

DARRINGTON GARDEN CLUB

DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER (9)



Good Things DO happen!

Margaret Keenan from Enniskillen, and 91 next week, said it was the "best early birthday present" when matron **May Parsons** administered the very first Covid-19 Vaccine jab to her.

"My advice to anyone offered the vaccine is to take it. If I can have it at 90, then so can you," she added.

The second person vaccinated was **William Shakespeare**, 81, from Warwickshire, who said he was "pleased" to be given the jab by wonderful nurses Shakespeare's vaccination immediately produced loads of witty comments:

- Why did Shakespeare get so many bacterial infections?
 - **Because he only had quillcillin** (Pens or quills? That was the question, after the one about which pencil to use)
- Did you know that Shakespeare once made a performance based on puns?
 - **It was a play on words**
- A Person walks into a bookstore and says "Can I have a book by Shakespeare?" The bookkeeper replies, "Of Course sir, which one?"
 - **William.**
- What was the slogan for Shakespeare's camping shop?
 - **Now is the winter of our discount tents**
- A rowdy William Shakespeare walks in to a pub.
 - **The landlord says "Oi, you're Bard!"**



Planting 'Seeds of Hope' in Lockdown

Loads of novice gardeners have been sprouting up during their time in Lockdown. For many, they have found that the pace of life has slowed through lockdown allowing time for simple activities such as planting seeds, tending plants, building veg plots and other garden activities. Gardening certainly has a positive benefit on our mental and physical health in several ways:

Be active Gardening is a great way to keep fit. With so many activities that can be done in the garden it can be a whole-body workout. From stretching to prune or weed, bending to dig and pushing and pulling a lawnmower, you can work up quite a sweat! It is a great way to get a daily dose of vitamin D as long as you remember the sunscreen.

Take notice A lot of people have commented that the birds have seemed louder since lockdown. The birds haven't turned the volume up but with the absence of traffic noise, people have become more aware of the birdsong while out on their daily walk or in their garden. Lockdown has been a perfect time to become more aware of what is around us, from the birdsong to the leaves unfurling on the trees.

QUICK TIPS

Tomatoes – cut a slice of tomato and leave it on the top of a pot of compost. The seeds should sprout after a week or so. You can pot up little tomato plants once they have three or four leaves.

Potatoes – any potatoes that have sprouted under the sink can be planted into a deep bucket. Cover with 10cm of soil and every time the leaves poke through the top, cover with more soil until you reach the top of the bucket. Harvest once the plants flower.

Chillies – Scrape a few seeds out of any fresh or dried chillies you have and plant them in a pot. Cover lightly with soil and keep the soil damp and the pot in a sunny spot. Seeds should sprout in ten days or so.

Spring onions, celery bases and lettuce bases – all of these can be encouraged to grow again by propping them over a glass of water with the water just touching the bottom of the vegetable. Roots will develop into the water and leafy shoots will appear from the base of the plant. These can be harvested once they are 5-10cm tall.



Some UK propagated and home-grown plants may possibly be ‘championed’ and thrive in markets abroad from January, deal or ‘no deal’. However, there may be some tricky times for imports especially from Holland. Many nurseries and private growers that offer a range of home-grown plants are unlikely to suffer any ill consequences of Brexit. In fact they may prosper and expand as demand for their services will probably increase.

But the current supply of most non-UK-grown plants involves many continental countries, particularly Holland. It is estimated that we import more than £400m of ornamental plants every year. Many seeds and bulbs are also produced outside the UK. It is likely that paperwork and administration time will quadruple so there could be supply-chain complications and perishable plants are likely to suffer delays at borders and this could result in deterioration in quality. What’s more, if the pound remains weakened, prices of all imported products will rise.

Landscape and horticulture supports about ½ million jobs, many of which have been eastern European, migrant jobs.

There are worries about whether the UK will begin to de-regulate and this may possibly change which insecticides and ‘additives’ will be allowable. Also, the EU has made significant funding support available for UK horticulture research. It remains to be seen whether there’ll be sufficient pennies left in the UK treasury once Covid Costs have been calculated.

