

PROUD EAST MARSHIAN

AUGUST 2020 ISSUE #5 FREE

News & views from the East Marsh - EMU/Sun & Moon Festival - online at www.sunandmoonfestival.org



**Our World -
Our Environment**

Hello everyone,

And hello August. So far, this month has given us some glorious sunshine, so come on August – do your best for us over the rest of your 31 days. The theme of this month's edition is the environment, but we're not just talking nature here; we're covering our whole environment: the streets of the East Marsh.

We catch-up with Ernie Brown and chat about his journey from hotel chef to head gardener at Your Place, an oasis tucked away on an East Marsh street.

And some East Marsh families have been working their magic to transform their front room windows with the craft boxes that Josie has been busy putting together and delivering to homes around the area (she had to be surgically removed from Boyes on more than one occasion)! Add East Marsh imagination to the craft boxes and – hey presto – windows are now storyboards that tell the stories of their family lockdown experiences.

As you'd expect, there's humour (look out for the toilet rolls), there's empathy and there's positivity: all the traits that sum-up the East Marsh spirit.

So, the next time you venture out, keep a look-out for these window theatres. They'll brighten up even the dullest of summer days. In addition to this, our plans for Christmas are cracking on a pace through our regular Zoom meetings and, as always, we're looking forward to the time when we can meet up with you all again.

Until then enjoy the sunshine when you can, take care, stay safe, and stay proud.

Love, the Sun and Moon Team.
x

Keep up to date and keep in touch



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WONDERFUL WINDOWS



The Sun and moon festival team are delighted that 20 boxes of arts and crafts materials have been distributed to families on the East Marsh.

We are really looking forward to seeing the windows as they are decorated and transformed into summery scenes. Look out for the windows on your travels around the East Marsh and if you spot them, so let us know what you think.

Here are some photos of some happy crafters receiving their boxes.



