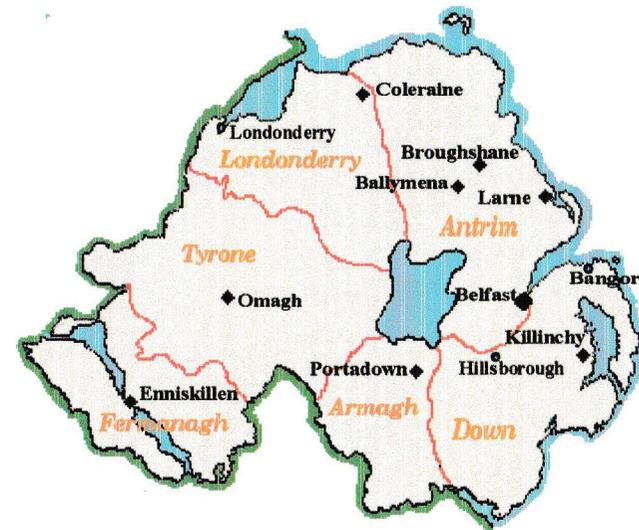


# *Newsletter*

*of the*

## *Northern Ireland*

### *Daffodil Group*



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Issue*

**THE NORTHERN IRELAND DAFFODIL GROUP  
NEWSLETTER**

VOL 5 NO. 8

Spring 01

**OFFICERS OF THE GROUP**

Chairman

G. WILSON, 5 Malory Gdns., Lisburn, Co. Down. BT28 3XJ

Vice Chairman

J. O'REILLY, 4 Cairngorm Crescent, Glengormley, Co. Antrim.

Treasurer

D. TURBITT, 16 Swilly Rd., Portstewart, Co. Londonderry.

Secretary

J. SMYTH, 35 Tullyglush Rd., Banbridge, Co. Down.

BT 32 3TN -Telephone 028 9269 2400

Committee

J. ENNIS MBE, Drumcullion, Ballinamallard, Co. Fermanagh.

R. GILPIN, Low Mills, Balteagh, Portadown, Co. Armagh.

R. McCRAW, 77 Ballygowan Rd., Hillsborough, Co. Down.

I. ERSKINE, 2 Coolnevaun, Stillorgan, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Co-opted members

N. Watson, Ringhaddy Lodge, Killinchy, Co. Down. BT23 6TJ

B. Duncan MBE, 'Knowehead', 15 Ballynahatty Rd. Omagh,  
Co. Tyrone. BT78 1PN

Editorial Committee

I. SCROGGY, G. WILSON and M. KERR.

Auditor

N. WATSON, Ringhaddy Lodge, Killinchy, Co. Down. BT23  
6TJ

## ***CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS***

My two years as chairman are over and I owe a great debt of gratitude to Richard McCaw, the secretary, George Wilson the vice chairman, Jack Carlisle and Derrick Turbitt both treasurers. The whole committee has been a pleasure to work with.

At the end of my first year Jack Carlise handed over the post of treasurer that he had held for some years and had briefed Derrick Turbitt who has now taken on the mantle. We are also to loose Richard McCaw, who feels that he has too much on his plate at the moment to continue as secretary. He deserves our sincere thanks for all he has done for the group.

The Early Show was again at Coleman's Garden Centre on a much drier day than last year. There was a very good turn out of flowers and the public enjoyed a very good show. The only slight disappointment was that lack of non-NIDG entries I hope that we can overcome this in future years. Many thanks again to Colemans who laid on coffee and were a great help in the general setting up of the show.

The main Daffodil show at the RHS in London was quite well attended by the NIDG. Brian Duncan won the "Engleheart Trophy" and went on to win the "John Lee Trophy" and the "Devonshire Cup". He was also awarded the "Reginald Cory Memorial Cup" by the RHS for his work in Narcissus hybridisation.

The Belfast Show was again held in a marquee at Malone House. It was a well attended show in the amateur and open classes but the novice classes were not well filled.

This is where the future lies and it is up to all of us to encourage new comers into these classes. They only need a couple of wins to become infected with 'Yellow Fever'. The group's stand was once again a masterpiece of Sandra Wilson's work and many thanks go to her for this. The Belfast Parks and in particular Alice Biennerhasset have our thanks.

The NIDG Late Show was held at Carncairn and although the season was almost over there was a good show of flowers. The Reade family had gone to a great deal of trouble and we all thank them very much.

John McCausland as usual hosted the Lily Show in July. His garden looked very well and the ladies of the group laid on a lovely tea. Thank you John and a big thank you to the ladies.

The World Daffodil Council has established a committee to try to set up and run a 'Virtual Daffodil Show' on the Internet. It is being co-ordinated by Bob Spotts, rspotts@netvista.net ,the UK representative is Tony James, dafftony@globalnet.co.uk so if anyone has ideas or would like to enter please let them know. The plan is to hold a show either in January or July, when neither hemispheres have flowers.

The RHS main show in London is on 10 & 11th. of April 2001. On the 11th there is a day dedicated to daffodils. There are to be a series of lectures and displays. The NIDG has been asked to contribute and we shall have a stand in the main hall. I hope that as many people as possible will try to attend and if they can, bring flowers to enter the show the novice section of which is now quite small.

Finally I would like to thank the whole group for a very pleasant two years and wish the new committee and chairman the very best of luck.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

For the first time that I can remember I took three days holiday between Christmas and the New Year, and guess what, we got snowed in. I decided to take the opportunity to relax and write this report. Looking out of the window at 8 inches of snow, nothing moved, but I guessed the Daffodils were loving it, nicely tucked under a blanket of snow. As it proved, when the snow disappeared they burst into growth. I was concerned about the pots, but they are growing strongly too. Enough of this dreaming of the perfect Lennymore just like Derrick had last spring. I was fortunate enough to have my Daffodils planted early in September. I'm not usually so early but this meant I missed the heavy rains of the last quarter of the year. Some growers have not been so fortunate.

First let me take you back to the most important season of our year. All the affiliated Spring Shows took place. These were mainly well supported but where are all the new growers? As usual I will give you a report on Belfast Spring Show. Again this was held in Malone House at Barnett's Demesne with many free attractions in the grounds. We had a good number of visitors pay to see the show. This was the second year of the amalgamation of the Open and Amateur sections. These exhibits rose from 314 in 1999 to 413 in 2000. In the classes left for Amateurs, which are all collection classes, these were also up from 49 to 76 in 2000. Disappointingly the Novice section was down from 70 to 38 in 2000. Overall Daffodil exhibits were up from 433 to 527 in 2000. For the show itself overall exhibits were up 6%. This year there will be a further amalgamation of Open and Amateur 3 Bloom classes.

