

The Scottish Rock Garden Club

Dunblane Early Bulb Display

16th Feb 2019

Willkommen bei Dunblane



Just after 10am, when the show day had just started, we were delighted to welcome about 20 visitors from Germany to the Early Bulb Display. Ian Christie was their tour consultant and as in previous years he helped plan the trip of Scottish Snowdrop sites for the visitors. The picture here shows tour leader Brigitte Knospe-Carstens in the centre with her husband Klaus and friend Brunhild Pfaff. They had left nice and early from their base in Dundee's Hilton Hotel to ensure that they would be in Dunblane in time to choose from the widest range of plants, especially Snowdrops, on the trade stands. Brigitte and Klaus live near Wilhelmshaven, north of Bremen in north Germany. Their web site shows many pictures of their magnificent garden.

I would love to visit it. Perhaps a tour of Frisian gardens would be of interest to SRGC members. Our friends from Germany managed to reach Dundee and Dunblane so we could surely manage the trip in reverse. The coach party attended Ian Young's fascinating morning lecture in Dunblane then left after lunch for a visit to Scone Palace near Perth. Brigitte had done her homework and knew all about the Stone of Destiny and that it was the Patriarch Jacob's pillow when he dreamed of Jacob's Ladder, which ascended from Earth to Heaven. There the angels of God were ascending and descending the ladder. [Genesis chapter 28: 10-22]

The Stone of Jacob was taken to Ireland by the prophet Jeremiah and thence carried, by St Columba, to Scotland. First Irish, then later Scottish Kings were crowned on the Stone of Scone. It was stolen by Edward I in 1296 and taken to Westminster Abbey in 1300, where it sat under the coronation throne. Is the stone at Scone the original or is that in Edinburgh Castle? Who knows? Who will tell?... becauseremember..... it was taken from Westminster Abbey on Christmas day in 1950 by four Scottish students. It remained hidden until it was found in April 1951 after it was left in the ruins of Arbroath Abbey. Where is the real stone? Since it is very regular in shape it is unlikely to be in a rock garden. A visit to Scone brings this history to life and the visitor is rewarded by swathes of snowdrops and the original Douglas fir, grown from seed sent back by David Douglas who was born in Scone. Check out his grave and the conifer arboretum at Scone Palace when you attend the SRGC AGM in November [in Scone] or when you are at Alpines 2021 in Perth.



The Stone at Scone, on the left and, right, the Stone of Destiny under the throne in Westminster Abbey and which is now in Edinburgh castle.









The pots of bulbs were displayed mixed as in a garden rather than set out and grouped by Genera. This gave the show room a more relaxed feel. An advantage was that it allowed each exhibitor to group his or her plants together, rather than scattered over the benches. It also meant that people viewed them as garden plants, rather than judged them as they would in a competitive show. Hopefully this will encourage more people to share their plants at our displays and show members of the public that we grow a wide range of plants in our gardens and greenhouses.







Eranthis hyemalis is a well know plant which lights up the early spring garden. Its bright chrome or acid yellow flowers enjoy conditions similar to snowdrops. Eranthis cilicica has a similar colour but is not hardy outside in Scottish gardens. the hybrid between them is Eranthis 'Guinea Gold', shown top left. It has large rich yellow flowers. In recent years E. hyemalis has tickled the fancy of some growers, especially in Germany. They have bred Eranthis with different coloured flowers, different in the amount of yellow in the flowers!

The plant pictured on the left is either E. 'Schwefelglanz' or the very similar E. 'Pauline' . One has slightly paler flowers than the other. You know when breeders are getting into dangerous territory when they start selling green flowers.

E. 'Noel Ayres



Picture from Judy's Snowdrops

shown above has semi-double flowers with the outer tepals shaded green. I don't have a completely green Eranthis but I am sure it is out there. Another good selection is E, 'Orange Glow', pictured Right. They are valuable plants because they flower early.

Breeders are also working on miniature daffodils. Although these two are not new, they are reliable. Both are N. cyclamineus hybrids. Englander on the bottom left is like a bigger version of the species. N. Mitzi starts off with yellow trumpets and pale reflexed petals. As the flowers age the trumpets lighten in colour till they are almost white. 'Mitzi' is bottom right



Golden Galanthus

G. nivalis 'Spindlestone Surprise'

G. plicatus "Wendy's Gold"

G. nivalis 'Blonde Inge'

Hybrid between *G. plicatus* 'Wendy's Gold' and *G. nivalis* 'Janet Aspland'



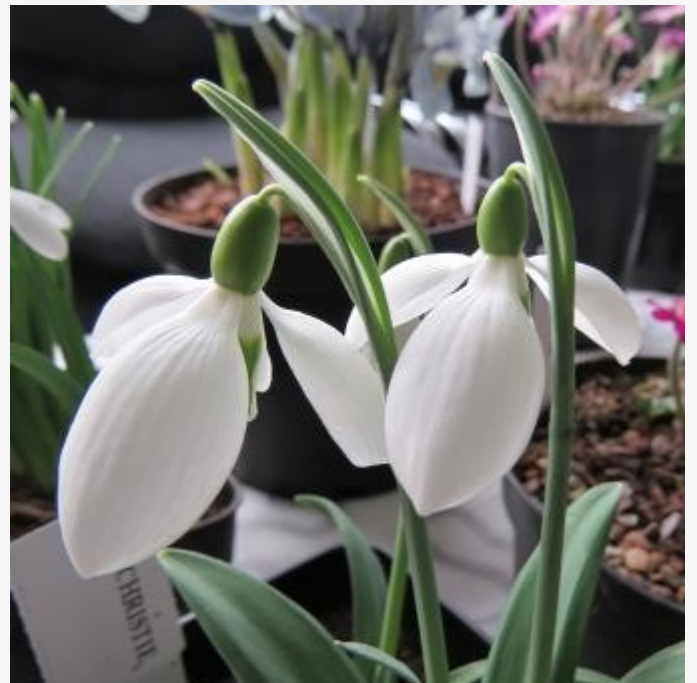


Four good snowdrops from left to right; top to bottom

Galanthus 'Scharlockii Little Imp'