HIDDEN GEMS

JOSIE MOON

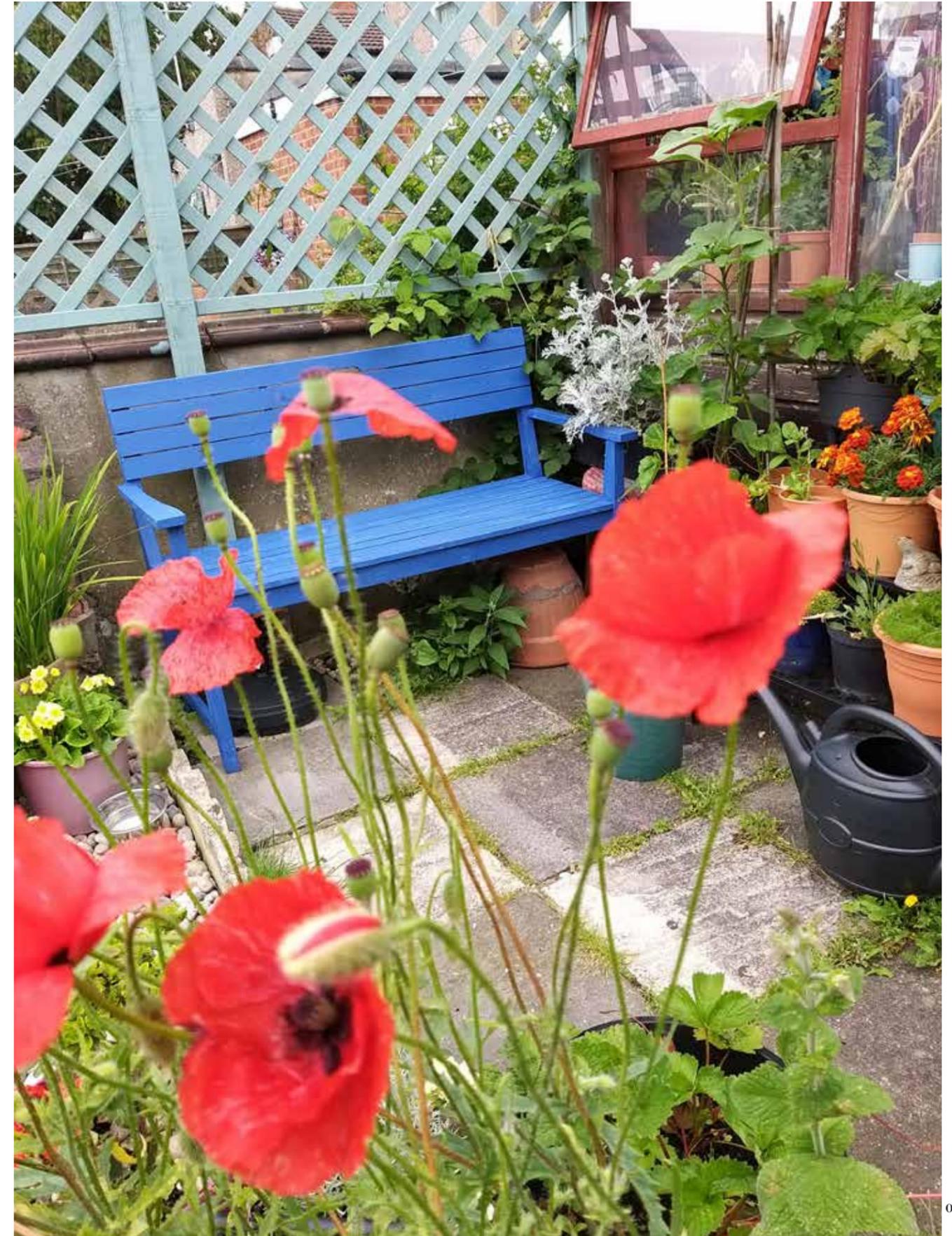
I came to gardening in my thirties. I have a green-fingered mother who also came to gardening in her thirties, too busy growing kids in her twenties to be too concerned with plants. I don't know if an interest in gardening is genetic but me and my youngest sister are both obsessed with gardens and spend as much time as we can with our fingers in the earth, watching the progress of plants, complaining about strong winds in the summer and basking in the smell of home-grown roses, honeysuckle and night stocks.

Here on the East Marsh, the environment is extraordinarily urban. The streets lack trees and most of the streets have no front gardens as the houses open directly onto the streets. Those of us who live here are all too familiar with the problems on our streets; wheelie bins, boarded up homes, litter, fly-tipping and a general lack of care for the neighbourhood.

However, that is not the whole story. Behind the houses, there are gardens, and these gardens are of substantial size. Like the houses, they are long and narrow, with space for sheds and birdfeeders, tubs, lawns and flower beds. Not every house has a resident gardener but where there are gardeners, there are treasure troves of peaceful loveliness.

I asked Shirley and Jay, neighbours of mine, what they like most about their beautiful, well-kept garden. 'I love my arum lilies,' Shirley said, proudly. 'For me, it's the twin trees,' Jay said, pointing at the two majestic yucca trees that stand guard over the garden.