Highlights of last years programs included our Lecture of the year where John Blanchard talked to us on the

pleasures of Wild Daffodils. I can inform you that John is as good at taking spectacular slides as he is at growing Daffodils. In the autumn 'Pot Culture' with Sandy and Maurice let us into all their secrets while Nial showed us some marvellous slides of prize winning blooms 'The Daffodil 2000 season in retrospect'. You will by now have the NIDG program of events and I hope you will be able to attend many of these. Our February lecture of the year for 2001 will be on 'Pests, Diseases and Disorders of Daffodils' delivered by Dr Gordon Hanks. Another meeting I am looking forward to later in the year is 'NIDG' in retrospect with Brian Duncan.

Londonderry Show on 7/4/01 has been in planning for a long time. Back in 1996 Seamus McCauley asked me for advice on improving their show. I suggested among others that they hosted the N.I.D.G. Silver Thread and it was planned for this year 2001. I would with Seamus encourage everyone to support Londonderry Horticultural Society so that the show goes from strength to strength.

There are some members I would like to thank, first our chairman Nial Watson, who has helped progress the NIDG forward and our treasurer Derrick Turbitt who has sent me money when ever I have asked!! There have been 10 new members join the group. This is a good sign and with the help of the new free standing exhibit being designed by our committee we should be able to reach a wider section of the gardening fraternity at other events.

I have had the honour of being your Secretary for almost 7 years. In this time I have meet. corresponded with and made many new friends. If you want to learn about the Daffodil world, become Group Secretary. I take this opportunity to officially stand down and wish my successor enjoyment and good luck.

Richard McCaw

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

May I begin with an apology to all our members on behalf of the editorial team with regard to the late production of the last copy of the Newsletter. Due to a series of unforeseen circumstances and illness we sadly failed to finish production until the new year. I trust that you all eventually received your copy and if not please contact the new secretary James Smyth by letter or phone or if you prefer you can email me:- heatherkerr@nireland.com

I had asked you to put pen to paper during the long winter months in my last comments and how true it has turned out. We have not had a winter like it for a long time here on the Seven Mile Straight. It was a very wet autumn, thankfully when the weather changed at the beginning of September I immediately threw up the rigs and planted my bulbs prompted by the experience of the year before when I ended up planting in conditions that closer resembled a paddy field because of my heavy clay soil. This time I had the task completed before soil conditions deteriorated too much. Did it rain? I thought at one stage someone had forgotten to turn of the tap as there were no two consecutive days on which there was no heavy showers at least and at times it rained for days on end until just coming up to Christmas. Then we had the frost and snow after it and even as I write these comments this is the first day I have been unable in thirty years to get from this house to work because of the snow. I left for work and took a longer but I hoped less exposed route only to be thwarted about two miles from home by deep drifts. I had great difficulty extracting myself then reversing back a few hundred yards in almost complete whiteout conditions until I eventually found a place to turn. I returned home almost two hours later made contact with school to be told that they were closing anyway.

George mentions in a later article is it an early or late season? It has all the appearance outside of as far as my flowers are concerned of being a late season as the cold biting wind has taken over since it stopped snowing here late morning and it is freezing into a solid mass. This has come on top of a period of about four weeks where the soil never really thawed properly other than on the surface. I had less than a third of my flowers nosing through the ground and this will certainly keep their heads down until warmer weather arrives.

So hopefully a lot of you aspiring young writers have put pen to paper as I am doing and produced an article which I will be able to use in future editions. Do not worry if you wish to have your article illustrated we on the editorial team will do our best to cope with anything you produce.

This edition features our incoming chairman quite heavily that is in terms of copy not weight. He has a lot on his plate as chairman and member of the editorial team. I am sure he feels like me 'drained' when I see what he has produced, he needs a rest in terms of copy to allow himself to generate further material for the future. So come on put pen to paper and let us have it ( copy that is).

Sam due to circumstances has decided to stand down and I must thank him most sincerely for all the hard work he did which largely went on unsung. He was an excellent proof reader who put up with my little idiosyncrasies, had the copy photocopied and took responsibility for the photographs in the centre pages plus the binding and distribution. Ian Scroggy has joined us on the editorial team this year and may I take this opportunity to welcome him and soon 'baptise' into the inner sanctum of editorial work.

Hopefully this edition will have something for everyone and it would be nice even to have suggestions on things you would like included. Have a good season.

Maurice Kerr

## INCOMING CHAIRMANS REMARKS

As I write these my first 'Chairmans Remarks' I am acutely aware that all my predecessors were not only a lot more knowledgeable of the world of daffodils but that I am as yet not even a proficient grower/exhibitor never mind my total lack of experience in hybridising or even the ability to identify with certainty the cultivars that I grow! My excursions into the 'X Files' have raised my awareness of the great daffodil growers who were founder members of the group and it is a daunting thought that I have been entrusted with steering the ship and its cargo of honourable history for the next two years. I am humbled by your confidence and I look forward to receiving advice and assistance in the same measure I have had since joining the group.

Just now we are in the annual game of guessing if it will be an early or late season. In the allotment where I do the bulk of my growing very little happened prior to the prolonged period of snow and frost which started on December the 27th ( I am certain of the date as I got marooned in Newry at a wedding reception).Locally this was followed by a brief false spring which made legions of noses appear, even in the rigs planted at the end of October!

Unfortunately normal service was resumed and now towards the end of February we are back to cold ground and negative night time temperatures. Of the half dozen growers with whom I am in regular contact there is roughly an equal divide in the early/late debate and this I put down to differing micro climates. In my own case I hope it is a 'normal' season as I intend to go to London as a first time exhibitor, I will need everything including the weather to be on my side.

Now for some tub thumping on behalf of the editorial committee. Our Newsletter is described as 'newsy, amusing

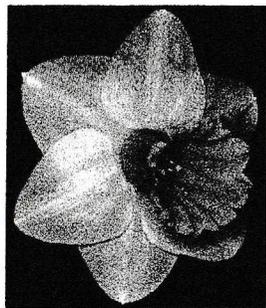
and educational' . It can only be so with your assistance in producing ideas or articles for publication. There is a mini 'X Files' enquiry in each of you into some area of personal interest, those you who hybridise must have had unusual outcomes - why? Tell us about your theories , conjectures or plain guesses. Take a division and check out colour breaks, advances in form or texture, write about your favourite flowers, your ideal 12, your perfect back row, tell us why the future is division 11, start a debate, fire our imagination. Do not worry about writing style, dont be afraid to go out on a limb, just get writing, there is no copy in the bank and our editorial team are starting to dry up. In all seriousness our Newsletter is the only contact with the Group for many of our members. They deserve something to look forward to and the editor deserves to be spoiled for choice.

