



The Scottish Rock Garden Club

Stirling Show in KINCARDINE 2014



For many people, Kincardine is the place where you cross the River Forth if the Forth Road Bridge is closed by high winds. Before then it was the point furthest down-river where the Forth could be crossed if storms prevented the ferries running between North and South Queensferry. When it was built the Kincardine Bridge must have been one of the wonders of the age and capable of carrying more vehicles than its designers ever thought possible. Now a new bridge runs parallel to the old bridge at Kincardine. Its name, the Clackmannan Bridge, does not trip easily off the tongue. Clumsily named it may be but its northern end does in fact start in Clackmannan-shire. Kincardine then is not just a river crossing town but is a western gateway into the Kingdom of Fife. It is an ancient Scottish burgh. Its 'Burgh of barony' charter dates from 1663, soon after the restoration of the monarchy.



Charles II was King and **Alexander Bruce** was the second earl of Kincardine, having accompanied the King back to London from his exile in Germany. Alexander was an inventor. He helped develop the pendulum clock. He was born into a family of practical men. His grandfather and father had developed salt production and coal mines in the area. His grandfather built Culross palace in 1597. Its not a big palace but it is still there. His coal mines reached under the river Forth. Alexander became one of the most powerful men in Scotland, holding high offices of Treasurer of Scotland and Lord of Session. He was one of the 12 men who founded the **Royal Society of London**. Intriguingly Alexander was the great grandfather and great great grandfather of James Boswell, the biographer who travelled with Dr Samuel Johnson.

The second Earl's mother, **Mary Preston**, lived at **Valleyfield House**. 'So what?', you might ask? 200 years later Valleyfield House had one of Scotland's premier

gardens with a 'very select collection of plants'. Sir Robert Preston who had lived there had a splendid botanical library. Valleyfield's head gardener in 1818, a Mr Alexander Stewart, had heard about an accomplished young man from Scone, namely **David Douglas**, who had trained for seven years at Scone Palace, home of the Earls of Mansfield. Douglas was a diligent student with a fondness for botany and tales of foreign travel. Young David had read and leaned much at Scone. He also accompanied 'gentlemen botanists' on tours of the highland, collecting plants.



Douglas was invited to work in the kitchen garden at Valleyfield House. He soon forsook the kitchen garden plants for the exotic and spent much time in the library at Valleyfield. Mr Stewart found him "careful o the plants committed to his charge and desirous of improvement". Douglas stayed at Valleyfield. for two years and then succeeded in gaining admission to the Botanic Garden at Glasgow. Mr Stewart Murray then curator of Glasgow Botanic Garden recommended Douglas as a botanical collector to Joseph Sabine Hon. Sec. of the Royal Society. This was the start of his great plant-hunting travels in North America.

The ninth Earl inherited the title Earl of Elgin and since 1747, the titles are united, so the same family still live in the area. James Bruce of Larbert was descended from Earl Alexander as was the Earl of Elgin who rescued and gave his name to the Elgin Marbles.

Today this sleepy town is home to The Scottish Police College at Tulliallan Castle and just beside it sits Longannet Power station where work is being done on carbon capture. Kincardine is part of our past and future **If not for Earl Alexander perhaps Douglas might never have been sent to America. Who then would have introduced his plants?.**

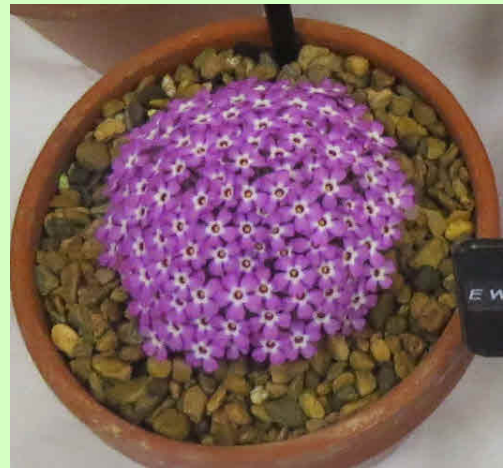


1st.



2nd.

1st. Cyril Lafong
 2nd. Bill Robinson and
 3rd. Barry & Cathy Caudwell's
 6pan exhibits in Class A



Bill's *Dionysia bryoides*



Cyril's *Crocus cvijicii* 'Cream of Creams' was awarded the new Glassford Sprunt Trophy for Best pan of Bulbs in a pan not exceeding 19cm.



3rd.



No matter how you look at it Cyril's *Pulsatilla vernalis* is a wonderful plant. This species is probably the most beautiful of all European Natives. It well deserved its Forrest Medal and Ben Ledi Trophy





Barry and Cathy had a nice exhibit in the class for 6 pans of bulbs of different genera. I liked their Muscari chalusicum in particular. Tulpia sogdiana is a small slightly untidy tulip but its flowers are very delicate in form and marking. I think it is looking for a wee shrub to scurry through upwards for a bit of support. Below is Stan da Prato's entry. I like the pale cream Narcissus 'Elka'. Stan's tulips are bigger than Cathy and Barry's!





