

Newsletter

of the
**Northern Ireland
Daffodil Group**



Half-yearly publication of the
Northern Ireland Daffodil Group

OCTOBER 1988
ISSUE

The Northern Ireland Daffodil Group



Objects

The purpose for which the Society is established is the advancement of horticultural education through the study of the genus *Narcissus* and in furtherance of such purpose:

- (i) to promote public participation in the said educational purpose;
- (ii) to promote the establishment of public gardens or of display beds in such gardens which include plantings of *Narcissus* bulbs;
- (iii) to provide bulb stocks for plantings within para (ii) above;
- (iv) to promote, or advance scientific or practical research into the breeding, cultivation, and production of *Narcissus* cultivars;
- (v) to promote, or advance the study of *Narcissus* diseases and pests with particular reference to making Northern Ireland an international centre for the production of healthy stocks of *Narcissus*;
- (vi) to promote, or advance the production of new and improved cultivars of *Narcissus* by hybridisation, and the increase of stocks of the best types of existing cultivars;
- (vii) to publish, or assist in the publication of scientific and practical information and to publish a journal in respect of the activities of the Society;
- (viii) to promote, or advance the holding of shows, lectures, meetings, and displays which include exhibits of material relating to the *Narcissus* and to which the public is admitted, and wherever held throughout the World;
- (ix) to promote, or sponsor the promotion of classes for *Narcissus* at any Horticultural Show including the provision of trophies, cups, or prizes for such classes;
- (x) to provide, or nominate suitable qualified persons to judge classes or exhibits of *Narcissus* at any Horticultural Show or at any Show or display having such a class or exhibit;
- (xi) to provide, or nominate suitable qualified persons to give lectures, or to provide exhibits relating to the *Narcissus*;
- (xii) to aid, and to receive aid from the Departments of Agriculture in Northern Ireland, and for England, Wales, and Scotland, or from any body or person whether incorporated or not and whether carrying on activities in Northern Ireland or elsewhere, which has objects which include the purpose of the Society and which aid will advance the purpose of the Society;
- (xiii) to grant financial aid to meet in whole or in part the travel costs of a person provided or nominated by the Society to act as a judge at a Show within para (x) above, or to give a lecture or provide an exhibit within para (xi) above, or to provide a trophy, cup or prize at a Show within para (ix) above, whether or not such person is a member of the Society;
- (xiv) to accept subscriptions and gifts (whether of real, chattel real or personal assets), devises and bequests;
- (xv) to borrow, or raise, or secure the payment of money by mortgage or otherwise;
- (xvi) generally to manage, invest, and expend all the property and monies of the Society;
- (xvii) to affiliate or associate with any body or person whether incorporated or not, and whether carrying on activities in Northern Ireland or elsewhere;
- (xviii) to do all such other acts which lawfully are incidental to the purpose of the Society.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND DAFFODIL GROUP

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 3 No. 3

OCTOBER 1988

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Rules of the Northern Ireland Daffodil Group

1. **Title**
The group shall be called "The Northern Ireland Daffodil Group Society".
2. **Registered Office**
The registered office is 1 Glenholm Crescent, Belfast BT8 4LT.
3. **Objects**
The purpose for which the Society is established is the advancement of horticultural education through the study of the genus Narcissus and in furtherance of such purpose:
 - (i) to promote public participation in the said educational purpose;
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 - (vi) to promote, or advance the production of new and improved cultivars of Narcissus by hybridisation, and the increase of stocks of the best types of existing cultivars;
 - (vii) to publish, or assist in the publication of scientific and practical information and to publish a journal in respect of the activities of the Society;
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 - (xvi) generally to manage, invest, and expend all the property and monies of the Society;
 - (xvii) to affiliate, or associate with any body or person whether incorporated or not, and whether carrying on activities in Northern Ireland or elsewhere;
 - (xviii) to do all such other acts which lawfully are incidental to the purpose of the Society.
4. **Membership and Subscription**
Membership of the Society shall be open to anyone on the payment of a minimum subscription, for the time being, of £5 per annum or £12.50 for 3 years due on the 1st January. Any member being twelve months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned.

- Honorary Members, who shall be elected on the recommendation of the Committee at a general meeting of the Society shall not be eligible to vote and shall not be liable to pay the subscription.
5. **Committee**
The management of the Society shall be vested in the committee of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, an Honorary Secretary, an Honorary Treasurer and four additional members, and the committee shall have power to co-opt, and power also to invite a non-member to attend its proceedings.
A quorum for committee meetings shall be four, with the Chairman having a casting vote.
A record of proceedings shall be kept.
The officers and committee shall be elected annually at the annual general meeting, and may be removed from office only by a general meeting.
No member may serve for more than 4 consecutive years on the Committee.
 6. **Sub-Committees**
The committee shall have power to appoint a sub-committee for any special purpose. A sub-committee shall make a record of its proceedings. The Chairman of each sub-committee shall be an ex-officio member of the committee.
 7. **Annual General Meeting and Other General Meetings**
The annual general meeting shall be held in January each year, and other general meetings may be held at any time directed by the committee. Ten or more members may convene a general meeting if the committee refuses their written request for a general meeting. At least 7 days notice in writing shall be given of any general meeting and shall state the agenda.
A quorum for General Meetings shall be fifteen, with the Chairman having a casting vote.
Any member desiring to propose a resolution shall send the proposed resolution in writing to the Honorary Secretary, to arrive not less than 48 hours before the meeting.
 8. **Amendment of Rules**
Rules may only be amended at a general meeting of which due notice had been given.
 9. **Voting at General Meetings**
Every fully paid up member shall be entitled to vote at a general meeting and the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
A record of the business conducted shall be kept.
 10. **Accounts**
A Bank Account shall be maintained in the name of the Society and cheques shall be signed by the Treasurer and the Chairman or Secretary.
An audited statement of the accounts of the Society shall be submitted by the Treasurer to the annual general meeting.
An auditor, whether honorary or paid, shall be elected at each annual general meeting.
 11. **Disputes**
Any dispute between a member and the committee shall be determined by a sub-committee appointed under Rule 6 and the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Society, the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer for the time being, shall be members of such sub-committee.
 12. **Dissolution**
On dissolution of the Society the assets shall not be divisible between the members but shall be given to a body, whether incorporated or not which has purposes which are charitable in a manner as nearly as may be resembling the purpose of the Society and which is selected by the Society at its terminal general meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Member,

Preparatory to writing these few words as I near the end of my second session as your Chairman, I referred to my previous exodus remarks in the January 1981 issue of this Newsletter. Activity and progress in the N.I.D.G. during the past few years has not been so dramatic or exciting as in those earlier heady days of hosting a World Convention, upgrading the presentation and content of this Newsletter and establishing Rules and Constitution for our long term security.

The past two years have seen steady if unspectacular progress and development with a nice blend of social and educational activity. One of the highlights was a trip to Holland where participants were educated, entertained and, especially, they were enthralled by the spectacular display of tulips, daffodils, lilies and numerous other bulb flowers at the Breezand Show. Already there are calls for a repeat visit! We all owe special thanks to our friends from the Netherlands — Jan Pennings and Wim Lemmers. Not only did they host us but also helped to organise the itinerary for our visit to their country and then each of them came to Northern Ireland to address meetings of the Group. These links with Holland, where bulb growing is a way of life, are most welcome and I hope will be maintained and developed in future.