At this stage I would like to put on record our thanks to our outgoing chairman Nial Watson and our retiring secretary Richard McCaw. Both have served their posts with distinction and Richard's long stint as secretary deserves a special mention. Any group such as ours is dependant on on an active and dedicated secretary and Richard met these criteria in no uncertain terms. It is also appropriate to wish James Smyth our incoming secretary every success and to welcome back John O'Reilly as the incoming vice chairman, I look forward to working closely with them both and with the rest of the committee.

Finally may I wish you all a successful growing and showing season in 2001 and if you don't exhibit make yourself known to some of us at the shows and we will persuade you of the error of your ways. Showing is really good fun, the banter is deadlier than rivalry.

George Wilson

## THE 'X' FILES 2 NARCISSUS SUPERBUS ?



### Key to growers identity

BRODIE - <i>Brodie of Brodie</i>	T.B. - <i>Tom Bloomer</i>
NAB - <i>N. A. Burr</i>	B.S.D. - <i>Brian Duncan</i>
C. D. - <i>Carncairn Daffodils</i>	G. E. - <i>Miss G. Evelyn</i>
ENGLE - <i>Rev G. H. Engleheart</i>	J. C. W. - <i>J. C. Williams</i>
G. L. W. - <i>Guy Wilson</i>	KEND - <i>Joan Kendal</i>
J. S. B. L. - <i>John Lee</i>	LLOYD - <i>David Lloyd</i>
M. E. - <i>Murray Evans</i>	GM - <i>Grant Mitch</i>
N. Y. L. - <i>N. Y. Lower</i>	P. D. W. - <i>Percival D. Williams</i>
J. L. R. A. or RICH - <i>Lionel Richardson</i>	

### LANDMARK DAFFODILS

In the first X files we went in search of 'King Alfred' and we see him again in this article. We have looked at his influence as a parent, grand parent etc. on both the pollen and seed sides of genealogy diagrams. Along the way certain 'building blocks' or patterns of breeding were exposed leading to or evolving from certain 'landmark daffodils', 'Hospodar' springs immediately to mind. In other words flowers of great influence even though they may not be current show bench winners. In this version of the 'X' files we will look at a selection of these flowers and examine their family trees. Perhaps even more importantly we will look at

trends that have arisen following the breeding of some of these cultivars. In selecting these 'landmark' daffodils we are conscious of the fact that our selection may not concur with the choices others may make but we believe we can justify in some degree our stance in using the varieties we feature as 'landmark' daffodils.

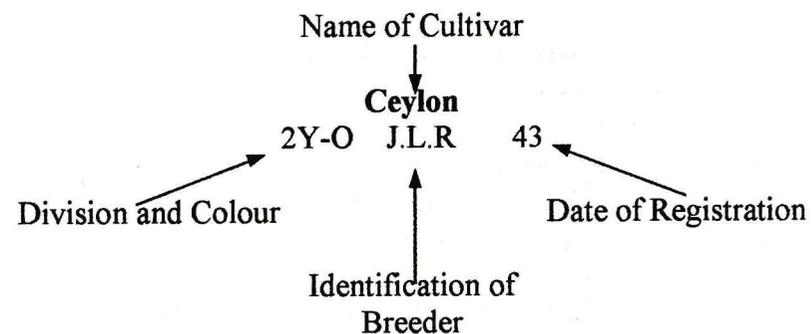
Perhaps at this stage a closer definition of the term 'landmark' would be helpful.

(a) A cultivar which is used or has been used to produce significant advances in colouration or form in one or more divisions.

(b) A flower which 'in it's day' was a good show flower and was the parent of outstanding progeny.

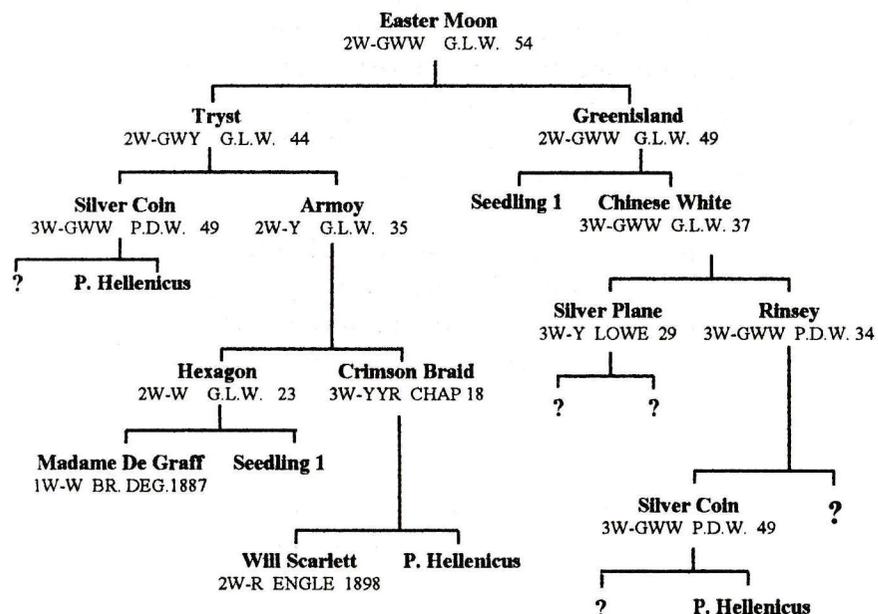
(c) A flower which 'in it's day' is or was unbeatable but produced no outstanding offspring.

No doubt you can immediately fit flowers into these categories and it will be interesting to see if your choices appear in the course of the next few minutes or perhaps appear in some of the family trees. Speaking of family trees this is the system of identification used in all of the following diagrams.



For our first 'landmark' we have chosen 'Easter Moon' due to it's influence in the 2W large cupped division. It would

be a shame to overlook the contribution of 'Easter Moon' and this would be a poorer division without it.



It is difficult to know where to start with this one. Although our focus is on 'Easter Moon' if we go back a few generations we find 'Chinese White' 3W-GWW, it is impossible to pass by without giving this cultivar an honourable mention. Registered by Guy Wilson in 1937 it was used by at least a dozen breeders for the next 48 years to produce 93 registrations, the last being in 1985. Of these 93 flowers some are still in cultivation and 'Cool Crystal, Impala, Woodland Princess, Silken Sails, Leslie Hill and Irish Coffee' are still making show appearances.

You will perhaps remember from the first 'X' files the fun and frustration caused by PDW-Percival D. Williams and

his less than full registration of new cultivars. Well just check out 'Silver Coin' in this family tree, it appears on both seed and pollen parent sides. As you see 'Silver Coin' was registered in 1949 yet it was to produce 'Tryst' in 1944 and even more confusing 'Rinsey' in 1934. Needless to say old P.D.W. took the secret of 'Silver Coin's' parentage with him apart from the fact that Poeticus Hellenicus supplied the pollen. If you want to stay sane do not venture into tracing daffodil breeding lines!

