

# The Scottish Rock Garden Club

## Forrest Medal, Glasgow 2015

### Gentiana acaulis

### shown by Peter Semple



#### THAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT!

Peter Semple's *Gentiana acaulis* was superb, in perfect condition and a joy to behold. I have never seen such a splendid Gentian as this. Peter himself is a fine fellow of a man with broad shoulders, so you can judge just how big the plant is. Last week at the SRGC Nairn show its flowers were not fully mature; nor did they open for judging. Peter was worried that the plant might pass peak condition during the week but luckily the temperature stayed low, with very cold nights. The plant too seem to appreciate being back in Glasgow [Peter moved to the countryside a few years ago] and it was determined to outshine the fierce competition. Many exhibitors must have been disappointed that their plant did not win the medal but everyone who saw this Gentian knew right away that this would be the Forrest winner. It was in perfect condition with innumerable fresh blue trumpets, a veritable blue brass band, sitting proudly over pea green foliage. In the afternoon light [below] with the sun shining through the backlit petals the flowers, if that were

possible, looked even better. In reflected light the you could see the green dots inside the trumpets and in the afternoon's transmitted light it was the lighter translucent lines which emphasised their deep blue. *Gentiana acaulis* is in everyone's top ten alpine plants. Cars stop on Swiss alpine passes so that the driver and passengers can admire the deep blue flowers peppering the short sub-alpine turf. Various forms are found from the Pyrenees, through the Alps to the Balkans. It is the emblem of our sister society, the AGS. An embossed *G. acaulis* was chosen for the obverse of the 1EuroCent coin.

***Well done Peter! Your superb plant is priceless, even in Euros!***

