

**WAKEFIELD  
&  
NORTH OF ENGLAND  
TULIP SOCIETY**

**ESTABLISHED 1836**

**NEWSLETTER**



**NO 24  
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The cover photograph of the Harrogate Spring Flower Show Premier Gold Award is by Teresa Clements.

## **Editorial**

**Jean Higginson**

Welcome to all our readers from a new Editor or, more honestly, Editor-in-training. After five years of juggling multiple commitments and struggling with visual difficulties, Wendy Akers has understandably decided to step down. We shall miss her very much and owe her a great deal for producing a well-balanced publication which has been both informative and entertaining. What are my qualifications? None, I'm afraid and, due to the vagaries of my telephone line, my Internet connection is only marginally faster than utilising a geriatric carrier-pigeon. On a happier note, Wendy remains available for consultation, the techies are still in place and Teresa Clements is acting as email intermediary. I hope, therefore, that the transition will not be too bumpy.

It seems to be customary to mention the weather, which has such a profound influence on our growing and showing season, but perhaps I won't. Meteorologically speaking, we all know that several records were broken, and not in a good way. Nevertheless, our members are a resolute and resourceful bunch. Not only did all the core activities take place but there were additional gatherings, visits and explorations which you can read about here.

As has been mentioned before, this is your newsletter so please keep the contributions coming, however brief. Brief is fine as it allows more voices to be heard.

## **Chairman's Report**

**Malcolm Hainsworth**

Arthur Robinson was for over thirty years the secretary to our older sibling the Ancient Society of York Florists. All those who knew him will have felt saddened by his death this year. [Penelope Dawson Brown has written a tribute to him.] Arthur was an utterly delightful man who both admired and supported our Society.

We are indebted to our own secretaries past and present, the other officers of the Society and the growing number of members volunteering to help in the extensive projects we have undertaken. If any member has not yet bought a copy of "Flames and Feathers" they should do so. It is a superb production. Anyone reading it will be drawn towards the very centre of our Society. I watched its creation from the sidelines and was amazed at the skill, imagination and determination of the team who put together this wonder-filled book. They were

supported by members whose concurrent archive work provided many of the fascinating details which sparkle from the pages.

All the contributors should be proud of their labour. So indeed should those who offered presentations at our A.G.M. These were illuminating and engaging and promised further treats at the Tulip Heritage Day following our 2013 show.

The year has been enlivened by a variety of pleasing events – meeting the Walkingtons on Aubert Ings and finding T. Sylvestris on the banks of the Nidd, an impromptu display at the Greyhound at Saxton and an unforgettable visit to Eythrope in July. I left there almost stupefied by the display of Sue and Jonathan’s mastery of the art and craft of gardening – and by the scent of their gifts of basil. A very welcome invitation to the Lever’s house-over-the-water allowed us to see, amongst many other treasures, Tim’s cantilever gate.

The Harrogate show continues to be a showcase opportunity and our display team’s artistry and skill was properly rewarded by a Premier Gold Award. Again I simply watched their purposeful cooperation with admiration.

I have real difficulty writing anything. I make the odd note as the year passes by but these are usually lost – misplaced as are so many bulbs and labels. I procrastinate endlessly. It is very unfair to other Society members who make their contributions in a thorough and timely manner. Whilst putting off the task in hand and picking up my copy of Sir Daniel Hall’s “The Tulip” out fell the schedule for the 164<sup>th</sup> Show. On the back I had written “A poor show for blooms and a worse show for me I forgot a bunch of bybs and the petals fell off my pair and so I only entered a breeder (from Trevor Mills and won nothing!!!) However it was one of the nicest shows for company.”

This year’s show appeared to be heading in the same direction as far as blooms were concerned. It was saved in the Open Classes by Judy Baker and by our novices. As far as company was concerned, I know none better.

Since the Chairman’s report was received we were sad to hear that one of our Novice members died suddenly while overseas. Lesley Franks, formerly of Liversedge, won third prize with a single Mabel breeder tulip in Class 30 at this year’s show. Other members may remember her excitement as it was her first ever entry.

Teresa Clements



# Secretary's Report 2012

**Teresa Clements**

After another busy year it would take far too long to report on everything the society has done so I will pick out a few highlights and say a big general thank you.

A team of people put a lot of thought and preparation into creating a new display for RHS Tulip Day. There was information about the society's history, growing and showing today and English Florists' Tulips in art and science. The judges commented on the excellence of the display; they said it was clear, informative and well presented, and we were delighted when we were awarded a Silver-Gilt medal. (See Wendy Akers' report of the RHS show later in this newsletter.)

The display was reworked for the Harrogate Spring Flower Show. It was only two weeks later but by this time we had plenty of fresh material to enhance the display boards. We rearranged the society's whole stand to encourage people to step off the path and have a closer look at the display – we even laid carpet tiles to encourage them to walk our way. We clearly impressed the judges who awarded us a Premier Gold! All modesty aside, we deserved it, the display looked fantastic!

Another big highlight of the year was the publication of the latest edition of the society's book. We had all been looking forward to this and it was worth the wait. There are more photographs and new features such as the timeline that runs along the bottom of each page. Anna Pavord gave it the thumbs up with her review in the 2012 RHS Daffodil and Tulip Yearbook.

The wet weather had a huge impact on us this year. Harrogate Show finished early, it was very cold, even in the marquee, and was very wet indeed but despite that there was a good number of entries.

Running alongside all our usual activities the Archive Project is making steady progress. It contributed material to the prizewinning display, which was called 'Looking back, moving forward.' The title was taken from a picture of English tulips by Monique Martin. It seems to me the perfect statement of where the society stands today. We have a well-documented history and the archive project is raising our awareness of that and what a valuable resource it is.

The society is more than the documents and records, interesting as they are; we are guardians of the stock of English tulips. Looking back at the history of English tulips has made me acutely aware of that. If our society folds, they will be lost. A few may remain as collectors' items but the standards would lapse, the quality of the blooms would decline and the stock would dwindle.

That's still not all; I went to see Keith Orrell about the sound archive and

we listened to a few clips of the recordings he and Mike Young had made. What a revelation! They have gathered up some fabulous material for us, the stories and the voices are fascinating, Hearing them was a vivid reminder that our members are our other vital resource. These are the people who are here for us now. I have space to name just a few and in no particular order; Roy Mitchell who set up the hall for the AGM; Anne Smales and her team of helpers who prepared lunch; Bob Bingham who regularly supplies food for the lunch and shifts the tables for the show; all the stall holders; the speakers at the AGM; Barbara Pickering, who opened her garden for us earlier in the year; James Akers and the team who worked on the book; everyone who helped with the archive, displays, recordings, hosting meetings and most of all with growing and showing tulips and providing bulbs this year. We are all moving the society forward.

It's worth reflecting on how very lucky we are (my children would laugh to hear me say this, again, but it is true!) There is a wealth of talent and goodwill in the society and we all benefit from it.

As the Secretary, I just want it to go on record that I am very grateful for the support I receive and to thank everyone who has done their bit for the society over the past year and, as we usually say, long may it continue.

## Treasurer's Report

### Jason Clements

This year has been a busy year for the Society; as you would expect, this has been reflected in the finances. I will mention a few specific items:

**Archive project:** This project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). In this financial year, we received the first 50% (£5,450) of this grant. The remainder is due in financial year 2012-13. You can see that this has been spent (actually 80p over-spent!). I mean to give full accounts for the project at its conclusion, in next year's report. Suffice to say that the grant has enabled us to purchase some much-needed electronic equipment, including a colour printer, laptop and projector. These are reflected in the 'office equipment' item in the Statement of Assets above. The printer has enabled us to avoid photocopying costs, and this saving will continue into future years.

**Flames and Feathers:** The new Society book, long in gestation, finally saw the light of day in April. We had 800 copies printed at a cost of £3,555. This was partly funded by a withdrawal of £1,200 from our savings account, which explains the balance reduction of the Abbey account, also the overall loss of over £2,000 over the course of the year. This loss is of no concern, as we can expect a steady income from the sale of the book over the next decade, in fact the initial sales already largely account for the jump in sales receipts as compared

with last year.

**Subscriptions:** You can see above that subscription income has risen by £92 against last year. Although this includes 21 new members paying the £5 joining fee since it was introduced last year, the underlying subscription income has remained almost exactly constant. I always feel this is a good indicator of the continued health of the Society.

**Statement of Accounts for Year ending 31st July 2012**

Receipts			Payments		
	2012	2011		2012	2011
<b>Subs &amp; Donations</b>			<b>Administration</b>		
Archive Project	5,450.00		Archive Project	5,450.48	
Subscriptions	1,172.00	1,080.00	Newsletter (printing)	727.00	546.48
Donations	197.45	184.23	Insurance	237.00	187.00
			Stationery & software	251.82	134.63
			Photocopying & printing	226.28	68.02
			Postage	388.21	213.26
			Internet registrations	0.00	61.62
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,819.45</b>	<b>1,264.23</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>7,280.79</b>	<b>1,221.31</b>
<b>Sales</b>			<b>Purchases</b>		
AGM	208.05	120.65	"Flames & Feathers" printing	3,555.00	
Harrogate	156.70	122.63	Harrogate stand expenses	50.60	48.70
Constable Burton	171.80	88.55	Library Books	30.00	12.99
Main Show	635.50	162.40	Display stands and material	8.00	0.00
RHS Spring Show	121.15		Other	29.27	136.98
Postal / other	499.33	71.82	Sales table	443.33	167.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,792.53</b>	<b>569.39</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,116.40</b>	<b>366.14</b>
<b>Bulbs</b>			<b>Bulbs</b>		
Hortus bulb sales	665.40	443.00	Annual distribution	113.77	100.24
Dutch bulbs at AGM	147.00	111.00	Breeders from Hortus	436.21	273.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>812.40</b>	<b>554.00</b>	Dutch bulbs for AGM	147.14	0.00
<b>AGM &amp; Shows</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>697.12</b>	<b>373.34</b>
Raffle	375.26	235.20	<b>AGM &amp; Shows</b>		
Refreshments	389.75	307.43	Hall hire	186.00	186.00
Plant sales	87.00	124.85	Table Hire, Crockery & Food	194.72	162.85
Prize money	581.25	90.00	Trophies, Engraving & Purchase	309.76	335.30
Sale of blooms	36.50		Prize Money	81.25	103.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,479.76</b>	<b>757.48</b>	Speakers' expenses	114.50	160.25
<b>Bank</b>			Other	10.00	0.00
Interest	3.37	3.47	<b>Total</b>	<b>896.23</b>	<b>948.16</b>
Dividends	35.48	37.00	<b>Other</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.85</b>	<b>40.47</b>	Misc expenses	15.00	117.60
			<b>Total</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>117.60</b>
			<b>Operating surplus/deficit</b>	<b>-2,062.55</b>	<b>145.98</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,942.99</b>	<b>3,182.53</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,942.99</b>	<b>3,182.53</b>

<b>Statement of Assets</b>	2012	2011	Change
<b>Cash Assets</b>			
Current Account	2,967.06	3,760.17	-812.11
Abbey Account	2,334.65	3,495.80	-1,161.15
Cash in hand	59.27	147.56	-88.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,360.98</b>	<b>7,423.53</b>	<b>-2,062.55</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>			
Banco Santander Shares	343.54	570.27	-226.73
Sales table stock	3,873.92	1,032.63	2,841.29
Office equipment	2,450.35	0.00	2,450.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,667.81</b>	<b>1,602.90</b>	<b>5,064.91</b>

**Auditor's comments:** I confirm that I have examined the receipts, payments and statement of assets relating to the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012 and have found these to be in technical order. In view of the Lottery funding and the office equipment purchased during the year I would suggest that this is depreciated over a 3 year period.