Cyril's 3 pan entry in new, rare or difficult included a small pan of *Trillium rivale* 'Purple Heart' and 2 Saxifrages. A description of the *Trillium* can found under Hexham Forrest 2014 report.

Saxifraga x dinninaris [below] is a natural hybrid between *S.dinnikii* and *S. columnaris*. Both come from the Caucasus. It was sown in 2009 and first flowered in 2011.

Saxifraga columnaris, [left lower] one of the parents of the above. Cyril got seeds from Vojtech Holubec and sowed them in Jan 2006. It is slower growing than the hybrid. Both are about the same size now but the parent species is 3 years older.



Tom Green's *Saxifraga* 'Red Poll'

Below is *Tropaeolum brachycerus*, grown from seed by Margaret and Henry Taylor. It is one of about 80 species native to south America. This one is from Chile. It is like an orange flowered *T. tricolor*. The plant needs to handled very carefully as its has very thin stems. Note its nice leaves each with 6 lobes.



Right *Fritillaria verticillata*





Cyril's 3 pan entry in Class 1
 comprised the Forrest Medal winning
Pulsatilla vernalis and
T. rivale 'Purple Heart'
 which was awarded a certificate of Merit.
 The fabulous *Dionysia aretioides* must have felt left out!

Tom Green's Primrose, *Primula vulgaris*, has come out a 'funny shade of yellow' but I included the picture because the plant was too good to ignore.



Jim Watson from Stockfield won the 3 pan bulbs class with these good plants/. He did well to keep the *Ipheion uniflorum* upright. I find that it tends to flop over because the flowers seem to get too heavy for the stems. *Frit. bucharica* used to be seen more often. It is good to see it re-appearing. You can't help but admire the leaves on the *Erythronium dens canis*.





Iris graeberiana from John Lee



Crocus chrysanthus 'Ard Schenk'



Iris bucharica from Ron MacBeath



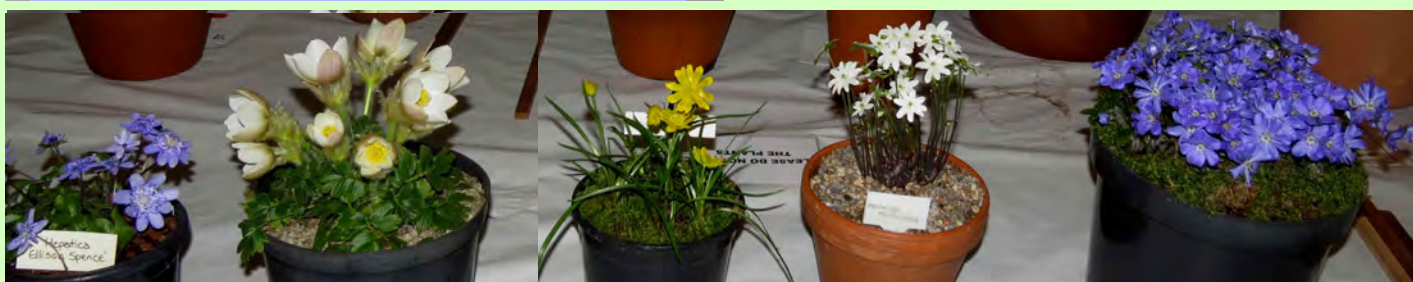
Narcissus bulbocodium obesus 'Marion Robinson' from David Millward'



Narcissus calcicola from Ian & Carole Bainbridge



Fritillaria pudica 'Richard Britton'



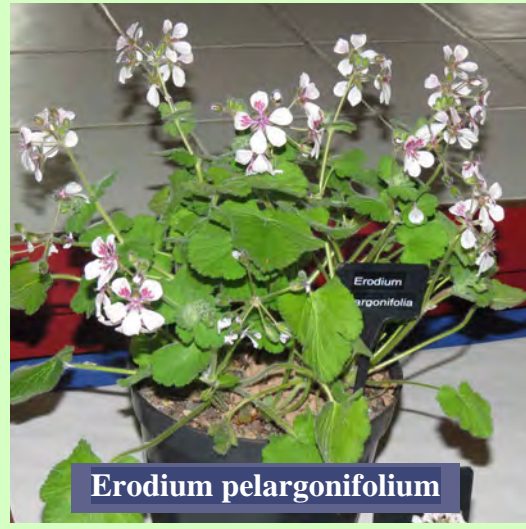
Hepatica
Elliott Spence



There and back along a bench!



