

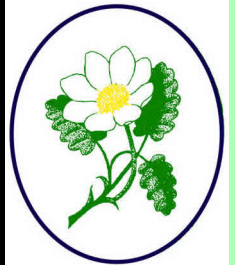


The Scottish Rock Garden Club

SHOW REPORTS

BLACKPOOL SRGC / AGS Show

2013



The weather forecast for travel on the M74 / M6 for Saturday morning 16th March was terrible. This meant that several Scots missed the show. I had already missed a recent Blackpool show and did not want to miss this one, especially as it was held under 'Scottish Rules'. I therefore decided to stay at Crooklands Hotel, which is just off at Junction 36 on the M6, signposted for Kirkby Lonsdale. It is also the southern route into Kendal. I already knew the hotel and its superb cuisine having stayed there for a week a couple of years ago. The problem when staying for one one night is that you have to select from many excellent dishes for the evening meal. I was more than happy with my smoked sea food platter of crayfish, prawns, mackerel and salmon served with excellent fresh brown bread. Not realising how big the portions would be I followed this with Rack of Cumbrian Lamb. When asked if wanted potatoes and vegetables I replied in the affirmative. If it hadn't been for the Black Ueep ale, I would have had difficulty in putting it all away! Crooklands, where the food is wonderful and the accommodation comfortable.



Why go on about food and lodging in Crooklands you might wonder? Well it so happens that Dave Riley lives in Crooklands. His superb pan of *Cyclamen alpinum leucanthum* won the Forrest Medal at Blackpool, so I can conclude that the location is good for tourists and good for rock plants. There were few cyclamen in the show but this in no way detracted from Dave's excellent prizewinner. Nowadays the plant is classed as *C. trochopteranthum* form *leucanthum* but it still has flowers like wee propellers. As a description I quote Paul Christian of rareplants.co.uk - *A wonderful Turkish winter-flowering species. This has silver-patterned leaves, and masses of deep pink, honey-scented flowers over a long period from January to April. Hardy here and difficult to fault. The name is easier to deal with if you think of heliCOPTER - anthum then change 'heli' to 'tro'.*

There is a suggestion that the name *trochopteranthum* be changed yet again. We are ignoring this for now as it is both irresponsible and extremely silly. The name was changed in the reverse direction not that long ago and that was definitely right as well! Here's another question. Why haven't we heard from Paul Christian at SRGC lectures in recent years? He was one of the first to break up *Fritillaria* bulbs and cut away *avrocus* corms Judge for yourself!

The plant is above and Crooklands Hotel with its raied bed is below



SRGC 80 years young

SRGC 80 years young



**Galanthus elwesii
'Penelope Ann'**



The Blackpool show is usually synonymous with Dionysias and Saxifrages. In some years there are lots of Primulas as well. Not this time! 2013 has started as one of the coldest in recent memory. We did not have huge snow falls but we had weeks of very cold arctic weather after New Year and months of miserable wet days since October. There were as many snowdrops in the show as Dionysias.

What a treat for galanthophiles. 'Sophie North', 'Spindlestone Surprise' and 'Elizabeth Harrison' represented recently named clones and 'Lady Elphinstone', 'Straffan' and a large flowered Galanthus nivalis represented the old guard. Galanthus elwesii 'Penelope Ann' was new to me. It had superb large flowers with a single green mark shaped like a molar tooth, roots and all.



Galanthus 'Sophie North'



G. f Spindlestone Surprise



Galanthus nivalis



Galanthus 'Lady Elphinstone'



I usually encounter Daffodils at Cumbernauld [the number makes you think they want to attract modern day Wordsworths to the area]. After Junction 33 on the M6 the sides of the A6 and A566 are lined with King Alfreds. Some thoughtful souls have added 'tete a tete' and wee 'asturkngsis' types which look 'wilder' and more in keeping with the countryside. This year I was well into Blackpool before I

encountered an open daffodil. **Poulton-le-Fylde** is a small town just East of Blackpool which you pass on the way to the show. In the graveyard its ancient church of St Chad the snowdrops were hanging on along the north side and the crocuses were at their best else where. A few Daffodils had started to flower, tho' I suspected that some of these were recently planted.