Ivor Fox FCIB, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012

# Library Report

## Margot Murray

In the library I am looking at ways to reorganise the lending system as the present procedure can result in books being forgotten or going astray. A year between borrowing and returning can be a strain for the memory and so I want to thank those who returned their books on time. One or two are still "out" and I hope this reminder will speed their return. Some of our books are comparatively rare or valuable and would be difficult to replace if lost.

At the same time the number of books in the collection is increasing and thanks are due to the kind donors of new additions. An extra surprise at the A.G.M. was the presentation to the Library by Anna Pavord of a new book for which she has written an excellent introduction. This book, *The Tulip Anthology; Photographs by Ron Van Dongen*, is a mixture of tulip-related quotations and historical images interwoven with Van Dongen's photography. He brings a personal artistic vision and an eclectic approach to his pictures of tulips, playing with elements of colour, form, perspective and composition. The botanical prints and paintings, the historical objects and decorative items hold their own to give the book a wide appeal.

A list of books is available if required.

## Minutes of AGM 6 October 2012

The meeting was held at Wrenthorpe Village Hall starting at 12 noon.

**Chairman's welcoming remarks:** Malcolm Hainsworth welcomed members to the meeting and thanked Roy Mitchell for setting up the hall and Anne Smales and her team of helpers for preparing lunch. There was a minute's silence to remember Arthur Robinson (1920 – 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012), a well respected florist from York and a long-standing member of our society, and Malcolm Jackson who died in Aug 2012, winner of the Brook Silver Challenge Cup, (the Novice Cup) in 1971.

**Apologies for absence** were received from thirty members and twenty-one people gave notice that they would attend. The AGM was attended by approximately sixty people.

**Minutes of previous AGM:** the minutes of the previous AGM had been published in the newsletter and were taken as read and were approved.

**Matters arising:** none.



**Secretary's Report:** Teresa Clements. The Secretary's Report appears separately in the newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jason Clements. The Treasurer's Report appears separately in the newsletter.

**Election of Officers:**

- President        The Duke of Devonshire KCVO CBE DL
- Patrons         Mr Keith Eyre, Mr James L Akers MBE
- Vice Presidents P Emmett, T Mills, T Clark, J Ollerenshaw, Dr A K Swift,  
Mrs C Gude, Mrs J Green, R Bingham, Mrs A Pavord,  
Mrs W Akers, Mrs A Smales, Ms S Akers, Mrs B Pickering, J.Wainwright,  
M Hainsworth.
- Chairman        Mr M Hainsworth
- Secretary       Mrs T Clements
- Treasurer       Mr J Clements
- Editor           Miss J Higginson
- Auditor          Mr I Fox

**Committee:**

James Akers, Wendy Akers, Jason Clements, Teresa Clements, Keith Eyre, Jane Green, John Gibson, Carole Gude, Malcolm Hainsworth, Jean Higginson, Terry Mitchell, Marguerite Murray, John Wainwright.

The Chairman announced the Committee had nominated John Gibson and Terry Mitchell as Vice-Presidents and that Wendy Akers had retired as Editor and Jean Higginson had taken the role. The Secretary had given notice of the AGM and had not received any nominations for the Committee.

The Chairman suggested that all the officers, listed as above, were re-elected in a single vote. This was agreed by acclaim.

**Show dates 2012:** See later in newsletter.

**Any Other Business:** There was no other business.

Memo to Chairman.. Was there something missing at the AGM this year?



# Arthur Sydney Robinson 1920 -2012

**Penelope Dawson-Brown, President, Ancient Society of York Florists**



The death of Arthur Robinson on 10<sup>th</sup> February marks the passing of a very special man who touched the hearts of all those fortunate enough to know him. For 25 years, until his retirement in 2010, he was secretary to the Ancient Society of York Florists (ASYF) a position he cherished. Today the Society, which was established in 1768, is recognized as the oldest extant horticultural society in the world. There is no doubt that its survival is due to Arthur's tireless endeavours.

Arthur was educated at Haughton's School in York. When War broke out in 1939 he served with the Duke of Wellington's Regiment in Burma and India. As with most of his generation he spoke little of his experiences except about the camaraderie of his fellow soldiers. After the War ended Arthur returned home to marry the love of his life, Eileen Baker, whom he had known since primary school. Their marriage was a happy one blessed with a son Philip and three grandsons. Arthur's interests apart from gardening were cricket and ballroom dancing with Eileen.

Arthur chose the Police Force as a career. His beat took in the site of the famous Backhouse Nurseries at Holgate, now West Bank Park, where he would slow his pace to admire the exotic flower beds and glasshouses brimming with horticultural gems. He already understood the craft of horticulture having helped in his father's allotment as a child and later created his delightful garden in Acomb. It was perhaps here that his love of exquisite flowers reasserted itself.

Arthur became secretary to the ASYF in 1985. Membership had plummeted and its future looked perilously insecure. Single-handedly he promoted the Society, extolling its virtues to entice new members. He reintroduced the Spring Show and once again florists' auriculas took centre stage just as they had once done in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. He forged links with other societies including the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society. He had a way with exhibitors, understanding their passions and idiosyncrasies.

The AYSF was formed by an elite group of city gentleman whose happiness was centred on florist flowers which they grew to perfection and for prize money. At that time there were just eight classic florist flowers, auricula, tulip and carnation being the most popular. These were shown at ‘florists’ feasts’ which often ended in drunken brawls!

During his last few years Arthur devoted much of his time to promoting the revival of Russell lupins. George Russell (1857-1951) was a member of the ASYF and became famous for the cross-breeding of lupins. Inspired by lupin seeds from Arthur, Wally Hammond is now growing them again in York.

Before Arthur died he was able to unveil a York Civic Trust plaque erected in Colliergate to commemorate the site where the first ASYF florists’ feast was held in 1768 and also to see the Society’s precious archive safely deposited at the Borthwick Institute, University of York. Today the ASYF continues to flourish thanks to the dedication and hard work of its committee members who stage four annual shows at Askham Bryan College.

Arthur was a man of principles, a staunch conservative and royalist who deeply valued tradition. His services to horticulture were acknowledged a few years ago when he and Eileen were invited to tea at Buckingham Palace. His contribution to the City of York’s unique gardening heritage will be his legacy.

## **Trevor Hesketh 1925 - 2012**

### **An obituary by Paul Hesketh**



I am sorry to inform you that my father, Trevor Hesketh, aged 87, passed away on Saturday 24th November 2012.

Trevor trained as a teacher in York and joined the army in 1944, being posted first to Aberdeen, then Halifax. His main role was to collect and deliver vehicles from Attingham Park, Shrewsbury. He was promoted from Private to Sergeant in a weekend to enable him to teach woodwork, leather work and English to soldiers waiting to be demobbed.

After the army he taught at Withernsea High School, the first comprehensive in the country and a model for all others. Then he returned to Barnsley, eventually becoming Head of English at St Helens school where he

liaised with Ken Loach for the film production of ‘Kes’ which was based on the book “A Kestrel for a Knave”, written by his old colleague, games teacher Barry Hines. Trevor took a supporting role behind the scenes from the auditions to looking after the pupils backstage and taking part himself, playing teacher, Mr Crossley, taking the register.

He was an active member of the Barnsley Playgoers Society, secretary of Barnsley Art Society for 20 years, and local representative of the teachers union AMA, later AMMA. He resigned from these roles to spend extra time with his elderly father, after his mother died and because of the extra workload following his promotion to Head of Lower School. His former pupils remember him as a smiling man with a light touch, who dealt with problems quickly, efficiently and kindly. He retired in 1985.

Trevor was devoted to his wife Hazel and extremely proud of his two sons Francis and Paul. He enjoyed his holidays both abroad and at home. Even after retirement he continued to help people in any way possible, such as going to Birdwell School to talk to pupils about the war and watching out for elderly neighbours who might need assistance. Mum has always been the gardener, but Dad enjoyed being a member of the Tulip Society, attending the meetings, and helping at the Harrogate Spring Show.

## **Malcolm Jackson**

### **An obituary by Keith Eyre**

At the A.G.M. we were notified of the death of Malcolm Jackson earlier this year. Malcolm joined our Society in 1968 after seeing the tulips at our Annual Show held at the Duke of York Hotel near to where he lived in Agbrigg, Wakefield. He was keen to get started, taking bulbs when offered each year, to build up his stock. In 1971 he won the Novice Cup and continued showing and helping for many years. In fact, he was a very loyal supporter of the Society for over thirty years.

## **Dates for your diary - Events 2013**

**The Arthur Robinson Memorial Lecture:** Saturday 6th April 2013. 3.30pm at The Mansion House in York. Speaker Teresa Clements.

**Alnwick Spring Show:** Saturday 13 to Sunday 14 April 2013. Willowburn Sports and Leisure Centre NE66 2JH (just off the A1.) This year there are some new classes for tulips. Schedule due in Jan. Entry free and staging from 4 to 10pm Friday 12th, then 7 to 9am on Saturday. The Duchess of Northumberland will be presenting the awards.

**Harrogate Spring Flower Show:** Thursday 25 to Sunday 28 April 2013. Staging from 2.00pm Wednesday 24 April until 7.00am Thursday 25 April. The show is for Dutch tulips and exhibitors receive a ticket for free entry to the show, which is a great day out. Do come along, support the society and make it a good competition.

