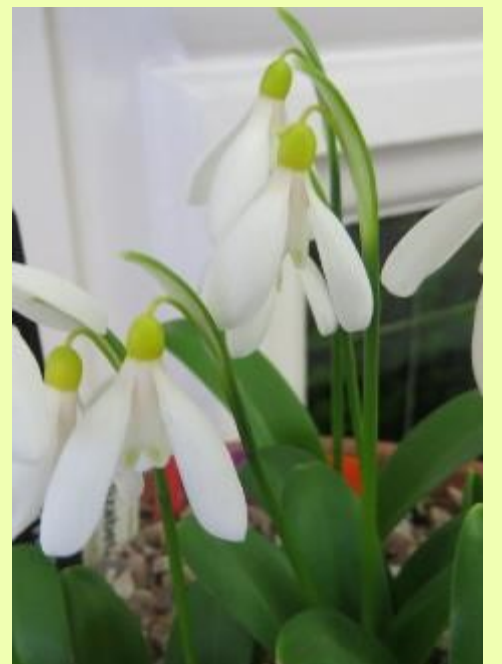




The Scottish Rock Garden Club

Dunblane Early Bulb Display

18th February 2017



Wendy's Gold, Godfrey Owen, Gold 'n Green
Flocon de Neige, Amy Doncaster, Elizabeth Harrison



Two views of Rodmarton Arcturus
E.A. Bowles [right]
Galanthus lagodechianus





People ask , ‘why grow lots of snowdrops?. They are all white and green!’. Well this year’s exhibits at the early Bulb Day provided some answers. We had them in many heights from a 6cm to 15cm high. Flowers had narrow and wide petals. Some were like tapered scimitars while others were definitely scoop shaped. We had several whose ‘green bits’ were in fact yellow. Single or double— you choose. I find the fly away petals of *G. elwesii* ‘Godfrey Owen’ irresistible. It has six perfectly symmetrical outer petals and six perfect inners as well. For further embellishment there is *G. nivalis* ‘Flocon de Neige’, six perfect outers and a tight double centre. Improve it? Someone is probably breeding a ‘Jaune, Flocon de Neige’. Warning! Don’t touch the yellow snow!

After the excitement of a few years ago the yellow form of *G. woronowii*, *G. woronowii* ‘Elizabeth Harrison’ sat quite reticently on the bench almost hidden by the great *Galanthus plicatus* ‘E.A. Bowles’. For good measure the green snowdrops also mesmerised the keen observer. Amy Doncaster with brushed green lines on each outer petal. Rodmarton Arcturus, another with large flowers, has inner petals which are pale green with a dark apical mark and two eyes above. Rodmarton is a village near Cirencester in Gloucestershire.

Arcturus is the fourth brightest star in the sky. Sirius, Canopus and Alpha Centauri are the only stars which are brighter. ‘Arcturus’ is Greek for ‘Guardian of the bear’. If that doesn’t tempt you enter the domain of the galanthophiles, what will?

Margaret and Henry Taylor showed their own hybrid yellow snowdrop, ‘Gold ‘n Green’, which had a bigger gold apical mark than the old favourite ‘Wendy’s Gold’. Poor ‘Wendy’s Gold’, which was once more feted than any other snowdrop because of its golden yellow mark and ovary, is now used as the bench mark against which later finds among yellow snowdrops are judged!

For sheer flower power as well as beauty the Royal Botanic garden rode to the defence of species with a fabulous pan of *Galanthus lagodechianus*. It has shiny green leaves rather than the glaucous leaves of *G. nivalis* and *elwesii*. It is native to the Caucasus.



A small trough of **Cyclamen coum** showing different colour forms. These plants were bought commercially. You can raise it from seed but as in this case bought plants do quite well. There are seedlings among the adult plants



Iris Lady Beatrix Stanley



**Iris Blue Planet
Iris Sunshine [behind]**



Iris Finola



Iris Happiness



Iris winogradowii

The reticulata group of Irises sparkle at this time of year. Good to see old favourites holding their own against more recent introductions.



Iris Sheila Anne Germaney



Iris reticulata Fabiola



Iris Blue Note



Helleborus abruzzicus is a recently named species from North Italy. It was once considered an extreme form of Helleborus multifidus but has been raised to specific rank. It has very finely divided foliage, a bit like Paeonia tenuifolia. It is reported to be hardy and is a fine architectural plant. A great introduction shown here by Chris Boulby



Sisyrinchium douglasii

Some good bulbs on their way to a new home in Fife!





This excellent petiolarid Primula is the hybrid 'Tantallon' raised many years ago by Margaret & Henry Taylor. It has been awarded an Award of Merit by the RHS. It is a hybrid between *P. bhutanica* [whitei?] and *P. edgeworthii*. It has survived in cultivation over a long period during which many other petiolarids have perished. It is what Scots gardeners would describe as a 'good do-er'.



Chionodoxa luciliae is a commonly seen in gardens in spring. It is quite undemanding and spreads about slowly. Many are bi-coloured blue with white centres. The amount of white varies. Many years ago Alan Dickinson from the Edinburgh group staged an exhibit of over 5 different selections. I was attracted immediately to those with almost completely blue flowers like this one.



Sternbergia candida was the 'in' plant a few years ago. It is relatively recent introduction from Eastern Turkey but almost as soon as it was discovered it became endangered because of over-collection by commercial firms. It is to be hoped that the bulbs offered nowadays are seed raised. It is a beautiful plant which is reputedly difficult in cultivation. So if you get one, propagate it and look after it. It was great to see this one on the bench.



