



Hon. President
George Cowgill

Clitheroe Garden Club

NEWSLETTER No 119

Spring Edition 2024

Welcome to the Spring Edition 2024, hopefully the weather can only improve after a very windy & wet few weeks. The sowdrops are abundant and the hellebores are threatening to open. Spring is just around the corner. The hut will open on the 3rd of March weekly until Sept excluding bank holidays. Opening on the 4th Feb proved very popular, thank you to Lesley and team for all their hard work.

The AGM was well attended with around 30 members who enjoyed a potato pie supper and gardening quiz. Delighted we have a new treasurer, and speaker finder with new members on the committee. The annual dinner at Calfs Head was a little sparse on numbers but enjoyed by those who attended.

Happy gardening.

Items for the newsletter to elaine.noelh@gmail.com
No PDFs please. Tel 01200423154 07742081043

Clitheroe Garden Club AGM 2024

Chair's Report of the previous year

The year began on a positive note with our annual dinner in January at The Calf's Head, Worston where a good time was had by all and the move from evening to lunchtime was met with general approval.

In March the real business of the gardening year began with the Sales Hut open for trading selling seed potatoes, onion sets and peas and beans as well as the usual wide range of garden supplies. The peat free compost has proved a bit of a challenge to some but in true pioneering spirit we persevere, sharing advice and experience, knowing we are contributing in even a small way to address the climate crisis. The new flower beds are now two years old and have continued to provide a low-maintenance spectacular show of insect-friendly plants especially in early summer when the foxgloves and poached egg plants are in bloom. Thanks to all those **dedicated volunteers who help at the Hut in various ways whether it's taking the** money, looking after the plants, heaving bags of compost into cars and keeping the place tidy and in good order. A special thank you however is due to Lesley Taylor our Hut Manager on whose shoulders all the ordering and organising rests and who is never too busy to help members out of hours who for various reasons may be unable to get there on Sundays.

Early in the year it was noted with some concern that the 40 year old huts were deteriorating and in urgent need of repair. Full replacement i.e. new huts was deemed far too expensive and so after due consultation the committee appointed joiner Rick Calvert to do the job. Despite difficult weather conditions – spells of high temperatures alternating with heavy rain- the work was finally completed in the autumn and we now have huts which not only look good but are able to withstand the worst of the weather we hope for decades to come.

In June our Social Secretaries Noel and Elaine Hodgson arranged an evening visit to Giles Farm, Thornley which despite it being one of the hottest days of the year was thoroughly enjoyed by all. It is also down to Noel and Elaine that the quarterly newsletter drops through your door and thanks are due to them and their loyal band of helpers who have kept the newsletter going after our previous editor moved away. They are always looking for new gardening-related articles so if you have a pen or a lap-top and something to share please do get in touch.

Monthly evening meetings have followed the usual pattern providing an opportunity for members to get together and listen to experts on a variety of gardening topics when there is less to do outdoors. Though it seems to be getting harder since Covid **to find speakers the talks we've had have been both entertaining and informative and** hopefully provided enough variety to suit every interest. Thank you to Katy Marshall

our Speakers Secretary for her perseverance in finding speakers of such consistently high quality. A few months ago one of our speakers commented how nice it was to visit a garden club since it appears they're in danger of becoming extinct. So it's thanks to our loyal members and ever-patient Membership Secretary Brenda Fenton that membership of our club has remained a healthy constant at 89 existing members and 17 new ones giving a total of 113. Despite outlay on Hut repairs finances are healthy and the membership fee for the coming year will remain at £10.00. As ever, age and illness have taken their toll and we have lost some members permanently. We mourn their passing while we celebrate their memory.

Sadly our Annual Show was cancelled again this year since there was no-one willing to take on the job of Show Organiser.

Finally I need to mention the change of venue and change of committee members. Though the Rugby Club met our needs initially in many ways, particularly the need for Social Distancing post Covid, latterly there have been problems particularly with the kitchen which really wasn't fit for purpose. As a result we have returned here, to our original- and beautifully refurbished - venue at Rib Wanderers and would like to say a big thank you to Mark and his team for giving us such a warm welcome back.