Ian Christie's own Pocuiform snowdrop

Galanthus plicatus 'Big Balloon'





Three pots of *Cyclamen coum* at the top left. *C. coum* 'Maurice Dryden' is shown below. It was named by the late Kath Dryden in honour of her husband. The name is given to the plants with silver leaves and white flowers. It is shown in the top picture on the right hand side.

Sternbergia candida is rarely seen these days. It was exploited when it was first discovered but now has to be raised in cultivation. It takes skill to grow it and it nice to see this beautiful white flower back on the show bench.



Galanthus fosteri differs from *Galanthus nivalis* in its leaf colour. While *nivalis* have blue tinged leaves *fosteri* has plain green leaves. It is more tender than other species and is best in a pot with some protection. That it is a bit tender is no surprise, as it hails from South East Turkey and Lebanon, although they do get some snow in those parts.

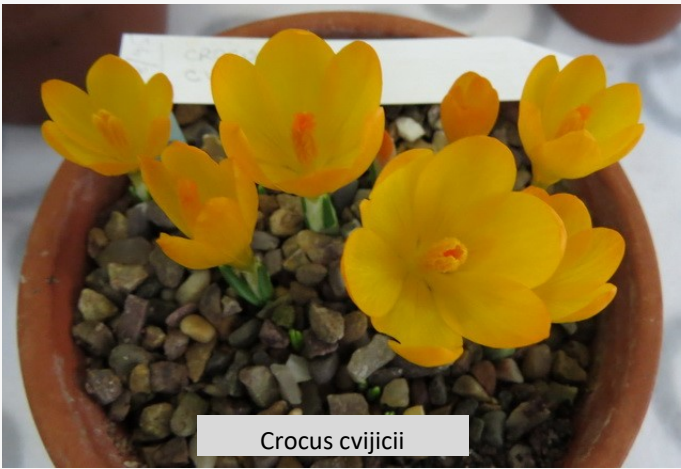
I like its clean double markings.



Crocus chrysanthus 'Blue Pearl'



Crocus sieberi tricolor



Crocus cvijicii



Crocus kosaninii





This floriferous early dwarf Narcissus

was raised by the late Don Stead, who had a large collection of bulbous plants. In many ways he, his enthusiasm, his generosity and the plants he showed from his collection were inspiration for the SRGC Bulb Group. For a long time it was known as 'Don Stead's Hybrid' but is now *Narcissus* 'Don Stead'. It is a hybrid between *N. cantabricus* and *N. bulbocodium*. Its colour is midway between the ice white and chrome yellow of its respective parents. Don's daughter pictured in the inset is convenor of the SRGC Glasgow Group.

I find it very difficult to distinguish the *romieuxii* type *Narcissus*. I tend to believe the label on the pot. I would love to see them growing in Morocco's mountain meadows. I remember pictures which Sheila Maule showed in the 1980's.



On the left is *Narcissus romieuxii*. A very fine collection was introduced by Jim Archibald. The plant is native to cedar and oak forests of the Middle Atlas mountains of Morocco. From Jim's collection several selections have been made, notably a fine petunioid form, 'Julia Jane'. 'Joy Bishop' is another excellent selection called Julia Jane after his daughter. Some plants in my original pot which I was given by Fred Hunt had flowers of palest cream and others which were much more yellow like the plant on the left.

The plant on the right is *Narcissus romieuxii zaianicus*. It hails from the Rif mountains of Northern Morocco. This plant is taller and has more upright flowers.

These bulbs are superb plants for a frost free greenhouse. They bulk up well if looked after. There are usually bulbs of these at the Late Bulb Exchange at the SRGC Discussion Weekend.





Iris 'Katharine Hodgkin'?
? Sheila Anne Germaney?



Iris 'Pauline'



Iris 'Lady Beatrix Stanley'



Iris 'Carolina'



Iris 'Katharine's Gold'



Iris 'Polar Ice'



Iris 'Spot On'



Iris 'Clairette'



Iris



Iris 'Lady Beatrix Stanley'



Iris 'Eye Catcher'



Iris hyrcana

Some of the Irises. Stan warns that some reticulatas split into many bulbils after flowering. I am told that the hybrids which have Iris histrioides in their parentage do not split up as much as do the reticulata hybrids. I think that Katharine's Gold is one of the best introductions in recent years. Like Sheila Anne Germaney and the original introduction Katharine Hodgkin itself it does well in Scotland. I like Polar Ice as well but so far have not grown it.





While everyone else was enjoying the lectures, display and chats with friends or buying plants these workers toiled endlessly making sandwiches and serving teas and coffees to the hungry crowd. Then they had to tidy and wash up. We give a great big thank you to the catering team. They did all this and kept smiling.



Happy together! Our Lady President Julia Corden and our Lady Honorary President Bette Ivey



Ian Young conducted the auction of paintings by Lawrence Greenwood from the collection of Fred & Allice Hunt of Invergowrie. The sale raised over £1800 for Club funds. You can tell by the concentration on the faces of the audience that they were paying great attention and that in case they were suspected of bidding many kept their arms folded! Up on the Kremlin balcony they were equally serious.