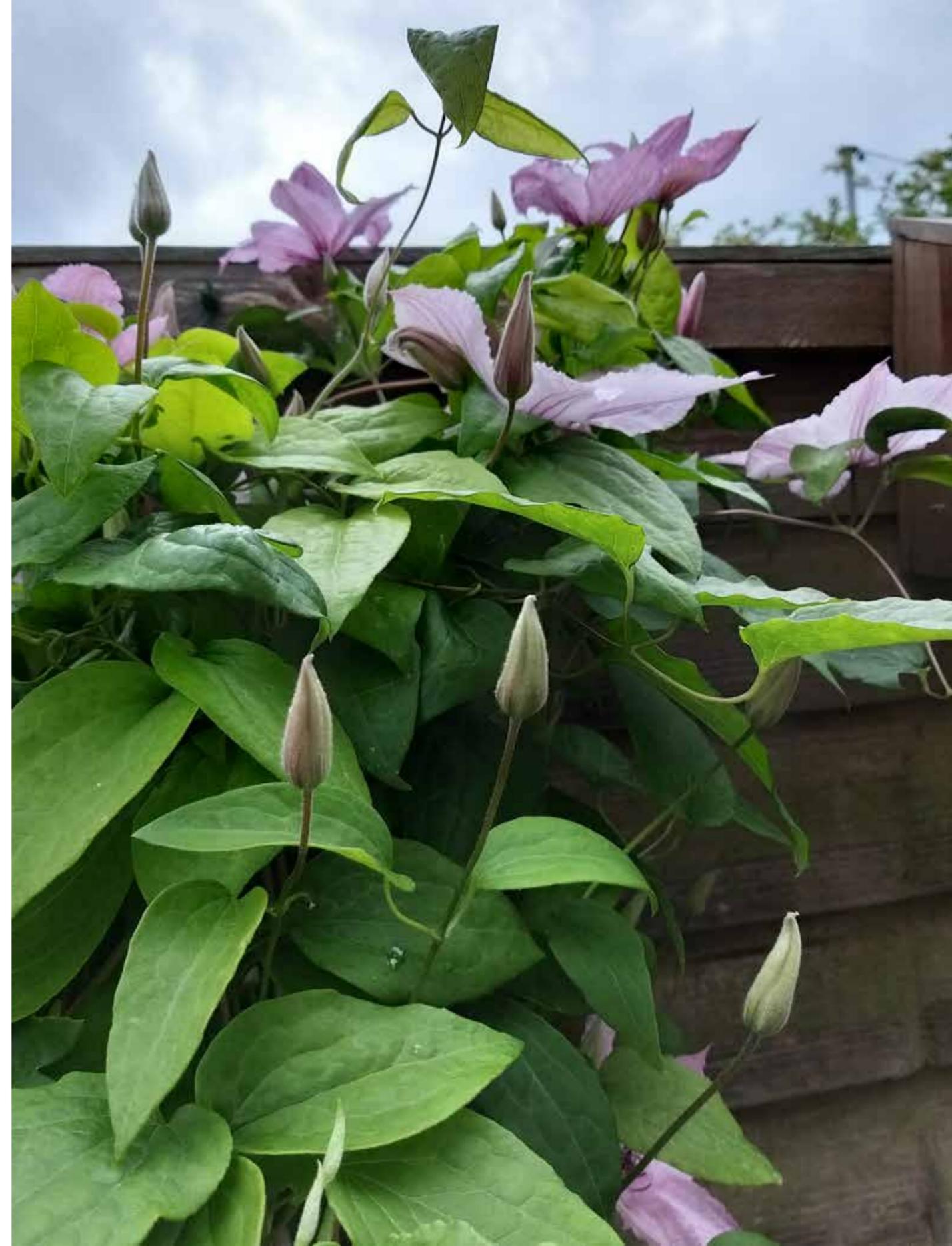
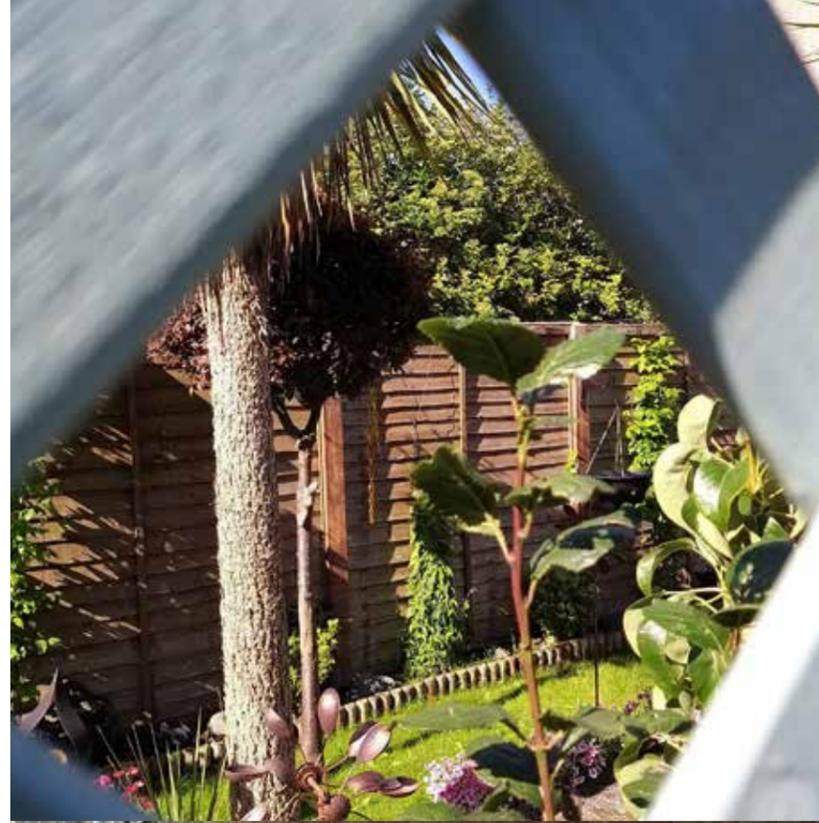
We often chat over the fence, admiring each other's plants, taking delight in the presence of the birds, who have multiplied in number since lockdown. We appreciate the slow nature of gardening, the journey from seed to bloom, and even the autumn die back, when we lovingly put our gardens 'to bed' for the long winter months.



