



Clitheroe Garden Club

NEWSLETTER

Autumn edition 2023

No 117

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Welcome to our Autumn 2023

Newsletter, we are writing this at the beginning of August on another wet-day, hoping by the time you are reading this the jet stream will have moved and the sun can still remember how to shine. We hope you have enjoyed your gardening this summer and been rewarded by beautiful flowers and plentiful vegetables. Watering is no longer on the agenda as we have recorded 220mms of rain in our garden during July.

We are looking forward to the first meeting of the Autumn which is a talk by Dr Irene Ridge on fungi, having found mushrooms growing in profusion amongst the phlox in our back garden.



October meeting Ray Cauldwell on Bonsai ?

Items for the newsletter to elaine.noelh@gmail.com

HUT NEWS

Perhaps it's something to do with all the harvesting, but August always seems to bring a feel of autumn to the plot and by the time you read this the Autumn equinox won't be far away and we will be in the final weeks of trading at the hut. We will be open every Sunday in September and our last day of trading in 2023 will be on September 24 th we will then close until March 2024.

It's been another challenging year for gardeners, dry and sometimes very hot weather when we needed rain and then cold, wet and grey days when flowers & vegetables were calling out for warmth & light. I'm sure many trees & shrubs were still suffering from the stress of the very dry spring & summer last year. Everybody will have had at least one failure but I'm sure you will have had successes as well. I think all gardeners must be optimists at heart because even as we consign failures to the compost heap or bonfire we are making plans for the next year.

We've had a fairly steady season at the hut and judging by the turnover of stock I think trading has been much the same as last year. Last year was my first experience of ordering seed potatoes, onions & vegetable seeds and I would welcome any feedback you have about what was on offer and how different varieties performed. For some reason the main crop potatoes didn't sell well, this may be because of the variety on offer or perhaps people just don't want to grow main crop potatoes. The 2 second earlies were very popular & sold out but the 2 first earlies less so. This year we were left with a fair amount of the yellow onion sets (have people to growing onions from seed?) but by contrast almost sold out of the red onion sets and both varieties of shallots. As in previous years nearly all the pea seeds sold & there was interest in the snap variety which I thought delicious and good for eating even when the pods were fat. We are constrained by what the suppliers have for sale but if there are any varieties of potatoes, beans & peas that you think would be popular with fellow gardeners and would fare well in East Lancashire then contact me & maybe we could trial them at the hut.

The (fairly) new flower beds are now in their second year and have provided a splendid, varied and continuous display of colour throughout the year from when the bulbs started flowering in February. They've also attracted a large number & variety of insects most notably a hummingbird moth in July

which made Gerry's day, it was very impressive but sadly didn't hang around for a photo.

A big thank you to everybody who has helped out at the hut this year, thank you for all your hard work and helping to make it such a nice place to be on Sunday mornings.

Lesliey



Our club huts have ben showing their age, phase one of the refurbishment is now complete with phase two soon to follow—given fair weather



ED MOORCROFT 6. 5. 1940— 30. 4. 2023.

Our friendship with Ed developed over a number of years starting with disbelief and amazement. This little gentleman with his frayed jacket and trousers tucked into his socks, seemed to be winning all the flower and vegetable prizes.



I suggested to my friend Laurie Ball that perhaps we should be buying him a new jacket. I was told that Ed was number one gardener in the area and won at all the local shows and always dressed like that. I was a learner gardener and approached Ed and asked if I could look at his set up. He said I would be welcome but he had no greenhouse— just his front garden which was a system of boxes and plastic covers and then planting out in cut-outs in his large lawn at the back.

Subsequently he taught me the secret of leek growing and showing— not that I learned very well!

For some reason Josie Ed's wife took a liking to us and from then on they would call in when in Clitheroe, shopping visiting the health centre or the tip! And the four of us became good friends.

Ed was generous with his gardening and flower show knowledge and with distributing his giant leeks and onions afterwards.

It is probably not well known that Ed was a great tool room engineer and trouble shooter at R.O.F. when R.O.F. was closing down Ed offered to work the last six months for free. I think in fact we was paid to the very end.

Ruth and I miss them both immensely.

Ruth and Trevor Mitchell.

Courgette Loaf

If you still have spare courgettes and are looking for something to do with them this is an easy recipe to follow. The result is similar to carrot cake and can allegedly be stored in the fridge for up to three weeks— mine never last that long.