Back then to 'Easter Moon', a prolific breeder used by virtually everyone over a forty year period. We have restricted the list of progeny to currently available cultivars from the list of 112 flowers registered with 'Easter Moon' as parent

**'Easter Moon' Progeny**  
(Cultivars currently available)

**2 W-W**

'Churchfield'	C.D. 69	G.L.W. Sdg.
'Columbus'	C.D. 76	G.L.W. Sdg.
'Chinchilla'	B.S.D. 83	'White Star'
'Silver Surf'	B.S.D.	'Empress of Ireland'
'Stoke Charity'	A.J.P. 87	'Rashee'

**2W-GWW**

'Connor'	C.D. 86	'Rose Caprice'
'Regal Bliss'	B.S.D. 82	'Knothead'
'Birthday Girl'	B.S.D. 83	'Knothead'
'Moon Valley'	B.S.D. 83	'Silent Valley'
'Ashmore'	J.W.B. 74	Sdg.
'Springwood'	B.S.D. 86	'Silent Valley'

## 2W-P

'Silent Pink' G.E.M. 'Cool Flame'

## 2W-GWP

'Magic Flute' C.D. 84 'Rose Caprice'

'Pankot' C.D. 84 'Rose caprice'

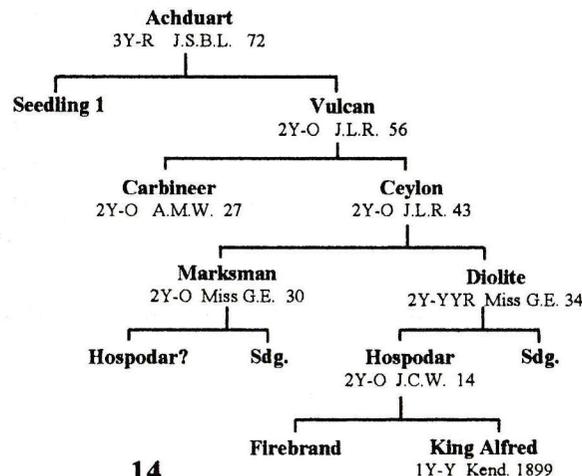
## 2W-GPP

'Cherry Gardens' N.A.B. 78 'Fair Prospect'

In this list the left hand cultivar is the relevant flower followed by the growers identification, date registered and the cultivar crossed with 'Easter Moon' to produce the relevant flower.

The list of growers is a fair indication of the way this excellent flower has been used by the foremost breeders since it's first registration by Guy Wilson in 1954 and who knows with registrations as recent as 1986 and 1987. We may not have heard the last of 'Easter Moon' as a parent.

In the next diagram there is a multiple choice of landmarks. In the 'X' Files we pointed out the significance of both 'Hospodar' and 'Carbineer' in the lineage leading to 'Triple Crown' which was the end of the line in the original enquiry. In this case we want to focus on '**Achduart**' as our landmark flower.



## 'Achduart' crosses

'Ulster Bank' — 'Solar Tan' 3Y-R B.S.D. 94

'Montego' — 'Dateline' 3Y-O B.S.D. 86

'Ferndown' — 'Badbury Rings' 3Y-YYR J.W.B. 85

Seedling — 'Loch Loyal' 2Y-R J.S.B.L. 80

'Sunapee' — 'Triple Crown' 3Y-GYR B.S.D. 87

'Burning Bush' — 'Shindig' 2Y-YYR B.S.D.

'Dateline' — 'Terrapin' 3Y-YYR B.S.D.

'Dateline' — 'Ring Fence' 3Y-YYR B.S.D.

'Garden News' — 'Jake' 3Y-GOO B.S.D.

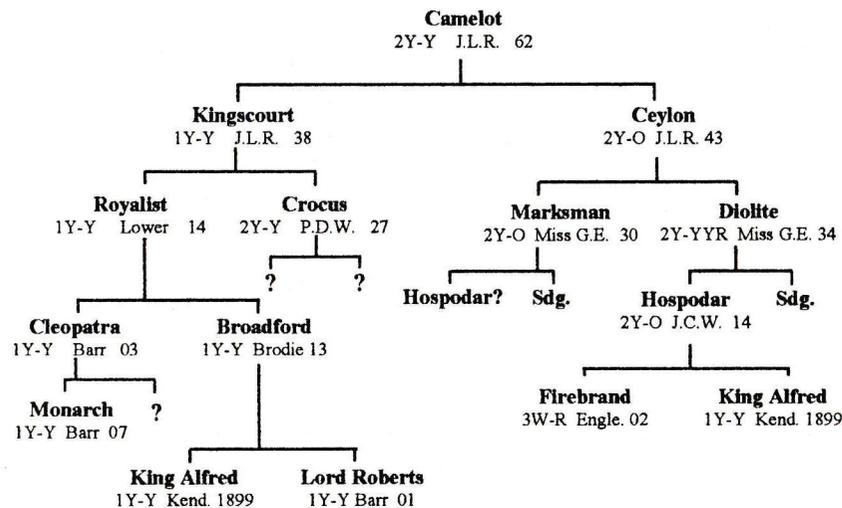
'Burning Bush' — 'Little Karoo' 3Y-O B.S.D.

This is a real definition 'B' flower for not only did it feature in Engleheart groups but it transferred it's fine red qualities to whole range of excellent division 2Y and division 3Y offspring. Apart from 'Triple Crown' Brian produced 'Solar Tan' and 'Dateline', John Lea who bred 'Achduart' kept the line going with 'Loch Loyal' while John Blanchard contributed the fine 'Badbury Rings'. Incidentally the seedling used to breed 'Achduart' was a 'Tolsa x Spry' cross and 'Carbineer' is a parent of 'Spry' so it is hard to overlook the influence of this flower first registered in 1927 and still producing significant flowers in the late sixties and early seventies including 'Sunapee' which Brian used to produce 'Triple Crown'.

Speaking of 'Triple Crown' it would be hard to overlook this one in any discussion of landmark flowers. It is a superb show bench offering and is now proving to be an excellent parent in it's own right and it is interesting to note the contribution 'Dateline' and 'Garden News' are making in these crosses, both having 'Achduart' genes. As we said at

the outset this is a particularly rich vein of landmark daffodils so take your choice from 'Hospidar', 'Carbineer', 'Achduart' and 'Triple Crown'. We will stick with 'Achduart' for the consistent quality of colour and substance in the offspring it has produced. A couple of last thoughts before leaving this family tree, will 'Triple Crown' prove to be the only good parent produced by 'Achduart'? Does anyone know what Percival D. Williams used to produce 'Gulliver'? Answers on a postcard please.

