

Newsletter

of the
**Northern Ireland
Daffodil Group**



Half-yearly publication of the
Northern Ireland Daffodil Group

APRIL 1994
ISSUE

System of Classification

1. The classification of a daffodil cultivar will be that which is submitted by the person registering the cultivar, or will be based on the description and measurements submitted by such person.

2. The classification will consist of a division number and a colour code (for example, 1Y-Y, 2YW-Y, 3W-WWR, or 4Y-O).

3. The numbered divisions in which a daffodil cultivar may be placed are defined on inside back cover.

4. Measurements taken in determining between Divisions 1, 2 and 3 will be those of the flower at maturity. The length of the perianth segments is the measurement from the tip of one segment when flattened out to the base of the corona. The length of the corona is the measurement from the base of the perianth segments to the furthest margin of the corona.

5. a) The colours and equivalent code letters which may be used to describe a daffodil cultivar will be those of the flower at maturity. They are:

White or Whitish	W
Green	G
Yellow	Y
Pink	P
Orange	O
Red	R

In distinguishing Orange from Red in daffodil classification, borderline colours including and on the yellow side of RHS Orange Group 29 are said to be Orange; those including and on the purple side of Orange-Red Group 30 are Red.

b) The colour code will consist of two letters or two groups of letters separated by a hyphen: the letter(s) before the hyphen will describe the perianth segments (the "petals"); the letter(s) following the hyphen will describe the corona (the "trumpet" or "cup").

c) For purposes of description the perianth segments will be divided into three zones: outer zone, mid-zone and base; and the corona into three zones: eye zone, mid-zone and rim.

d) If the perianth segments are substantially of a single colour, a single code letter will describe them; if they are of more than one colour, either two or three code letters will be used, describing the outer zone before the mid-zone and/or base.

e) If the corona is substantially of a single colour, a single code will describe it; if it is of more than one colour, three code letters will be used, describing the eye-zone before the mid-zone and rim.

f) In double daffodils the code letter(s) before the hyphen will describe not only the perianth segments but also any extra perianth segments (being of the same colour), even if they are interspersed with the corona at the centre of the flower; the code letter(s) following the hyphen will describe the corona or the segments of the corona. Multiple letters before or after the hyphen will in doubles as in all other daffodils indicate that there is more than one colour from outer zone to base of the perianth segments or from eye zone to rim of the corona or the segments of the corona.

Continued inside back cover

THE NORTHERN IRELAND DAFFODIL GROUP NEWSLETTER

VOL 4 NO. 4

APRIL 1994

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Auditor

SIR FRANK HARRISON, Ballydom, Killinchy, Co. Down.

RULES OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND DAFFODIL GROUP

1 Title

The group shall be called "The Northern Ireland Daffodil Group".

2 Registered Office

The registered office is 22 Moira Drive, Bangor, Co. Down.

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;
- (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 or 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 provide a trophy, cup or prize for 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;

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 £7.50 per annum or £18 for 3 years due on the 1st January. Any member being 12 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 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 4 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 4, 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 members may serve for more than 4 consecutive years on the Committee.

6 Sub-Committee

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 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 15, with the Chairman having a casting vote. Any member desiring to propose a resolution shall send 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 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 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 REMARKS

I will apologise in advance if I touch on subjects already covered by our Honorary Treasurer and Secretary in their reports. I can hardly believe that 12 months have passed since I was given the honour of being your chairman, so do not expect too much from these remarks.

The weather at the moment is kind of rough to put it mildly, which I think will make for a late season or even more rare, a normal season. Of course it was an early season last year but the shows were well filled even to the late show at Ballydorn Bulb farm where Sir Frank and Lady Harrison extended a very warm welcome to us all.

As chairman, I must thank and encourage the people around me. So first I would like to thank our secretary, John O'Reilly for his dedication and hard work over this past year. John has kept me right on numerous occasions and his expertise as editor shows in our newsletter; but I feel we push him too hard and we must relieve him of some of this work. I would also like to thank Jack Carlisle who was appointed treasurer after the death of Gilbert Andrews this year. Jack has shown a very professional approach to his job. You know chairmen come and go but as long as the group has two stalwarts such as these the Northern Ireland Daffodil Group will continue to survive and strengthen.

Also on my list to thank are those who helped at the spring and autumn Belfast Shows and especially Belfast Parks and anyone who donated blooms and bulbs. I know everyone is busy at the Spring Show but I would appeal for more cut flowers to sell during the show hours.

