy surgeon born in Paisley in 1794, who spent much of his overseas journeys searching for exotic plants. After reluctantly accepting the post of Colonial Secretary of New Zealand in 1844, he did much to ease the conflict between the settlers and the Maoris. He also turned out to be a talented administrator and was responsible for creating an efficient civil service in the colony. Life was dangerous then - Sinclair died in 1861 while attempting a crossing on horseback of the Rangitata River in southern New Zealand. Editor



Members' Recipes: from Elspeth McGregor Savoury pancakes with spinach, leeks, ham and cheese

- 110g plain flour
 - pinch salt
 - 2 large eggs
 - 200ml milk
 - 75ml water
 - 2 tbsp melted butter
 - butter for greasing
 - 3 leeks, trimmed, halved and washed
 - 250g young spinach leaves
 - 6 fine slices of honey roast ham, trimmed and halved
 - 200g Brie or Camembert, sliced
 - 30g Gruyère cheese, finely grated
1. Sift the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre, break the eggs into it and whisk everything together
 2. Combine the milk and water in a jug then gradually add to the batter while whisking continuously. Once all the liquid has been added, continue to whisk until the batter is smooth and creamy. Whisk in the melted butter
 3. Grease an 18cm frying pan and heat until it is really hot, reduce the heat to medium and ladle about 2 tbsp of batter into the pan then immediately swirl around so the base is evenly covered. Cook until it begins to set then flip over and cook the other side briefly. Make 12 pancakes in this way, stacking them between sheets of greaseproof paper as made
 4. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F and liberally butter a large baking dish
 5. Place the leeks in boiling, salted water, cook for about 3 minutes then cool in cold water. Squeeze dry on kitchen roll and cut each into four
 6. Add the spinach to the boiling water, removing it as soon as it collapses. Cool in cold water, squeeze dry and gently unfurl
 7. Place half a slice of ham in the middle of a pancake, add two pieces of leek and a little spinach and top with a piece of Brie or Camembert. Roll neatly and place on the baking dish. Repeat with the remaining pancakes
 8. Sprinkle with the grated cheese and bake for 25 minutes or until hot and bubbling
- Serves 4**

Volunteer Fortnight at Chisholme House, near Hawick: 8 – 22 April

Would you like to gain experience of large-scale garden planting? Or work in the kitchen or woodyard, or perhaps renovate the house. You are welcome to join our morning meditation sessions also. For further information see: <http://www.chisholme.org/calendar/12/5-4-April-Volunteer-fortnight.html>

Members' Arts and Crafts Evening to accompany our AGM in April

You are invited to bring along your recent art and craft work for display and judging

This year's theme is 'Springtime'
in the form of
**embroidery, quilting, tapestry,
paintings, photography, bowls of bulbs,
flower arrangements, and the like**

A gardening / horticultural emphasis is a must, but there are no limitations on the type and number of items that you may present. For further details / advice on displaying large or unusual items, please contact Margo Gilchrist: 0131 441 7339 library@colintongardens.org.uk

Update on Garden Refuse Collection in Colinton

On 6th March, Elspeth went to Councillor Jason Rust's surgery to discuss the Garden Club's concerns over garden refuse collection. The advice given was that, "Each customer can only have one brown bin per household. However they can pay a price of £29.80 for a 360 litre garden bin and the current small bin would be removed." See the following website; http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20225/bin_collection_days/1529/garden_waste

Tiphereth's service will remain the same and be totally unaffected by the wider change to the council service. There *may* be scope for Tiphereth to expand delivery of its service to other parts of Colinton.

Outdoor Summer Schedule 2017

Contact Susan Plag: 0131 441 7936; events@colintongardens.org.uk

Monday 15 May	Evening Garden Event A visit to the beautiful private garden at Oakwood in Roslin Glen (EH25 9PZ). 6.30 – 8 pm. List is now full. Parking is limited – you must meet at Westgarth Avenue at 5.50 pm when car places will be allocated
Saturday 24 June	Open Gardens & Plant Sale You are kindly invited to visit three gardens within easy walking distance 1 Dreghorn Loan – Alan and Heather Smith – Tea & Coffee 3 Dreghorn Loan – Tom and Susan Murray 19 Dreghorn Loan – Bryan and Mary Dale – Plant Stall Please deposit plants at the Dales' house from 9 to 9.30 am on the day
Saturday 29 July	Summer Outing A whole day outing by coach to three gardens in the Borders: Newhall in Carlops, Abbotsford House in Melrose and Mertoun Estate in St Boswells. We now have a full complement for the coach. Please bring a picnic lunch. We depart Westgarth Avenue at 9.00 am PROMPT , returning around 5 pm

Newsletter Delivery

Not received your newsletter?
Contact Bob Jones
Communications Officer
0131 445 2745

publicity@colintongardens.org.uk

Club Website

For details of all Club activities
and contact addresses

Webmaster: Sonia Duffy

www.colintongardens.org.uk

Membership enquiries – contact Jo Todd, Membership Secretary

membership@colintongardens.org.uk