One regret is the failure of my efforts to encourage wider interests in other bulbs such as tulips and hyacinths by way of widening the appeal of our Daffodil Shows. The Royal Horticultural Society has been persuaded to introduce some tulip classes at the late competition. I am sure that if we could only have a few really impressive displays arranged at some of our shows, interest could be created which would result in yet more colourful and appealing shows in future.

After several years thinking, wondering, debating, waiting and worrying about the effects on local shows, the idea of a major Championship of Ireland Daffodil Show in Belfast at last becomes a reality in April 1989. I have long been an advocate of the well-established mobility of the Championship of Ireland which was originated to encourage top exhibitors to take their best blooms to all parts of the country and thereby stimulate interest and create awareness of the infinite variety and perfection of modern daffodils. By co-operating with the Belfast City Parks Department we have an even greater opportunity to display our best exhibits before a much wider public and thereby attract a greater number of people to join in the fun, to become members of our group and exhibitors at all our shows. We have a great opportunity in 1989 to put on a really great show and I hope I am not encroaching on the terrain of my successor by appealing for maximum support for this first show in Belfast.

Now is the time to plant and plan — remember this will be an extra show in the calendar and exhibitors will need to plan accordingly.

At the American Daffodil Society Convention in Washington, D.C., in April the President, Dr. Ted Snazelle, read the following citation:

"The recipient of the American Daffodil Society Gold Medal is a hybridizer of note who has also received the Peter Barr Memorial Cup from the Royal Horticultural Society. He is now a silver-haired gentleman who, in his youth, was an outstanding rugby player. He has won the Bowles Cup three times in London — no small feat when you realize that it is awarded for twenty-four varieties, three stems of each, drawn from not less than four divisions. Some of his hybridizing successes include 'White Star', 'Midas Touch', 'Silent Valley', 'Golden Joy', 'Lancelot', 'Silent Cheer', 'Dress Circle' and 'Poet's Way'. Additionally his golden hands produced 'Sartoria', 'Chief Inspector', 'Fly Half', 'Megalith', 'Algarve' and 'Vernal Prince'. It is my pleasure to announce that the winner of the ADS Gold Medal is Brian Duncan's mentor, Mr. Tom Bloomer!"

In the absence of Mr. Bloomer I was privileged to receive this highest award of the American Daffodil Society on his behalf and later to telephone the good news to an incredulous but highly delighted recipient. The A.D.S. made a wise choice — and one which I'm sure we all applaud as most thoroughly deserved. On behalf of our membership I take this opportunity to express our sincere congratulations.

Thank you all for allowing me to act as your Chairman for a second session; my interest in daffodils and daffodil people is such that I like to be involved both practically and socially. I wish my successor and his team the same support and happiness which I have enjoyed in my term.

May those seedlings and show specimens of our dreams become realities and may we all be given many opportunities to share our enjoyment and pleasures with like-minded people.

Best wishes to all members for a happy and successful season in 1989.

Yours sincerely,
BRIAN DUNCAN

JUST BLOOMIN' MARVELLOUS FOR WINNER TOM

One of Ballymena's best known horticulturalists has been given a top award by the American Daffodil Society.

Mr. Tom Bloomer, Senior, of Galgorm Road, was honoured at the Society's annual convention last week and awarded a medal in recognition of his work with daffodils.

It was about 40 years ago that Mr. Bloomer (83) first took an interest in the flowers. He began as an amateur, going round the local shows with breeder, Guy L. Wilson of Broughshane, and gradually his blooms started to win the top prizes at the show benches.

Progressing to serious breeding, with particular interest in pure white trumpets, Mr. Bloomer set up stands at various events for a few years but the increasing amount of work and time involved in the 'daffodil business' recently prompted him to retire.

Mr. Bloomer sold his prize seedlings to Omagh breeder Mr. Brian Duncan who has had success after success with them since. And it was Mr. Duncan who received the American Daffodil Society Medal on his behalf last week.

"I was very surprised at being given the medal but of course I'm delighted", said Mr. Bloomer.

"My seedlings have achieved success not only in America but in Australia and even Japan and they're now doing very well for Brian Duncan".

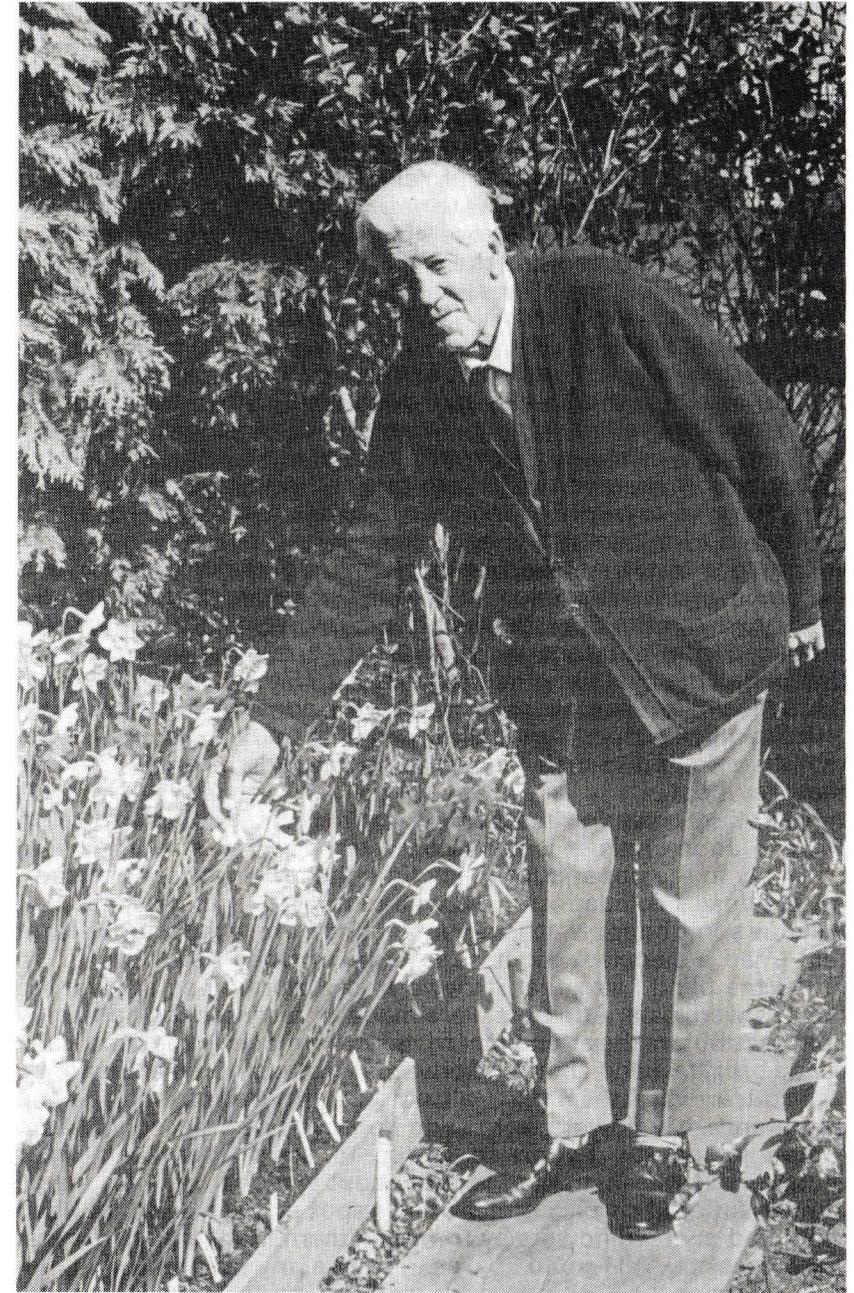
Mr. Bloomer added that he is content to leave the breeding and showing of blooms to others.