And now to the encouragement. As you know the Belfast Show returned to Maysfield and underlined its position as our premier show in the province. Although I would like to see more people exhibiting in the championship classes.

The new award this year is the Gilbert Andrews Trophy and I know it will be highly contested but let us make the winner earn it, please travel & exhibit at as many shows as you can.

New members are always welcome and I would encourage each one of you, as individuals, to look round your Horticultural Societies and invite anyone interested in daffodils to come along to any of our meetings.

I would also like to see the social side of our group develop. This has already begun with the barbecue at Maurice Kerr's house and the Belfast Show dinner. Anyone who was not there missed two good events and I would like to see these continue.

Later in the meeting a proposal will be made to form a Newsletter committee and I would ask you to rally round and support this committee in any way you can.

Now is the time to encourage our newer members and bring them to the fore, so I hope you will remember that when we come to the elections.

It just remains for me to wish you a very successful year and hopefully meet you at the spring show.

PS: ADDITIONS TO CHAIRMAN'S REPORT JANUARY 1994

I would like to say how pleased I was to see so many members of the group at the AGM. Also I would like to welcome new members there for the first time. But I would especially like to welcome Robin Reade back into our midst. Let us continue our general meetings in future with this high turn out of members.

R. McCaw

SECRETARY'S REPORT

As we approach the new season it is time to reflect on the one that has passed. Last year saw the passing of our esteemed treasurer Gilbert Andrews. He is a big loss to the group but his name will not be forgotten as the group has purchased a new trophy to be called 'The Gilbert Andrews Trophy'. This will be competed for at all the affiliated society shows. His widow Mrs Jess Andrews has kindly agreed to present it to the winner at our late show.

And now to something in a different vein. We were all delighted when Sir Frank Harrison received the Gold Medal from the American Daffodil Society. This award was richly deserved especially as Sir Frank's raisings are mentioned in every issue of their journal as being prizewinners in most of their shows. Well done Sir Frank! We were equally delighted when an American member Mrs Mary Lou Gripshover was awarded the Peter Barr Cup for services to daffodils. It was a pleasure to welcome Mary Lou and all our visitors to our Show Dinner at the Ballance House. They really made the occasion one to remember. Future dinners have a lot to live up to.

At the London Show Brian Duncan again won the Engleheart Cup and Sandy McCabe the Richardson. It is becoming a bit of a habit for these pair. On the local scene some societies are prospering while others are finding the going difficult. I urge all members to support as many society shows as possible. They are people who are promoting our favourite flower and they deserve our support.

Finally, I thank those who hosted group events during the year. Everyone agreed that they were a huge success and I look forward to similar events this coming season. I thank everyone for their support and will not be offended in the least if someone could take over from me the post of secretary.

J. O'Reilly

EDITOR'S REPORT

It is not entirely due to the fact that you have a new editor that this issue of the Newsletter is different in many respects from previous ones. Over the past year the committee has been attempting to put the group on a more sound financial footing - as well as improving it in other respects. As can be seen from the financial statements over the past few years our bank balance has about halved; and our new treasurer Jack Carlisle insisted that action be taken to halt this trend. As a result subscriptions have

been increased, and our principal expense - the bi-annual Newsletter - has been cut in cost from around £1000 to hopefully under £600. Also some fundraising efforts will be organised - of which no doubt you will be advised.

Printing of the Newsletter has been taken from a firm of Printers and given to amateurs, and I do hope they will prove as good at it as our amateur senior daffodil growers are in their own field. It is still the intention to publish bi-annually with the autumn edition concentrating on show results. It was also decided to experiment with colour, which - though expensive - will make it more interesting. Because of circumstances this year all colour photographs have come from one source - Roland Gilpin from Portadown, and I thank him most sincerely for providing these. For future editions I would implore members to send in colour prints or slides for possible publication - and while I'm begging please, please, please send in articles on any subject you wish. I'm sure I'll find space for them.

Towards the back of the Newsletter you will find tickets for our new bulb ballot with the list of prize bulbs on the back. Please support this effort and return your tickets and money as soon as possible. Also please return your Barbecue return slip, and new membership application form (if not for yourself, then for a friend) promptly.

Turning to membership, our numbers have been declining rapidly and is now under 100 worldwide. In 1987 the published list contained 120 names, so we do need an active recruiting drive.