The twin Yucca's, Shirley's Arum Lillies, Josie's bench

There is something powerful and magical about gardening. There is an important connection between humans and the natural world and too often we overlook it. It would be easy to just see the concrete and the problems on the East Marsh, to become despondent about all the issues, but the gardens provide an alternative picture; they are beautiful escapes from the hardness, a place for growth and renewal, a place for important chit-chat over the fence, the sharing of tips, ideas, seedlings.

Pat loves a visit to the garden centre with her daughters. She prefers a plant in a pot as a gift than cut flowers. Living alone, she finds the song of the blackbird good company and likes to get her chair and sit out with the plants, talking to them, and encouraging them to grow.

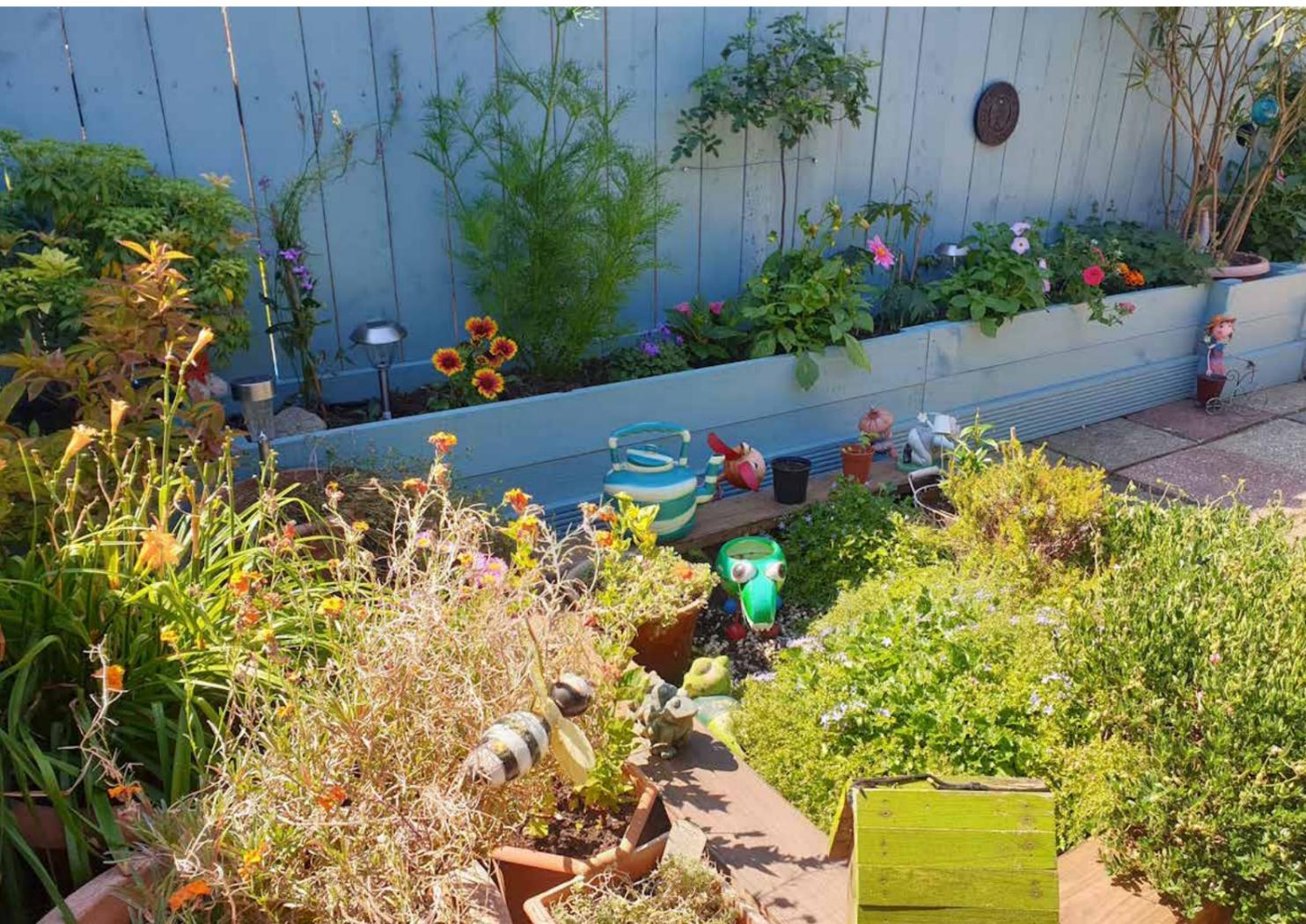


A peek through the fence
Pots of paradise in Pat's yard
Jay and Shirley's Clematis

Eileen tells me the best thing about her garden is that the plants take care of themselves, nature is in charge. A sun lover who likes to sit out and enjoy the peace and sunshine on a sunny afternoon, Eileen has created a little haven of tranquillity.

We hope you enjoy this glimpse into the gardens on the East Marsh and that we might have inspired you to pick up a trowel and get cracking. Happy gardening everyone. It would be great to see some more pictures of our East Marsh hidden gems.

Eileen's happy haven (right)
Denise and Paul's perfection (below)



THE MAGIC GARDEN

coming soon

The quality of our environment is centrally important to the quality of our lives. Everyone needs a safe home and a place that is for them. We know that we live in a complicated world where not everyone has access to safety and a place called home and that is one of the big challenges we face as a society and as a world.

When I write for children, I make sure that it is the children who are the centre of the story. They solve the problems and are imaginative and creative in how they go about their problem solving. I think I have now settled on two favourite characters, Cosmo and Carrie. These two have really come to life and have had some marvellous adventures, in space and at sea. In the latest story, Cosmo and Carrie's adventure is based entirely in a garden, Carrie's garden in fact, and the problem to be solved is all about home. I didn't realise when I wrote the story that I was writing a perfect lockdown adventure; one that really does happen in one, small space, a back garden.

The story is centred on Carrie and her realising that some of the animals in her back garden are facing a threat from the 'giant with the green legs.' With her usual kindness, courage and creativity, Carrie sets about helping her animal friends and learning a lesson about the importance of home. Cosmo is Carrie's friend and helper on her quest to support the animals and both of them do a good turn.

The Magic Garden is not just a story. It is part of a big project, one that was meant to be in our local primary schools this spring; Covid has pushed it back, in all likelihood to next spring. The project involves music, a series of brand new songs for children aged 4 -6, a drama workshop, story book, original artwork and set of activities for children, teachers and families to enjoy. There will also be some video resources, a bit like our Let's Go to Space resources which are still available via our website.