We realise that in choosing 'Camelot' as our next landmark that there already is a definitive article by Brian Duncan in the 1994/5 Daffodil and Tulip Year Book subtitled 'Parent of the Good'. There are subsequent articles dealing with Brian's assertion regarding the parentage of 'Camelot'. However we believe Brian's sub-title to be so appropriate that to exclude 'Camelot' from any study would be an inexcusable omission. Having said that anyone wishing to undertake further in depth work would be well advised to read Brian's article first.



In this enquiry we have tried to steer clear of the controversy and have accepted the registered parentage of 'Camelot'. We have also tried to minimise duplication of Brian's article.

A glance at this diagram displays yet another spoiled for choice situation, we have landmark contenders such as 'Hospodar', 'Diolite', 'Kingscourt' and 'Ceylon' in addition to 'Camelot'. Registered by Lionel Richardson in 1962 'Camelot' proved to be an example of a 'Landmark A' type daffodil. While enjoying nominal success as a showbench flower 'Camelot' turned out to be extremely successful as a parent still registering offspring as recently as 1992 that is thirty years after it's own registration. By this date forty four registrations had been made listing 'Camelot' as a parent, 32 as seed parent and 12 as pollen parent. One of it's own parents 'Kingscourt' produced 71 registered offspring while the other 'Ceylon' produced 52. It could therefore be claimed that 'Camelot' is the outcome of two cultivars with strong breeding credentials, possible candidates as landmarks themselves.

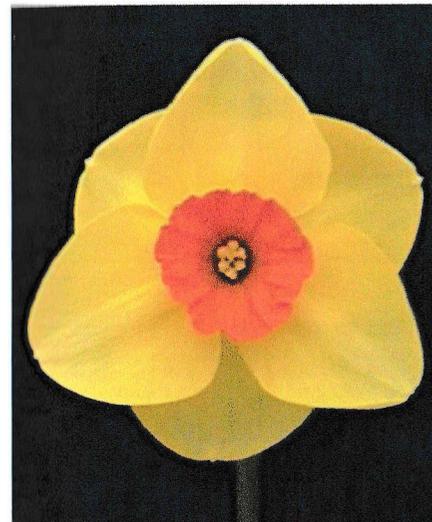
**'Camelot' crosses**

Artic Gold	— Golden Jewel	2Y-GYY	T.B.	73
Beauvallon	— Sherborne	4Y-Y	Lloyd	89
Artic Gold	— Rathowen Gold	1Y-Y	T.B.	73
Artic Gold	— Lancelot	1Y-Y	T.B.	79
Daydream	— Golden Ranger	2Y-Y	J.L.R.	76
Artic Gold	— Golden Joy	2Y-Y	T.B.	73
Daydream	— Altun Ha	2W-Y	J.P.	87
Golden Aura	-- Celtic Gold	2Y-Y	J.L.R.	74

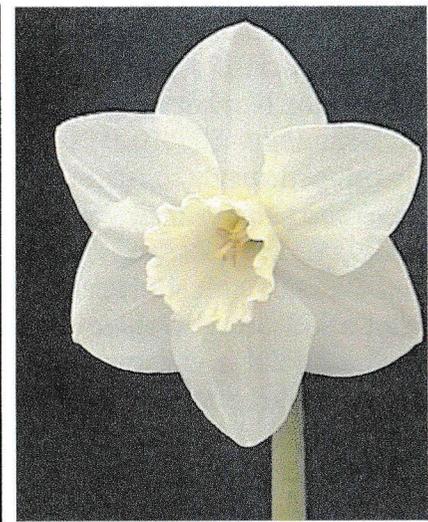
This strength of breeding continued through 'Camelot' and of the 44 registrations some are landmarks in their own right and represent the three definitions outlined in the



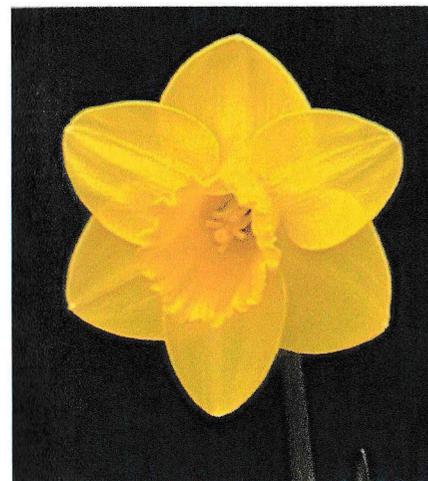
Derek Turbitt's Amateur Championship 12 at Belfast 2000



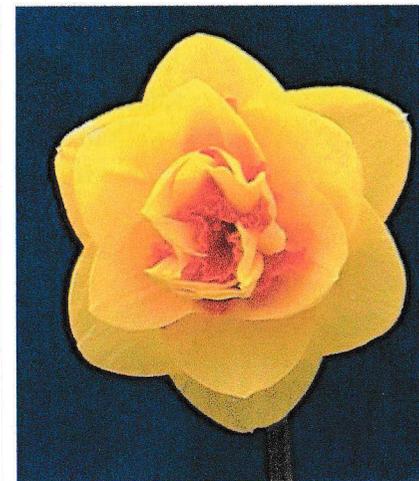
'Little Karoo'



'Chinchilla'



'Barnesgold'



'Crowndale'

introduction. Outstanding among these cultivars must be 'Altun Ha' surely on it's way to becoming one of the most successful reverse bicolours ever and to date an example of landmark definition 'C'. It is now 13 years since it's registration so perhaps there is still time for a 'super' 'Altun Ha' to emerge. Other flowers of note are 'Carib Gipsy', 'Golden Joy', 'Golden Ranger', 'Lancelot', 'Midas Touch', 'Rathowen Gold', 'Celtic Gold' and the outstanding breeder of 'Camelot's' offspring 'Golden Jewel'. This is a landmark in it's own right and it is surprising that only one hybridist has used it extensively or perhaps exclusively.

