

The Scottish Rock Garden Club

David Boyd Event 22nd & 23rd June 2019

Garden Visits on Himalayan Weekend in Lockerbie

Glenae Garden

On behalf of the SRGC I would like to thank all the garden owners and gardeners for allowing us to visit. I was only able to visit two of the gardens and am disappointed that I could not visit the other two. By the time I reached Langholm on the Sunday evening I was too late. Along with President Julia and Past President Ian, I enjoyed the Glenae Garden and Craigieburn House. These are two quite different gardens, each reflecting the enthusiasms of their creators. All four gardens are open under Scotland's Gardens Scheme. Check the Yellow Book or scotlandsgardens.org. Craigieburn is open most days

Glenae Garden, Amisfield, Dumfries, DG1 3NZ [Mrs V Morley]

Craigieburn House & Garden, Selkirk Road, Moffat DG10 9LE [Mrs Janet Wheatcroft & Dawa Sherpa]

Westerhall, Bentpath, Langholm DG13 0NQ [Mrs Mary Buckley]

Westwater Farm, Langholm, DG12 0LU [Mr & Mrs Clapperton]





Our arrival at Glenae was delayed by my Sat-nav system. We were very close to the garden for quite a while but managed to miss the side road off the main A701. We did, however, pass through the Amisfield twice! I have always wanted to visit the village of Ae, a wee bit further north, ever since I heard of it. There must be something special about a place with such a concise name! I still have not been to Ae Village but Glenae House and Garden are definitely 'extra special'. You realise this as soon as you enter the long drive, which rises gently and with enough turns to make you wonder what is round the next corner. The verges are neatly trimmed and the lawns kept in good order. It is obvious that this is a place which is loved and well cared for. In my opinion these are two of the most essential requirements for a successful garden. Before long there is a view of the mansion house and its surrounding lawns. The house has views over the hills around Dumfries. This open vista contrasts with the surrounding woodland.

Signs directed us away from the house towards the walled garden which was the main focus of our visit. On the right of the drive there is a beautiful pond. The scene reminded me of the paintings of the late American artist, Bob Ross, who made landscape painting look easy with his 'simple' techniques. He would have loved the reflections in the still water. I wish we had had time to explore the garden above the waterfall.





The walled garden is entered via a side gate beside the car park. It is home to a kaleidoscope of plants, many of which I believed were on the tender side, which thrive here with the added protection and shelter provided .

The garden is divided into four large lawns, separated by long herbaceous and shrub borders. There are many interesting plants within these walls.





My first surprise was the huge Moroccan broom growing against the Victorian Greenhouse; outside not inside. *Argyrocitrus battandieri* grows at 5000 feet [1,600 m] in the Atlas mountains so is hardier than it looks but still needs protection in Scottish gardens. It has the colloquial name 'Pineapple Tree' because its yellow cone shaped flowers have a pineapple scent.





Despite the yellow pineapple tree flowers I feel there is tendency towards plants with flowers in white and pastel colours like the oriental poppies. I like the one with dissected petals. At home we grow poppies with orange flowers which compliment our *Embothrium coccineum*. These pinks are a refreshing change.

A large pink flowered Weigela welcomes you into the garden. Beside it is a golden leafed Deutzia. Both large shrubs were covered in flowers.

These bushy shrubs hide the main garden until you are almost mid way along the path, when the view over the gently sloping lawns opens up. The slope probably helps the pineapple tree as frost will roll downhill away from the greenhouse. There is no wall at the bottom of the slope but there is a ha-ha. A flight of wide stone steps leads down to the patio at the centre of the garden.



Either side of the steps there are splendid retaining walls. Low summer flowering herbaceous plants surround the patio. This must be a peaceful haven in which to relax. I particularly like the Violas.

All round the garden in most beds there are wonderful shrub roses.







When I was young I only knew the wild form of *Atractia* with its dull flowers. This spectacular selection is a great improvement and a burst of dazzling colour among the numerous white flowers. The *Spirea* below and the white *Polemonium caeruleum*, Jacob's ladder continue the cool white theme.



Diplarrena morea is another plant I thought needs protection. At Glenae it is very happy in the mixed planting. This member of the Iris family is from Australia. The foliage is evergreen and quite architectural at the edge of a border. I find the flowers fascinating, with their three petals and a pair of yellow eyes watching you. There is just a hint of Violet eye shadow!







Ginkgo biloba is a living fossil. It is found in fossilised rocks, 270 million years old. It is native to China and has been planted and admired by gardeners all over the world. Here at Glenae there is a marvellous mature specimen. We must thank the gardeners of the past for their foresight in planting a tree like this, which will only be appreciated by later generations. It can grow to 150 feet but is usually shorter in UK gardens. Its fan shaped leaves are immediately identifiable. It is deciduous with wonderful autumn colour. Its

seeds are used in Asian Cooking but can be poisonous if you eat too many. Extracts of the leaves are sold in the UK as dietary supplements, said to aid memory, reduce blood pressure and counter Alzheimer's disease. These purported effects have not been proved. It is the official tree of Tokyo. Six Ginkgo trees close to Hiroshima survived the atom bomb explosion, whereas all other vegetation was killed. The Ginkgo's were scorched but soon regrew. After all this time I hope it will be shown to have some healing properties. If you are planting one for posterity, choose a sight which is open, well watered but well drained.





I want to thank Mrs Morley, her daughter and their three boisterous friendly dogs for welcoming us to their beautiful garden