Without the committee the club could not function and we've had a few wobbles along the way but so far, thanks to the willingness of members to step up, we've survived. This year we're saying goodbye to two of our long-standing committee members Beverley Cooper and Frances Hocken whose dedication and good sense have kept the committee on an even keel for many years. We'll miss them both but look forward to seeing them at club events when time and inclination allow. Chris McNeal who volunteered as Treasurer when the previous hero moved away is also stepping down but is willing to remain as an ordinary committee member. We're very grateful to all three of them for their time and unstinting effort on the Club's behalf.

It's great to be involved in this club and see it flourish. Please do spread the word of the speakers meetings and the sales hut as word of mouth and friends brought along can boost our numbers further.

So here's looking forward to another successful and enjoyable year with Clitheroe Garden Club.

Gordon Preston

Chair

The committee has decided to buy a Plusnet card reader

To enable members to pay for membership fees and purchases

By debi or credit cards.

CLITHEROE GARDEN CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

7TH February 2024

Minutes

1. Welcome from Gordon Preston Chair. 27 members present
2. Apologies form John and Chris McNeal, Dorothy Jackson, Marion Fox.
3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 7th September 2022 read and approved.
Proposed: Frances Hocken
Seconded: Beverley Cooper

4. Chair's Report – see attached sheet. One point of information raised – the visit to Giles Farm took place during one of the wettest days of the year not the hottest.

5. **Treasurer's Report** presented and approved.

Proposed: Lesley Taylor

Seconded: Gordon Preston

6. Election of Officers : the following people were elected en bloc:

Chair – Gordon Preston, Secretary – Chris Fawcett, Treasurer – Ruth Ham,

Membership Secretary – Brenda Fenton, Speakers Secretary – Veronica Brown

Social Secretaries – Noel & Elaine Hodgson, Sales Hut Co-ordinator – Lesley Taylor

General Committee Members – Ian Berry, Chris M Neal, John McNeal, Katy Marshall

Proposed: Alex Berry

Seconded: Lesley Taylor

The position of Show Secretary remains vacant.

Committee members were thanked for their work on behalf of the club. Retiring members Beverley Cooper and Frances Hocken were presented with a small gift in acknowledgement of their long service.

7. Any Other Business: It was felt that the early opening of the Sales Hut on 4th February to sell seeds, potatoes and onions had been a success.

The meeting concluded with a pie and peas supper, quiz and raffle.

Ramblings from the hut

The days are definitely getting longer, albeit slowly & temperatures are increasing a little although it

doesn't feel like it in the strong winds we've been having. I looked back at the weather diary I kept

last year for comparison and discovered that in 2023 we had heavy rain for the first 2 weeks in January followed by a week of a week of snow & sub zero temperatures. In spite of this frogspawn

appeared in my pond & the first outdoor daffodils flowered on 21 st February so I'm optimistic of the

same happening this year.

Down at the hut we had an early start to trading this year when we had a one off opening on 4 th February to enable members to buy seed potatoes as well as onion & shallot sets in good time for

the new season. We were all taken aback by the number of people who came along in spite of the poor weather & astonished that 90% of the potato stock had been sold in one morning's trading. I'm

sorry that some of you were disappointed not to get your favourite potato & yes, I will order more

Charlotte next year. There are still plenty of onion sets and some shallots available for when we open for regular trading on March 3 rd as well as pea & bean seeds --some new varieties as well as old

favourites. If you did buy potatoes or onions please let me have feedback on how you fare with them, I'm particularly interested to know what people think of Orla as we haven't sold it before.

Looking forward to seeing you all in the coming months. The hut will reopen for trading on 3 rd March

10-12 and will then be open every Sunday (except bank holiday weekends) until September. If anybody wants to join the hut team then please contact me or any of the committee members in person at the hut or by your favoured method of communication!

Happy gardening & may it only rain at night

Lesley

Japanese Gardens

Many of you may have watched the recent repeat of Monty Don's Japanese Gardens on the BBC. We were lucky enough to visit many of those gardens on our trips to Japan. We cannot comment on the beauty of the spring Cherry Blossom, but we have included photos of some of the gardens we visited on the cusp of autumn colour.