2 med eggs	85 gms plain flour
125 ml sunflower oil	1/2 level tsp bak pd
175 gm grated courgettes	1level tsp bi carb
85 gm raisins	75 gm walnuts
1/2 leveltsp cinnamon	

Set oven to 180 C/160C Fan/GasMark4. Grease a llb loaf tin and line base with baking parchment. Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl to make a thick batter. Pour into tin and bake for about 1hour until firm and cooked in the middle.

Allow to cool before turning out.

Chris Fawcett.

GARDEN CLUB VISIT TO GILES FARM, THORNLEY

Giles Farm rests on the lower slopes of Jeffrey Hill. It has spectacular views across the Loud Valley towards Chipping, Parlick and Beacon Fell. It is not an easy place to find, which is why our six o'clock start was somewhat delayed.

The farm takes its name from the Giles Family who created it in the fifteenth century in the time of Henry VIII. From that time the farm was tenanted right up to the 1990s when it ceased to be a working farm and was bought by a man with a passion for horses. This is why, on arrival, you find yourself in a very large rectangular piece of ground that was once an exercise and training arena for these creatures: the ideal place for a car park!

This is where we were introduced to Mr Phil Brown, the current owner and guide. It was obvious that his passion is remodelling and restructuring the old farmstead and surrounding garden areas and improving the real estate by adding little indulgencies like an indoor pool with its terraced roof, from which to marvel at the view, and a Japanese style summer house in which to relax on fine days.

From the car park, the indoor pool with its roof terrace was a very dominant presence and Phil began the tour with a detailed account of an alarming incident that occurred during its construction.

In order to create the pool, a huge amount of material had to be removed to create the necessary deep hole. During a period of prolonged rain, the hole filled rapidly with water, so swift and urgent, and no doubt expensive, measures had to be taken to prevent part of the adjacent farmhouse from taking a premature dip. It was pointed out that the large embankment along one side of the car park, now covered with wild flowers, is the spoil from the excavation.

The tour progressed, with detailed descriptions of drainage channels, heavy stone bridges and culverts, to the terrace over the pool, where we were able to fully appreciate the spectacular view, made all the more beautiful by a setting sun and cloud topped hills.

We then followed Phil, very gingerly because of wet stones and wood, who guided us around the outside of the farmhouse, pointing out details of the many changes that have occurred over the centuries. There was, however, only one spot that had any feeling of antiquity. It was a rubble wall with a small window. This was a window into the one remaining room from Henry VIII's time, and, according to our guide, the setting sun shines directly through this window during the Summer Solstice.



You may have spotted that up to this point there has been little mention of flowers or flower beds: meat and drink to members of a garden club. Well

thankfully, after the structural and architectural tour, the mood changed when we were led to the rear of the farm buildings where the family have created a large wild flower meadow on the lowest slopes of the hill. It contained mostly oxeye daisies and knapweed with a sprinkling of bird's foot trefoil and rattle, but Phil is confident that, given time, more wild species will seed themselves.

Several paths have been mown through the sea of purple and white, one of which led across a deeply incised stream that has been dammed to create a clay lined lily pond: a haven for frogs, newts and dragonflies. In an adjacent field there was a brightly coloured gypsy caravan which added a touch of exoticism to the idyllic scene.

The party then moved to a sloping, grassy field to the front of the farmhouse where we were introduced to a small, tethered pony called Giggles. It was clear from his rounded figure that he had been able to munch his way across most of the field.

At the bottom of the field was the Japanese summer house. The timber used in its construction were very obviously blackened by fire and Phil explained that scorching wood is a traditional way of preserving it.

Whilst being guided round, many questions were asked about flowers, shrubs and the many hand made embellishments artistically positioned throughout the farmstead, including small carvings and sculptures. Phil confessed to having little knowledge of plants and said that we should consult Mrs Brown about her artistic handiwork. This, however, proved to be practically impossible because, when it was time for tea and cakes, all thoughts were concentrated on which huge chunk of homemade sponge cake or flan to choose and any delay caused by asking questions would have met with disapproval. So at the end of a really enjoyable evening we remained in blissful ignorance.

I have one small tale to tell about a certain piece of sculpture.

Standing on the aforementioned terraced roof and looking east, at about fifty yards there was a flagpole flying the flag of The National Garden Scheme. Below was a tall limestone coloured structure that I took to be a sculpture of some significance. In front of everyone I asked Phil about it. Turns out it was a large, folded parasol!!

I'll keep on taking the pills and possibly visit Specsavers. GP





Kirsten and Phil will be opening again mid June next year as part of NGS