**'Golden Jewel' crosses**

Midas Touch	— Arleston	2Y-Y	B.S.D.	
Midas Touch	— Barnum	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	86
Midas Touch	— Barnes Gold	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	
OP	— Coromandel	2Y-Y	B.S.D.	87
Midas Touch	— Dispatch Box	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	88
Midas Touch	— Ethos	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	
OP	— Gold Bond	2Y-Y	B.S.D.	83
OP	— Golden Sheen	2Y-Y	B.S.D.	87
OP	— Gold Finger	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	83
Midas Touch	— Mulroy Bay	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	
OP	— Sperrin Gold	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	
Midas Touch	— Tyrone Gold	1Y-Y	B.S.D.	86

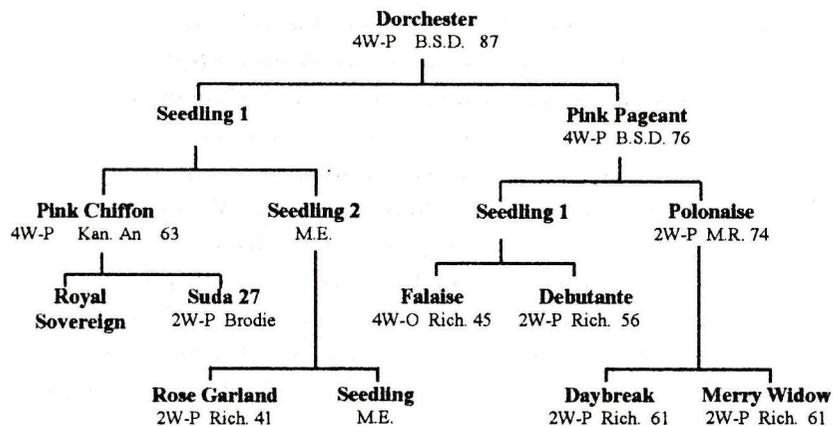
**'Golden Jewel' X 'Midas Touch' crossed with**

Barnum	— Boulder Bay	2Y-YYO	B.S.D.
Barnum	— Chapman's Peak	2Y-YOO	B.S.D.

There are several things to note in this list, first of all there is consistent use by Brian Duncan of 'Midas Touch' in his 'Golden Jewel' crosses. 'Midas Touch' has itself got

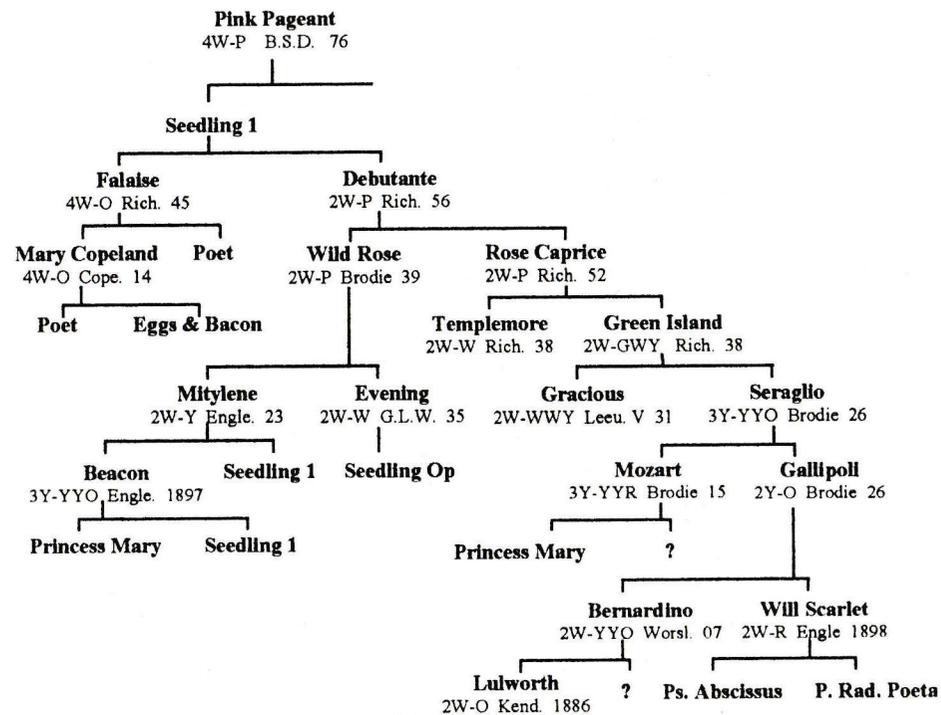
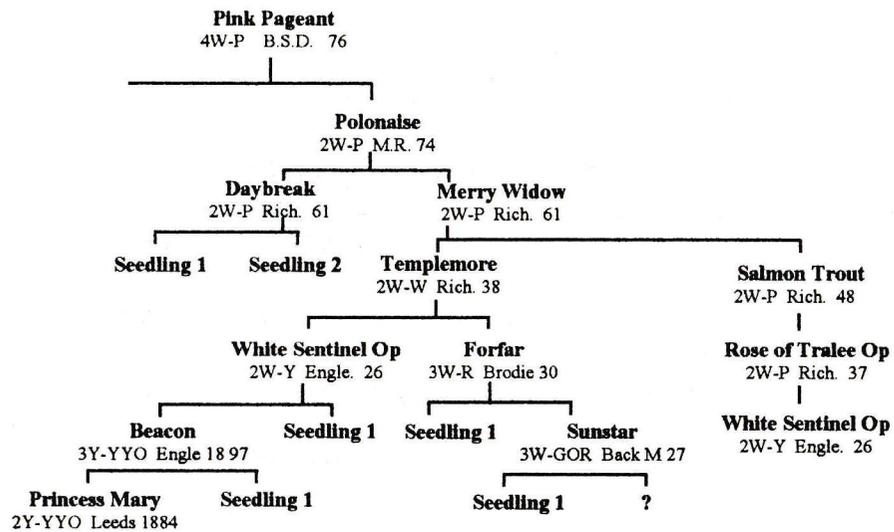
'Camelot' as a registered seed parent though there may be a question mark regarding the accuracy of this registration. Of the 12 'Golden Jewel' first crosses here 7 involve 'Midas Touch' the other 5 being cases of open pollination. Considering the quality of the flowers resulting from open pollination you wonder why breeders agonise over planning crosses at all! Harking back to Brian's article on 'Camelot' he suggested 'Kingscourt' had been pollinated by a 'Hibernian bee' not Jack Goldsmiths brush loaded with 'Ceylon' pollen. If that is the case then 'Golden Jewel' is merely carrying on the family tradition and making a grand job of it! A further point of interest is the use of a 'Golden Jewel x Midas Touch' seedling along with 'Barnum' ( itself a 'Golden Jewel' cultivar ) to produce 2Y flowers with orange corona shading. All other 'Golden Jewel' are strictly Y-Y in colour as are the genealogy lines leading to 'Midas Touch'. So perhaps that particular 'Golden Jewel x Midas Touch' seedling awakened the orange/red gene coming from away back via 'Hospodar' and 'Ceylon', the latter being one of the registered parents of 'Camelot'. Or maybe it is that dratted bee again, in either case there may be grounds for a real enquiry by any would be geneticists out there.

For our last 'Landmark' we have chosen '**Dorchester**'. No one can deny it's qualification as a type 'C' cultivar, alike with 'Altun Ha' it is virtually unbeatable. The only question remaining regarding this super flower is will it be a super parent? If we look at the time interval from 'Pink Pageant' to 'Dorchester' we are now somewhat overdue on this timeline for the next super 4W-P. We all know of course that things do not work like that and having seen some of the time scales involved in some breeding lines thirteen years is nothing. Anyway if any of us had produced 'Dorchester' we would have probably stopped hybridising there and then!