"The work was getting a bit too much. Now I just enjoy concentrating on my garden at home", he smiled.

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*Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.*

John Wesley



Mr. Tom Bloomer with some of his prize daffodils.

A GREENHORN IN LONDON

JOHN O'REILLY

Since I was first exposed to daffodilmania I have been continually exhorted to join that motley crew of enthusiasts on their annual pilgrimage to the R.H.S. Show in London. Early in 1988 I was afflicted by an unusually severe attack of Yellow Fever. My medical adviser decreed that the only cure was to attend the London Show.

On a cool sunny day we assembled at Larne for an uneventful ferry crossing and boarded the train for Glasgow. This is a rather tedious journey which was enlivened by consuming various aperitifs and playing games of "Spot the Rabbit" and, when close to towns, "Spot the Daffodil".

At Glasgow we changed trains and boarded the overnight sleeper to London. Once the flowers had been safely lodged we pilgrims made our way along a very narrow corridor to our respective sleeping compartments. I managed to enter mine with considerable difficulty and selected the bottom bunk. Conditions in these compartments are somewhat congested to say the least — it is like trying to sleep in a horizontal telephone box.

The door to the adjoining compartment was duly opened and everyone again assembled, with our Chairman conducting proceedings from the floor between the compartments. Drinks were produced from suitcases and with glasses and water by courtesy of British Rail the only thing missing was ice. Naturally the talk was of daffodils whilst several "nightcaps" were consumed and the time and the miles slipped away. Eventually the party broke up and the members retired to their respective compartments and I presume that they slept.

If so, they were fortunate. My travelling companion and room mate — John Ennis — is a London veteran and was soon snoring blissfully in the upper bunk. Each time the driver dropped anchor, my proboscis collided with the wall of the carriage. This, coupled with the sonic boom which was emanating from the top bunk meant that I had a sleepless night. What a relief when dawn broke. On lifting the blind I saw that it was a frosty morning so at least the flowers were safe. Attempts were made to carry out the necessary ablutions before the attendant arrived with what he euphemistically called breakfast and shortly afterwards we had arrived at Euston.

On our arrival at the R.H.S. Hall we found it locked but soon gained admittance. My flowers were soon unpacked and placed in water. I then joined the Rathowen Group to assist them with their unpacking. I was instructed to trim about ¼ inch from the stems. I almost suffered cardiac arrest on the spot as I realised that I had mutilated my own flowers by trimming them far in excess of what was necessary. All I could do was to stare at my own table and ruefully reflect on the 2-3 inches of stems which mutely reproached me.

The remainder of the day was spent filling vases, sorting flowers and in general it was pretty tiring. However thanks to our 'foreman'

— the aforementioned Mr. Ennis — the work was interrupted on occasions for food and/or drinks or both. The following day followed the routine of the previous day but there was much more activity. I had time to stroll round the hall, watch other exhibitors staging and was able to put faces to names which I had only read about in daffodil journals. Their courtesy and helpfulness to this greenhorn was much appreciated.

Judging took place on the following day and I was delighted to see that Carncairn and Rathowen were each awarded Gold Medals for their trade stands. Best bloom in the show went to 'Gold Bond' — a variety bred by our Chairman and exhibited by one of our members.

The trade stands were invaded by enthusiasts and it would have been helpful if chairs had been provided. My aching feet only eased when I was tucking into the celebration dinner at night. Later at our hotel we sat and discussed daffodils in general and the show in particular until the hotel became like the pub with no beer!

Wednesday was similar to the previous day except that as the day wore on I wilted more. At the end of the show I grabbed a few flowers (for pollen) and we were soon packed and on our way back to Euston. After only a few nightcaps we bedded down for the night and I must confess that there was no insomnia on the return journey. The ferry crossing on the return journey was a bit on the rough side and I was relieved when the boat docked in Larne.

In conclusion my thanks to everyone for putting up with me and making it a most enjoyable trip. I can now say "I was there" when I hear people talking about the London Show and I can only reiterate what has been said before — come and join us on the Guy Wilson Trail. It is tiring but well worthwhile.

P.S. I have changed my medical adviser. The Yellow Fever has got worse!

*A smile takes but a moment,
But the memory of it lasts for ever.*
Anon

*Love wasn't put in your heart to stay,
Love isn't love till you give it away.*
Anon

WAS THIS THE BEGINNING?

MAISIE JONES

My father always helped to run shows for the Royal Southampton Horticultural Society. It was a flourishing society which held three shows each year. The Spring Show was usually held in the Royal Pier Pavilion — a large Victorian structure. There were trade stands as well as competitive classes which included the "Ladies' Classes". The latter were what we now call "Flower Arrangement" and we allow the gentlemen to enter if they so desire.

One spring nearly 60 years ago when I was in my late teens, my mother insisted I accompany her on the eve of the show to help carry her gear for her entries. (No car then.) Having left her with the other ladies in their staging room, I proceeded to wander round the hall and was especially taken by the stand being assembled by Peter Barr & Son — so many daffodils, so many kinds being arranged by a number of men supervised by a charming young man. My father, in the course of his duties, came to the stand and he introduced me to Mr. Barr. I stayed around and we talked about daffodils and other flowers of which I did have some knowledge. We got on very well and he invited me out the following evening after the show closed, but my father would not allow me to go and I was very disappointed. I do not know which member of the Barr family he was. He was in his early twenties at the time and the incident left me with an interest in Barr's daffodils and I thought Barrii Conspicuous the most beautiful!

What with going to university, working away from home and then getting married and having three kids, daffodils had no place in my life. During the war I "dug for victory" while my husband was in the Forces. I had two allotment plots and became a good and enthusiastic vegetable grower. This was in Edinburgh. After the war James was transferred to London where we had only a pocket handkerchief-sized garden. Then in 1956 we came to Northern Ireland and having got our house in order we started on the garden. James grew roses and other garden flowers and calceolarias, begonias, cinerarias, etc., in the small greenhouse. I looked after the vegetables.

A few years later my parents came to live with us. We visited Bangor Spring Show (not members then) and my father decided to grow some daffodils for the next year. He got a Ballydorn catalogue and ordered a collection of bulbs for exhibition. When they arrived he commandeered a piece of my vegetable garden which was nicely prepared for something else and planted them. They did well but were mostly too late for the show. By the following spring he was no longer with us. I planted the bulbs in clumps around the garden — 'Mr. Jinks' still produces a few blooms most years. The only other names I remember are 'Diolite', 'Buncrana' and a white trumpet which I believe was 'Cantatrice'.

