

KAILYARD DIARY REPORTS - 2020

NAME	MONTH	COMMENTS	WORK REQUIRED	SORTED √
Alison Kennedy	January 2020	6.1.20 I took advantage of the mild weather today and managed to get to the kailyard. I secured kailyard gate, and there were a few loose, sticking out "twigs" of fence and gate, but when I went to try to weave them back into place, they just snapped and seemed rotten so by time of better weather, in spring/summer, both fence and gate might need some repair.	Keep a check on the fence – possible repairs needed.	
Colin Miller	January 2020	8/1/20 Cool and sunny day, with slight frost on ground. Sign, fence and gate all OK, but see “Work Required” box re fence. Added an extra curved stick to the top end of the raspberry row, as one of the sticks and a couple of canes were unsupported. Currant bushes have lots of pink buds and strong currant aroma. Mulched the 4 th path with bracken from the heap at the “old Esson House” which we cut in 2019. Not much water in well; stones in bottom are visible. Cleared broom and brambles which were obscuring Colony Trail post 3.	The west end of the north (or back) fence is bowed inward; still an effective barrier but will be vulnerable if snow drifts up against it. CM will discuss with Chris and Barry.	
Jackie Cumberbirch	February 2020	24/2/20. My visit was in the morning before the snow arrived!! All seemed in good order in the kailyard. As I have not been in the area for ages, I also noticed that the laurel is getting bushier and the cherry tree has been cut up after blowing down. Good work that Neil Taylor and his volunteers did a wee while ago to remove regenerating Sitka Spruce from around the well area too.	A general tidy up in and around the older unused section of the kailyard.	

Barry Foster	March 2020	4/3/20 Chilly day, some snow still around. General inspection showed no issues of note, everything looked healthy and tidy. Spent time thinning and pruning fruit bushes ready for the 2020 season and made sure the plants were supported adequately. The rhubarb is coming on well and looks like it may be ready to supply a crop. Just in case of any heavy frosts, broom “fronds” were placed around and over it. The fence, as previously noted, may need some attention later in the year.		
Chris Foster	March 2020	General 4/3/20 Fed fruit bushes with potash to help reduce the acidity of the soil and to add extra nutrients.		
Chris Foster	April 2020	A workparty was proposed for April for a general tidy up of the site and manuring, but due to the Coronavirus has been cancelled.		

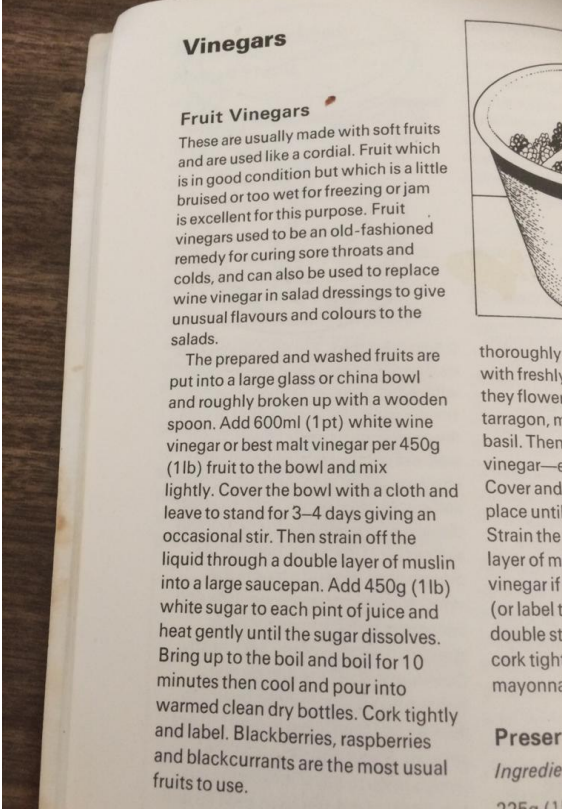
Following the Coronavirus outbreak all rota duties have been suspended until further notice. 4.4.20

Margaret Gardner	30 April 2020	It's looking really well, the rhubarb is so vigorous! And no weeds!! With this rain I'm sure everything will come on leaps and bounds now. If there's anything you want checking or doing just let me know and I will do my best.		
Andrew Wainwright	May 2020	Visited kale yard. All looking very good. Took flower stem off the rhubarb and harvested some lovely big	There are lots of raspberry suckers all over the place which should probably be removed.	