Please use the membership application form to recommend a friend.

The committee elected this year is devoid of female influence (apart from the influence our wives have on us.) This unfortunate state of affairs is mirrored in our membership, as I believe it is in most specialist horticultural groups in the British Isles. Perhaps this is one area in which we could expand.

W.J. E. Dukelow

SAINT BRIDGID, SOME DAFFODILS
AND A HOST OF ANEMONES

E. CHARLES NELSON

National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9

[This article is based on a talk broadcast on RTE Radio 1 in February 1994, and on an article published in *The Irish Garden* January 1994]

Saint Bridgid produced at least two named daffodils, one of which I grew for many years in my garden at Celbridge, County Kildare. When I moved into Dublin several years ago, I gave the bulbs to the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, where they flourish in the collection of Irish-raised daffodils that includes many newer cultivars donated by the Irish Cancer Society.

The particular daffodil was 'Lucifer', a delightful papery-petalled flower with a short orange trumpet, a refined and delicate plant, quite unlike some of the monsters that breeders achieve nowadays.

But who was Saint Bridgid? The answer is that she was an Irish lady who had a passion for flowers - daffodils, windflowers, Christmas roses, and a host of others. The easiest way to answer the question about Saint Bridgid is to recount the story of the windflowers.

Windflower is another name for the anemone, and some of the most beautiful windflowers originated on the southern slopes of the Hill of Howth, County Dublin. The Howth windflowers were the choicest a century ago, and today they are familiar to every gardener as St Bridgid's anemones, to use the original spelling of their everyday name.

The St Bridgid's anemone is a race of the crown anemone (*Anemone coronaria*, also called poppy anemone) selected for bright, many-petalled flowers. In the wild, crown anemones inhabit rocky places and meadows throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and

their flowers have five or six large petals surrounding a boss of black-blue stamens and carpels - St Bridgid's anemones from the Hill of Howth had narrow and more numerous petals.

By raising generation after generation of seedlings, year after year, and by selecting for seed-parents only those individual flowers which had the brightest petals and were truly "double", the Howth race of the crown anemone eventually became stabilized - it is exactly the same as raising new daffodils. The lady who did this work was Mrs Alice Lawrenson.

The first intimation of this splendid new anemone is found in a somewhat cryptic paragraph printed in *The Garden*, one of the best of the Victorian weekly gardening papers published in London but founded and edited by the opinionated, Irish-born horticulturist William Robinson.

ST BRIDGID'S ANEMONES- "St Bridgid" must kindly tell us how she grows these huge, almost Paeony-like Anemones on the Hill of Howth. We are in any case grateful for so many pleasant reminders of the fine form and splendid colour of the Poppy Anemone, so long a neglected flower, and seldom seen well grown even where not forgotten. It is the semi-doubles which have the grandest forms. The satiny bosses in the centre of the cups, when grown as well as these, add greatly to the beauty of the flowers".

In succeeding issues of *The Garden* during the springs and autumns of 1883, 1884, and so on, there were more notes in similar vein about St Bridgid's sumptuous windflowers.

Why were the anemones called after the patron saint of Kildare, and not Mrs Lawrenson? There are various stories published about this, among the most persistent being that Alice Lawrenson used the name as a nom-de-plume when writing articles for horticultural periodicals. I have never found any original contributions signed "St Bridgid" in *The Garden* nor in its contemporary rival *The Gardener's Chronicle*. Another version, a much more likely one, is that Mrs Lawrenson shunned the thought of becoming

famous as the lady who had bred these splendid anemones, and thus hid behind the anonymity of a saintly pseudonym.

Alice Louisa Lawrenson was a keen gardener and during the 1880s, she and her husband, Edward Lawrenson, lived in Sutton House, Howth. In 1891, Mrs Lawrenson moved to Salerno in Ballybrack, South County Dublin, presumably shortly after she became a widow. St Bridgid's anemones were raised in the garden of Sutton House. Mrs Lawrenson was among the charmed circle of gardeners who benefitted from the plant-exchange networks that included the 2 Dublin botanic gardens in Glasnevin and Ballsbridge - she was well-known to Frederick Moore and Frederick William Burbidge, author of a famous book about Narcissus and then curator at Trinity College Botanic Gardens, Ballsbridge. In the 1880s, she was able to donate seeds of her anemones to Glasnevin, and the records preserved there indicate that in return she received daffodils and herbaceous perennials.

