

Minutes of the Darrington Garden Club held at the Kyte Hotel 13th of September 2017.

Chairman - stand in Hazel Crabtree

Present:-

Hazel Crabtree
Mr and Mrs Cook
Wendy Armitage
Barbara Abrey
Vera Stones
Mr and Mrs Maw
Barbara M^cKillop

Apologies:-

Ann Hutchinson
Kathleen Hirst
Andy Tagger
Allen Bentley
Mr and Mrs Heelis
Fran Walker
Mr and Mrs Audsley



Aster

Absent:-

Christine Blakeston
Joan Lowe
Gail Jenkins

The meeting opened at 6pm.

Hazel welcomed everyone – It was lovely to see Mrs Cook albeit in a wheel chair for ease of mobilisation, Mr Cook following his weekly chemo treatment, Phil who is steadily improving – he is now allowed to do some weeding and dead heading in the garden – he is also allowed to do a little gentle dancing. Barbara reported that she has been to see Kathleen today in her new ‘royal’ residence Holly Rood House Knottingley.

Members asked where Andy was last month – sorry Andy I had to tell the truth – he ‘forgot’ to come.

Andy had sent a ‘programme’ for the September meeting which was more or less adhered to.

Plant of the month is the Aster, of which there are 600 species.

Botanical Name: *Aster* --- Plant Type: **Flower** Sun Exposure: **Full Sun / Part Sun** – Soil Type: **Loamy** Soil pH: **Varies** – Flower Colour: **Pink / Purple / Red / White** – Bloom Time: **Summer / Fall** – Special Features: **Attracts Butterflies** this lead on to talk about other plants which attract butterflies.

The plant’s height ranges from 8 inches to 8 feet, depending on the type. You can find an aster for almost any garden at garden centres in autumn. The plant can be used in many places, such as in borders, rock gardens, or wild-flower gardens. Asters also attract butterflies to your garden! - Asters prefer climates with cool, moist summers — especially cool night temperatures. Select a site with full sun to partial sun. Soil should be moist, well-drained, and average to humus-rich. Plant asters in early to mid-spring. Fertilize soil prior to planting. While the plant can be grown from seed, germination can be uneven. You can start the seeds indoors during the winter by sowing seeds in pots and keeping them in the refrigerator for 4 to 6 weeks (but not in the same fridge as you keep your food!). After 4 to 6 weeks, put the seeds in a sunny spot. Set seeds one inch deep. Many gardeners opt for

purchasing a potted plant from the nursery instead. Space asters 1 to 3 feet apart, depending on the type. Give plants plenty of water at planting. Add mulch after planting to keep soil cool and prevent weeds. If you're replanting shoots, use vigorous, young shoots to ensure best growth. Care - Add a thin layer of compost with a 2-inch layer of mulch around the plants every spring. If you receive less than 1 inch of rain a week, remember to water your plants regularly during the summer. However, many asters are moisture-sensitive; if your plants have too much moisture or too little moisture, they will often lose their lower foliage or not flower well. Keep an eye out for any stressed plants and try a different watering method if your plants are losing flowers. Stake the tall varieties in order to keep them upright and remember to pinch the young shoots to encourage bushiness. Cut asters back in winter after the foliage has died. Divide every 2 to 3 years in the spring to maintain your plant's vigour and flower quality.

Asters - associated with qualities of faith, wisdom and valour, are susceptible to: **Powdery mildew Rusts** White smut Leaf spots Stem cankers, **Aphids Slugs** and snails Nematodes

At one time it was believed that burning asters protected against snakes. Mr Cook who does not burn asters says he has not seen any snakes in his garden though they are known to be living on the golf course (next door to Mr and Mrs Cook).

If you receive Asters in a flower arrangement place each stem under water then cut 1" off each stem at an angle - by doing the cutting under water it prevents air bubbles in the stem - it was remarked by the members that this is done with other 'empty' stemmed flowers especially roses, gerbera and tulips.

Darrington Garden News:- best wishes from Andy for a full and total recovery to those who have been ill.

Darrington School Garden Project - 4 members visited the school and agreed on the types of plants that would be best suited to the first phase of redevelopment. If you have any plants you wish to donate please ring Andy 704681 and he will collect on Wednesday the 20th of September at a time suitable to both.