		<p>stems. The tall raspberry canes to the north end have no sprouts at the top and I would suggest cutting back to below topmost sprout. Currents and gooseberries in grand form. Did some weeding.</p> <p>Rhubarb Sampling: The stems were surprisingly thick, better than those in my garden. Liza roasted them with a little ginger. They were tender and mild, no excessive acid like some rhubarb. They were great on cereal in the morning and also very fine in a cake.</p>	The grass may need cutting soon.	√
Margaret Gardner	3 June 2020	Photos.		
Chris Foster	16/7/20	<p>With the easing of some of the Covid-19 restrictions Barry and I paid a visit to the kailyard. The general appearance of the kailyard looked a bit unruly, especially with all the raspberry suckers creeping their way through the rest of the kailyard and the long grass! Barry tackled the grass, while I weeded out the suckers and other unwanted herbage and we then did a general tidy up.</p> <p>All the plants are looking healthy and some are fruiting well - the three blackcurrant bushes were drooping under the weight of the fruit! We picked some to take home from the lower bush (Goliath) but there are still plenty left if anyone wishes to use them. Comments on the different varieties would be welcome for the final report. See details below.</p>	<p>Blackcurrants need picking!</p> <p>Gooseberries will soon need picking.</p> <p>Check out non-fruiting problem on red and white currants.</p> <p>Should we go back to normal rota duties with the easing of some restrictions?</p>	√

	<p>Blackcurrants Looking good with plenty of fruit. There are three different varieties of Blackcurrants, all with plenty of fruit. The lower bush is Goliath, a large fruiting type. Next is Baldwin a medium sized currant slightly sweeter and finally Russian Black a smaller, sharper flavour so would probably make good jam. We picked a 1½ lb from the lower bush to take home and try and would urge anyone else who likes Blackcurrants to go along and pick some to try.</p> <p>Gooseberries Pleased to report that there was no sawfly in evidence and the bushes were looking fine. The Crown Bob gooseberry (at the top) had a good crop which should be ready for picking very shortly. They have large dark red berries when ripe and are good for both dessert and culinary purposes. The Essons bush (a cutting from Essons Croft) also had a few berries which I was pleased to see as this is only a few years old. The third bush, a cutting from a modern variety “Invicta”, looks healthy but no fruit.</p> <p>Raspberries Both varieties growing well. The late summer variety have plenty of unripe fruit coming and the autumn variety are looking healthy and growing well.</p> <p>Red and White Currants Rather disappointing as there is no fruit on either bush! Not sure why – possibly birds, frost, bad pruning, bugs - will need to investigateany suggestions?</p>		
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		<p>Rhubarb Looking healthy and produced a nice tasty crop as reported from our chief tasting volunteer, Andrew!</p>		
Chris Foster	24/07/20	<p>All looked well. Did a bit more weeding (plenty of unwanted blackcurrant seedlings from last year's crop!) and picked some of the gooseberries. Tasty enough to eat straight from the bush! A very high yield of blackcurrants this year, hopefully they will all get harvested and used!</p>	Blackcurrants and Gooseberries available for harvesting.	
		<p>31/7/20 Corona virus update – Rota volunteers have agreed to return to their normal duties based on an individual maintenance check of the Kailyard as from the beginning of August.</p>		
Anne Reid	11/08/20	<p>I was up at the kailyard yesterday, it is looking great, everything lush & healthy. I cut the grass round the edges, pulled some of the fruit & tidied up the rhubarb. The gooseberry bushes are looking great, no sawfly! The green ones are finished. I pulled 1lb 6 oz of the red onesthere are loads left.</p> <p>Blackcurrants more than ripe very large & starting to fall off the bushes. I pulled 1lb 14oz & again lots still to pick. The rasps are starting to ripen & 3/4 looking good the ones at the N end don't look as though they will ripendifferent variety? I pulled 3oz & ate a few!</p>		

		<p>It would be great if more folk could take advantage of the fruit & pick some !</p> <p>I will go up again before the end of August & include the photos</p>		
Anne Reid	25/08/20	<p>I was up at the kailyard today before the weather changed. It was a beautiful day but I was eaten alive so my visit was a bit shorter than planned! No midges there last time so was unprepared..... September person be warned! I cut the grass , tidied up & pulled some fruit.</p> <p>The fruit is all getting a bit wet & needs picking. Unfortunately, the birds are not taking advantage & ripe fruit is falling to the ground. Next year I'm sure will be different</p> <p>The Baldwin blackcurrants are very large & juicy. I picked 15oz which I have soaking to make into blackcurrant vinegar used in the past to cure colds & sore throats - we will see! Perhaps the colonists made this recipe attached.</p> <p>Half the rasps are ripening nicely, but quite wet, the other half to the N of the yard, presume a different variety, are not ripening well & doubt if they will (see photo) Picked 10oz.</p> <p>There are still some red gooseberries and picked 5oz, very tasty stewed.</p>		