St Bridgid's name is attached not only to an anemone. In the spring of 1883 all hell broke loose in the pages of *The Garden* over the naming of a Christmas rose, *Helleborus niger* 'St Bridgid', a lovely white-blossomed Christmas rose with pale green stems and big showy flowers which stayed concealed under an umbrella of glossy dark leaves. *H. niger* 'St Bridgid' appeared in the choicest nursery catalogues during the early 1900s and was always rare - Daisy Hill Nursery in Newry was well-known for its stock of this coveted Christmas rose. Another Christmas rose is credited to Mrs Lawrenson. 'Apple Blossom', with flowers of rosy-white inside and rosy-purple outside, was 'very distinct and beautiful'. Peter Barr, the argumentative English nurseryman who bred daffodils introduced it into commerce in the 1890s. Lastly, Alice Lawrenson tested her horticultural skills on daffodils. Among the seedlings she raised was one with creamy-white petals and frilled, compact orange-red trumpet, a colour sharper and brighter than hitherto known. This daffodil was christened 'Lucifer'. *Narcissus* 'St Patrick' was also raised by Mrs Lawrenson and she is reported

to have produced others although I am not sure they were ever named - in one obituary notice, Burbidge wrote that she '...originated 2 or 3 very early Star Narcissi, such as St Patrick or Lucifer and others, all characterised by white perianths and intense red or fiery chalices'.

There is little more to tell about Alice Louisa Lawrenson. She died in 1900 and was buried on St Partick's Day in the graveyard by St Fintan's oratory on the hillside above Sutton. Today few people who purchase packets of the 'corms' of St Bridgid's anemones realize that these delightful flowers originated in the garden of a patient, perceptive, amateur Irish gardener, nor that these wind-flowers have absolutely nothing to do with the triple goddess of the Celts who became the patron saint of Kildare.

**Summary of Income & Expenditure
for year ending 31st. Dec. 93**

Balance C. F.	£4990.11	Newsletter	£1041.63
Subscriptions	£332.78	Postage	£30.00
Interest Recd.	£31.71	Lectures	£26.00
Barbecue	£68.80	Trophy Purchases	£293.33
Bulb Auction	£204.00	Belfast Show Dinner	£47.75
Lily Sale	£140.90		
Autumn Fair	£311.90	Balance	£4641.49
	<u>£6080.20</u>		<u>£6080.20</u>

A.J. Carlisle
Honorary Treasurer

THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

NARCISSUS CLASSIFICATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO ALL DAFFODIL HYBRIDIZERS AND GROWERS

QUESTIONS OF CLASSIFICATION AND IDENTITY

FEBRUARY 1994

Your help is again requested with certain questions of classification and identity raised by the RHS Narcissus Classification Advisory Committee. This year, to questions about particular cultivars are added questions about the content of Division 6 and the subdivisions of Division 11.

If you have any observations or information, please contact the International Daffodil Registrar. The Royal Horticultural Society, Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE (telephone 071-834 4333; fax 071-630 6060).

If you can spare blooms, please send them to the Narcissus and Tulip Committee, who will be meeting at the Royal Horticultural Society on 22 February, 15 March, 12 April and 24 May 1994.

Please keep these enquiries in mind for next season if they have arrived too late for some of the earlier flowering daffodils. Please keep them for next season anyway if you are in the southern hemisphere.

NB. Measurements and colours required are those of mature blooms.

'*EATON SONG*' 12 Y-OOY (Tuggle 1973) Rosewarne 1989

Is the corona code right? There is a discrepancy between the registrants' OOOY and some growers' recent experience of YYO or even Y.

'*EDWARD BUXTON*' 3 Y-OOR (Sandys-Winsch, pre1932)

Is the corona code right? The discrepancy is between the OOR reported by Rosewarne Experimental Horticultural Station and the YOO or YYO of the 1933 award description.

'*HAKA*' *NOT REGISTERED* 2 -Y- (Wm Jackson Jnr, pre 1960)

Is the division right? What is the corona code? Division 2 is from the ADS Data Bank, but a Division 1 flower of the same name appears in early Jackson catalogues. The Division 1 flower is described as all yellow.

'*PIDGET*' 9 W-GYY (Mrs Richardson) Mrs Richardson 1976

Is the corona code right? The registered GYY does not tally with American experience of bulbs from the registrant herself that have a red-rimmed corona that would be coded GYR.