**The Midland Show:** None this year

**The RHS Tulip Show:** The Glasshouse, Wisley. Tuesday 30 April to Wednesday 1 May 2013.

**Constable Burton Tulip Festival:** Saturday 4 May to Monday 6 May 2013. Constable Burton Hall, Leyburn, North Yorkshire. DL8 5LJ. The society will have a stand for all three days at Constable Burton Hall.

**The 178th Annual Tulip Show:** Saturday 11 May 2013 , Primrose Hall, Green Park Avenue, Horbury, Wakefield. WF4 6EG. Staging from 10am to 12noon. The classes will be called at 12noon, immediately followed by judging. Open to the public 2.30pm to 4.30pm.

**Tulip Heritage Day:** 12th May 2013 . Our Heritage Lottery Fund project officially closes with a day of celebration. Talks, slide shows, stalls and displays taking place throughout the day at Primrose Hall, Horbury.

This is an important weekend for the society as the Archive Project concludes with this special event. Primrose Hall has been booked for two days and to help us celebrate we have invited our Swedish members and friends, who made us so welcome on our visit to the Linnaeus Garden in June 2011.

Rooms have been reserved at a special rate for bed and breakfast at the White Hart Hotel in Harrogate. These are available for our Swedish visitors and anyone else wanting to stay over. All are welcome to be part of the same group. For anyone wishing to make a booking: The Group Name is Tulip Society and the Booking Reference is BK09531. Rooms are reserved for the weekend, 10th – 12th May 2013. Please call the hotel directly and quote these details to get the special rate of Single rooms at £60.00 per night and Double or Twin bedrooms at £90.00 per night, which includes bed, full English breakfast and VAT.

Tel 01423 505681 email: [reception@whitehart.net](mailto:reception@whitehart.net) Website: [www.whitehart.net](http://www.whitehart.net)  
A coach has been booked to take everyone to Primrose Hall on Saturday, leaving at 9.30am. After staging at Primrose Hall the coach will take participants out for lunch, returning after judging. There will be a further sightseeing excursion by coach between 4.30pm and 7pm, returning to the hall for an evening buffet, at which everyone is welcome. Further details of this will be available nearer the time. The coach will leave at 10pm for the return journey to Harrogate. Everyone is welcome at the Tulip Heritage Day on Sunday or feel free to make other arrangements.

**Annual General Meeting:** Saturday 5 October 2013. Wrenthorpe Village Hall, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield. Our speaker this year will be John Page.

Show schedules: Please contact the Secretary.

**Keukenhof** dates for next year: from 21st March to 20th May 2013.  
Further details: <http://www.keukenhof.nl/>

# Harrogate Show Report

**Teresa Clements**

2011 was the Centenary year at Harrogate Spring Flower Show so 2012 was year 101 and it must have been a nightmare for the organisers. The weather was awful, the first few days were cool and rainy and the turf rapidly turned to mud but the last day was so spectacularly wet that the show was closed early, at 3pm. It was a relief to get away early but it was a shame that people coming to collect their exhibits at 5pm found the place almost deserted – sorry Harry, had I known you were coming, I would have called and saved you a wasted journey.

The society staged a display called ‘Looking back..Moving Forward’ which won a Premier Gold Award. Putting aside all modesty, we deserved it, the stand looked fantastic! As well as the glory, the award meant prize money of £500 for the society. Thank you to everyone who worked on the display boards and to those who donated fresh flowers to enhance the presentation; especially Carole Gude who adds that touch of magic when it comes to assembling all the pieces to make an impressive stand.

For those who haven’t seen Carole at work, don’t imagine that there is a great deal of fuss and artistic temperament; the word is ‘cool.’ While I was having a sneaky look at the clock and wondering if we would be ready on time Carole was enjoying a sandwich, but she still had the carpet tiles down with an hour to spare, job done!



It was a good Tulip Show too, despite the strange Spring weather. There were 24 exhibitors and a wide range of entries giving visitors an interesting selection of varieties to look at – and to photograph. The showbench looked good, with two tables of entries but the cold air meant that Keith Eyre and his daughter Jane Green had to start judging at the species classes and work back through the schedule to give the larger flowers time to warm up and open.

Morris Robinson won the Tulip Championship of Great Britain for the second year running. Newcomers John and Jean Gibson of Kettering, already successful daffodil exhibitors, won six first prizes out of 16 classes; we’ll have to give them some serious competition next year! Exhibitors Pat and Melvyn King arrived from Colne when most of us were asleep and Frazer and Lynn Henderson came from Edinburgh to take part. Thanks to them and to everyone who overcame the weather before and at the show to put on a colourful display.

## Harrogate Spring Show Results 2012

**Class 1 3 Vases of 9 Tulips, 3 different varieties, one per vase (3)** 1. Morris Robinson (Tyne & Wear): World Peace, World's Favourite, Moonwalker 2. Pat King (Colne): Ad Rem, Banja Luka, Salmon Impression 3. Wendy Akers (Wakefield): Aria Card, Honey-moon, Ad Rem

**Class 2 9 tulips, one variety (8)** 1. R Taylor (Pontefract): Big Smile 2. Pat King : Hakuun 3. Melvyn King (Colne):

**Class 3 3 Lily flowered tulips, one variety (7)** 1. J & J Gibson (Kettering) : Aladdin's Record 2. Linda Chapman (Pickering): Red Shine 3. Teresa Clements (Harrogate): C'est chic

**Class 4 3 Parrot flowered tulips, one variety (4)** 1. J & J Gibson: Bright Parrot 2. Teresa Clements: Salmon Parrot 3. Jenny Orrell (Wakefield): Flaming Parrot

**Class 5 3 Double flowered tulips, one variety (5)** 1. Barbara Pickering (Wakefield): Sun Lover 2. Barbara Pickering: Double Maureen 3. Wendy Akers: Uncle Tom

**Class 6 3 Fringed tulips, one variety (2)** 1. J & J Gibson: Curly Sue 2. Jenny Orrell: Davenport

**Class 7 3 Yellow flowered tulips, one variety (7)** 1. R Taylor: Big Smile 2. Lynn Henderson (Edinburgh) *unknown* 3. Jenny Orrell *unknown*

**Class 8 3 White flowered tulips, one variety (2)** 1. J & J Gibson : Angel's Wish 2. Pat King : *unknown*

**Class 9 3 Pink or Red flowered tulips, one variety (17)** 1. Barbara Pickering: Tambour Maitre 2. Jean Higginson (Menston): Red Impression 3. Linda Chapman: *unknown*

**Class 10 3 tulips any other colour, one variety (13)** 1. J & J Gibson: Toyota 2. Teresa Clements : Burning Heart 3. Jyll Thomson (Leeds): *unknown*

**Class 11 5 Kaufmaniana, Greigii or Fosteriana cultivars (0)**

**Class 12 3 multi-headed tulips one variety (0)**

**Class 13 3 tulips any other colour, one variety - restricted entry (12)** 1. J & J Gibson: Gavota 2. Jean Wyatt (Barnsley): *unknown* 3. Jean Higginson : *unknown*

**Class 14 3 cut flowers from one species tulip (7)** 1. Jenny Orrell: *Tulipa orphanidea* 2. Harold Brooke (Wakefield): *unknown* 3. Teresa Clements: '*Tulipa clusiana* 'Peppermint Stick'

**Class 15 5 cut flowers from one or more species tulips (7)** 1. Harold Brooke: 2. Barbara Pickering: 3. Wendy Akers:

**Class 16 A Bowl or pan of species tulips containing not less than 5 bulbs (8)** 1. Terry Mitchell (Ossett): *Tulipa batalinii* 'Bronze Charm' 2. Harry Fogg (Doncaster): *Tulipa linifolia* 3. Teresa Clements: *Tulipa* 'Little Beauty'

A much admired exhibit on our award winning display stand.





Harrogate 2012

photos Teresa Clements





# The 177th Annual Show

## Teresa Clements

This year we had an early show in a late season, which meant many members didn't have a single English flower in bloom in time for the show. In addition, the ten freakishly hot days in March followed by the wettest April on record caused various new physiological problems for the growing tulips and a widespread outbreak of tulip fire.

It was such a relief to see Judy Baker appear with crates of English tulips and to realise that we would have a show after all. Remarkably, we had 38 exhibitors and the tulip totals were 321 Dutch, with four entries in Class 1, The John Hardman Memorial Class for a vase of 18 tulips, and 306 English Florists' tulips. For the four classes 8 – 11, there was only one entry in each and that was from Judy Baker, who won a total of 12 prizes! She certainly deserved her success, it's not simply down to the favourable growing conditions in Hitcham, there's a great deal of skill involved too. Weather permitting, let's hope more of us will be able to compete next year.

There was only one entry in Class 29, The Gina Roozen Cup, a Novice Class for three breeders, one of each colour. This was surprising as there was an unusually high proportion of breeders in the show this year, which could be due to the influx of new stock from the *Hortus Bulborum*. When staging your tulips, it is always worth considering all the options. If you can make a pair or a set of three they may be more successful than if entered singly. Ask for advice on the day if you are unsure.

Thank you to Harriet Gash, a great benefactor to the society, who opened the show and presented the prizes.

## Results

### Vase Classes

**Class 1 The John Hardman Memorial Class Vase of 18 Tulips (One variety not English Florist)** (4) 1. Mr & Mrs Gibson (Kettering): Maureen 2. Ken Bacon (Sutton-in-Ashfield): Toyota 3. Pat King (Colne): Camargue

**Class 2 Vase of 12 Tulips (Any variety or varieties not English Florist)** (8) 1. Pat King (Colne): Menton 2. Barbara Pickering (Newmillerdam): La Courtine 3. Ken Bacon (Sutton-in-Ashfield): Toyota

**Class 3 Vase of 6 Tulips (Any variety or varieties not English Florist)** (13) 1. Jean Wyatt (Wakefield): Barcelona 2. Barbara Pickering (Newmillerdam): Dordogne 3. Pat King (Colne): Menton

**Class 4 Vase of 3 Tulips (Any variety or varieties not English Florist)** (25) 1. Trevor Myers (Wilmslow): Maureen 2. John Thompson (Morley): Dreaming Maid 3. Cynthia Day (Ackworth): Roi du Midi

**Class 5 Vase of 12 English Florist Tulips** (2) 1. Trevor Myers (Wilmslow): Mixed  
2. Don Palmer (Kent): Mixed

**Class 6 Vase of 9 English Florist Tulips** (2) 1. Trevor Myers (Wilmslow): Mixed  
2. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): Lord Stanley