The Japanese are absolutely meticulous in all aspects of their life. This is obvious in their attention to detail in the maintenance of their gardens, from the tiniest courtyard to the magnificent parks. Even in autumn there is rarely a fallen leaf to be seen on the manicured lawns. As a preparation for the harsh winters the trees are pruned and strung-up in a characteristic way to protect the boughs and prevent them from breaking under the weight of snow.



Entry to the public gardens usually has a small charge (around £2.50- £5.00), often reduced or even waived for those of a certain age. The Japanese are very respectful of age. The more ancient gardens are in the grounds of, or adjacent to, castles or temples. In Tokyo they provide a haven of calm



There is an emphasis on views particularly from an adjoining house or tea-house. This is taken to an extreme in the Adache gardens which are not only designed to be seen from a series of picture windows but the public do not actually enter the gardens to wander (except at one limited spot). I was surprised at the fact I enjoyed visiting this garden despite the restriction.



The Chrysanthemum is the Japanese national flower and many gardens had displays at their entrance.

SPEAKERS FOR 2024

March 6th Sylvia Travers Garden Media Guild. Talk on her current passion “A new walled kitchen Garden restoration.”

April 3rd Mathew Smith “Potato Salad”

May 1st Ray Caldwell “Bonsai.”

Sept 4th Kevin Pratt “Bulbs are not just for Spring.”

Oct 2nd Donald Witton “Once seen never forgotten”

Nov 6th Izabella Donohue “Peat in Gardening”

Dec 2nd Andrew Rowett “Wild flowers of Lancashire”

Meetings are now held at Ribblesdale Cricket Club at 7.30

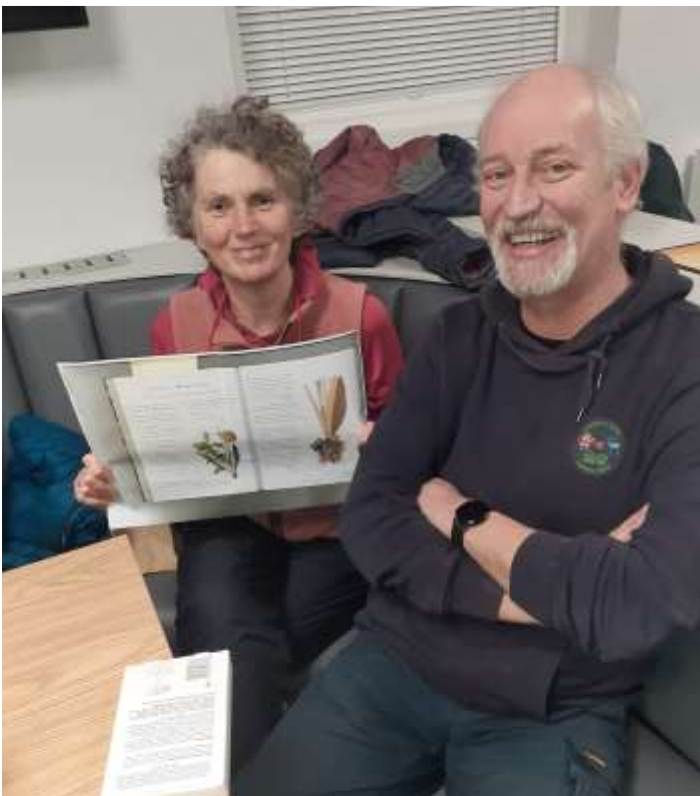
VISIT TO RHS BRIDGEWATER

We are investigating the possibility of a visit to the RHS Garden at Bridgewater to take place in early June either on Saturday the 1st or Wednesday the 5th. Coach fare should be less than £20 and entry would be free for paid up members of the club, we would plan to depart from the interchange at 9.30am and depart Bridgewater at about 4.00pm.

We need to fill a 29 seat coach ideally, its early days but it would be useful to have some response before committing ourselves to setting the ball rolling. Please let us know soon on elaine.noelh@gmail.com or 07742081043.