'*TEKAPO*' 2 O-O (Gibson) Hyde 1951

Is the corona right? In its New Zealand homeland, and in Ireland where stock has been had from New Zealand, the flower is self-orange. In England, however, the corona has recently been coming yellow, flushed orange only at base ie O-OYY.

'*WHITE BUTTERFLY*' 2 W-W (Brodie) Brodie 1940

Is the division right? There have been reports both from Latvia and from Canada that the flower is a split-corona of the papillon type, with the corona and perianth segments alternate to each other ie 11b.

'*WINDDHOVER*' 3 W-GYR (Jerrel) Jerrel 1987

Is the division right? The registered Div 3 is based on perianth segments 38 mm long and corona 12. However, in exhibition in England recently, the division has been 2, with the perianth segments 42 mm long and the corona 15.

' *W P MILNER*' 1 W-W (Backhouse pre-1869)

Is the colour code right? Recent listings (for example the ADS List of Approved Miniatures or Broadleigh catalogues) agree with early references to a white flower, or at least one that becomes white even though opening yellow. But there are early references (Bowles, Coleman, Gray, a Wisley trials description) to a flower that both opens and remains yellow.

DIVISION 6

In your experience, what cultivars at present in Division 6 should be re-classified following recent amendments to the definition of Division 6? Now to be excluded from the division are those with more than one flower to a stem and those with the perianth segments insignificantly reflexed.

DIVISION 11

In your experience, which Division 11 cultivars should be placed in which of the newly formulated subdivisions? Those in subdivision 11a would be the Collar daffodils, with corona segments opposite the perianth segments; those in 11b, the Papillon daffodils, with corona segments alternate to the perianth segments. Among the Papillon daffodils are a number with longitudinal rather than concentric bands of colour in the corona. In any of those cases, could you say (1) which of the corona colours is predominant and (2) what the other colours are?

Quote

The daffodil is a flower with dual personality and has been regarded as the symbol of both joy and sorrow, and of light and darkness.

Eric Maple

R.H.S. Gold Medal for Trade Displays

Engleheart Cup - 1985,1986,1990 and 1993

American Hybridisers Trophy - 1988,1991,1992 and 1993

Brian Duncan

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Quote from the Bible (G. N. V.)

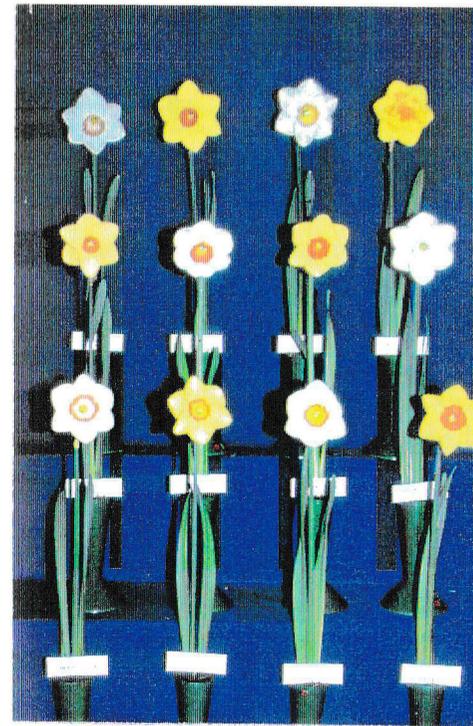
If you wait until the wind and the weather are just right, you will never sow anything and never harvest anything.



Chairman Richard Mc Caw with 'Bryanston' Best Bloom Hillsborough Show 1993



Brian Duncan at the NIDG Early Show 1993 with winning entry in 7 bloom class Loch Loyal, Sportsman, Lennymore, Bryanston, Bandit, Seedling, Premiere.



Championship of Ireland 1993 Winner B. S. Duncan Soprano, Furnace Creek, Zion Canyon, Smokey Bear, Brodick, Nether Barr, Garden news, Silverwood, Sandycove, 1505, 1550, Arizona Sunset



Secretary John O'Reilly with 'Lighthouse' Best Bloom at NIDG Early Show 1993



Sam Jordans winning 12 at Hillsborough includes Crackington (best Div 4) and Jocelyn Thayer (best Div 3)



NIDG Dinner 1993. Sandy McCabe and Mrs. Estella Evans



It's Evesham again! Sam Jordan getting assistance from the Mayoress of Bangor.