Here's a short extract from The Magic Garden, books will be available in the early autumn.

Carrie looked up and to her great surprise saw a tawny owl come to rest on a low branch of the big tree. He had a serious face and was wearing a fine waistcoat.

'That's Notwhat, he reads the news every evening at dusk. He's up early today,' said Sandi. Notwhat perched elegantly on the branch and peered at the creatures who looked up at him with great respect.

'Good afternoon all, for indeed it has now passed noon and is therefore indeed, the afternoon,' said Notwhat in a deep, slow and serious voice. Carrie wanted to giggle but remembered her manners.

'Excuse me, Notwhat, thank you for coming, but I am in charge of this meeting and we need to get on with it,' said Susan, who looked a bit cross. 'Indeed, Susan, indeed, but I bring news, news that you must all hear, news that cannot wait for dusk. What a to do, what a to do.'

'Oh, very well,' said Susan, 'but get on with it, we haven't got all day, and we don't want the refreshments to spoil.' 'Refreshments, you say, how very delightful, I shall of course stay and mingle,' said Notwhat.

'And you are very welcome, but please, we have to hear from Barry and his family, there is an urgent matter to attend to, so please, tell us the news and we can get on.' Notwhat took out his spectacles from his waistcoat pocket, placed them on the end of his beak, unfolded a scroll of paper and prepared to deliver the news.

Illustration by Vivienne May

ERNIE BROWN – EAST MARSH GARDENER AND A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

CAROLYN DOYLEY

Ernie warned me before I arrived that he could 'go on forever' about his work, so I've made sure the recorder's batteries are fully charged.

He's currently working solo at Your Place, here on the East Marsh. His dedicated team of volunteers are waiting in the wings, eager to get back when the current situation allows their return.

There's lots to do and Ernie is busy watering his plants and seedlings when I arrive. The polytunnel he's in is vast and filled with tray upon tray of plants at different stages of growth.

Ernie has been a gardener for thirty years and his journey into gardening is an interesting one:

'I was a chef in hotels down in Somerset and Devon. In my mid-twenties I was made head chef and that was when I realised that it wasn't what I wanted to do. The environment was too angry, there was too much shouting. I looked out of the window and saw the hotel gardener working in the grounds. He was tickling the soil with a hoe in his shorts and vest and I thought, I want to do that job. So, I did what any twenty-five-year-old bloke would do; I went out picking wildflowers!'

Of course he did, after all, this is Ernie we're talking about!

Ernie tuned-in to his instincts that afternoon. It was the start of a journey that would lead him to become the gardener he was born to be. 'I came back home with a big bunch of wildflowers that I found in alleyways and I made a record of where I'd seen these flowers and plants. I got lots of books from charity shops and I spent about three years just studying wildflowers for no other reason than I wanted to be a gardener.'

He was proactive, hungry for knowledge with a firm belief that gardening can't be taught. Yes, you can teach someone landscape gardening, hard landscaping such as laying pavements, paths and building structures, but real gardening, well, that comes from the heart and

is achieved by diving in and feeling your way. 'When it comes to identifying plants and what they need, it's not something you can actually do without seeing them, without getting to know them, without understanding them.' He can identify most plants from their seeds and their seedlings: 'You see that Tree Echium, over there,' he points to a giant plant that looks as though it's from a sci-fi movie, 'that plant has thousands of seeds and I know what Tree Echiums look like as seeds and tiny seedlings. I can tell one plant seed from another.'

Ernie moved to Caistor and worked for twenty years as a gardener in the villages along the western edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. He was offered the job at Your Place on a three-year contract. That was ten years ago. I hope it's safe to say that he's here to stay. 'I knew lots of plants before I started here, but since I've been at Your Place, I've been learning about new plants every single day. I've always been able to remember their Latin names. For me, Latin is the language of plants, it just makes sense and I can remember them. Mind you, I have my moments now I'm getting older. A bloke came in the other day and said, 'Have you got any of those little red flowers that you had last year. About a foot high – really bright red flowers.' Well, I was thinking about it for three days. I knew the plant had a bloke's name, so I kept going through all the bloke's names I know and then it came to me: Alonsoa Warscewiczii!