**Class 7 Vase of 6 English Florist Tulips** (1) 1. Trevor Myers (Wilmslow): Akers  
**Open Classes**

**Class 8 NORMAN EYRE MEMORIAL GOBLET Stand of 12 Breeders (different varieties)** (1) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Goldfinder, Sam Barlow, Airy, Lord Stanley, Albert Tear, Argyre, Music, Trefoil Guild, Gloria, Juliet, Rosie Wainwright, Adonis

**Class 9 NEEDHAM MEMORIAL CUP Stand of 12 rectified English Tulips (all dissimilar)** (1) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Doctor Hardy Fl, James Wild Fl, Royal Sovereign Fe, John Hardman Fl, Columbine Fl, Habit de Noce Fe, Adonis Fe, Mabel Fl, Juliet Fl, Julia Farnese Fe, Wakefield Fe

**Class 10 ROYLES JUBILEE CUP Stand of 9 Breeders (different varieties)** (1) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Lemuria, Goldfinder, Airy, Wendy Akers, Albert Tear, Argyre, Mabel, Rosie Wainwright, Aonius

**Class 11 LOCAL SILVER CHALLENGE CUP Stand of 9 English Florist Tulips (all dissimilar)** (1) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Goldfinder Br, Sir Joseph Paxton Fl, James Wild Fe, Trefoil Guild Br, Habit de Noce Fl, Jane Eyre Fe, Aonius Br, Akers Fl, Juliet Fe

**Class 12 SILVER CHALLENGE CUP Stand of 6 rectified English Florist Tulips** (3)  
1. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): Lemon Paxton , Lord Stanley, Bessie, Habit de Noce, Akers Fl, Wakefield 2. Margery Walkington (York): Lord Stanley, Doctor Hardy, Talisman, Not named, Julia Farnese, Wakefield 3. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Sir Joseph Paxton, Royal Sovereign, John Hardman, Adonis, Wakefield, Ruth Duthie

**Class 13 THE G.S.HUNTER MEMORIAL CUP Stand of 6 Breeders (different varieties)** (5) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Goldfinder, Lemuria, Cydonia, Albert Tear, Mabel, Aonius 2. John Gibson (Huddersfield): Lord Stanley, James Wild, Cydonia, Music, Juliet, Hubert Calvert 3. Barbara Pickering (Newmillerdam): James Wild, Goldfinder, Columbine, Music, Mabel, Juliet

**Class 14 STAGES CUP Pan of 3 stages - One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered** (3) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Columbine Br, Fl and Fe 2. Margery Walkington (York): James Wild Br, Lord Stanley Fl, Sir Joseph Paxton Fe 3. Malcolm Hainsworth (York):

**Class 15 SILVER PLATE Pan of 3 Breeders - One Bizarre - One Bybloemen - One Rose** (4) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Lemuria, James Wainwright, Aonius 2. Jenny Orrell (Wrenthorpe): James Wild, Wendy Akers, Mabel 3. Margery Walkington (York): James Wild, Music, Judy Baker

**Class 16 Three Flamed** (3) 1. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): Not named 2. Judy Baker (Hitcham): James Wild, Habit de Noce, Juliet 3. Margery Walkington (York): Lord Stanley, Unknown, Akers Flame

**Class 17 Three Feathered** (3) 1. Margery Walkington (York): Lord Stanley, Adonis, Julia Farnese 2. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Royal Sovereign, Adonis, Wakefield 3. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): Not named

**Class 18 Pair of Flamed** (8) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): James Wild, Habit de Noce 2. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): Not named 3. Margery Walkington (York): Unknown ,

Sir Joseph Paxton

**Class 19 Pair of Feathered** (3) 1. Margery Walkington (York): Sir Joseph Paxton, Julia Farnese 2. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): Adonis, Lord Frederick Cavendish 3. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Lemon Paxton, Adonis

**Class 20 One Breeder** (7) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Goldfinder 2. Barbara Pickering (Newmillerdam): Music 3. Bob Taylor (Baildon): Gloria

**Class 21 One Flamed** (10) 1. Margery Walkington (York): Lord Stanley 2. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Constable Burton 3. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): James Wild

**Class 22 One Feathered** (6) 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Royal Sovereign 2. Malcolm Hainsworth (York): Lord Frederick Cavendish 3. Mike Higgins (Harrogate): Akers

**Class 23 SEEDLING CUP One Seedling Breeder or Rectified raised by the exhibitor** (0) 1. Not awarded

**Class 24 Three Seedling Breeders (one from each colour class)** (0) 1. Not awarded  
**Novice Classes**

**Class 25 Pan of Three One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered** (3) 1. Trevor Myers (Wilmslow): Solis Br, Akers Fl, Wakefield Fe 2. Jean Richardson (Leeds): Sam Barlow Br, Lord Stanley Fl, Lord Stanley Fe 3. Don Palmer (Kent): Talisman Br, Wakefield Fl, Lord Stanley Fe

**Class 26 One Breeder** (18) 1. Jean Richardson (Leeds): Albert Tear 2. Roy Mitchell (Wakefield): Music 3. Hazel Hesketh (Barnsley): Music

**Class 27 One Flamed** (20) 1. Margaret Mitchell (Wrenthorpe): Columbine 2. Don Palmer (Kent): Lord Stanley 3. Jean Richardson (Leeds): Akers

**Class 28 One Feathered** (8) 1. Sally Nuttall (Wakefield): Wakefield 2. Jyll Thompson (Morley): Julia Farnese 3. Roy Mitchell (Wakefield): Lord Stanley

**Class 29 THE GINA ROOZEN CUP Pan of 3 Breeders - One Bizarre - One Bybloemen - One Rose** (1) 1. Jean Richardson (Leeds): Sam Barlow, Music, Juliet

#### **Extra Open Classes**

**Class 30 One Breeder** (8) 1. Jean Richardson (Leeds): Music 2. John Gibson (Huddersfield): Juliet 3. Lesley Franks (Liversedge): Mabel

**Class 31 One Flamed** (10) 1. Trevor Myers (Wilmslow): James Wild 2. Jenny Orrell (Wrenthorpe): Akers 3. John Thompson (Morley): Wakefield

**Class 32 One Feathered** (3) 1. Jean Richardson (Leeds): Agbrigg 2. Trevor Myers (Wilmslow): Lord Frederick Cavendish 3. John Gibson (Huddersfield): Utopia

**Class 33 Pan of Three One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered** (1) 1. Not awarded 3. Jenny Orrell (Wrenthorpe): Mabel Br, Akers Fl, Mabel Fe

#### **Best Bloom Awards**

**Peter Emmett Trophy Best Exhibit Classes 2 - 4** Jean Wyatt - Barcelona

**Cochrane of Cults Vase Best Bloom Classes 20 - 22** Judy Baker - Judy Baker

**The Dudmaston Plate Best Bloom in Novice Classes 25-29** Margaret Mitchell - Talisman (Fl)

**Albert Tear Memorial Trophy Overall Premier Bloom** Judy Baker - James Wild (Fl)

**Best Breeder in Show** Judy Baker - Goldfinder

**Best Flame in Show** Judy Baker - James Wild

**Best Feather in Show** Margery Walkington - Julia Farnese

**Stan Knowles Trophy Best Bloom in Extra Open Classes 30-33** Trevor Myers - James Wild (Fl)

Right -  
John Snocken and Judy  
Baker judging the Novice  
Classes.



Below -  
Judging the Open Classes,  
John Thompson watches  
Jane Green.



Right -  
Bob Bingham multi-tasking.





Malcolm Hainsworth introducing Harriet Gash, who opened our 177th Annual Show



Above: Pat King, winner of the F R Hunter cup.



Left: Trevor Myers, winner of the S Knowles cup.



Left: Jean Richardson, winner of the Brook Silver Challenge cup (the Novice cup) and the Gina Roozen cup.

# RHS Tulip Day

Wendy Akers

In 2011 the decision was taken by the RHS Daffodil and Tulip Committee to have a Tulip Day in 2012 which would follow the same format as the previous one held eight years earlier. That had included a day of speakers and associated displays related to tulips. One of the displays was a stand, 'The Genus Tulipa', put up by the WNETS. The date was settled; it would take place in conjunction with the Great London Plant Fair on April 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 in the Lawrence and Lindley Halls at Westminster. James was asked to contact speakers and was delighted to report that Anna Pavord, Christine Skelmersdale and Richard Wilford, Collections Manager at Kew Gardens, had all agreed to speak. The fourth speaker and chair of the day would be James. There would be a Tulip Competition held in the hall with the Daffodil Show.

We decided to attempt another stand, this time 'Florists' Tulips', and looked around for members who would like to be involved. The evolution of this ambitious project and how it came to fruition are described in the article which follows. As the weeks went by we became aware of a worrying lack of any publicity about the Tulip Day. This was flagged up by several people who made the point that if people didn't know about the day of talks then they could hardly be expected to buy tickets. Since the RHS has an excellent online site for publicising events and booking tickets this seemed like an easily corrected oversight and we voiced our concerns to anyone and everyone at the RHS but absolutely nothing happened.

When we got into March we were told that due to the lack of interest in the Tulip Day (i.e. no tickets had been sold) the event was likely to be cancelled. This rather 'Alice in Wonderland' state of affairs was baffling. The Great London Plant Fair had been online for months but had no mention of the Tulip Day. Clearly something had gone wrong but identifying exactly what proved impossible to determine.

Tulip Day did go ahead and our stand was taken down to London on the Monday to be erected ready for judging and public viewing



RHS judges at our stand

early on Tuesday.

There was an additional small display next to ours set up by *de Jager*, with a varied selection of colourful tulips. We were delighted to be awarded a Silver Gilt medal for the display. Visitors who came, chatted and read the information over the two days were fascinated.

The weather was pleasant in London but the strange conditions of the preceding months diminished entries for the tulip competition. Barbara Pickering flew the flag for WNETS though, and won 1st in Class III with a vase of three Lily-flowered tulips, Moonlight Girl, and 3rd in Class I with a vase of six Red Impression.

The attendance for the day of speakers on Wednesday proved to be as disappointing as we all feared. When Anna Pavord began to speak I turned round and saw the handful of attendees and my heart sank. The speakers were wonderful; Anna somehow managed to be her enthusiastic best, Christine gave the most inspiring talk I have ever heard her give and Richard nailed the species tulips and their mountain haunts. When James rounded off the day in his inimitable style we knew we had been privileged to hear world class speakers at their best.



I hope that whatever had gone wrong within the RHS, who should have publicised the day, is identified and lessons learned for the future. At least the WNETS had the satisfaction of knowing that they had done their bit.

