



At the nursery...

Well, there's a surprise!

Before I begin I would like to apologise for forgetting to remove the link to Barnsdale Gardens and confusing anyone clicking on a few of the images and finding themselves on their website. The good thing was that Nick had re-opened to the public on 1st June so I guess a little additional publicity didn't hurt.

Last month we reported on the benefits we are finding from not doing flower shows this season, so this month we feature some of the progress we have been making...



Pop's Patch

Last month we mentioned the creation of a new hosta bed, which we have called 'Pop's Patch'. During June, which was Robin's birthday month, we completed the planting of a select few of his favourite cultivars to share the ground in which he is interred.

[Hosta 'Oriana'](#), [H. 'Regalia'](#), [H. 'Moonlight'](#) and [H. 'Empress Wu'](#) have joined [H. 'Paul's Glory'](#) and [H. 'Frances Williams'](#), with room to develop.

We had already planted two Acers, retired from exhibiting, near to the bed so it was an obvious spot to select and there are several, well-established clumps of daffodils there



The joy of having time to spend on projects

As with most things in life, you either have the time to undertake projects, or you have the money to splash out on others doing the work. Being the self-sufficient lot we are here, we prefer to save the money and do as much of the work ourselves as practically possible.

The reservoir garden is a great example of this. Before we can get any heavy machinery in there is a massive amount of clearance work required. Much of the work Robin and Mel did on this project back in 2018 was not maintained due to lack of time and Robin's failing health. Looking at the project at the start of the year we were not surprised to have to begin again.

too. We have some snowdrops and aconites to add to the bed later on in the year. Mel dug out and mulched the area, so we can mow up to the edge and now Robin can be a focal part of the nursery even though absent.



Hosta 'Empress Wu' in Pop's Patch

Shows update

Usually July is one of our busiest months of the season with two major shows back to back, Hampton Court and Tatton Park and then Hyde Hall immediately afterwards. It is feeling quite strange without all the work involved in pulling together the displays and the associated sale plants, supporting the displays. At least we are not falling over trolleys of stock and display plants clogging the entrances to the poly tunnels. As the turn-around between the two shows is less than a week, it used to get rather hectic over and above being busy at the nursery.

Unfortunately, the effects of the Covid19 pandemic have already seen the demise of Gardening Scotland and many other event organisers will be under great pressure from the loss of show incomes. The RHS announced at the end of last month the cancellation of the Cardiff and Chatsworth Flower Shows for 2021. The effects of the pandemic continue to reverberate but we hope to keep going and with the support of such brilliant customers, we want to be here for many more years.

Open by appointment

Welcoming visitors back to the nursery during June has been lovely, especially when regulars have remarked on the differences they can see on their return. We are gradually getting used to a slower pace of life without the shows and forget the progress we are making without that work load,

As David was unable to carry on his business during the Coronavirus lock-down it left him free to be able to help us round the nursery and that help has made a tremendous difference, especially on the reservoir project, which is right back on track again.

Mel has updated the [Garden Project page](#) with the latest developments and she has created a video of the clearance work. It was a windy day and the audio is a little muffled towards the end of the video when she emerged from the protection of the poplar trees - click the image below to view:



Rubber Rockery

Mel has created a video taking you round the different plants she has used in the tyres - click on the image above to view. The [landscaping page](#) on the website has more details.

Plant Heritage talk

Mel has been invited to give a talk for Plant Heritage on the evening of Thursday 23 July from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

"Hard working Hostas: a National Collection that earns its living"

Jonathan Hogarth will also be

so it's great to get such positive feedback.

Regular visitors are missing Robin, so again it's rather good to be able to point out the fact he is still with us, forever part of the place he loved so much. Robin was particularly proud of the collection and we like to think he would be really happy with all the work we have been doing and the continued interest it is receiving.

We continue to open by appointment, so why not book a visit - call 01449 711576 or [email us](#)



Flowers of [H. 'Empress Wu'](#) and [H. 'Seducer'](#)

Hosta flowers

At this time of year we spend quite a bit of time dead-heading the hostas and removing flowers before they break bud. Removing the flowers re-directs the energy the plant produces into the roots and leaves, so if you want your plant to mature more quickly, do this for the first couple of years.

The bud forms can be quite architectural and are sometimes a different colour to the actual flower that emerges. The flowers have their own beauty and is an aspect of the plant that more people are interested in these days. There are quite a few cultivars with fragrant flowers. Our [newsletter archive](#) has issues devoted to fragrance and [H. plantaginea](#), the species from which all the fragrant varieties originate.

[Stay safe everyone,](#)

[Team Mickfield Hostas](#)

giving a talk that evening on miniature hostas, so check out the [Plant Heritage website](#) for details if you would like to 'Zoom' in on proceedings.



RHS Free Advertising

The RHS has offered their exhibitors free advertising for the month of July on their website, which links through to our website.

Let's hope it gets a few hits...