When it comes the seasons, Ernie loves them all: 'I love the snow when we're scraping it off the paths. November, December and January are quiet months and I use this time to get other things done, cleaning things up, repairing structures and jet-washing the polytunnel. 'I love it in February when we start sowing the first seeds of the year. After all these years, I know seeds don't germinate overnight, but the very next day I'll still look at them thinking is there anything coming up yet? 'When they do start growing it's such a relief because there's always a chance they won't. If this happens don't blame yourself – some seeds just don't germinate – it isn't anything you've

done! For me, one year, it was sweetcorn, they just wouldn't grow and oh my goodness what a sad year that was! Nature is so unpredictable. 'In February we're sowing seeds and pricking out and potting on, sowing seeds and pricking out and potting on; and on and on it goes. Now we're in July, I'm sowing plants for spring, so we're working about six months in advance. You can't get to spring and have no spring flowers!'

Before I go, I ask the inevitable question: 'Ernie, what's your favourite flower?' Although he's been asked hundreds of times, he answers with enthusiasm: 'The runner bean. The red of the runner bean flower is just fantastic. I love to see little specs of red in the garden, and the wigwam I build for it to grow up is great. And of course, once the flower has finished, you get beans. I love everything about runner beans.' He ponders for a while and then says, 'I love my job. I was once told that a man who enjoys his job never has to work a day in his life. That's me. I really love my job.' Ernie walks me to the gate. He points out the unusual plants as we go and as I look at him, it's easy to see that 25-year-old man with an arm full of wildflowers on the verge of a whole new life.

Now, all these years later, Ernie is much more than a gardener – he is the very essence of the environment. He's in league with the land and everything that grows in it.

We're so lucky to have him. Ernie, the East Marsh Plant Whisperer.



ERNIE'S TIPS



My first tip for this time of year is go out and enjoy the sunshine and buy some more plants and fill up your garden. There will always be little gaps in your flower beds, fill them up so your garden is bursting.

Once the flower has died – snip it off and keep deadheading all through summer. Do it as soon as you see it rather than leave it on the plant for months, that way you could get a second flush of flowers (depending on the plant).

If you haven't got any flowerbeds, most plants will grow in pots. I've got cherry trees, peach trees, apple and pear trees and vegetables in pots, so go ahead and plant up some pots with whatever you fancy. They just need water and sunshine, even if the sun only gets to them for four to five hours a day, that's fine.

Growing vegetables in your back garden is easy. You only need a little bit of space and can plant them in a flowerbed or plant them in a pot. My vegetable growing started with the wonderful runner bean and by the end of that first summer, I was so pleased with the beans, I wanted more space. They ended up taking over another flowerbed, then another.

Courgettes do well in pots too, and vegetable flowers are just as beautiful as any flower, but they have the bonus of giving you fresh produce. Seeds are easy to come by, most supermarkets sell seeds, or you can buy young plants if you prefer.

If you haven't got the space in your garden, try growing something on the windowsill.

Chilli peppers are great for the windowsill and your crop of will add a zing to a pizza or tomato sauce. At this time of year, we've got lots of chilli peppers. I've got a friend who's had her plant in her house for three years. She cuts it back bit by bit over the winter and it bursts back into life every spring.

So, let's be more adventurous in the garden!

ERNIE BROWN



PERSEVERANCE

TERRY CLARKE

A Tribute To A Survivor - 'GY411'

My original meeting with the 'Perseverance' was in 1982 when I was sketching at Grimsby Fish Docks. I saw this slightly built fishing boat looking a little forlorn and in need of attention. She was surrounded by various types of fishing vessels which dwarfed her.

I spent some time doing a pencil sketch of her. In 2013, I came across my original drawing and thought that it might be of interest to the Fishing Heritage Centre.