## **Making a Stand**

**Wendy Akers**

When we decided to enter a display stand, *Florists' Tulips*, for the RHS Tulip Day in April of this year, we looked around for members who would like to be involved. Late 2011 was an extremely busy period for the WNETS with two large ongoing projects. The archive was well under way and involved a lot of people but had the potential to provide new material for the stand. The new book was also being intensely worked on but, finally, a group of volunteers came together in January 2012 and made a start. We divided up into pairs each of whom would concentrate on a particular aspect of the society; history, art, notable events, shows past and future and so on. We chose a theme, "Looking back.. Moving forward" coined by Monique Martin for one of her English Florists' tulip paintings, which allowed us a broad spectrum to work on.

We quickly realised that while there was plenty of material, the focus was going to be on getting the right amount for each subject, not too much, not too little, which is easier said than done. Our working venue was the dining room at 70 Wrenthorpe Lane because the dimensions of the table allowed us to work on the display boards. Ultimately these would be set up in a large hall in Westminster, the Lindley Hall, attached to the RHS Lindley Library in Vincent Square, and open over two days. Also in this hall would be the Alpine Garden competition and the Daffodil Show, both sizeable displays attracting crowds of people who had possibly never heard of the tulips. Our four-sided piece had to work in such a way as to be attractive wherever you started looking at it and, hopefully, be interesting enough to make you want to read the other three sides.

I was the chief provider of food and drinks, so spent a lot of time looking through the hole between the kitchen and dining room and was struck from the beginning by the creative energy, enthusiasm and sheer enjoyment that went on. Studying the archive has emphasised the fact that the old florists were mainly men; I had experienced this for myself when I joined the Daffodil Society Northern Group which met at Leeds Paxton Society's hall. I realised that the few ladies attending were simply there to make the tea for the men at a nod from the Chairman. He nodded at me a few times when I didn't leave the room and never seemed to take me seriously after that. It's simply not like that now, thank goodness, and our societies are all the better for it. Margot Murray is our design guru, Teresa Clements keeps us well organised, Linda Chapman has taken to researching with a passion, Carole Gude and Jyll Thompson were full of ideas



and the whole team came up with a display that we were proud of.

On Easter Monday the bustle in the Lindley Hall throughout the day was exciting. The professional RHS staff had all the staging and tables ready, so that exhibitors and displays could go ahead as soon as they arrived. Beautifully grown alpines in pots, masses of cut daffodils in boxes and buckets started to appear and the stand began to take shape. Next morning we dusted off specks of moss which had been deposited on the black cloth table-covering and waited for the judging team to arrive. There is something peculiarly nerve wracking about watching something you have worked on so intensely being discussed by complete strangers. Eventually, the award they had decided on arrived, plus the scale of points which was helpful. We were delighted to have a Silver Gilt medal. The lack of plant material had counted against us. There was no opportunity to tell them that the English florists' tulips were six weeks away from flowering at that point, but we were delighted anyway. Just over a fortnight later, when more plant material and a few early florists' tulips were available, we had the further pleasure of setting up the slightly revamped display at Harrogate Spring Show and achieving a Premier Gold Award.



The RHS show award.

Photo Teresa Clements

# R H S Three Counties Show at Malvern

## Richard Spiers

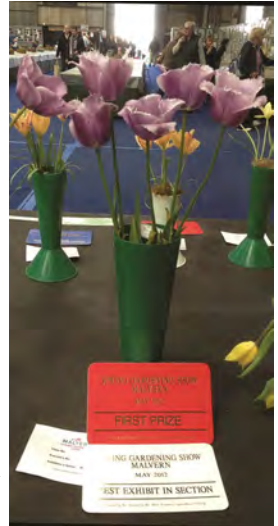
Despite the poor weather we have had here in the Midlands there was a decent turnout of tulips on the show bench at Malvern (May 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> 2012) Staging proved difficult to say the least in the pouring rain on the Wednesday afternoon. Wearing a hooded waterproof and carrying the blooms barely 10 yards from car to staging hall was risking a season's preparation for the final Spring show of the year. However, the job was accomplished in good time and the rain ceased ...eventually! The Malvern Hills could not be seen due to the low cloud and there was much muttering amongst the competitors who had travelled from far afield to stage their blooms.

The tulip section has classes for:- one specimen bloom; one vase of 5 stems parrot; one vase of 5 stems double; one vase of 5 stems other than previous; one vase of 5 stems miniature; one container of any species of bulb. In the huge floral marquee, Bloms had a spectacular, colourful display of their tulips. Miniature Bulbs and Avon Bulbs were also displaying many different species and a few new varieties were noted for future reference. Malvern is a 4 day show; the photos therefore show that the blooms are past their best by the Sunday afternoon.



I was pleased to win the single bloom category with 'Maureen' but to also win the best bulb exhibit in show with 5 'Blue Heron' (fringed) felt brilliant! My colleague from the Midland tulip society, Derek Smith, came second in the single bloom category with 'Yellow Flight' and won the miniature section with 5 blooms of 'Bright Gem'. The show overall was a great success with the weather improving vastly over the week end to finish in bright sunshine!

'Bright Gem'



'Blue Heron'

photos Richard Spiers



Derek Smith and Richard Spiers at the Malvern Show.



Tulips at Malvern Show.

Photographs from Richard Spiers

# Stewart Park

Teresa Clements

This year the society was invited to put on a stand at the Stewart Park Open Day in Middlesborough. We don't have a special connection to the park or the area but agreed to go as we are part way through a project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and this was an event to mark the end of the Stewart Park HLF project. We were given two tables in a marqu e of stands for local groups including gardeners, environmentalists, local crafts and bakers. As the day went by a steady flow of local people passed by the stall and a few stopped to take a look. Two likely lads had a good sniff at the tulips and asked 'What's in the bottles then – is it beer?' They thought they had discovered an unusual cultivational tip and seemed quite disappointed to find it was just water.



Young visitors at Stewart Park

photo Teresa Clements

# Tulips at the Greyhound Public House

**Mike Higgins**

Only a stone's throw away from the bloodiest battle fought on British soil (Towton Moor) stands this unassuming drinkers' hostelry, in the quiet village of Saxton. A sunny Sunday in May (20<sup>th</sup>) saw a much more peaceful gathering at this watering hole. Late flowering was a general problem this year and a second chance to show tulips was welcomed by many members; no prizes, only good company and a large and varied show of blooms. The weather was good too and so was the beer. Members responded from near and far.

Exhibiting outside has the big advantage of excellent light to enable detailed and objective comparison by novice and expert alike. An informal setting allowed the novice to learn at first hand from experienced members. Blooms could be freely picked up for close comparison and criticism. A most valuable lesson was a comparison between the breeders 'James Wild' and 'Sulphur'. Exhibits clearly showed the differences between the two. Unfortunately, this is not so easy when dealing with their broken forms. In my case, it is now clear that what has been successfully shown as a 'James Wild' breeder is in fact a 'Sulphur'. This means that I possess both and am better placed for showing bizarre breeders in future!



'James Wild'

'Sulphur'

'Lord Stanley'

Teresa's photograph of these two breeders accompanied by a 'Lord Stanley' breeder is a good illustration of the subject. Again of great benefit to the novice was the chance to see examples of faults in our tulips. It was very gratifying that so many members took the trouble to bring tulips which failed to make the annual show with no other purpose than enjoyment. The landlord of the Greyhound deserves a big thank you for allowing his inn to be taken over for the

lunchtime opening. We hope that his regulars appreciated what was going on and that his trade did not suffer. Tulipomania came to an area where once the white and red rose fought for dominance. On this occasion a much more convivial atmosphere prevailed with tulips taking centre stage. Perhaps we should do it all again in future?



Above: photo Trevor Myers.  
Left: Keith Eyre, Jane Green and Mike Higgins.



Below left: Tulips at Saxton  
Photos Mike Chapman.

Below right: Malcolm Hainsworth  
indoors at The Greyhound Inn.  
Photo Teresa Clements.



# The Day after the Show

Jean Higginson

It was a perfect May morning; warm enough to take home-made refreshments outside on the terrace and listen to the bird song. There was that special quality of light, sparkling through fresh new leaves. Beneath the greenery an elegant piece of ecclesiastical stone-masonry looked perfectly at home beside a fountain. You might expect this scene to have involved a trip to the airport or at least, this year, a flight of fancy but not so. Mobile phones seem to have replaced postcards but, had one sent such a thing, the postmark would have indicated the Wakefield area.



Barbara and Jeff Pickering generously opened their garden on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May so



Photos Jeff Pickering.

that members could share in its delights as well as having a second chance to closely inspect English Florists' tulips from the previous day's show. Assembled en masse, the beer bottles took on an amber glow worthy of designer glassware and the blooms opened their petals wide, aflame in the sun.



John Wainwright gave a master-class on what makes and what mars a good tulip. This was a fine opportunity for the novice to ask questions and the intermediate grower to validate what he or she knew, or thought they knew! Because the ‘hands-on’ period is so fleeting, those who do not have Florists’ Tulip knowledge encoded in their DNA can take a long time to learn.

The next treat was a blissful meander around Barbara’s garden. Where to begin? Beside the house was a spacious gravel and flagged area with groups of plants rising from the ground. Specimens in attractive containers added even more interest, the occasional pot left empty to speak for itself. There was a glorious conservatory, full of treasures. Just outside the main garden lay the allotment. I haven’t been on an allotment since I was knee-high to my



grandfather and it was too early in the year to admire edibles but I’m pretty sure every manner of crop would be happy there. What I could see was that here was the source of Barbara’s many prize-winning tulips, neatly lined out and labelled.

Back in the main garden, a hedge-enclosed hideaway was home to plants which enjoy woodland conditions. Some of the space had previously been dominated by a large tree which had grown too big for comfort. The trunk



remained and had been skilfully carved into a beautiful shape so that it might enjoy a second life as a living sculpture.

I doubt if any two people would have agreed on what they liked best - there was just so much to look at - but my personal favourite was a quite formal space where a path was flanked by two symmetrical beds bursting with colour. Tulips, of course, were stars of the show. Sleek, trim-waisted ‘West Point’ stood tall as a golden supermodel, contrasting with luscious deep crimson goblets of ‘Jan Reus’. Dancing through the mix, ‘Ballerina’ picked up the colours of



both companions. Choosing colours is one thing; by getting height, shape and spacing perfect Barbara took design to another level.

Of course none of this was achieved without hard labour and thoughtful planning. A photo album gave some idea of just how much work had been put in, with materials brought in by the truck-load, yet all appeared settled and mature. It was hard to believe that the garden had ever been subjected to upheaval. Horticultural scribes are fond of categorising outside spaces as ‘cottage’, ‘courtyard’, ‘contemporary’ and so forth but that would be impossible here. Barbara and Jeff’s garden is everything with the exception of low maintenance! There is structure, architecture and formality; equally it is pretty, productive and the garden of a florist and plantswoman. Let’s just say it was gorgeous!