The cooks at NIDG Barbecue held at Maurice Kerr's home July 93 Robert Currie, Richard McCaw Sandy McCabe and Maurice Kerr

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, April 16th

Show Dinner, Ballance House

Sunday, June 26th

Garden Visit and Barbecue at 223 Seven Mile Straight,
Crumlin, by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs M Kerr.

Sunday, August 21st

Lily Show and Garden Visit at 231 Ballynahinch Road,
Lisburn by kind invitation of Mr J McAusland.

Sunday, October 23rd

Bulb Auction and Video, Ballance House.

Sunday, January 29th 1995

Annual General Meeting followed by slides, Ballance House

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From 0 - 10 (A 'quare' Novice)

When asked to write about my beginning of growing daffodils I have to say I must have been the greenest of the greenest. I had never been to a spring flower show, never saw a bulb catalogue or show daffodils growing, nor did I know anyone who grew them.

About 10 years ago I bought 300 bulbs (Woolworths Special). At that time I became ill and spent a lot of time in and out of hospital. During a spell at home I got my bulbs planted in a bank in front of the house. The bank was so full of stones I had to make holes with a crowbar, put in a handful of compost, dropped in the bulbs and topped up with soil. Most of the bulbs bloomed and put up a good show of colour. There were whites with orange cup, all yellow, some trumpets, short cups, long cups, white and yellow doubles. The one that caught my eye was a yellow trumpet, firstly because it was nearest to the living room window and secondly because it seemed to be moving in an up and down motion. On closer examination I found a large bee inside gathering nectar and pollen - in fact it was more yellow than black. When it moved on to another flower I lifted the flower head to inspect the havoc it had made and was surprised to find no harm had come to the bloom. I then noticed the thing sticking up in the middle of the trumpet surrounded by 6 other things (I have since learned these are called stigma and stamens). I thought about this for a few moments and then decided that if the bee could pollenate a flower then so could I. I used a small pocket knife to lift an amount of pollen and set it on the stigma; in all I pollinated 10 flowers, 3 set seed. When I thought they were ripe I filled a pot with soil and set the seeds on top and set the pot under a privet hedge and awaited my first seedlings. (I did not know they had to be planted 1" deep) and consequently the only seeds that germinated were the ones covered by soil when the pot was knocked over by the cat and put back upright again and seed and soil returned to pot. Six seeds germinated out of above fifty sown.

Year two started a lot better as the lady next door was going to Hillsborough show and asked if I would like to go (she said she was going to see the daffodils). That year the Championship of Ireland was at Hillsborough and I was able to see top class varieties. At the show I met Richard McCaw. He advised me to get some show bulbs and have a go at showing.

I duly got some catalogues among them Cairncarn, Ballydorn, Rathowen, also Clive Postles via the kindness of Mrs Lea. I proceeded to order a beginner collection from Rathowen which included Achduart, Fiery Flame, Ringleader and Montego. From these humble beginnings I now have over 200 named varieties and approximately 600 seedlings in all stages of growth, including most of JSB Leas releases and most of Clive Postles releases, some of B Duncan's newer flowers and some older varieties from Australia, New Zealand and USA.

I grow most of the blooms I want to show in a polytunnel which is 20' by 8' in two deep beds, one 4' wide the other 2' wide divided by 2' path. The beds are dug out to 3' deep, top soil is kept and sub-soil removed and replaced with equal parts soil, leaf mould, garden compost and 3 year old cow manure all riddled by hand. At the bottom of the bed I put 6" of rotted cow manure mixed with bone meal, then fill up with riddled mixer. I use about 6 oz to the sq yd of growmore which I mix in.

When the bulbs are planted about 6" deep I go to the shore for seaweed that has been washed well up the shore by the high spring tides. This is spread in the garden to let the rain wash out the salt. Then it is put through a fine riddle and mixed into the top 4 inches.

Before the leaves break the ground I give a feed of rose food, 4 oz to the sq yd (the sort that feeds 12 bushes all year). This method works for me as I get good size blooms and good colour. After the bulbs have been down 2 years, they are planted outside in a bed made up with much the same mix as the polytunnel. I have brought bulbs back to the tunnel after 1 year planted and have had good flowers and bulbs, but I think 2 years out would be best.