The meal at the Calfs Head (above) was as before enjoyed by all who attended, below Katy and Richard won the fiendish Quiz at the AGM.



Safety in the garden & allotment

I think it's a well known statistic that most admissions to A&E are the result of gardening accidents so I thought I'd share with you a few nuggets of wisdom gleaned from Dr Sarah Jarvis in one of her regular medical Monday appearances on the Jeremy Vine show.

Wear appropriate footwear as a lot of people manage to put forks or spades through their feet sometimes severing toes. One listener was unable to retrieve his detached toe as it was eaten by his pet labrador!

Be very careful lifting & the technique you use. DON'T lift & twist at the same time as this can result in major bone, muscle & ligament damage which could stop you gardening for many months.

Ensure tools are maintained & especially in the case of electrical tools well lubricated. Some injuries caused by kick back from tools like angle grinders were stomach churning. Obviously wear appropriate protective clothing using equipment like chain saws.

Treat ladders with respect, make sure the ladders feet are on a stable surface & if necessary have a friend hold the bottom of them. Don't go up one if you think you might be having a heart attack, don't go up one with one hand on the ladder & the other clutching a running chainsaw and no, I haven't made up either of those scenarios.

Obviously this isn't an exhaustive list of safety measures to adopt in the garden or allotment but the programme was a timely reminder to do a mental risk assessment when we're about to tackle any job that is much more than a bit of light weeding with a trowel. Speaking of which don't forget to protect your knees with a kneeling mat whenever your kneeling down.

From Lesley

D

Hi,

I was wondering if it would be possible to include something about Asian Hornets (Vespa Velutina) in your next allotment newsletter?

Vespa Velutina is non-native apex predator that has been knocking at the door of the UK for a number of years, with a few sporadic incursions including an individual sighting in Bury in 2018. Last year, due to weather conditions 2023 saw a large spike of 78 colonies that have been identified by the public and destroyed by DEFRA, mainly in Kent

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asian-hornet-uk-sightings/asian-hornet-sightings-recorded-since-2016>

It is voracious, and reported that colonies can consume upwards of 11kg of insects in a year, around 100,000 individuals. It arrived in France in 2004, and is now very widespread in France and moving north through Europe in some areas with colony density of 1 per Km².

Clearly the Asian Hornet would be devastating to the UK ecosystem, with no natural predators. Not only that but it poses a risk to humans too. During its life cycle the Asian Hornet creates a primary nest, typically low down in hedgerows. Disturbing a primary nest will invoke an aggressive response, which can be fatal for people that have underlying medical issues.

I would ask that people download the App as per the attached poster, and should they see something that is not like a bumblebee and noisier than a wasp, they take a recording via the app which will be reviewed by DEFRA and managed accordingly.

Thanks

Dave Heaton

Dave Heaton <dave.heaton@lancashirebeekeepers.org.uk>

(and Primrose allotmenteer)

Lancashire Beekeepers Asian Hornet coordinator

Have you seen this insect?

Asian hornet, *Vespa velutina*



What is it?

A highly aggressive predator of native insects that poses a significant threat to honey bees and other pollinators. Originally from Asia, in 2004 this invasive non-native species was accidentally introduced to France where it has spread rapidly and into neighbouring countries. Since 2016 a number of sightings have been recorded in the UK.



Slightly smaller than the native European hornet. May be confused with other species, shown below in actual size for comparison.



Asian hornet



European hornet



Median wasp



Hornet mimic hoverfly



Woodwasp

Where might I see it?

May be seen on flowering plants, around beehives, around rotting / fermenting fruit and protein, and at street markets attracted by sweet fruit and fish stalls. Active February to November across England and Wales.

This insect stings, do not disturb an active nest.

Please report sightings immediately with a photo:

- with the iPhone and Android recording app: Asian Hornet Watch
- online at nonnativespecies.org/asianhornet
- by email: alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk

Find out more and report a sighting:



For more information on invasive non-native species visit: nonnativespecies.org

From Dave Heaton Lancashire Beekeepers Hornet Coordinator (and Primrose allotments)