## Cherry Ripe, Cherry Ripe Visit to Eythrope 17<sup>th</sup> July 2012

### Carole Gude

Anyone who, like me, has coveted one of Sue Dickinson’s gorgeous raffle prizes of fruits and vegetables leapt at the chance to visit Eythrope, the source of these delights, which is the private residence of Lord Rothschild where Sue is Head Gardener.

An early start was needed to arrive by 12 noon and enjoy our packed lunches in a beautiful greenhouse with trained peach trees all around. Our first treat of the day was a delicious glass of apple juice, pressed on the premises from single varieties with evocative names such as ‘*Belle de Boskoop*’. Already we were beginning to realise just how beautifully arranged and immaculate everything here is. Suitably refreshed, we returned our baggage to our cars, and the tour proper began at 1pm, led by Sue, accompanied by her colleague Jonathan Cooke.



Photo Linda Chapman

We crossed a grassy area towards the house, which is surrounded by a newly established wildflower meadow, parkland and overlooks a Victorian style parterre with imposing wrought ironwork beyond. Close up to the house the planting has been designed by Mary Keen. Well established climbers including the curious *Dicentra scandens* clothe the walls, and a wide variety of lower shrubs, perennials and tender potted plants surround intimate places to sit and



enjoy the views. One particular paved area was fitted up with table, chairs, and in a recess a wrought iron arrangement in the form of a tree with holders for potted plants, giving the appearance of a large bonsai. A pair of statues either side complete the picture: just the place for a spot of breakfast or lunch in the sunshine, heady with the scent of *Heliotrope* ‘Chatsworth’ and *Nicotiana suaveolens*. A beautiful enclosed porch provides a more sheltered place from which to enjoy the parkland with trees given the space to reach their full potential. There are some fun elements here too: a carved stone big cat peers out from the foliage kept at bay by a tiny five barred gate, and a pack of sculpted hounds tear across the lawn – you almost look for the huntsmen in hot pursuit. A game of Guess the Animal ensues as we come upon a group of topiaries set in gravel.



On the opposite side of the drive from the house, a lodge has been made into a charming guest house. Along one side, only two plants are used, giving a modern prairie effect, and a flight of shallow steps leads to a generous decking overlooking a lake. Jaunty Venetian poles add a touch of colour and guests can

relax on ultramodern furniture and watch a bird building its nest in a striking sculpture set in the water. Returning to the drive, planting on the other side is mainly in restful whites.

Entrance to the walled vegetable garden was through a pergola of trained pear trees, tall and wide enough for several people to walk together in comfort. This is a serious place. Fruit, vegetables and flowers are grown to very exacting standards, supplying all members of the family with their requirements.

Vulnerable crops were protected by cages made from stout posts with gamekeepers' netting stretched across and supported by brickies' line; form

follows function. But then the corners were decorated with small clay pots, making the whole thing both practical and beautiful. As we proceeded past ranks of artichokes, squashes, caulis, herbs and all manner of things, I spied a display house tucked into the wall, filled with scented geraniums and was taken with a lovely feathery variety *Geranium filicifolium*. I could imagine this



space as an auricula theatre earlier in the year. For those of us who grow vegetables, there was an exchange of ideas on cultivation and varieties: production of restaurant quality food in such quantities must be a very highly tuned business. Some distance away, a gardener up a ladder was pruning fruit trees trained against the wall – he seemed to have a long way to go!

In a sheltered corner as far from the house as I think it could be, we came to a fabulous pot garden. It was filled to bursting with colour and scent and a perfect place to bask in the afternoon sun. Many plants were familiar, but all were well chosen varieties, rewarding closer inspection. I was particularly taken with the unfamiliar *Campanula vidalii*, with delicate shell pink flowers, which I later discovered to be a tender evergreen sub-shrub. Anyone who grows a few



Photo Jeff Pickering

plants in pots knows that keeping them in such good condition throughout the season, and in such quantity, is a real *tour de force*.

On through the flower cutting garden, next to the potting sheds, with a bench flanked by a large terracotta pot filled with mixed planting in white, lemon and grey – surely a nod to The Old Rectory, where Sue was previously Head Gardener, which was famous for such massive pots. Then a

succession of greenhouses, some set low in the ground, each with its own perfectly tended crop; vines, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, aubergines plus cuttings and seedlings. I doubt if any plants are bought in if they can be raised on site, both as a matter of pride and because of the numbers involved. The edge of a circular pool provided some of us with a minute's rest before returning to the cherry house, where the space not normally occupied by picnickers was to be explained.

In order that Lord Rothschild can offer his guests dessert cherries out of season, potted trees are brought in and forced into early flower. The pots are smaller than you might imagine for a tree at least 30 years old- but they have to be portable, and the care they receive is extraordinary. A thick collar of straw and manure is placed around the edge of the pot, making a well around the trunk to enable efficient watering. Sue produced a boxwood hammer on a long handle, used to knock the pots to establish the amount of water required, dependent on the ringing tone. Imagine the stress of all this, and ensuring pollination, and waiting for the crop to ripen. Sue Dickinson is a strong woman. To replicate this process in our own gardens we only need to acquire a very old cotton reel (usually made of boxwood, apparently), fix it on a cane, and away we go!



Sue Dickinson with hammer in right hand and pollinator in left. Photo Teresa Clements

A double border in rich reds and purples led us back to the working parts of the house. I gather these are all Sue's own work and a chance to show off her artistry with plants. The difficult start to the season meant that we were a bit early to see the borders at their peak, but potted out dark aeoniums, old varieties of red pelargoniums and luscious foliage were already making their mark. An arch through into the yard was decorated with pieces of poetry by Alice Oswald written on roof slates, and hung on the walls – too much to take in all the poetry as well - but at least one member of the society has purchased the book to read the poems at leisure.

With our time almost over we headed back to our cars to be met with a cart full of the large-leaved basil plants which had been much admired in the greenhouse; one each to take home. Thanks and goodbyes were said and we just

had time to visit the nearby Waddesdon Manor garden centre, a delight in itself with its vintage furniture, teashop and plants artfully mixed together.

Reflecting on the day, I cannot remember visiting any garden, small backyard, stately home or any in between that was more carefully and beautifully tended, a tribute to Sue and all the other gardeners, each with their own area of responsibility. All parts were interesting and instructive in their own way, with the decorative and the productive blended together. The beating heart of it all, though, was undoubtedly the walled garden, with its immaculate ranks of fruit, veg and flowers. I doubt if anyone has much time to sit and admire, with so much to do!

And what did I covet? That seating area, of course! I can just see it in my back garden. Come to think of it, it would BE my back garden. I could manage without the statues – maybe the slates with a few well-chosen words would do just fine. In fact I will definitely have a go at those.

*Thanks to Barbara Pickering and other members for their contributions to this article*



Poetry in the garden. Photo TC



Beside the Cherry House.

Photo Linda Chapman

# A Lecture in York

## Marguerite Murray

On the evening of Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May, several members of the Tulip Society attended an open lecture presented jointly by the Yorkshire Philosophical Society and the Yorkshire Gardens Trust. This took place in the Tempest Anderson Hall of the recently refurbished Yorkshire Museum in the Museum Gardens, York.

The lecture was given by Dr. Eric T. Haskell, Professor of French Studies and Interdisciplinary Humanities Director, Clark Humanities Museum, Scripps College, Claremont University Centre, California. The focus of his talk was the period in the 1630's when there was an "astronomical rise in the vogue for tulips in Holland."

Entitled: "Tulipomania: Banking with bulbs during the golden age of Dutch culture", the lecture covered the history of the market crash in the Dutch economy due to over-speculation in tulip futures. Well illustrated with slides of botanical drawings and prints from the period, and contrasted with the continuing success of bulb and flower production in present-day Holland, Dr. Haskell drew on historical and anecdotal evidence to submit a collection of stories relating to the Tulip. A bonus was a further series of illustrations from an historical catalogue residing in an American University collection. Contemporary slides included Keukenhof in its spring perfection, scenes of Dutch tulip production fields and a glimpse of the vast commercial enterprise of the Tulip Market near Schiphol airport.

Dr. Haskell's animated delivery seemed much appreciated by his audience, but at Question Time, James Akers was called upon to explain the process of "breaking" in tulips and how the virus affects the coloration of the petals. A few late flowers, breeders and rectified examples provided by James Akers and Teresa Clements, were enormously helpful as visual aids and in demonstrating the appeal of the English Florists' Tulip to the uninitiated among the audience.

Penelope Dawson-Brown of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, who introduced the Speaker, has recently contributed to and supplied photographs for a publication about the St. Nicholas garden in Richmond, North Yorkshire, which featured in the WNETS Newsletter of 2007. The garden is now under restoration and development and will open once more to the public.



# A Day at the Seaside

Wendy Akers

Willison of Whitby. The raiser of Sir Joseph Paxton and Juliet. Not much more than these bare bones were known. James and I made a visit to Whitby about twenty years ago, poked about for hours in the cemetery near the abbey, where the older graves looked as though they'd been eaten by the salt spray, ate some fish and chips and called it a day. What a pathetic effort. Then, as you all know, Linda Chapman of Pickering took up the challenge, found the family, found the shop, found the nursery, found the grave and wrote it all up in last year's Newsletter. To say that Linda was gripped by the exercise would be an understatement. She was in the grip of an obsession which isn't over yet. She added to the story with a short talk at this year's AGM, which posed the question, since their lives overlapped and since Willison called one of his best tulip raisings Sir Joseph Paxton, did they know each other, did they meet? I feel her next step is to look at the Paxton archive, is it at Chatsworth? Or somewhere else? Sadly, the family of Willison preserved all his papers and correspondence, only to lose them in a fire. The keen loss is still evident in his great, great nephew's voice when he mentions it.

So you may picture my pleasure on being invited to accompany Teresa Clements, Malcolm Hainsworth and James on a visit to meet the current Willison of Whitby, Richard. We were to be introduced by Linda who was eager for us to meet Richard and to share her finds. The date was set for the 5 July, which you might confidently assume would be the height of summer. Not this summer, this was the period just before the Great Yorkshire Show, which was cancelled after

the first day due to torrential downpours. The morning dawned to black skies, wind and heavy rain. I imagined us looking round Whitby in a semi horizontal position, lashed by rain. As we drove to York to collect Teresa and Malcolm the deluge continued. Just as we approached Pickering the skies cleared, roads dried and the sun shone. Was it a trick, a blip, the sun shining on the righteous? Never mind, Linda's lunch was delicious and Whitby sparkled in warm sunshine.