Sam Sutherland's
 Primula allionii 'Mary Berry'
 won the Spiller Trophy
 for Best Primula



Erodium pelargonifolium



Fritillaria bucharica



Corydalis nudicaulis



Find out what they are looking at on the next page



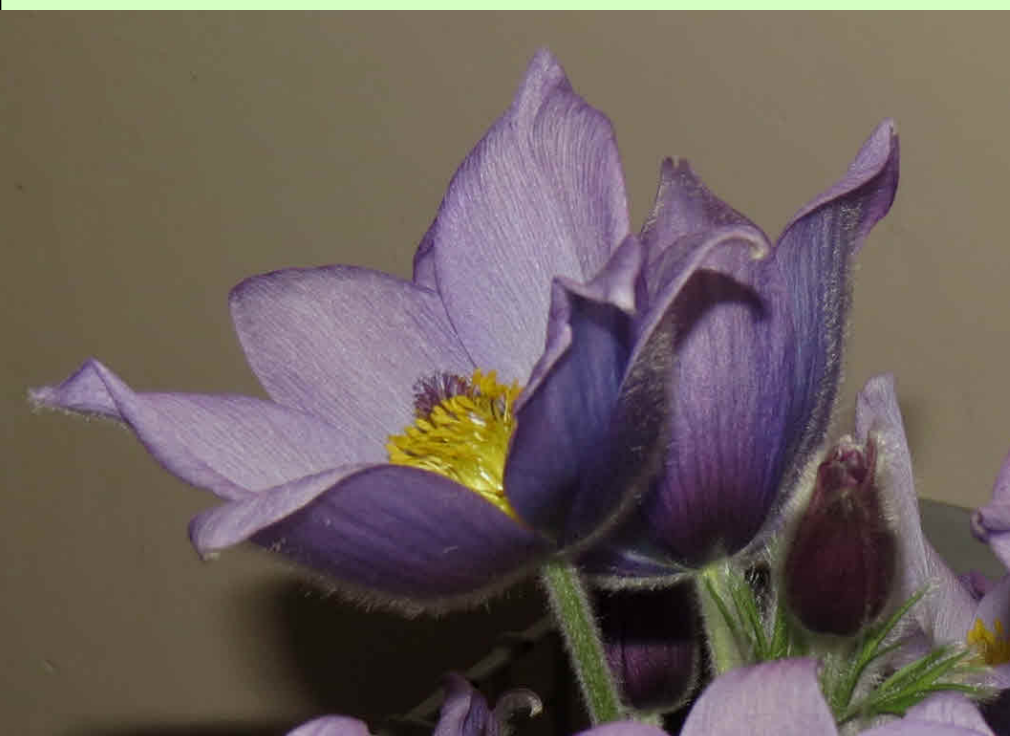
Jim Watson's Hepatica - fabulous!



Sue Simpson's

***Pulsatilla vulgaris* Budapest seedling**

Well described in last year's Kincardine report but better than it was last year. It is rare for plant exhibited by a novice exhibitor to be awarded a certificate of Merit. Sue has the 'knack' .her exhibits are beautifully presented as well as being well grown. Well done!





A rare picture of Stan da Prato. Stan is usually behind the camera so I was delighted that he agreed to have his picture taken. Stan's plants were the backbone of the show.



Stan da Prato had another good day. He had most points in Section I, winning the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust Trophy. His *Andromeda polyfolia* 'NIKKO' was Best Non European Plant in Section I, [Institute of Quarrying Quaich] and also won a Certificate of Merit



Below left is one of Stan's double primroses
Centre is Margaret and Henry Taylor's nicely presented *Primula marginata* alba
At bottom left Watt Russell's *Primula whitei* 'Arduaine Form' beside a pale lilac *P. marginata*





**As Wallis said to his wee dog,
'Crackin' Saxifrages, Eh! Grommit!'**

Above S. Coolock Gem
Top right S. Coolock Kate
Middle S. Allendale Beau
Lower S. Allendale Elf
Below S. Czech hybrid



Jean Wyllie's Shortia uniflora



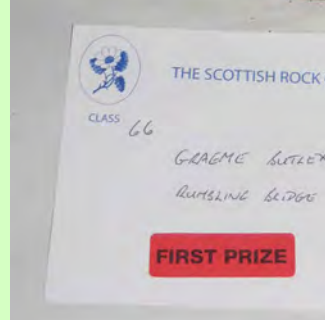
David Millward showed this excellent panful of the diminutive *Trillium hibbersonii*



Barry & Cathy's *Erythronium grandiflorum* with RED anthers



Two forms of *Thlaspi zaffranii*





Above Nine super plants from Sue Simpson shown in Section II
 At right Sue's young Pulsatilla vernalis and below Cyril's Forrest medal winning P.vernalis



Watt Russell's trough included a huge number of great wee plants