A word of explanation regarding the very short family tree shown here, the genealogy involved in the lines leading to both the seedling and 'Pink Pageant' are so involved that it would take an A1 sheet never mind this page. In fact we are only going to look at the 'Pink Pageant' side of 'Dorchester' simply because of time and space.

A quick glance at this pollen side of 'Pink Paradise' reveals the contribution the Richardson's made to hybridising division 2 white/pink flowers. They are preceded by the Reverend Engleheart and Brodie of Brodie and it is strange how 'White Sentinel' a 2W-Y appears twice in what is basically a line of orange/red/pink coronas. 'White Sentinel' was one of those flowers which was used by virtually everyone to produce a total of 65 registrations, mostly as a seed parent, the last one being in 1960 when Willie Dunlop crossed it with 'Broughshane' to produce 'Rathgar', again a 2W-Y. Moving up the family tree none of the other cultivars were prolific breeders and as a forerunner of 'Dorchester' Brian Duncan seems to have got the best out of 'Polonaise' with 'Athol Palace', 'Pink Paradise' and of course 'Pink Pageant'. Now for the seed parent side of 'Pink Pageant'.



What a rich vein of all sorts we tap into here. First of all 'Princess Mary' appears twice here (once on pollen side). This 1884 registration has no recorded parents and is well before P.D.W's. days! Second point of historical interest is 'Will Scarlet' which is the earliest white/red colour break the 'X' files has unearthed. Third point of historical importance is 'Gallipoli' which was obviously named to commemorate that particular bloody shambles involving the Turks and the British. In scouring the records all sorts of names and events turn up as names for flowers but few have the connotations of 'Gallipoli'.

This seed parent side of 'Pink Pageant' has a fair selection of landmarks in daffodil terms, 'Debutante' while having only 25 registrations as a parent managed to attract virtually all the hybridisers, 'Falaise' is a parent of 'Unique' registered in 1961 and still capable of competing with the best in it's own division (remember Maurice Kerr's at the early show last year). Of all the breeding flowers we have looked at 'Green Island' would be a tough nut to crack, 131 registrations, used by 15 breeders and we still see 'Silken Sails' in winning form to this day even though Mitch registered it in 1964, 26 years after the registration of 'Green Island' one of it's parents.

What then of 'Dorchester', our last landmark daffodil, it certainly is a worthy flower to close the 'X' files, unbeatable on it's day and a double of grace and presentation whether single stem, vase of three or member of a twelve. Will it remain a type C landmark or is there already a super 'Dorchester' lurking ready to spring out and amaze us all? Only time will tell!

So there it is then the 'X' files choice of landmark daffodils. As we said at the outset not everyone may agree with the choices but in any event we probably highlighted

alternatives in virtually every family tree. In compiling these diagrams certain daffodil breeding aspects come to light. The most obvious among these are:-

- Many fine cultivars arise from open pollination.
- In times past virtually all hybridisers used a significant breeding flower whether it was from their crossing or not.
- There now appears to be shorter time span for breeding from a particular flower. Most relatively recent cultivars are virtually finished within twenty years from registration unlike some of the older registrations which could have been in full productive flow at this age.
- Of the thousands of flowers registered only a tiny percentage stand even a modest test of time. Those that do survive are outstanding and many appeared in the foregoing diagrams.

In gleaning information for the meeting from which this article is derived and the previous 'X' files the work of the great names past and present in daffodil breeding were revealed time and time again. Their perception (and luck) over the past hundred plus years have produced flowers of great beauty to excite our interest, we are truly fortunate to have a hobby that exposes us to the results of the labours of these great enthusiasts.

George Wilson

## Garden Daffodils!!

The most commonly asked question by customers at the garden centre about daffodils is, why have my daffodils all gone to leaves and no flowers? The main problems are some people plant their daffodils tightly together in clumps and leave them there for years without any attention. The daffodils therefore keep on dividing and multiplying and eventually are too tight together that they haven't got enough room to grow and they are competing for nutrients. So the easiest solution is simply to lift the bulbs in July when the leaves have died down and dry them off in a cool airy place until planting time in September. When you come to replanting the bulbs space them out well, at least six inches apart if you are planting in the border, or if you are planting in the lawn scatter the bulbs and plant where they land to give a more natural look. Planting bulbs into the lawn or in your orchard can be very awkward, a spade is too large, whereas bulb planter is fine for light soil but when the ground is heavy and not cultivated I find the best tool is a crowbar or a long handled bulb planter with a foot bar on it to get more leverage. When using the crowbar make sure to make the hole more than twice the size of the bulb. This is to let you place sand or light fine loamy soil in the bottom of the hole. The crowbar leaves a pointed base to the hole so if you plant the bulb straight into the hole you will leave an air space which will not let the root system of the bulb get off to a good start. Apply a low nitrogen fertiliser to the hole like potato fertiliser. This will ensure that your bulbs get off to a better start after having been deprived of space and nourishment, it will probably take at least one to two years before they get back to their full potential. Over feeding will not improve the flowering quality, as the best food a daffodil can get is to let the daffodil make its own food in its leaves.

Do not cut the leaves or tie them up after flowering, as this is the time that the bulbs are making the flower for next year. If you apply too much nitrogen fertiliser this only promotes too much leaf growth and weakens the bulb leaving it susceptible to pests and diseases. Phosphates encourage more vigour and good root growth while potassium improves the flower shape and texture. Remember the more you feed the more likely you are to weaken the bulb for the following season.

A good place to naturalise your daffodils in your lawn is to make sure you plant them if possible on a south facing incline to allow maximum sunshine and drainage. When deciding what variety to plant think of planting a mixture or one variety. Planting a mixture will ensure flowering from late February to May. When ordering your bulbs from local growers order by the number codes 1 - 6 one for early flowering too six for late flowering, i.e. 1 '*February Gold*' to 6 '*Frost In May*'. This way when '*February Gold*' has finished flowering '*Frost In May*' will just be starting. It is also a good idea to interplant snowdrops in between the daffodils and crocus around the edge of your planting as these will flower before your daffodils and will give you colour from January until May. If only planting one variety make sure to plant a variety that has a strong stem and neck to the flower and is colour fast, example '*Barnum*', '*Falstaff*', '*Coolatin*', '*Ashmore*' and many more.

Hope this has been of some help to keen gardeners and if you have any problems with your daffodils or have any ideas on daffodil growing and companion plants please write in with your letters and we will reply to your problems.

Ian W Scroggy HNDH

The following notes may be of use to all and are based on the talk given to the N.I.D.G. in February by our guest speaker Dr. Gordon Hanks.