It was many years before I actually bought daffodil bulbs with a view to growing them for the Show Bench.

More of that later — perhaps!

(Editor's Note: No perhaps, Maisie. We want to hear more!)

BULB BALLOT

The results of the Bulb Ballot held on 14th August, 1988 are given below. We wish to thank all who participated and congratulate the winners and offer our commiserations if your name does not appear.

1. 'Ballyfrema'	Miss S. Fenn	England
2. 'Elizabeth Anne'	K. S. Robinson	Australia
3. 'Fragrant Rose'	P. Fenn	England
4. 'Golden Joy'	Miss L. Anderson	U.S.A.
5. 'High Society'	Mrs. R. Turner	U.S.A.
6. 'Indian Maid'	R. Spotts	U.S.A.
7. 'Interval'	E. T. King	England
8. 'Lilac Charm'	Mrs. W. Anderson	U.S.A.
9. 'Limbo'	W. Davidson	Northern Ireland
10. 'Lough Bawn'	H. Hatfield	U.S.A.
11. 'Lough Ryan'	Mrs. M. Winn	U.S.A.
12. 'Mary Kate'	Mrs. D. Dietsch	U.S.A.
13. 'Mentor'	Mrs. M. Jones	Northern Ireland
14. 'Midas Touch'	Mrs. E. Havens	U.S.A.
15. 'Murlough'	Mrs. M. Winn	U.S.A.
16. 'Nendrum'	Mrs. D. Dietsch	U.S.A.
17. 'Parthenon'	J. Moralee	England
18. 'Reckless'	J. Morley	England
19. 'Regal Bliss'	R. Roese	U.S.A.
20. 'Reggae'	R. Frank	U.S.A.
21. 'Rio Bravo'	Mrs. M. Jones	Northern Ireland
22. 'Rivendell'	Mrs. R. Turner	U.S.A.
23. 'Shanes Castle'	Mrs. M. Winn	U.S.A.
24. 'Silent Valley'	D. Barnes	England
25. 'Sportsman'	Mrs. D. Dietsch	U.S.A.
26. 'Vernal Prince'	Mrs. K. Frank	U.S.A.

Our thanks are also due to our professional growers who kindly donated the bulbs and arranged for them to be forwarded.

The only way to have a friend is to be one.

FROST LOSSES OF 1979

B. S. DUNCAN

Editor's Note: The following article was penned by our Chairman after the disastrous winter of 1979 when losses in pot grown daffodils affected many growers. I do not believe it was ever published but in any case it is worthy of reproduction as a warning of what can happen.

From my own personal experience and from conversation and correspondence with daffodil growing friends it would seem that the peculiar winter of 1978/79 played havoc with several growers' pot grown bulbs. This note is intended as a warning to those who have grown bulbs in pots for many years and who, like myself, may have become complacent and regarded daffodils as almost completely immune to cold and frost.

Until 1979 I never had bulb losses which I could attribute to frost and during the fifteen or so years that I have been growing in pots I confess to having progressively taken short cuts on traditional methods. In the beginning I used clay pots and buried them deep in the ground. As numbers of pots increased the pots were then covered with 3-4" peat (later used to mulch shrub borders) in a sunken area behind the greenhouse. Pots were also gradually changed from clay to plastic pots and buckets. Plastic buckets are about one third the price of pots and have the advantage of a handle for carrying — it also plays a part in the support of the plants. Peat became expensive and the effort required to remove the covering layer and wash down pots seemed unduly laborious and time consuming. This led to the next progression which was to use a 6-8" layer of sphagnum moss picked from local bogs. This seemed an ideal solution as it was easily handled, gave a nice spongy cover, was easily removed leaving clean pots and when dried, could be used in the Spring for staging the flowers. The only difficulty with the moss was the time required to collect the large quantity needed to cover a still increasing number of pots which were being grown to provide flowers for our London Trade Display and for exhibition. On one occasion when the amount of moss collected was insufficient to give an adequate cover it was quickly and easily supplemented with a bale of straw. So "quickly and easily" obtained and applied in fact, and also seemingly just as successful as all other materials that straw has, in recent years, been the only covering material used. So why the disaster in 1979?

Before attempting to answer that question a note on the symptoms may be of interest. The pots were removed from their straw coverings and transferred to the greenhouse. The 2-3" growth looked quite normal in practically all cases until about one week later when the growth in some pots seemed to be retarded and the green colouring was dark and lifeless; some tips went brown. Examination of a few of these bulbs revealed dead and rotting roots

and bulb bases beginning to go soft. The mass of rotting roots indicated that root growth had been normal, advanced and vigorous before being killed off. The soil in the affected pots was very wet. Samples of the bulbs were submitted to a Plant Pathology Laboratory and the diagnosis was death by asphyxiation due to wet and frost.

This diagnosis caused much heart-searching especially as several good new seedlings were lost for all time as well as many yellow perianthed flowers for our London display. I have come to the conclusion that the trouble was caused by inadequate covering and protection of the pots from both rain and frost in a winter which was peculiar in that there were many very wet days followed by heavy frost at night. The straw covering was probably lighter than usual and the pots which were most exposed with no side protection (numbers had out-grown the "plunge" area) were most severely damaged. I think too, that straw permits rainfall to run straight through into the pots whereas a good covering of soil or peat will initially absorb and/or shed more of the water. Moss might also be a more effective absorbent. Also plastic pots can only drain through the bottom and the thin sides afford no insulation against frost.

The lesson to be learned from all this is simple — daffodils are not entirely immune to frost attack. Potted bulbs must be adequately protected in the plunge bed both on top and around the sides. Though I still intend to use straw or moss the thickness of the covering and the side protection will be increased and the spaces between the pots will also be packed. Perhaps we will not have another winter of wet and frost like 1979 for many years but, just in case, I intend to provide safe protection in future.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

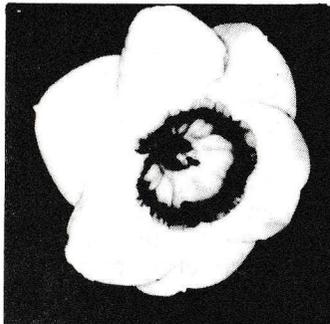
Have you ever wondered how daffodils get their name?

Some are easily explained. Simply name them after a town, village or person. But with others it can be very different.

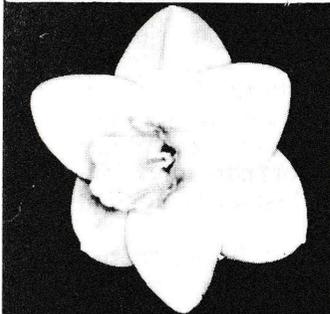
We recently heard the history of how 'Ice Wings' was christened. Many years before it first appeared in all its glory, Cyril Coleman and friends were in Switzerland. They gave a lift to a charming girl who, en route down to the valley waved happily up at the snow and said "Voilà! Les Ailes de Glaces".