What are the advantages of tunnel growing? The greatest are no worries about wind, rain, hail or snow, but best of all no soot spot from smoking chimneys (mine included). Disadvantages - in an early season you miss the later shows as bulbs in the tunnel tend to flower 14 - 16 days earlier. Also the flower needs heavy shading as the flower tends to burn quicker. I find the advantages outweigh the disadvantages as the bloom grown inside seems to be of a better quality all round, but as the saying goes, "You pay your money and take your choice". (Incidentally the first crosses [five survived to flowering] all looked like poor ice jellies). The second year crosses were not much better. Third and fourth year - well, that's another story!

SAM JORDAN MRH

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Personality Profile: MAURICE KERR

On looking back through Newsletters I find that John O'Reilly when he became editor resuscitated the series of Personality Profiles. Now that I have become editor, I have been asked to do likewise. On the editorial team with me are Sandy McCabe (a past editor) and Maurice Kerr. Sandy has already been profiled, so it did not take much inspiration to pick my friend and fellow-worker for this article.

Though he lived in Omagh before I did - born in Strabane on 6th August, 1943, the family moved to Omagh, where he obtained all his secondary education - I had never met Maurice until we were competing on the show benches. He completed his formal education at Stranmillis College, where he qualified as a heavy crafts teacher. Straight away he took up an appointment in a Belfast school, and has remained there ever since - typical of the reliability and sense of duty of the man.

In 1970, he married, and he and Heather set about looking for a house. For a man who knows his own mind it could not be just any house, and I believe the first criterion was that it had to have a large garden. This could not be found in Belfast so, looking further afield, he found what he wanted, about 7 miles out from the centre. This was a bungalow on about three quarters of an acre of gardens which had been lying idle for a year. Not being afraid of work, he tackled the overgrown garden vigorously, and modified and extended the dwelling to his own needs and taste. Everything had to be right - even the lawn was dug and re-sown. The whole garden was laid out of his design. Looking at it now one can see the touch of expert and realise how fortunate we are in the Northern Ireland Daffodil Group that he chose daffodils as his speciality.

He could easily have been won over by the Vegetable Society, Rose Society or other group of enthusiasts in Northern Ireland. His hobby is gardening, though he points out he enjoys sailing, music and a night out. From the results he gets they quite obviously do not affect his enthusiasm for horticulture.

His love of daffodils started the first spring after buying his house when a swathe of King Alfreds appeared up the side of the drive. Just like the plant itself the seed thus sown took a few years to bloom. In the meantime, having joined Templepatrick Horticultural Society, his desire to compete persuaded him to exhibit vegetables and flowers.

Then having visited a Spring Show in 1975, he caught the disease - YELLOW FEVER. Like so many of us he was feeling his way and purchased a beginners collection from a general garden catalogue. This collection included Golden Rapture, Air Marshall, Spellbinder and Don Carlos. It was enough - the disease was now incurable - for next spring they netted him 5 prizes, with the aid and assistance of George Whiteside, who gave him his first lesson in staging daffodils. Quick to learn and eager to acquire knowledge he soon came into contact with the experts and before long became one himself. His collection now exceeds 500 varieties and is continually growing with the addition of new varieties.

In 1983, the house was extended greatly, using up garden space, and the daffodils were begging for more room; so when the opportunity came he purchased a further three quarters of an acre, and set about integrating it into the overall plan. This extra ground gave him the opportunity to erect a third and very large greenhouse, where he grows cacti, tomatoes and exotic fruits. A further extension of his garden took place in 1991 when he acquired a long narrow strip bordering his garden from a neighbouring farm.

This being fresh ground, is used mostly for daffodils. Maurice now exhibits at most of the Northern Ireland shows but since his garden is in a late area he is most successful at the later shows. In Omagh for instance (which is normally the last except for the Northern Ireland Daffodil Group late show) he has won the Amateur Senior Multiple Bloom and Single Bloom Sections for the last 5 years, and before that in 1987 and 1988, he won the Intermediate Section. One of his most satisfying wins was the Amateur Championship at Belfast in 1990, when he also took second place. He

won it again in 1991.

His expertise at selecting and staging was brought home to me at Belfast in 1991. I was begged to put a few seedlings in the special class for which the winner was to be named 'Belfast City'. I picked two and staged them, but Maurice - as he had a little time to spare - picked another, staged it properly and won the class for me!

At show time I have always admired his calm unflustered approach while getting his blooms ready for exhibition. No sign of tension, no doubts, but with pipe at the ready, he will sit and work at his blooms. With a few deft touches they will be ready for the bench. His groups of twelve are arranged with artistic precision, each bloom being placed where it will have best effect.