## **NARCISSUS DISEASES (and tulip fire) and their control - for breeders, enthusiasts and specialists.**

**Dr. Gordon Hanks**

### **Introductory points**

- Compared with 'natural' growing systems, almost all aspects of commercial narcissus growing increase pest and disease problems
- Key role of hot-water treatment ('sterilising' or HWT) with formalin (formaldehyde)
- Limited access to pesticides (range, costs) to commercial and non-commercial growers
- Strategies:
  1. Chemical (the 'obvious' way)
  2. Biological (largely undeveloped as yet) - e.g. fungal antagonists for basal rot, nematodes for large narcissus fly?
  3. Physical (very applicable to bulbs) - drying, storage, handling, inspection and HWT
  4. Cultural (many possibilities?)
  5. Breeding for pest- and disease-resistance or tolerance (not relevant to this sector?)

A useful web-site that can be searched for different pesticides, amateur/commercial use, etc., is <http://www.pesticides.gov.uk>

### **Fungal diseases — Basal rot**

- Basal rot (caused by *Fusarium oxysporum f.sp. narcissi*) - the most serious bulb-borne fungal disease of narcissus bulbs. Develops rapidly in warm conditions (20 - 30°C).
- Previously a cyclical problem associated with hot summers - now a permanent feature of commerce?
- A particular problem for UK growers because the most widely grown cultivars, 'Golden Harvest' and 'Carlton', are very susceptible. Difficult to reduce incidence below 2 - 5%

In commercial stocks of these varieties. 'St Keverne' is an example of a 'resistant' variety (but is resistance breaking down?)

- Cultivars from pseudonarcissus and poeticus groups susceptible, those from triandrus, jonquilla, tazetta and poetaz resistant.
- No quick screening test - disease-resistance develops in 'adult' plants - but 'detached scale test' being developed.
- Spores widespread in soils and on bulbs, spores viable for 10+ years in soil.
- Infection across damp bulb surfaces in storage, or, after planting, through damaged bulb surface or basal plate (either due to new roots exiting in autumn or old roots dying in early-summer)

### **Symptoms:-**

1. Premature die-down
2. Soft or 'mummified' bulbs on lifting
3. White/pink fungal growth on base
4. Chocolate-brown rot spreading upwards from the basal plate

**Control (for susceptible varieties or poor stocks):-**

- Important role of control by physical (storage, drying, etc) and cultural means (conditions in field) as well as chemical.
- Lift bulbs early (early- to mid-June).
- Dry bulbs rapidly in good air-flow (below 20°C).
- Spray bulbs with thiabendazole fungicide or cold-dip in formalin (preferably plus thiabendazole) within 24 hours of lifting. There are possibilities of thiabendazole resistant strains of Fusarium. Use fungicides full rate
- Inspect bulbs carefully.
- Store bulbs below 18°C with air movement (preferably 17-18°C).
- Give planting stocks full hot-water treatment ('sterilising') (3 hours at 44.4°C) using formalin. Add a fungicide (thiabendazole or prochloraz) if levels of basal rot are

above 5%, or if no fungicide is applied after lifting.

- Do not plant early (plant late-September).
- Use low planting rates and avoid shallow planting (plant 15cm (6") down).
- Wide rotation.
- Avoid excessive nitrogen or crop residues.
- Grow one-year-down.
- Keep ground cool (weed cover or straw mulch) and avoid warm sites.

**Future prospects:-**

- Newer commercial cultivars less susceptible to basal rot now becoming available.
- Breeding from cultivars like 'St Keverne' or (with chromosome doubling) species like *Narcissus jonquilla*

- Biological control not successful so far.
- The pathogen is very variable in aggression and fungicide resistance.
- Genetically modified (GM) narcissus with disease-resistance genes - long-way off for basal rot as we do not sufficiently understand the pathogen - need to prove the technology using genes for virus-resistance which are readily available (aphid-borne potyviruses).

**Neck rot**

- A long-known disorder which came to prominence with pre-export bulb inspections in 1970s
- Like basal rot, a result of modern commercial narcissus growing methods? (Virtually all aspects of commercial narcissus growing tend to increase pest and disease problems)
- Fusarium (basal rot fungus), Botrytis (smoulder fungus) and Penicillium all implicated, but rarely all occur together
- Less common than basal rot, but occurs in a wider range of cultivars.

***Symptoms:-***

- Cutting the bulb length-wise, rot can be seen spreading down from the bulb tip.
- Rot colour usually chocolate-brown (caused by Fusarium)
- A gingery neck rot often the result of infections by Penicillium.
- Neck rots are clearly progressive; they should not be confused with 'physiological neck rot' where the tips of the bulb scales die-back and become dry naturally. This condition does not spread downwards into the bulb.

**Control:-**

- Apply regular fungicide sprays through the growing season. Prolongs retention of green leaf.
- Do not remove foliage too deeply or in advance of lifting.
- Lift bulbs early
- Dry bulbs rapidly with good air-flows (preferably below 20°C)
- Store bulbs with air movement below 18°C (preferably 17-18°C)
- Fungicide bulb dips (benzimidazoles - Benlate, Storite and Carbendazim)
- There are possibilities of benzimidazole-resistant strains of Fusarium and Penicillium
- Give bulbs full hot-water treatment (3 hours at 44.4°C) using formalin

**Future prospects:-**

Research to understand the inter-relationships, etc., of the pathogens.

Diagnostic tests for pathogens.

**Leaf Scorch**

- Leaf Scorch caused by *Stagonospora curtisii* occurs particularly in south-west England.
- Common on tazetta narcissi and cultivar 'Magnificence'.
- The pathogen over-winters in the bulbs.

**Symptoms:-**

- Leaf tips become reddish-brown with a yellow border
- Reddish-brown spots develop, and the lesions spread downwards in damp weather.

- Minute pycnidia develop in the spots. (flask shaped fruiting bodies)
- Flowers may also be spotted.
- The crop may senesce (age) early

**Control:-**

- Apply a regular and varied foliar fungicide spray programme, starting once shoots are about 4" tall.
- Spray as soon as practical after rain.
- Grow one-year-down.
- Generally maintain good hygiene.
- Hot-water treatment with formalin decreases infections carried in bulbs.

**Future prospects:-**

- New fungicides.
- Disease forecasting techniques.

This series of notes will be continued in future editions.

Editor

<b><u>Northern Ireland Daffodil Group</u></b>			
Summary of Income and Expenditure year ending 31/12/00			
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Balance B/F	£17027.20	Journal	£693.67
Interest	£679.74	Printer	£200.00
Subscriptions	£430.28	Sec. Expenses	£137.71
Fund Raising	£721.20	Meetings	£425.00
Sales	£33.00	Show Expenses	£392.67
		Lottery Expenses	£59.30
		Bank Charges	£7.94
		Balance C/F	£16975.13
	£18891.42		£18891.42