Whatever happens, horticulture will adapt and move forward. Gardeners will still garden, plant-lovers will continue to enjoy fulfilling their passion and nature will still need to be nurtured.

These will be changing times but Gardeners are amongst the most optimistic of the population. Planting tiny seeds, nurturing fragile plants all in the expectation of feeling that exhilaration and achievement when we see the results of our labours; we wouldn’t spend the time if we weren’t optimistic

Our Global Grandma! **We’ll meet (and hopefully hug!) again**



This Lovely Lady (Yes, you’ve guessed it, I’m a Royalist who won’t allow the dramatic licence of Netflix’s ‘The Crown’ affect the depth of my support!) will have one of her toughest tests as she plans her Christmas Message.

On April 5th this year, Her Majesty spoke to the Nation and The World from Windsor where she and the Duke of Edinburgh will spend Christmas and not at Sandringham as is their usual tradition.

That speech inspired and deeply moved me. She’s given both a symbolic and tangible stability throughout so many tricky times. Few, if any countries can claim perfection for their system of Government. Jacinda Ardern has reportedly been doing well in New Zealand but a certain Donald provides a persuasive argument for a constitutional monarchy like ours.

The Queen, 94, and The Duke, 99, have been living at Windsor during the pandemic with a small household staff.

The *Sunday Times* recalls that in 1957, amid widespread public anxiety about the potential side-effects of a new polio vaccine, the Queen broke with protocol and let it be known that a young Prince Charles and Princess Anne, then 8 and 6, had been inoculated. It reportedly eased public concern and millions went on to have the vaccine. In this, the year of Covid, The Queen and Prince Phillip will be taking the Coviud-19 Vaccine.

At 3pm on Christmas Day, I'm looking forward to her 2020 Christmas Speech. I'm sure she'll pitch it perfectly as always but it won't be easy

The Queen's favourite Plant? Lily of the Valley The white, bell-shaped flowers featured in her coronation bouquet, so they hold particularly special memories for the monarch. **Prince Charles' favourite? Delphiniums. Princess Anne? Hellebores.**

**“We will be with our friends again.
We will be with our families again.
We will meet again”**



Well, it's not only Christmas at this time of year. The Jewish Festival of Hanukkah starts on December 10th until Friday 18th. (Imagine if your mobile phone was at 10% but lasted for 8 Days! Now you understand the 'story' of Hanukkah!)

Christmas Trees

Perhaps you've bought the IKEA Xmas tree? £29 including a £20 voucher so not *that* expensive!

Christmas trees are usually decorated evergreen conifers such as Pine, Spruce, fir or an artificial tree. They were traditionally decorated with coloured paper roses, apples, tinsel and wafers.

Think of your tree as you would cut-flowers. It can soak up a good 4 litres of water so Hydrate!!

Mistletoe

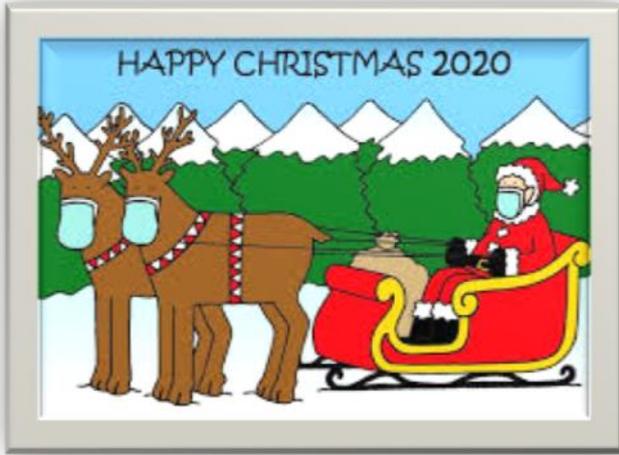
- Extracts from mistletoe—newly used in Europe to **combat colon cancer**, the second greatest cause of cancer death in Europe and the Americas—show signs of being more effective against cancer, and less toxic to humans, than standard chemotherapy!
- Ancient Anglo-Saxons noticed that mistletoe often grows where birds leave droppings, which is **how mistletoe got its name**: In Anglo-Saxon, “mistel” means “dung” and “tan” means “twig,” hence, “dung-on-a-twig.
- In Norse mythology, mistletoe symbolised love, which is where the custom of kissing under the mistletoe originates from.