SRQC 80 years young

SRGC 80 years young



The Scottish Rock Garden Club has members in all parts of the UK. Part of the joy of travelling to Blackpool is the anticipation of meeting up with old friends from all parts of the country. When this show and the one in Northumberland started there were no flower shows for rock garden or alpine plants in the North of England. Our local members and local Alpine Garden Society members [often the same individuals because most serious rock gardeners are members of both] wanted to start up their own shows and the SRGC Council readily agreed to support them. The shows have proved to be enormously popular with both clubs as the venues are reachable from central Scotland as well as northern and central England. For our Lancashire members this show is their local show.



The classes at all SRGC shows are determined by the local show secretary, who chooses the judges and acts as referee. His word is final! This was show secretary, Lionel Clarkson's 25th show. Congratulations Lionel [pictured on the left, officiating at the decision making] and thank you for all the work you have done over the years. He is holding Robert Rolfe's superb pan of *Fritillaria aurea* which won the Duncan Lowe award for the Best Plant shown in a pot sized up to 19cm diameter. With all those chairs behind him Lionel could give three for Robert!



The Kirby Cup, commemorates Lionel's predecessor as show secretary when it was held in Morecambe, Wilf Kirby. It is awarded to the Best Foliage Plant in the Show.

Frank & Barbara Hoyle, Chipping, won it with their flawless 10 inch pan of *Helichrysum pagophyllum*





Geoff Rqrinson has grown and shown this fabulous pan of *Fritillaria alburyana* for a long time. I was told that to simulate the cold conditions of mountainous western Turkey where it gows wild, Geoff keeps his pan-full it in the fridge till it starts into growth. That is is reluctant to multiply by itself I can testify to. I was given a single bulb 20 years ago or more by Harold Es-srgmont. I have been scared to break the bulb in two, as Paul Christian shows in his lectures, which is the secret to increasing the number of bulbs. I think Geoff has more courage than I.



The Colchicum szovitsii 'Pink form' belongs to Diane Clement. It was part of her 3 pan entry along with the exotic pure white flowered Ypsilandra tj ibetica and a Hepatica maxima, whose big shiny leaves testified to its specific name. The flowers were less spectacular!



SRQC 80

Aesthetic 3 pan entry

Sometimes a 3 pan entry is just that! 3 pans. Here however Rod and Shirley Johnson from Bollington grouped 3 excellent Narcissi. They were different but similar. They shared the same colours in the blooms. The clever thing was to get 3 daffodils which were tall, medium and small with flowers with large, medium and small proportions! They were from back to front :- Narcissus 'Topolino', N. 'Mitzi' and N. 'Elka'. I am not sure about Topolino but the other two start with darker reflexed petals which slowly lighten as the lowers age. Wonderful.

Wordsworth would like Blackpool too.



Dionysia aretioides and *Dionysia* ('Monima) from Frank and Barbara Hoyle of Chipping



Primula 'Joan Hughes' from Martin Rogerson of Breadsall



Big and First
I often think that special prizes should go to these big old plants which have demanded years of dedication from their growers and that they deserve classes for themselves.



Saxifraga 'Coolock Gem' from Peter Hood of Hetton le Hole



SRGC 80



Primula 'Anna Griffith' from Gdward Spencer from Eggington



Eranthis 'Guinea Gold' from Tommy Anderson



CUSHIONS

Clockwise from top left. *Draba sphaeroides* from former AGS President John Richards was a true mountain plant. Stiff stems held yellow pom-poms aloft over a dark green cushion.

The super wee saxifrage is Allendale 'Tommy', shown by its namesake Tommy Anderson. It is a cross between Allendale 'Ice' and Allendale 'Dream'. It thus has blood of 4 saxes - *diapensioides*, *vandellii*, Sep 549 and *lilacina*. Cp exciting new hybrid from Ray Fairburn.

Tony Stanley from Darlington has joined the exalted ranks of exhibitors who have success with *Dionysias*. His trio were D.z 'Yellowstone', D. 'Lycaena' and D. 'Emmely.' These hybrids were new to me but he has chosen well as they the three plants are quite distinct in form and cushion as well as in flower colour. Another of Tony's plants which I liked was *Saxifraga* 'Maria Callas'. It is obviously a clone which covers itself in flower. I get confused by all famous people names. Do you buy the actors and singers you like or see the plants first? Tony went on to win the Michael Roberts Memorial Trophy for most first prize points in Intermediate Section.