Colchicum luteum is a favourite of mine. It is another difficult plant we are told. This pleased me because when mine did not come up one year I blamed nature rather my own deficiency. It is the only yellow *Colchicum*, some are paler than this one. It is a snow melt plant, found at around 2500 to 4000 metres on open hillsides north from the Indian Himalaya and china to central Asia. I would like to grow it again.



Narcissus romieuxii



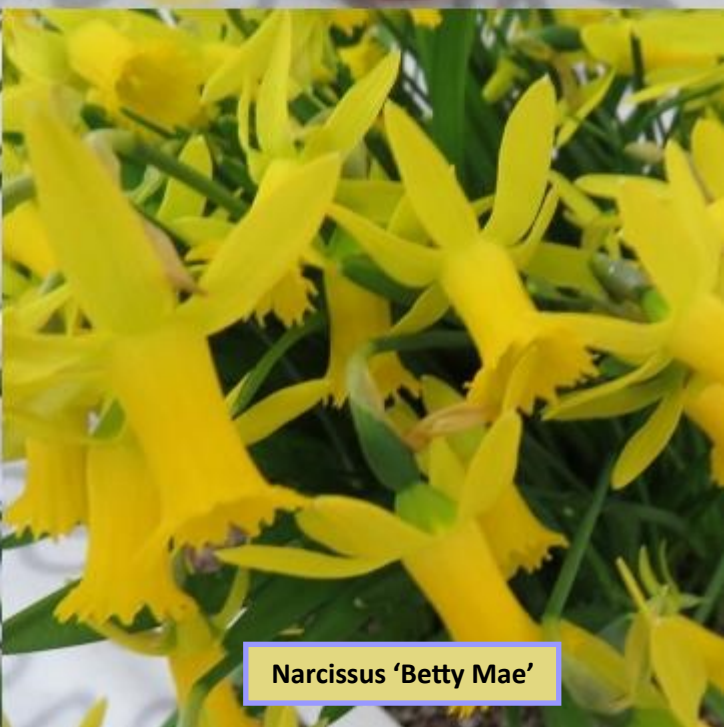
Narcissus albidus



Narcissus cantabricus shown by the RBG Ed.



Narcissus 'Julia Jane'



Narcissus 'Betty Mae'



Crocus malyi



Crocus chrysanthus 'Snowbunting'



Crocus versicolor



Crocus sieberi 'Ronald Ginns'



Crocus cvijci



Crocus biflorus 'Serevan'



PLANTS FROM THE NATIONAL COLLECTION
 SUPPLIED BY MARGARET MCLENNAN

- 1. ERANTHIS SWHFEELGLANZE
- 2. ERANTHIS SWHFEELGLANZE
- 3. ERANTHIS SWHFEELGLANZE
- 4. ERANTHIS SWHFEELGLANZE
- 5. ERANTHIS SWHFEELGLANZE

Above is a selection of snowdrops from Margaret McLennan's National Collection. Left is Ian Christie's plant of the recently introduced *Erantthis 'Schwefelglanze'* which means 'Sulphur glow'. It is a soft slightly orange shade rather than the vicious citron yellow of most *Erantthis*. Below, a selection of Ian's Snowdrops including some from Brechin Castle. Below left is Jean's *Fritillaria raddeana*, a plant which stretches out towards the light, making it difficult to have a potful with parallel stems.



The Early Bulb Display and Gothenburg Botanic Garden



Above is Jimmy Person in the Bulbhouse and below Henrk Zetterlund in the alpine plunge house at Gothenburg B.G.



We in the Scottish Rock Garden Club have been fortunate to have heard lectures given by three generations of top gardeners at Gothenburg Botanic Garden. The pictures here show Jimmy Person, Henrik Zetterlund and Johan Nilson. Each has given presentations at our Early Bulb Day and at Discussion Weekends. For their part, as Johan emphasised this year, the men from Gothenburg recognise the encouragement given to them by SRGC stalwarts Harold Esslemont, Jack Crosland and Eric Watson. The latter three also encouraged me when I was a young gardener. In fact at one Discussion Weekend I was summoned to Mr Esslemont's presence to tell him about a plant which I had exhibited—a shrubby *Mimulus* with purple. Harold, Jack and Eric among others gave and swapped plants with Gothenburg. Through their generosity they established our strong friendship. The plants they gave thrived in Gothenburg and over the years plants introduced in Sweden came to Scotland. Especially with rare plants and those from countries which are difficult to visit or where collecting is prohibited it is very important that species are grown in several places to maintain them in cultivation. *Dionysias* are a perfect example. Johan showed us the range of quality *Dionysias* grown at Gothenburg. I find them very difficult to maintain but over there they named one large Glasshouse, 'The *Dionysia* House'

Johan gave two talks. The first on 'Bulbs at Gothenburg' and the second on its Alpine Plants. In both talks he took us into the wild to see plants in nature as well as showing fabulous specimens in the garden. Having visited the Gothenburg BG several times I can say that he did not have to search far to find superb specimens of good as well as rare and unusual ones. The garden is a treasure trove and the jewels therein are well looked after.

Johan was guest at the meeting of the RHS Joint Rock Garden Committee. For various reasons the meeting was held in the lounge bar of The Dunblane Hotel, a change from the Elegant library in which we met in Gothenburg last year, when Henrik attended. Henrik Zetterlund, like Harry Jans, is a corresponding member of the committee.



Peter Semple, Ian Young with Johan Nilson at the meeting of the Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee which was held in the Dunblane Hotel.



Johan's pictures of part of the Dionysia collection at Gothenburg above and of the many collected forms of *Iris persica* below. My thanks to Johan for the use of the pictures





Johan's pictures of the 'bulb slope' at Gothenburg which had been planted 2 years ago. You can see naturalised *Crocus tommasinianus* and *Iris reticulata* above and *Muscari latifolia* and *anemone blanda* below