Andy has joined the Historic Houses association and he reports that there are more choices of places to visit than the National Trust Locally, and it is quite a bit cheaper, he goes on to say 'Newby Hall and Gardens were magnificent last week with a MAGNIFICENT dahlia border.

Garden News September 2017.

Long range weather forecasters think next month (September) could deliver enough sunshine to make up for the disappointing summer. The warm weather at the end of August will pave the way for more hot weather as we head into September. We expect a number of heat surges through the month and the start of the meteorological autumn. Seasonal forecast will vary in their output but we expect a switch to cooler conditions in October. Members talked about the weather and the damage caused by the strong winds experienced this last week in Darrington.

Nell Jones was one of the 22 people killed in the Manchester bombing in May, a 'Remembering Nell' Fund has been set up to raise money to create a garden at her former school.

A magical memory garden to help people suffering from dementia has opened at an east Belfast care home, it includes a caravan for recalling family holidays, a farm yard and pets corner where residents and visitors can care for the animals. Members did wonder if a similar thing could be copied nearer here

The Peoples Trust for Endangered Species (P.T.E.S) is teaming up with the British Hedgehog Preservation Society for the first ever National Hedgehog Housing Census in an attempt to combat the ongoing decline in native hedgehog population numbers - more details can be found by contacting --- For advice about hedgehog welfare, injuries and illness call 01584 890801

For other enquiries, email hedgehog@ptes.org

<https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/about-our-hedgehog-street-campaign/get-involved/>

It would appear that all contact / information has to be via the internet (sorry Wendy, I did try) all the members had their own pet theory about food for hedgehogs and hibernation shelters - of which Phil is now banned from making until he is pronounced fully fit by his consultants (his shed key has been hidden).

Members then went on to talk about nesting sites for House martins, swallows and swifts.

Jobs for September

Start your compost. Phil told the members about his compost bin – constructed from breeze blocks.

Clear garden debris

Clean out your Green house if your tomatoes and other green house crops are finished.

Dig clay soil

Water especially hanging baskets and tubs as the wind has a very drying effect on them.

Planting shrubs / trees Fruit bushes

Barbara told the members about **Fried Green tomatoes**, and said that in America there are a lot of restaurants called Fried Green Tomatoes.. On the internet there are many recipes for Fried Green tomatoes this is one of many:-

Fried Green Tomatoes



How to

Make It

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 pound green tomatoes, sliced 1/2 inch thick
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- kosher salt

Step 1

Place the flour, eggs, and cornmeal in 3 separate shallow bowls. Dip the tomatoes first in the flour, then in the eggs (letting any excess drip off), and finally in the cornmeal, pressing gently to help it adhere.

Step 2

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, cook the tomatoes until golden, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Season with 1/2 teaspoon salt before serving.

Plant swap.



Cerithe Major

Winter pansies

Water reed plant - no name but it has a two tone longitudinal green stripe on the leaves, no picture - sorry

Mr Cook brought some apples from his tree, he said this years crop was the best it has been for a very long time, he feels this is because he gave it a lot of TLC last year. Unfortunately the wind has brought down a branch which had at least 70 apples on it.

Barbara brought this months copy of Garden News.

Wendy brought two plants for distribution and identification – one was easy and was immediately identified by Hazel as Cerithe Major, the second plant, though known, proved a bit more difficult to name. After the meeting Hazel went on to Google and has identified it as – **Leycesteria formosa Plant** - Purple Rain. Commonly known as **Himalayan Honeysuckle** this is a vigorous, fast growing upright shrub. Clusters of purple and white flowers are produced in summer and into autumn, followed by small reddish-purple round fruits. Height 150-200cm. (and according to the internet selling for £30 per plant!!!).



The members went on to talk about Orchids and care of.

Orchids are parasitic plants and feed via their leaves, they grow freely on trees - showing they need diffused lighting as if the light is coming through tree leaves, they need misting – mimicking the morning dew dripping from the tree leaves.

There are orchid food a plenty to buy – but make sure that you only spray the leaves not the flowers.

Hazel told the members of a plant she got earlier this year called Queens Tears, common name Friendship Plant because it sends out so many ‘pups’ which all need new homes, and who better to give them to than friends!

The meeting finished at 7 p.m.

£4 was handed over to the Kyte staff by Hazel