Who could fail to admire the rich yellow flowers on his fellow section competitor, George Jaworski's *Dionysia aretioides* 'Bevere' on the right?





An excellent pan of *Corydalis sewerzowii*



WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT CORYDALIS?

Forget who grew the fabulous *Corydalis sewerzowii* but I know that Ian & Carole Bainbridge [Past and Present Presidents of the SRGC!] grew the *C. ropovii* above. It is a former show winner. This time it beat Carole's mum's [Kath Rimmer] plant of *C. ainii* shown on the left. The result might have been different had Kath not knocked a couple of flower stems from her plan'0



Les Brown of Southport showed the 3 pan entry below. Centre is an excellent plant of

Corydalis integra, flanked by *Fritillaria gibbosa* and *Muscari azureum*.



Centre left is *Corydalis kuznetzowii* and beside it a nice dark *Corydalis solida*



SRGC 80



PRIMULAS & DIONYSIAS
 Derek Pritchard with a fine pan of Dionysia bryoides and 3 more ongu near right.
 The Primula hybrids are Brian Burrow's. He has introduced some superb hybrids over the last 25 years



CHILEAN RARITY A plant which I haven't seen before. It has tiny yellow flowers and quite a lot of leaf. Its name *Miersia chilensis* it gives a clue to its homeland. The flowers are so tiny it was only afterwards I wondered what they looked like. I have enlarged one and it gives an idea. Its flowers have 6 petals 3 pointing up and 3 pointing down, like flat sided star. The anthers are purple. The enlarged image is from Chileflora.com. Look up their site for more info. Like this :-The plant grows in water or it has its roots within a permanent water course. This corresponds to marshes, bogs, water courses, lake and river shores. These are humid areas, with almost constant rainfall. Short dry periods are possible (generally not longer than 1 month). It might like Scotland!



It grows in shadow. Steep slopes facing south [Southern hemisphere remember!] or a vegetation cover which filters 40 - 80 % of light. Found in deep ravines facing south with additional shadow from trees, or where there is a very dense vegetation cover which gives 80 - 100 % shadow (for instance, the Valdivian forests) Apparently it is hardy down to -5 Degrees centigrade. It is tiny and very rare in central Chile where at low altitudes in interior valleys. Quite a challenge. I doubt the judges appreciate its rarity, beauty or difficulty in cultivation -thank you John and Clare Dower from Frodsham.

TOWN NAMES

As a last word I want to say that I am impressed that so many good growers live in places with names to rival Auchtermuchty in their unusualness. I have a feeling that all these names are words which can be made out of **BLACKPOOL FLOWER SHOW LANCASHIRE USED TO BE IN MORECAMBE!**

Count the flowers on this one!
Mala Janes produced this floral feast for Primula fans.
It is *Primula marginata* 'Mrs Carter Walmsley'. The flowers may be small but there are lots of them. Every year there is another plant to go out and look for. This is my one for this show!



I loved this 3 pan exhibit from Ivor Betteridge of Ashby-de-la Zouche which comprised *Fritillaria gibbosa*, *Crocus cvijicii* and *Narcissus cantabricus petunioides*. In their 3 pans he has the most desirable of each genus. Fabulous!



Fred and Pat Bundy's pan of *Narcissus cantabricus*, to show the difference between it and the petunioid form above. What a cracker!



Above
Galanthus woronowii 'Elizabeth Harrison'
the first yellow woronowii?

Colchicum hungaricum [above right] and
Merendera sobolifera [below right]

Below
Olsynium [formerly
Sisyrinchium] *douglasii*, whose white form
is more frequently seen but the purple form
is the more plentiful in nature.



IRISES

Clockwise from TOP LEFT

***Iris aucheri* 'OLOF'**

Iris svetianae

***Iris reticulata* 'WHITE CAUCASUS'**

***Iris svetianae* again
Sam Sutherland with his *Iris kesselringii* which was
awarded a n award of Merit**

***Iris reticulata* 'RHAPSODY'**