His judgement of daffodils is always sound. With no sign of indecision he will examine all the exhibits carefully and expeditiously. No wonder he is on demand as a judge.

Living in a late pocket, Maurice overcomes this by using early and mid-season varieties with good effect. All are grown outside and are not covered for show purposes, but are cut when just open and brought under cover. New acquisitions are grown in pots for the first year to check for disease.

A third of the collection is lifted each year and replanted in a fresh position. With regular acquisition of more land this is achieved without difficulty. His soil is a heavy clay and tends to get very wet in winter. The daffodils are grown in ridges which have to be fairly high so that the bulbs are not sitting in water. The site is quite exposed, so when the extra plot was obtained it had to be protected. The quick-growing Castlewellan Gold was chosen and now forms a substantial hedge and wind break.

In 1978, Maurice tried his hand at hybridising, and has continued ever since. The first crosses produced little of interest, but with experience and more knowledge gained, he is now producing some reasonable blooms (his own words, modestly) with which he has won prizes. We can look forward to many more successes in

this direction.

Anything Maurice does is done with enthusiasm. Once bitten by the disease he joined the Northern Ireland Daffodil Group and was soon elected on to the committee. He served as Vice-Chairman in 1990, and Chairman in 1991 and 1992. Under his wise leadership the group has advanced and consolidated its activities. Now retired by rule from active membership, I have no doubt that Maurice will continue to work for the benefit of the genus *Narcissus*.

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Quote

There was a time long ago when most people swore by the therapeutic qualities of plants and flowers and so it was with the daffodil which was thought to be the source of a miraculous salve that relieved skin irritations.

Eric Maple

CAN YOU HELP?

The following is a letter received by a former editor:

Dear Mr McCabe

A couple of years ago it became apparent to me that Mr Richardson named more than an occasional cultivar for outstanding thoroughbreds. A little research has turned up a little of over a hundred of his and later Mrs Richardson's cultivars registered within a year of the horse's winning major classics or becoming leading sires or dams.

So far I have been able to round up 36, but I have exhausted state side commercial sources as well as Mrs Reade, Mr Duncan and Mr Campbell. So it looks like I will have to do my future searching in private collections. Would you have any suggestions of daffodil fanciers in Ireland who may have older cultivars in their collections who may be willing to sell a surplus bulb?

To say the least I am quite proud of my Richardson "Horses". Some are still very good on the show bench, and almost all are very good garden flowers which is more important to me. So far it has been an interesting pursuit; I have learnt quite a bit about daffodils and a lot about English and Irish racing in the 1920s and 1930s. I have also learned to my surprise that a lot of large collections have very few Richardson cultivars. Any suggestions you may offer will be more than appreciated.

Respectfully Yours

John Robert Kibler
Route 3, Box 168 Warrenteu, Virginia, 22186

I am particularly interested in getting the following cultivars;

HUNTSMAN	2WR
ROYAL MAIL	2YO
KILMORE	3WO
AYALA	2YR
ALYCIDON	1WW
BAHRAM	2WO (QUERY 2YO)
BALLYMOSS	2YY
CREPELLO	3WGWY
DEVON LOCH	1WW
BIG GAME	2YR
FAIR TRIAL	1WY
GAY TRIP	4WWRR
MILL REEF	1YY
NEARULA	3WR
PALESTINE	2YYOO
RELKO	2WO
ROYAL CHARGER	2YO
SIR IVOR	1YY
STRAIGHT FLUSH	2YO
TULYAR	3WR

If you wish to assist, you can either get in touch with Mr Kibler or the editor. I presume export formalities would be required. Ed.

The origin of Yellow Fever ??

Quote

'Fleur of Daffodil' was once prescribed as a cure for madness. The scent was also supposed to have an intoxicating effect if the flowers were left in airless room.

Eric Maple

The Northern Ireland Daffodil Group

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

To J. O'Reilly, 4 cairngorm Crescent, Glengormley,
Co. Antrim BT36 8EW

Mr.
I/ We Mrs. _____
Miss _____

Post Code _____

desire to become a member of The Northern Ireland Daffodil
Group, and enclose the sum of £7.50/£18.00 being my
subscription for year/s _____

Date _____

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Please complete and return to M. Kerr, 'Downfield' 223
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by 21st June

I will be attending the Barbecue on the 26th June
and there will be a total of _____ in my party.

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