We parked near the harbour and walked the short distance to the charming Georgian street where Willison's greengrocers still



James Akers outside Willison's shop.

sells fruit, vegetables and flowers. Richard greeted us warmly and we repaired round the corner for a cup of tea and a chat in a cafe. It quickly became obvious that the most usual occupation in Whitby was “going to sea” not raising tulips. I could have listened to Richard’s family history all day, and Teresa obviously had the same thought, just as I got my notebook out to try to capture the flavour of what Richard was telling us Teresa remembered she had the Society’s voice recorder. We were intending to visit “New Gardens” so had to tear ourselves away, but what a charming raconteur.

A short drive to the nursery and as we turned off the road there was an old sign on which it was just possible to read New Gardens. At the end of the track was what seemed like a tiny hamlet of a farm and a few cottages then finally the house and the amazing wall covered with climbing roses and seemingly stretching away to infinity. The remains of the vinery were still there but tantalizingly little else, in my diary I noted that “it looked unloved but at least it’s still there”. It’s quite high on the cliffs and would be horrendously exposed if it were not for the high wall. As we strolled around I suddenly had that ephemeral “sense of place” that sometimes comes. I could imagine the bustling nursery with its extensive rose beds, the Botanical Garden, the orchard, another time. Now it looked a little forlorn. In the field at the other side of the path was a fine bull with his cows and their calves, a twenty first century use of the land but I would have loved to see it at tulip time in the mid-eighteenth century.



Photos James Akers



The final part of our visit was to be the cemetery where William was buried. This was an impressive well tended and large graveyard. I noticed that a significant number of gravestones had a carved rope around their edge and wondered if this was to signify that the family member had a connection with the sea. We stood looking at William’s headstone and I thought what a wonderful thing Linda had achieved\*. She had persevered in her desire to find the man, William Willison, and succeeded. Along the way she has acquired a taste for research which I think she will never lose, and the society has a great deal to thank her for. I had enjoyed every minute of the day and as we travelled home through



Eskdale marvelled at the endless beauty of Yorkshire. As we left York we ran into lowering black clouds which were the forerunner of driving rain back in Wrenthorpe. Our sunny day in Whitby almost seemed like a dream, until I remembered the crab and pair of kippers in the boot of the car.

\*See 'Whitby's William Willison', Newsletter 23, 2011, pp 36 to 43.



Richard Willison with members of the society. Photo Teresa Clements

## Wild tulips in Yorkshire

Teresa Clements

I had a call on 27<sup>th</sup> March to say the *Tulipa sylvestris* near York were in flower so I called a friend and we went to see them the next day. In the bright spring sunshine we could just make out the little yellow heads of the tulips above the grass. As we drew closer and sought out the flowers we could see many more of them than we had noticed at first, a beautiful sight.



To me the epithet '*sylvestris*' suggested the tulip was likely be found in growing in woodland, in sylvan glades, but these were growing well in grass on a damp riverbank. A quick check online put me straight, '*sylvestris*' simply means 'found wild' or 'wild, not cultivated.' These delicate little flowers certainly lived up to their name; they are protected within a site of special scientific interest and seemed to be doing well with no more assistance than that.

Photo Teresa Clements

## **My Own Little Stained Glass Window**

**Marguerite Murray**

If you were a school child in the mid twentieth century, you might remember the classroom windowsill in early spring, with hyacinth vases topped by little black conical hats. I always marvelled at the bulb, producing its roots and then a shoot under the cap, which would be removed when the time was right to observe first the bud and then the magnificent flower. If the glasses were coloured, it seemed like a chaotic kind of rainbow. In those days hyacinths were usually either pink or blue, but the glass vases could be purple, yellow, green, turquoise or ruby.

I have a small collection of hyacinth vases which I still like using, but I hadn't realised there was anything more serious at play than an instinctive nature-table mentality. Then I was handed a new book, 'The Curious History of the Bulb Vase', by Patricia Coccoris. James Akers had been asked to review it for 'The Plantsman', and, as is the usual practice, the copy was then his to keep. He has very kindly donated it to the Tulip Society Library.

The entire history of growing bulbs in water is investigated from the earliest days, not long after tulips and hyacinths were first imported into Europe from the near East. Tulips do not respond quite so well to this method – they need more time and patience - but hyacinths and many other bulbs are successful. Many of us have tried to grow an acorn or an avocado stone in a glass, but how about an onion or a garlic bulb?

For the prized hyacinth however, no glass could be too ornate and some wonderful designs were produced. For crocus, smaller vases were manufactured as well as the familiar pots which allow shoots to sprout out of the sides through strategically placed apertures. There were also some terracotta vases for hyacinths.

Patricia Coccoris has used archives, pattern books and advertisements in trade journals to research the many companies which produced hyacinth vases and has illustrated her book with exciting examples from private collections. Vases might be hand-blown or moulded and were sometimes decorated with enamels or enhanced with extra glass frills or ribs. The Victorian period produced varied and imaginative designs in iridescent or opaline glass, engraved in double layers, textured or painted with gold.

Attempts were made to incorporate or affix a support to prevent taller glasses from tipping over if the flowers became top-heavy. A more squat shape was designed by George Piercy Tye (1810-1879) of Birmingham. This proved popular as it gave greater stability and could also include a neat supporting wire. He also designed a “triple” vase, a tripod shape which could hold three bulbs.

Most European countries produced bulb vases as did the USA. A Bovril or Mason jar can also be put to use. The aim is that the roots be visible within the water, and if the glass is coloured, so much the better. It’s your own little stained-glass window.

There is a renewal of interest today in both the historic vases and the older varieties of hyacinth, rescued or re-introduced in wider colour ranges. Some commercial growers are once again offering double-flowered hyacinths for sale. I have realised that my own small collection is not extraordinary, but it does have its place in bulb-vase history. Examples may be seen in The Wedgwood Museum, Stoke-on –Trent and Broadfield House Glass Museum, Kingswinford, Staffs. Dartington Crystal Ltd continues to market a hyacinth vase and an acorn vase.



Some of Margot’s collection of hyacinth vases. Photos Teresa Clements

# How Lucky Can You Get?

**Mike Higgins**

Antiquarian books have been a passion ever since I could read but perhaps I was a late starter! Books on natural history and in particular books relating to the great plant collectors are the main interest. Unfortunately price is often a major obstacle especially when hand coloured illustrations are present. My first introduction to James Maddock's important book 'The Florist's Directory; or a Treatise on the Culture of Flowers; to which is added a Supplementary Dissertation on Soil and Manures, &c.' was when John Snocken presented his talk on Florists' Flowers at the AGM a few years ago. First printed in 1792 (it was reprinted many times) it became the main book on the subject which includes florist's tulips. It is illustrated with five hand coloured plates one of which is a bybloemen feathered tulip.

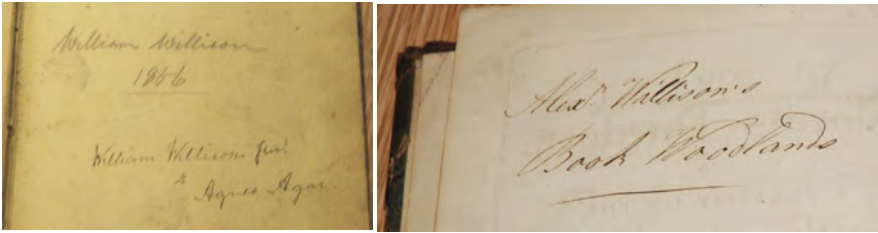
The search started to find an affordable copy. A good second edition copy was located very quickly on eBay but the price was high and the dealer refused a lower offer. Tennants Auctioneers of Leyburn have dedicated book sales two or three times a year, send out catalogues and now put the full list on their web site. A trip to Leyburn is always a pleasure and a book sale is the perfect incentive. My route goes through Kirkby Malzeard where the one-time vicar, Rev. H. D. Horner, preached on the plight of the old florists; through Masham; past Jervaulx Abbey and on to Leyburn. Constable Burton is only a short detour away.

The sale in question was on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2011 and there was a first edition of the target book on offer. Lot 167 included the main book and one other, which was lucky as often a single lot might include a box full when only one is of interest. The book was in tight condition and for its age, clean. The dealers did not push the price too high and it was duly bought.

It was a week or two later when the penny dropped as to the specific history of this copy. Ownership signatures were seen before bidding started but their significance was not immediately apparent. Printed in 1792 its first claimed ownership is 'Alexr. Willison's Book Woodlands'. Woodlands probably refers to a residence in the Whitby area. This signature is in black ink with one or two annotations in black ink in the text. It is also signed in pencil, 'William Willison 1856' and 'William Willison Jnr. to Agnes Agar'.\* This is undoubtedly the Willison family that Linda Chapman has so ably written about (see Newsletter 23, 2011, pp36-43) and was the subject of her presentation



Photo Mike Chapman



Photos Mike Chapman

at this year's AGM. William Willison 1856 is the breeder of tulips Juliet and Sir Joseph Paxton. It is my opinion that Alexr. Willison was his father and the original nurseryman.

When I showed Linda the book and the signatures she visibly trembled with excitement. It is fortunate that the book found a very appreciative home and did not go to a dealer to be further dispersed and lost to us without its true value being understood.

How lucky that Linda Chapman's research and the finding of this book coincided to add to the history of our Society.

*\* Agnes Agar was William's niece and Alexander's granddaughter.*



Photo Teresa Clements

## Rain and Shine

### Teresa Clements

Well, how was it for you this year? In general it has been a very poor year for growing tulips, both April and June were the wettest on record and May was cool and overcast, but I think that what caused most problems was the unexpectedly hot weather in March. It is hard to remember now, but we had a long period of warm dry weather that briefly made it feel like winter was over. The tulips were confused too; the early flowering varieties that already had buds above the ground, rushed into bloom before the stems had time to elongate.

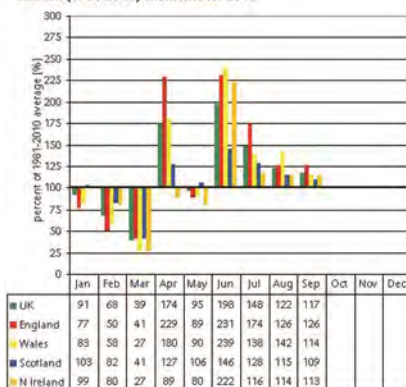
There were no entries in Class 11 at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show for 5 *Kaufmaniana*, *Greigii* or *Fosteriana* cultivars as all of them were long over by 26<sup>th</sup> April 2012. Several people reported having strange little tulip flowers far earlier than expected and with the flowers at or just above ground level.