Anne Reid	30/08/20	My blackcurrant vinegar is very rich & syrupy ...no taste of vinegar, lovely on salad. I can see how it could be used for colds!		
Jeff Oliver	8/09/20	I toured some new colleagues in archaeology up through the Colony and the kailyard last Friday. We continued on with an epic walk across the Bennachie massif from Mither Tap to Watch Craig (mostly via peat diggings) and then returned via the Gordon way. My colleagues were impressed by the kailyard and refreshed with a handful of tasty raspberries! Well done to all gardeners!		
Brian Cornock	16/09/20	Onsite 11h-16h. Weather cloudy bright with slight breeze, midge repellent did the trick. No water in well (access was easy). At quick glance, future downslope woodland seems to be mainly birch. Stockade appears in good shape with only minor holes. Firm on SE/downslope and NE/gate sides, a bit more wobbly on the other sides. Gate post that the gate meets on closure also wobbly. Notice easily readable with no significant water ingress but Bailies logo chopped off at top. Crease in the notice looks like a crack on glass. Spent most of time trying to chop grass around the stockade, outside and inside. Fairly thorough outside on SE & NE sides but less thorough elsewhere as time and energy started to wane. Didn't get round to much	Keep a check on fence stability.	

		<p>weeding inside but whatever was on the ground (was it bracken?) has done a good job of keeping the weeds down - or maybe previous volunteers have done a good job.</p> <p>There was a 10ft and a 3ft branch lying at odd angles on lowermost NE side of the raspberry-support wooden framework. Could not work out where they came from or what they were doing so put them behind the NW/upslope stockade with a few other lengths of branches that were stored there. Propped up a couple of keeling-over upslope rasp canes. No pruning carried out.</p> <p>Picked 4oz giant rasps (= all the ripe rasps) mainly from the upslope canes but there were plenty of cane top bunches to come on these plants. Cleared fallen-over and rotten rhubarb stalks/leaves which yielded about 4oz of potentially eatable stalks. Left the better-looking stalks to feed nutrients back into the crowns, hopefully. Gooseberries starting to get autumn colours. Didn't touch the few blackcurrants left on those bushes.</p> <p>Well done to Chris and Barry for getting this kailyard going. Must ask about planting some kail, sometime.</p>	<p><i>Yes to both! Chris</i></p>	
<p>Alison Kennedy</p>	<p>17/10/20</p>	<p>I finally managed to get up to the kailyard on Saturday. Had meant to get there start of month but weather has been so wet. Sun was out on Saturday morning so ventured over. Sunny when I got there,</p>		

		<p>but by time I got half-way up rain started and rest of duration was mixture of rain showers and sunshine.</p> <p>I hadn't been up there for months and was surprised (possibly an understatement!) at how much mother nature has taken over the hillside during pandemic. Poor Shepherds Lodge is so overgrown I could hardly make out where the remains were – what a difference.</p> <p>Kailyard is looking good. Pulled out a few weeds in kailyard but apart from that everything else seemed fine – checked fence, gate and notice and all were good as well. There were still a few rasps available, but stupidly I had left my intended container at home so they lived to see another day! Rhubarb had perished.</p>		
Chris Foster	6/11/20	<p>Lovely sunny afternoon, no breeze, pleasantly warm and no midges! Plenty of water in well. On arrival the gate was closed but not tied. All looked OK.</p> <p>Barry and I pruned the gooseberries, blackcurrants, red and white currants, and the summer raspberries. (The Autumn Raspberries will not need pruning until February/March.) Checked out the rhubarb and there were some nice crowns just below the surface. Built a protection around it out of broom. Pulled a few grass clumps out but will need to come back again later in the month to weed, renew the bracken and tidy up but</p>	<p>General weeding. Renew bracken weed supressent.</p> <p>Prune Autumn Raspberries Feb/March</p>	

		at least the pruning is done just in case we go into lockdown again and won't be able to get there!		
Chris Foster	26/11/20	A chilly day but sunny and wind free making it feel quite warm until late afternoon when the sun disappeared! Added some manure to the rhubarb and protected it with some broom fronds. Weeded under the bushes and the paths in between - will need to renew the bracken but should be OK to leave until the New Year. Pulled out unwanted Raspberry runners. The fence also needs a bit of attention but a job for 2021. The cut grass borders both inside and out are still looking good and helps make the Kailyard stand out from the rest of the overgrown areas at Shepherds Lodge. All looking fine as the Kailyard settles down for its winter's rest.	Jobs for the New Year: Renew bracken weed suppressant. Minor fence repairs required. Prune Autumn raspberries Feb/March	
Dave Peter	December	-----		