Cyril decided at once that if he ever produced a flower worthy of such lyricism he would name it 'Ice Wings'.

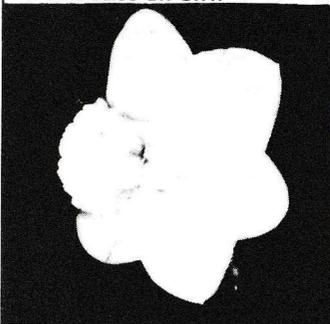
The Editor thanks Mrs. Beatrice Coleman for this fascinating snippet of daffodil history and would be grateful if other readers could supply similar accounts of how a particular variety was named.



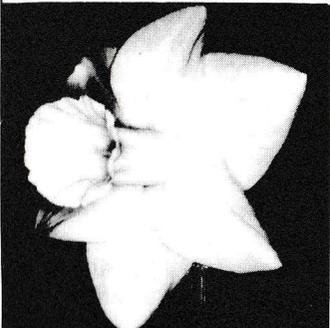
PISMO BEACH 2W-GWP



REGAL BLISS 2W-GWW



WHITE ERMINE 2W-GWW



SILENT VALLEY 1W-GWW



Engleheart Cup	1985/1986
Large Gold Medal—Harrogate	1983
Gold Medal—Harrogate	1984

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N.I. SHOW REPORT

S. M. McCABE

Our show season got under way on 16th April with the almost obligatory but unfortunate clash of dates. Bangor, Coleraine and Enniskillen Societies all opted for this date. Despite this all three shows were well supported.

At Bangor, John O'Reilly produced an immaculate bloom of 'Namraj' to win Best Bloom in Show and Best Bloom in the Senior Amateur. Maurice Kerr, on his first visit to Bangor and in his last year in the Intermediate Section, won the Intermediate Section after a close tussle with Mrs. D. Smith. In fact, to use golfing parlance, he won on a countback having more first prizes. His bloom of that old favourite 'Cantatrice' was adjudged best in the section.

A newcomer to our ranks — Mrs. Janice Webber — easily won the Novice Section and had best bloom in the section with 'Amber Castle'. We understand that Janice is a very keen grower and already exhibits all the symptoms of being incurably afflicted with 'Daffodilmania' or 'Yellow Fever'. There were only a few entries in the Open Section which was won by Mr. Jack Carlisle and our correspondent noted his vase of three 'Golden Rapture' as being specifically worthy of mention.

Further north at the University of Ulster at Coleraine, the local society was hosting their 5th annual Spring Show. This society has a relatively small number of daffodil enthusiasts but, having judged there for the past few years, I noticed a distinct improvement in the standard of blooms, staging and number of entries. There were six entries in the 6-Bloom class which was won by D. Turbitt, with the family connection of L. Donnell and M. Donnell being 2nd and 3rd respectively. The winner's "reserve" entry has to be marked N.A.S. Derek, you MUST ensure that there are three divisions represented.

Best Bloom in the Show went to D. Turbitt's 'Cool Crystal'. The now customary small trade exhibit by Carncairn Daffodils is an added attraction at the show and aroused considerable interest. The big attraction on their stand was 'Dolly Mollinger' — a Division Eleven flower — and as our correspondent states, "There is no accounting for the taste of the fickle public". I may add that our correspondent is a traditionalist!

It is hoped to introduce an Intermediate Section to this fast-growing show in 1989 and I would appeal to our established exhibitors to visit this enthusiastic society as soon as possible and give them all the support they deserve.

Co. Fermanagh Gardening Society had the honour of staging this year's Amateur Championship. George Marsden was successful with good blooms of 'Loch Stac' (Best Bloom Amateur Section), 'Ringleader', 'Lancelot' (Best Division 1) and 'Cyros'. John Ennis was runner-up and featured 'Wetherby', 'Purbeck' and 'Sportsman' in his 12. George has asked me to express his thanks to the professional growers and the other leading amateurs in the province for all

the help, advice and encouragement so freely given.

The Amateur Intermediate and Novice Sections were keenly contested with John Ennis, W. J. E. Dukelow, R. H. Allen, A. E. Allen and G. Jordan all featuring in the prize list. Blooms worthy of mention were 'Broomhill', 'Tudor Grove', 'Unique', 'Loch Stac', 'Bunclody'.

The Open Classes saw entries from as far apart as Omagh and Dublin. Rathowen Daffodils had Best in Show and Best Division 3 with 'Dateline', Best Division 4 with 'Smokey Bear' and Best Any Other Divisions with 'Kaydee'. Michael Ward prevented a clean sweep by taking Best Division 2 with 'Amber Castle'.

Hillsborough was next on our schedule on 23rd April and whilst the Open Section suffered through the absence of Kate Reade and Brian Duncan who were attending the A.D.S. Convention, Amateur Senior, Intermediate and Novice Classes were all well supported.

The Senior Amateur saw a close contest with John O'Reilly, J. P. McAusland, G. Andrews and a newcomer — Miss D. Bell — who apparently has been hiding her talents in Hillsborough each year. She will have to travel as her blooms were well grown and well staged but suffered from having too short stems. 'Mentor', shown by John O'Reilly was Best Division 2, 'Pink Pageant' (Miss Bell) was Best Division 4, and W. Davidson's 'Tuesday's Child' took Best Division 5-9.

The judges went to the Intermediate Section to give Best Bloom in the Show to Richard McCaw with 'Achduart'. For someone who has asked us to organise a lecture for beginners on how to grow exhibition blooms, he needs little advice! He and Maurice Kerr had a tense battle in the section, with the latter just gaining the verdict. Maurice also won the Best Seedling with a 'Kingscourt' cross which has bloomed for the first time this year. A query for our readers arose at this show. *Is a double headed 'Altruist' eligible for a prize in Division 3?*



Sam Bankhead pictured at Ballymena Show.

Photograph by courtesy of "Ballymena Times"

And so to the Championship of Ireland at Ballymena when our guest judge was Mr. Ron Scamp from Cornwall. The early season and the counter-attraction of an Open Day at Greenmount Agricultural College meant that the show in general was very disappointing and the attendance of the general public was meagre.

It was fortunate that the Championship of Ireland and associated classes were being held as very few blooms were on display in the other classes. Last year I was extremely despondent after the Ballymena Show and this year did nothing to relieve my gloom. This is no fault of the organisers, though I feel that a change of venue to a more central location might prove beneficial. However, one would then come up with the problems of facilities and car-parking.

In the not-too-distant past, Ballymena was *the* principal show. Entries abounded and competition was fierce. I don't know what has happened in the meantime or what the remedy might be, but unless new exhibitors are found or existing exhibitors can be coerced back, I fear that Ballymena Show could well sink into oblivion.

