

If you came to our meeting in May, 'A Spoonful of Herbs', then you will know more than you could imagine about growing and using herbs. Our speaker, Lynda Warren, kindly provided a really useful handout, four sides of A4, for everyone.

Lynda grows 75 herbs but fortunately, for us, she listed the ones we all should grow. Bay, lavender, thyme, rosemary, basil, chives, mint, oregano and sage. With the first four in the list just buy a plant because the seeds of these take too long to germinate. Mint is easy to propagate, just put some stem cuttings in water for a week or two. There are different varieties of many these herbs too, many of which are worth investigating. For example, there are upright and prostrate forms of rosemary. Incidentally, rosemary is often used for edging pathways or creating low, informal hedges. Many herbs are of Mediterranean origin and like hot' dry conditions and rapid drainage. However, mint likes shade and lots of water.

One really useful section of the talk was about using herbs. Herbed butter was a delicious suggestion and here are some examples: Chive butter to go with cheese scones, dill and lemon butter for fish, mint and lemon butter with new potatoes and rosemary and garlic butter with lamb. In each case the fresh herbs are finely chopped and mixed with unsalted butter. At this stage you can add sea salt or other spices and then roll the butter into a log shape and wrap with film. Discs can be cut off as you need them having stored the 'log' in a fridge or freezer.

Lynda's 'Herb Schedule' was so useful, describing what needs to be done each month of the year to keep herbs growing healthily. However, don't be put off by this as they really are trouble free plants to grow.

This is my last report from the Garden Club as I am signing off after eight years. When I became Chairman in Sept 2015 I started writing the reports. I would introduce the speaker and then sit down to write notes on their talk and leap up at the end and ask for questions. When Barry took over as Chairman, Sept 2019, I just carried on writing reports. In a way, the best bit was lockdown! For a whole year there were no speakers or meetings so I light-heartedly wrote about what I was doing in my garden and since none of us could go anywhere, I started some big jobs. However, I have made lots of changes since then as I experiment and learn about different plants. I hope that you do the same and enjoy your gardening as much as I do. Gardening is my 'Keep Fit' activity but I must admit to creaking more, just lately, as I do it.

Dorothy Richards