North Pole Plants

- Cotton Grass, Sedge and Dwarf Heath grow in the Arctic.
- These plants depend upon the division of roots for reproduction – high winds and cold temperatures are helpful for flowering or seed reproduction.
- Many North Pole Tundra plants have dark pigments on their leaves. The high albedo (ability to absorb sunlight) allows photosynthesis to take place at lower temperatures.

Top 10 Cracker Jokes of 2020

- What is Dominic Cummings favourite Christmas Song?
 - **Driving home for Christmas**
- Did you hear that production was down at Santa's workshop?
 - **Many of his workers had to elf isolate**
- Why are Santa's reindeer allowed to travel on Christmas eve?
 - **They have herd immunity**
- Why is it best to think of 2020 like a Panto?
 - **Because, eventually, it's behind you.**
- Why couldn't Joseph and Mary join their work conference call?
 - **Because there was no Zoom at the inn**
- Why did the Pirates have to go into Lockdown?
 - **'Cos the Arrrrr! Rate had risen**
- The first man to be administered the vaccine was a 'Mr William Shakespeare.
 - **All's well that ends well!**



BAGHILL NURSERY at Christmas

Nordmann Fir Christmas trees and fresh handmade wreaths at Baghill Nursery from the end of November. Contact Jenny (Baghill Nursery) 07590 647124

Autumn / Winter hours (1st October - 13th December),
Friday (9-3), Saturday (10-4),
Sunday (10-4), Monday (9-3),
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday CLOSED

No Jobs – Just Relax! It's been a tough year!

- Doctor: Relax David, it's just a small operation. Don't panic!
 - Patient: My name isn't David!
 - **Doctor: I know. I'm David!**
- I hope one day to be rich enough to buy a ring-shaped island chain formed of coral where I can retire to relax
 - **I'll call it my 'No Worries Atoll'**
- I can't relax when I have multiple options for where to sleep when I'm camping.
 - **It's two tents.**
- The other day somebody told me to relax
 - **I said 'No' I always 'Lax' the first time.**
- Where does Santa Claus go to relax?
 - **On Sleigh-cation**
- Waiter: Hey, where do you think you are going with these spoons?
Santa: Doctor's orders
Waiter: What do you mean?
Santa: See what is written on this side of the medicine bottle,
'Take two spoons after each meal.'

DARRINGTON PARISH continue to welcome questions or comments from our residents.

(Next meeting Thursday 17th December, 7pm)

Be a GOOD NEIGHBOUR.

Useful contacts in these *gradually*, less tricky times

St Marys Centre, Chequerfield 01977 705341.

Email: denisepallett@stmaryscommunity.co.uk

WMDC is supporting this Community Centre as a key friendly, support 'Hub' for Pontefract.

Wakefield Samaritans

Call: 116 123 (free to call – no code needed)

<https://www.samaritans.org/branches/samaritans-wakefield-and-district>

Offering a safe place to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's getting to you.

Live Well Wakefield

Supporting healthy living for the people of Wakefield District, providing information, advice and support in coping with everyday life.

Call: 01924 255363

Website: www.livewellwakefield.nhs.uk/

Age UK Wakefield District

Age UK Wakefield District is a local independent charity working with and for older people across Wakefield District.

Call: 01977 552114

Website: www.ageuk.org.uk/wakefielddistrict/

Maybe email me/phone and suggest something for the next edition – **Due January 13th**. If you've received a printed copy and you have an email, please share that with me for next time. Thanks.

Be Safe. Be Well. Be Kind

Andy Tagger:

andytag@hotmail.com/07985676324

And Finally....

I told my friend 10 jokes to get him to laugh.

No pun in 10 did

My New Year's resolution is to get in shape.

I choose ROUND.

I needed a password eight characters long, so I picked 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarves.'

I bought my friend an elephant for his room. He said, "Thanks" I said, "Don't mention it"

STAY SAFE, STAY WELL, STAY SMILING!

See you next year!!