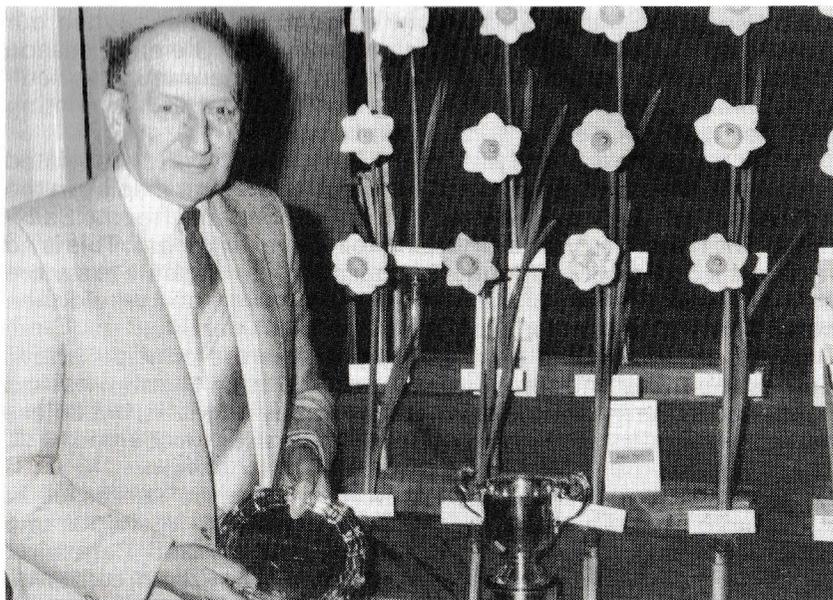
Our Chairman, Brian Duncan, returned from his successes in America to regain his title as Champion of Ireland. My hopes of a hat-trick of success were shattered by both he and Carncairn. Brian's winning 12 were all excellent blooms, well grown, colourful, and staged in the superb manner which only he can manage. Among his winning group were 'Solar Tan' 3Y-R (Best Division 3), D.891 3Y-R (Best Unregistered Seedling) and 'Moralee' (Best Division 4). Robin Reade (deputising for Kate who was still in U.S.A.) staged a very creditable group which would have been enhanced by a little more colour. Worthy flowers to note were 'Timolin' (3Y-YYR) and seedling 1/2/67 (3W-GWO). Best of my refrigerated 12, which showed signs of frost damage, were 'Ringway' and 'Merlin'.

The Royal Mail Trophy which calls for six varieties, three blooms of each, Irish raised, saw the same result. B.S. showed excellent specimens of 'Val D'Incles', 'State Express', 'Moralee' and 'Young Blood' (one of which was Best Division 2 in the Show). Pick of Carncairn's entry was a vase of their lovely pink 'Quiet Day' while my best was 'Regal Bliss'.

Carncairn won the W. J. Toal Award for the Best Division 5-9 with 'Stratosphere'. In the classes for seedlings or flowers not in commerce, I was impressed by 'Triple Crown' and D.990 (20-R).

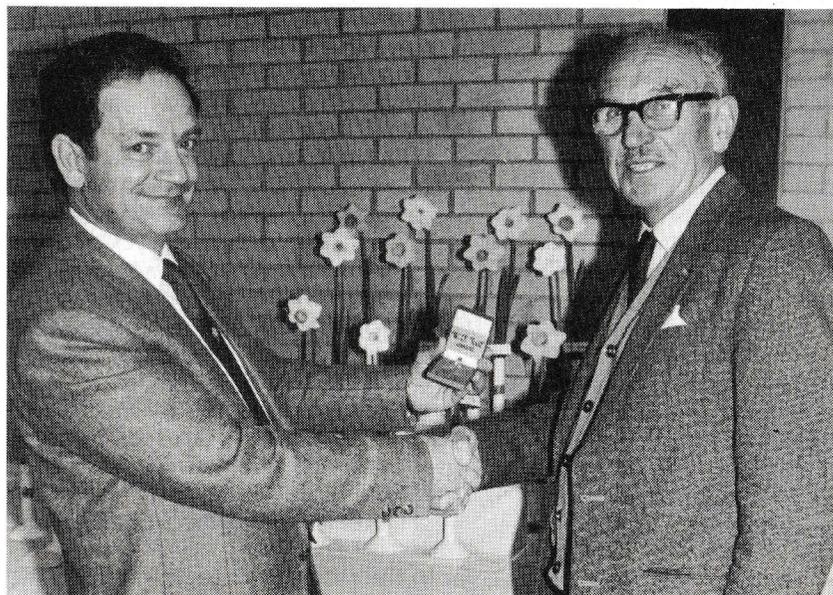
The Amateur Senior Classes were only supported by Sam Bankhead, John O'Reilly and myself and in no class did we each manage an entry. It was a case of permutation of any two from three in each case. Flowers of note in the section were 'Ringway', 'Purbeck', 'Sportsman', 'Comal' with John's 'Dateline' being adjudged best in the section.

Maurice Kerr had a walk-over in the Intermediate. In no class did he face any opposition and had he chosen to enter the Senior Section (where he would have gained considerable success) there would have been more vacant spaces. He had the satisfaction of



Mr. Clarke Campbell with Rathowen's winning group at Omagh.

Photo by courtesy of "Tyrone Constitution"



Mr. Ron Scamp presents Mr. Robin Reade with the W. J. Toal Award at Ballymena.

Photograph by courtesy of "Ballymena Guardian"

showing an immaculate bloom of 'White Star' which was Best Bloom in Show to add to his considerable record of Best Bloom Awards and also to dot the eyes of the "big guns" for the second week in succession.

Novice classes were poor in the extreme and it was noted that the prize-winners also won prizes in the same section 10-15 years ago. Obviously they have no desire to progress. Best Bloom in the Section was awarded to 'Misty Glen' shown by a newcomer, Mrs. Margaret O'Neill.

No report has been received from Omagh, but from memory I recall that Best Bloom went to 'Poet's Way' shown by Harry Allen and again coming from the Intermediate Section. Judges at Omagh seem to have a preference for Poeticus as 'Cantabile' won the award last year. In the principal class for 12 blooms Brian Duncan had a reserve entry consisting of 12 blooms with pink colouring in the cups. It did not win a place but was a most attractive exhibit.

The late show was held at Ballydorn on 8th May and the thanks of the N.I.D.G. are due to Sir Frank and Lady Harrison for hosting the event and for providing a most enjoyable lunch. Results are not really important at this event and judging is probably affected by the copious quantities of delicious wine served by our gracious hosts.

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DAFFODILS

HELEN K. RICHARDSON

Mr. Lionel Richardson, who delegated the task of writing this article to his wife, is one of the very successful daffodil raisers, his success being proved by the fact that this year he has secured 5 Gold Medals and 43 First Prizes, including the Engleheart Cup, and 19 First Prizes at the R.H.S. Daffodil Show—EDITOR, My Garden, 1936.

The middle of summer may seem a curious time to write about spring flowers, but to reap the full benefit of one's garden one must think for several months ahead; and so it is now that a keen gardener thinks about what he or she is going to plant to make a splash of colour in the garden in the early months of the year. When one thinks of spring a picture of golden daffodils bravely dancing in the fickle spring sunshine comes to our minds. What is more cheering on a grey March day than to look out of a window and to see a blaze of yellow in the grass, reminding us that the long winter months are past and that warmer days are coming.