I met with Louise Bowen, the Collections Assistant, and showed her the drawing. She informed me that the 'Perseverance' would be 100 years old in 2014 and the

Heritage Centre was considering an event to celebrate the vessel's birthday. I said that I would like to be involved in this special occasion and offered to submit some works of art to honour this unique fishing smack.

I was intrigued by the Perseverance, a small, simple vessel that held a unique charm which connected with me and I felt inspired to create a series of work which was exhibited in the Fishing Heritage Centre.

During this process I spent some time

at the Heritage Centre, recording with photographs and many sketches to familiarize myself with the vessel's cut and rigging.

The boat had originally been built in about 1914 in Boston by Alexander Munroe Gostelow. It came under various ownerships one being the Parrot family when it was utilized as a shrimper in the River Humber.

It continued to be used as a shrimper during the early part of the Second World War until it was eventually laid up. Great Grimsby Council purchased it in 1987 from Mr Scholey of Barton-upon-Humber and the Council invested in restoring it for exhibition in the National Fishing Heritage Centre to ensure the rich heritage of Grimsby's fishing industry would always live on.

It was an honour and privilege to be participating in the celebration of the 'Perseverance'. I donated my original drawing and this now hangs in the Fishing Heritage Centre.

The Perseverance is one of hundreds of fishing smacks that plied the Humber and the British coast in days gone by. It might be of interest to know that many of the other smacks from this time have been preserved and now participate in regattas racing against each other.

Long may they continue to sail.



MIDNIGHT MILLIONAIRES

CAROLINE SPENCE



All's quiet in this town of fish
The kids are in bed, curled up in crocheted blankets
Made from pulled down jumpers and recycled creations
Into patterns of similarity across a generation of cousins.
The wave of men bleeds across the town
Walking, cycling, getting the bus
The Fish Docks waiting to present its gift
Paused in frozen silence, waiting for it to be broken
By the clatter of clogs
Men of steel working in ice through the night
In clothes made of wool, before layering and plastic fabrics.
Ladders up, slip and slide
No risk assessment or health and safety apparent
Frozen spaces, in frozen air
Haddock from the dark, deep waters of the North Sea
Eyes wide open – convenient grab holes for scooping up from the dock side.
A generation of children fed on fish
High intelligence guaranteed, health and wealth to follow
Built on a foundation of stinking wet hob socks
And body numbing temperatures
By proud men, dubbed the midnight millionaires.

If you're an East Marsh resident, or have
previously lived on the East Marsh and have a
story or poem, please email to
carolyndoyley@gmail.com
and you could be published in a future publication.



media & web
creative writing
music & performance
arts & crafts

As this month's theme is the environment, this month's writing prompt is based on nature.

There are two options and, as usual, you can interpret them in any way you choose. Let your imagination take you on any path it likes, even if it takes you away from the theme of the prompt. In short, anything goes – it's the writing that's important, not following the prompt!

Option 1

You wake up in a field full of sunflowers with no idea how you got there or why you're there. Write whatever comes to mind.

Option 2

You've turned into a wild animal or flower. Write about your day as that entity.

Tips to get you started:

Use the 'freefall writing' technique: spend 2 or 3 minutes writing continuously based on the prompt (or any other idea the prompt gives you) without a break. Write down anything that comes into your head and don't worry about writing in sentences, spelling or punctuation. Have a short buzz word you can write when you can't think of any other word. This will make sure you don't break the flow of ideas.

Usually, many of the words you write won't make sense, but there will be some gems that will spark an idea.

Use questioning to get ideas such as:

- Why am I here?
- How did I get here?
- What was the last thing I can remember?
- Why a field of sunflowers? What's the significance?
- If this flower/animal could talk, what would it say?
- What personality does this flower/animal have?
- What are the benefits of being this flower/animal?



The answers to the questions you ask will build your piece of writing.

We'd love to read any writing you create from this writing prompt, or any other writing

Stay safe and well.

Annabel, Carolyn, Josie, Rachel and Vivienne.

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Civic
Change

Lincs
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TOGETHER
For
East Marsh



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