Annual report year 2019 / 2020 for North Berwick Gardening Club.

This has been a very challenging year for us all and currently we are in the throes of the coronavirus pandemic which has put huge restrictions on all our lives. We are gardeners. We, like plants will survive. There is a time of ‘hibernation or lockdown’ before new plant growth begins. We know the favourable growth conditions and we will attend to them accordingly. Look for signs of new growth.

Spring is a wonderful time of year when the gardens do come to life again. The bare soil begins to show signs of growth, little by little. The spring bulbs have been a joy. I hope your club bulbs have given you much pleasure. The yellow Narcissi ‘spring sunshine’ was just that, a ray of sunshine, the blue and white of the Pushkinia, and red tulip blooms were a welcome sight. All of these bulbs can be transplanted into your garden and will bloom again next year, and continue to give pleasure.

The Gardening club year started with our Autumn Show in the Community Centre on 29th August. It was a very encouraging start to the session and was well supported by our members. In total there were 165 entries adorning the show-bench. 21 of the members won awards. That is a great result as the awards were shared round. Congratulations to you all. During judging we were happily entertained with an amusing and informative quiz devised by Stan. The trophies were awarded as follows. The Rose Bowl for best indoor plant, Nan Howe. Sir Hew Hamilton Dalrymple cup for 1st in the class with most entries, Sheila Montgomerie. The North Berwick Horticultural cup for Best in Show, Claudia Gehrig. The John Wightman cup for most 1st awards, Ian Bowie

I missed Stan’s talk on planning a new or not so new garden in North Berwick. It was well supported and many questions asked. Stan is the Club’s Honorary president and brings a wealth of knowledge and is a huge inspiration especially to the Committee. We are most fortunate to have his expertise.

Pam Whittle spoke passionately about Saughton Park Gardens and the ‘make-over’ that the Caley has been involved in there. We had booked a follow-up outing there in June, but sadly this is now cancelled.

Gardener’s question time in November attracted a large audience, and some who became new members. The questions were many and varied and the illustrious panel gave knowledgeable advice with humour. Time afterwards answering individual questions was greatly appreciated.

At the start of this new decade Dr Libby Morris gave us great insight into plants used in medicine. This also enveloped a huge historical background of our town, of pilgrimages, and experimental herbal work in Abbeys by friars and nuns.

In February, which sadly became our final meeting of the session, we were ably enlightened in the growing of better vegetables. Tom Anderson, with a wealth of practical knowledge in vegetable growing shared many of his tips and hints, through his many ‘stories’, and how we ought to use what is available and recycle.

The Spring Bulb Show, Plant Sale, and all planned outings have been cancelled, or perhaps postponed until next year. The new Committee will make these decisions.

Over the past 3 years membership has flourished, possibly due to the 2pm time-change. We’ve now 120 interested people some of whom are paid up members, while others are hugely supportive. I sincerely thank them, and all the members of committee for their encouragement to me, for their unstinting commitment to the Gardening Club, and for their involvement and encouragement within the local schools. Margaret Ann Crawford (Chairman)