During the last few years amazing strides have been made by the daffodil raisers so that no longer is the daffodil the simple yellow trumpet flower that grew in everyone's garden. It is now possible to have white daffodils — some with red centres and white or yellow petals — in fact all shades from pure white throughout, to a cherry red cup with deep yellow petals, and this year at the London Daffodil Show a very lovely pink trumpet daffodil was exhibited. Of course, some of these new varieties are very expensive, as in most cases the stock of bulbs is very limited, and it will be some years before we shall see pink daffodils in everybody's gardens.

To the average person the innumerable varieties of daffodils exhibited must seem very bewildering, and to make a suitable selection for one's garden well-nigh an impossibility, so I will now endeavour to give a list of the newer varieties at moderate prices which are proved good garden plants.

In the yellow trumpet section there are not many outstanding flowers at low prices that are much of an improvement on the older varieties — 'Godolphin' merits notice for its high quality, broad petals, long stem and beautiful soft clear yellow colour; 'Decency', slightly cheaper, has pointed petals and is deep golden yellow; and 'Master Robert', a veritable giant flower with broad overlapping petals and a large trumpet, rich golden yellow throughout. 'Halfa' and 'Bonython' are good bicolour trumpets.

For those who like white flowers there are several to choose from. Undoubtedly the best is 'Beersheba', but to get the full benefit of its purity it should be grown indoors or with adequate protection outside. 'White Emperor' is a sturdy plant and stands bad weather surprisingly well. 'White Nile', 'Cicely', 'Mitylene' — which has a pale lemon crown — 'Silver Salver' and 'Mystic' are charming 'Leedsii' which should be in everybody's garden.

There are many excellent flowers of the *Incomparabilis* type. Of self yellow there are 'Carlton', 'Havelock' and 'Jubilant'; amongst those with yellow crowns and white petals should be noted 'Bodilly', a really outstanding flower, and 'Nissa'. In this section also are many high-coloured flowers with red or orange cups and yellow petals, such as 'Bokhara', 'Killigrew', 'Damson', and that still rather expensive fine flower, 'Fortune'; 'Warlock' with its orange cup and white petals is worthy of notice, and that dainty flower, 'Folly', with its shaded red cup and reflexing white petals will burst with bloom late in the season; 'Elspeth' is a pretty flower with white petals and a pale yellow cup banded with vivid orange-red. A very late flowering variety is 'Sunstar', with broad white petals and a dark red eye.

Many people like flowers with a sweet scent, so I must include the delightful Jonquil Hybrids; 'Lanarth', 'Trevithian' and 'Polnesk', the three best — the first mentioned has deep yellow petals and an orange cup, and the other two are self-yellow throughout, bearing two or three flowers on each stem.

All the flowers I have mentioned so far are very suitable garden subjects and are very reasonably priced and would form the nucleus of a good and interesting collection. Many of the flowers exhibited on the show benches nowadays are still too highly priced for the average garden lover, but for those who are keen daffodil enthusiasts and are anxious to exhibit in shows I would like to draw attention to a few of the really outstanding novelties. 'Cameronian' and 'Slemish' are both excellent white trumpets; 'Balmoral', 'St. Issey' and 'Trennoon' are yellow *Incomps.* of the highest quality; 'Carbineer' and 'Porthilly' are striking flowers with their vivid red cups and yellow petals; and 'Polindra' is a perfect show flower with its very broad, smooth, white petals and lemon-yellow cup; 'St. Egwin' is the only self yellow *Barrii*, so is quite unique; 'Therapia', another good *Barrii*, has broad, flat, pure white petals and a flat yellow eye margined with bright orange-red. Amongst Giant *Leedsii*, 'Brunswick' is one of the finest — an early flower with a well-balanced greeny yellow crown and flat white petals, it has amazing lasting powers either on the plant or cut. 'Niphetos' is an excellent garden plant as well as being a first-class show flower.

All the flowers in this article have good constitutions, will grow well in most places and are good increasers, so that in a very few years from one bulb one will have several bulbs each bearing beautiful flowers. The prices of the latest novelties sometimes seem exorbitant, but it should be remembered that it takes five years for a bulb to bloom from seed, and then there is only one bulb, and perhaps from five thousand seeds planted the same year a very small percentage are better than their predecessors, but the indifferent flowers have taken just as much time in cultivation as the few good flowers, and for every really outstanding flower there are at least a hundred which are practically worthless.

The foregoing article was discovered by one of our members in

a publication entitled "My Garden" and dated August 1936. He felt it worthy of reproduction and wonders if any of our present day exhibitors ever saw any of the Novelties listed — let alone ever grew them.

Some of the varieties mentioned in the article evoked, in me, a sense of nostalgia as I recall my schoolboy employment with Guy L. Wilson, though I'm not sure that I ever saw the flowers. I know that I handled bulbs of some of the varieties at despatching time.

One aspect has not changed in the intervening half-century since the article was first published. The price of novelties still seems exorbitant but when one recalls that some varieties were introduced at £50.00 per bulb in the late nineteen thirties, is £100 per bulb really too expensive in the late nineteen eighties?

Editor: N.I.D.G.

TALE OF TWO LOVES

PETER FENN

This tale of two loves began way back in 1955, a long long time ago. I fell for my first love at the local Saturday night dance. She was tall, slim, attractive, pale, a real beauty — Sheila.

Love blossomed, in the fullness of time we were married and made our first home in a cottage with an enormous garden (well it seemed enormous to a non-gardener).

Then into my life came love number two, in the garden of all places. She too was slim, elegant, very pale, another beauty — 'Polar Ice'. Sheila, sensing competition, presented us with our first son. That same spring, 'Polar Ice' presented me with a first prize at the local Spring Show, and more important, introduced me to some of her friends, even more beauties, with names like 'Kingscourt', 'Preamble', 'Vulcan', 'Cantatrice', 'Avenger', 'Tudor Minstrel', 'Ben Hee'. The list was endless, so many, so lovely, so confusing, and I was told there were even more in catalogues from Richardson, Wilson, Dunlop, to name but a few.

Sheila was generous. I was allowed to have more of these beauties. The collection grew, and although I didn't appreciate it at the time, I was in good company with a few local exhibitors who could grace the tables of the R.H.S. any day. I was shown how to groom and stage to show these lovelies to their best.

To keep pace with the collection Sheila presented us with our second son, but my love for the yellow and white beauties continued. Four foot wide raised beds appeared, stocks multiplied, new cultivars purchased, the variety, elegance and beauty attracting me even more.

Sheila played her ace, a lovely daughter. We needed more room

(indoors) and, as if it were planned, my job took me South to Guildford — and a smaller garden. My "other" loves took a nasty knock, the stock was heartbreakingly reduced to a modest collection, the growing family demanded more attention, and so for a few years my other loves took a back seat, though I couldn't abandon them altogether.

Guildford proved only a stepping stone to our present home at Farnham, a typical suburban detached home in 1/5 acre where I quietly nursed my other loves into the rather dubious garden, working hard at improving the mixture of imported topsoil which had been filled in over the worked out gravel pits.

As the family grew and began to go their various ways, I found myself able to spend longer in the garden. Sheila, to her credit and my relief, decided "if I can't beat them, I'll join them". This began a far more amicable relationship. The collection began to increase again, stocks built up. The new introductions were classier, more elegant, more colourful, more beautiful! Alas, 'Polar Ice' was surpassed, but retained, if only as a reminder of how it all began, the garden filled to overflowing and again, as if planned, Ian, a fellow "yellow fever" sufferer, introduced himself and surprise, surprise, had more garden than he needed.

The expansion could now proceed apace, quality improved, better stocks introduced. There is now as many bulbs at Ian's as there are at home. Home stock is a mixture of pot work and beds, some of these having 10' 0" wide tunnel frames over two beds and covered at the appropriate times with "rokolene" type netting. Stocks at Ian's are all in open raised beds.

I'm very lucky. I love my flowers, I love Sheila, and I'm very grateful they get on very well together because I need them both. Honest.

Well, who's going to dig the bulbs when I'm injured? Who looks after the greenhouses when I'm at work? Or keeps the beds watered? Keeps an eye on the H.W.T. tank? Helps clean the bulbs? Who indeed?

So to any intending exhibitor, before you finally succumb to the power of "yellow fever" make sure of your first love, so you can enjoy your second love.

If you think you're too old for growing pains, try cultivating a small garden.

The dictionary is the only place where the word success comes before work.

When success turns a person's head he is facing failure.

WHAT IS SCENT?

FRANK STRONACH

Reproduced from Tasmanian Daffodil Journal

Our olfactory nerves react to substances possessing odour in a way that makes it possible to recognise such substances often with certainty. There can be no mistaking the smell of a pungent substance such as ammonia, or the odour of stale fish, and once registered in the memory many smells are recorded most faithfully to be recognised instantly even after a lapse of some years. The enchanting mystery lies in the fact that the sample that actually touches that very sensitive nerve centre in the nose is infinitesimally small. Even so, I have to tell of a most surprising experience which I enjoyed only last season but first let me go back for something like a quarter of a century. I was arranging my first exhibit ever for the Hobart Spring Show on the show eve. I was nervous because I was not at all sure of the worth of my exhibits or the correctness of my presentation of the flowers, however I relished the pervading scent of daffodils that seemed to fill the whole hall that night, I remember it and I consciously prepare myself for that same fragrance as I arrive at each show that I attend even now.

The recent experience of which I have set out to write however, concerns the scent of individual flowers and not daffodils in quantity. A lady of noted artistic talent with whom I am pleased to be acquainted when visiting our home was attracted to the sight of daffodils which my wife had arranged. Our visitor admired the flowers fairly critically which did not surprise me as she is a botanical illustrator. Then she removed one flower and carrying it away from the bowl, held it to her nose and inhaled deeply. After a short pause she exclaimed, "Let me try another".

With the second flower she exclaimed, "That's so different, this has the hint of carnation, while the first one had the scent of lilac in its fragrance".

Even though I was slow to be convinced I had to agree as she continued to find new olfactory experiences taking various flowers in turn she was right. For my part I had never taken the trouble to go past the simple pleasure of the smell of lots of flowers together, now however it was like entering a new world. Soon I realised that not only colour, but scent as well, was characteristic of particular varieties. Of course I had always realised that jonquilla possessed a particular scent, characteristic of the species, but here now was a demonstration that even among seedlings which I had raised I could find distinctive aromas. It was only then that I began to think that, as well as being unique in form, 'Erlicheer' too had always had a distinctive scent both strong and sweet.

I have thought of the scientific approach to distinctive perfumes, and as interesting as the process of compounding this toiletry is, it has no importance in relation to this subject. I was nevertheless

interested in the reference I found in Edmund Launert's book "Scent and Sent Bottles" in which he wrote:-

"No one would pretend that the bouquet of jonquil or the 'Pheasant's Eye' even vaguely approaches the pleasant. Among all the flowers used in perfumery there is none so reminiscent of excreta and yet it is one of the most interesting scents and, next to jasmine, the most erogenous. The narcotic effect of these flowers which play a great part in Greek and Roman mythology (the story of Narcissus), has always been recognised. Both species (*N. jonquilla* and *N. poeticus*) are extensively cultivated in southern France, and the absolute is used mainly in perfumes of the gardenia and *quelques fleurs complexes*".

The word bouquet has a special connotation for the wine buff, and there can be no doubt that there are such among the daffodil growing fraternity. Again this leads to thought of formulation or blending. There can be no doubt of the importance that the wine maker attaches to the bouquet of each vintage for this is one of the prime characteristics by which it will be judged.

So to return to the concept of distinctive scents possessed by individual varieties, since I have not found a single reference in all the books I have studied on raising daffodils I believe I may be focussing on a new and original theme, that of purposely breeding daffs that will exhibit special perfume qualities. Clearly the fundamental material is at hand as my friend's sensitive nose has discovered. There is scope for original work in identifying the distinctive kinds of aromas available in known garden varieties as well as species of narcissus. Possibly the study of the family trees of some of the specimens we find could be a heady occupation in tracing the effect of combining genes on the development of the scent.

Now, lest I be considered too much of a radical, let me observe that nowhere in the rules of judging is there a specific reference to allocation of points for perfume, and let me say that I don't think that there need be any more consideration to scent by judges than there has been in the past. No, on this occasion I think I am satisfied to say that my friend introduced me to a thought provoking experience, a little space for nostalgia, and a desire to experiment. Nostalgia? yes I have used the word purposely as no doubt the scent of many flowers remind many people of past memories. In my own case with the scent of a hall full of daffodils comes the recollection of two great enthusiasts Mr. and Mrs. Steven Bisdée, who as I was working on my exhibit for my very first show, were working quietly and purposefully too, in such a way that they represented something special. With daffodils they appeared to have found in total mutuality the essence of happiness. What a name that could be for a carefully bred flower excelling in its scent above all of its other qualities!

Ah! I have not yet answered the question "What is scent?" Scent, smell, fragrance, call it what you will, I can only suggest that the individual's own reaction to it is all that matters, then it may be agreed

that this has to do with very personal and individual interpretation through the sense of smell. It was in 1898 that a First Class Certificate from R.H.S. was awarded to Will Scarlett raised by one of the great pioneers — G. H. Engleheart. The flower would not remain in the memory of any grower today as a colourful flower, but in 1932 Louise Beebe Wilder, in her book, "The Fragrant Path" recorded "to my nose the gay Will Scarlett smells exactly like a ripe pear." Scent then is truly one of the ways that daffodils can be made more memorable.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

18 Bosmeor Close
Falmouth
Cornwall
May 1988

Dear Sandy,

Your invitation to join you in Ireland to see the shows and meet the people was truly the highlight of my life with daffodils. It was an honour and a privilege to be asked to judge the Championship of Ireland and I hope I did not make too many mistakes.

The hospitality and friendship of yourself and your fellow countrymen was overwhelming. It was so nice to meet them and see some of your beautiful countryside. There was never a dull moment.

Please convey my warmest thanks to everyone for making my visit such a memorable one and my best wishes for the continued success of your shows.

Yours sincerely,
Ron

Thanks, Ron. We are so glad you enjoyed your short visit. You will be welcome at any time but arrange a longer trip next time.

Editor

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