For me, the effect on my English tulips was disastrous. I grow the breeders on a friend's allotment at the top of a very cold hill. The hot March weather came when the buds were just showing and caused them to start to mature. The petals expanded a little and they were tipped with colour but it was far too early and when the cold wind and the endless rain returned the tender petals were browned and crisped at the edges. The stems grew a little longer in April but there were no flowers ready for the Annual Show on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

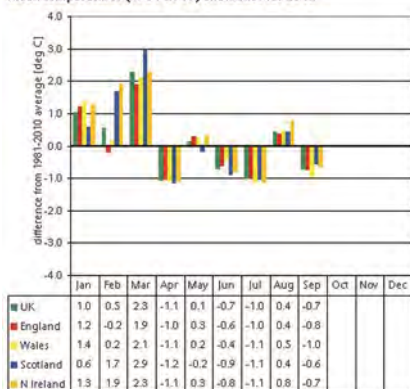
I took a few flowers to the Greyhound Inn on 20<sup>th</sup> May and still had a handful for the York Philosophical Society talk on 29<sup>th</sup> May, but none of them were much good. The petals had puckered edges and pointed tops and some buds were clearly going to amount to nothing so I snapped them off and discarded them. It was a very disappointing result from bulbs that had produced Best Breeder in previous years. Met office data confirms this year's exceptional conditions.

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/anomalygraphs/>

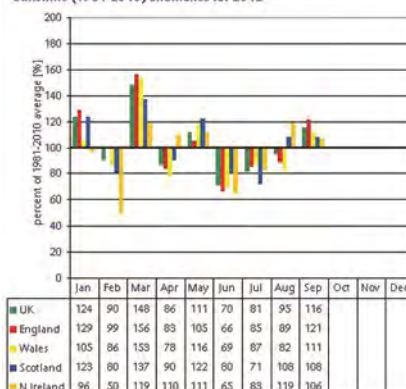
Rainfall (1981-2010) anomalies for 2012



Mean temperatures (1981-2010) anomalies for 2012



Sunshine (1981-2010) anomalies for 2012



## 18. Asirda Lâle [The Tulip in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century] by Ekrem Hakki Ayverdi

Frazer Henderson

In the 1950s, Ekrem Ayverdi (1899-1984), a noted architectural historian and devotee of Ottoman culture, chanced on an album of tulip paintings in his native Istanbul.

The album, of quarto size, with a contemporary goat-skin and a gilded cover with a bossed, sun motif, contains 49 representations of tulips, one multi-flowered narcissus (a jonquil) and a single, poorly executed red-flowered cyclamen. The first four pictures are mounted on decorative collage pages with the rest on unadorned paper. Forty-four of the tulips are named, of which seven are repeated. The names are in Arabic, Farsi or Turkish, written in Arabic script.

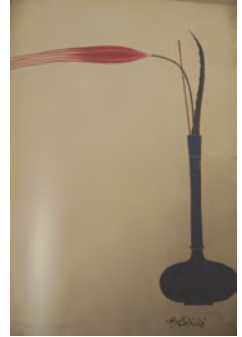
So taken was Ayverdi with the beauty of the album that he resolved to find out more and sought to establish when and by whom the work was produced. By making comparisons with other works and investigating written information, the quality and type of paper and paints he was able to establish that the work was of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Further research with reference to known dates by which various tulips and their cultivars had been named enabled him to establish that the work had been produced between 1726 and 1730. Ayverdi noted that the *Defter-i Lâlezâr-i Istanbul*, the register which gives over one thousand names of tulips grown between 1681-1726, includes 31 of the 37 named in the album, one appearing first in 1725/26. Ayverdi's research led him to conclude that the album dates from *circa* 1725, when the appreciation of tulips in Istanbul was at its height.

With a small selection of the pictures together with an introductory essay from Ayverdi about his investigations, a pamphlet was published by Kemal Press in the 1950s. It is likely that a book with the full range of illustrations from the album would have been too expensive for an independent publisher to produce. In later years Ayverdi disposed of the album in order to fund the publication of some works on architecture. Through various transactions the album made its way to auction in 1998 when it was sold for £111,500. A few years prior to its sale at auction a number of the pictures were reproduced in a book by the Turkish botanist Dr Turban Baytop entitled *Istanbul Lâlesi* [The Tulip of Istanbul].

In 2006 the original Ayverdi essay together with all the album pictures was reproduced and published by Kubbealti Neşriyâti. And just as Ayverdi had done so some 60 years earlier I chanced on this facsimile in an Istanbul bookstore and was similarly captivated and beguiled by the exquisite paintings.

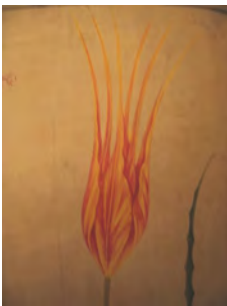
The tulips are portrayed in a stylised form reminiscent of *Tulipa acuminata*. The leaves are shown, in most representations, as being undulate. The flowers, delicately shaded in soft pink, carmine red, purple, orange, yellow and cream in whole or streaked colours, conform to the criteria required of the tulip in the *Mizan'ı Ezhar* (The Habit of Flowers), the authoritative treatise on the subject of the cultivation of flowers written in 1703 by Mehmed Lâlezari.

Though the tulips are shown without adornment, the scarlet flowered *Nize-i-rummâni* ('the pomegranate – coloured lance') is presented in an exquisite, cobalt-blue glass vase. Ayverdi mentions that this tulip was the most expensive and was sold in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century for a price of seven and a half gold Turkish lira. He also mentions that the *Nâib-I Krali* ('the regent') was exchanged for 2 carts of oats, 4 carts of barley, 4 fat oxen, 12 fat sheep, 8 fat pigs, 2 barrels of wine, 4 barrels of beer, 2 barrels of butter, the equivalent of 50 kilos of cheese, one bedstead, a suit of clothing and a silver vase – and we thought that the apogee of tulipomania was in the Netherlands!



As Ayvedi says in his introductory paragraph “...*this graceful blossom [of the tulip] became the symbol of an entire epoch, and gave its name to an era. The Occidental Turks loved all flowers with unrestrained exuberance. Within the fellowship of Islamic civilization, it was solely the Turks who adopted the flower as an element, creating a distinctive and personal universe of ornamentation in architecture and in tiles. But the passion for tulips so far surpassed the affection for other flowers that it became a world in its own right.*”

That affection is clear in the wonderful and evocative names given to many of the tulips in the album: ‘the augments of joy’, ‘the heart-breaker’ and ‘the bringer of joy’. But it is not only emotions that are evoked, senses managed to be affected, for it is interesting to note that one of the tulips, a carmine red with a white ground, is given the Arabic name, which translates as ‘scented’. Very few tulips merit this description today.



If you should be in Istanbul, I thoroughly recommend searching for a copy of the book: it is more likely to be found in a book shop rather than the book bazaar. There are a few English language copies available but they are hard to track down. The Turkish version will give equal pleasure. I’m sure that a few hours on the internet may prove fruitful in securing a good second-hand copy and whilst the price for such a copy may seem relatively high it won’t be anywhere near that charged at auction for the original album.  
T. ‘Ibrahim Bey’



# The Search for *Tulipa Cretica*

Linda Dooley

The town of Kritsa lies 11km inland from Agios Nikolaos on the eastern coast of Crete – the largest Greek island. About one kilometre short of Kritsa stands the church Panagia Kera, a small Byzantine structure, its interior walls illustrating biblical events. The church itself has been extensively conserved, the outside is rendered and unremarkable, but inside are the earthy coloured frescoes which should not be missed.

From here the road rises into Kritsa, a town built on the foothills of the Dikti mountains facing the sea. Renowned for its traditional textiles, elderly ladies sit crocheting elaborate tablecloths outside their respective shops. ‘Just look!’ they call. Beware..! Stop, and you will be hooked in and lucky to escape without a purchase.

All along the road bright rugs and textiles are strung along the walls, but nearing the top of the hill a small road runs off to the left. No fabrics adorn these walls - it’s quiet and easily ignored. Take this road out of town, continue up and up, now and then levelling out, and admire spectacular sea and mountain views. Ascend for about 16km from Kritsa and you will encounter the cool, fertile Katharo plain, uninhabited, save for one incongruous house in the French style and a very welcome taverna.

The residents of Kritsa have the right to farm the land on the plain and no others are allowed to use it, which has brought about feuds. The plain is approximately 1.5kms wide and 6kms long at an altitude of 1150m above sea level, situated to the north of the Dikti mountain range. The area was a lake during the Pleistocene period (2.5m to 12,000 yrs ago). Recently the bones of Cretan dwarf hippos have been unearthed.

It was here that Eva and I were taken in May 2011 by Steve Lenton. He was our guide, an Englishman who had decided his project whilst in Crete would be to identify, photograph and catalogue the wild flowers of the island and to search for rare species. He knew the whereabouts of *Tulipa Cretica* and was going to show us.

Steve is an explorer and had found many unusual plants, sometimes having prior knowledge of their whereabouts or else just wandering. On one occasion he was scaling a sheer rock face on a quest for some rare species when before him he saw the shadow of a very large bird’s wingspan – a vulture, no doubt hoping for an early lunch. These birds are often seen high in the sky circling on the thermals.

We walked along the deserted, rough roads and pathways of the plain for around 40 minutes, past farmed land, wild areas and wild flowers (all identified

for us) over rocks and boulders, through small copses and even passing pools deep in the rocks. Eventually we came to an open area where there was no road and scrambled over scrubland until we came to a slope where there were only sheep tracks. Here were the tulips, not just one hiding in the undergrowth but around half a dozen - their pink heads and pointed petals open and flourishing – what a welcome sight! They grew on a north facing slope on a chamomile bed.

While Eva photographed and Steve searched I lay down on the chamomile in the warm May sunshine, gazed up at the blue sky and at the mountains opposite, the tulips beside me – heaven!

Originally the intention was to find *Tulipa bakeri* as mentioned in Anna Pavord’s book ‘The Tulip’. This she found in Omalós in Western Crete, but unfortunately our search there did not bear fruit. Richard Wilford from Kew advised that *T. cretica*, which flowered at the same time was easier to find, so we embarked on that search. The other wild tulip of Crete is *T. saxatilis*, which has been catalogued by Steve Lenton.



The habitat of *T. cretica*

*T. cretica*

Photos Eva Stewart



*T. saxatilis* Photo Steve Lenton

# *Tulipa cypria*

**Ian Instone**

I visited North Cyprus this year to see the orchids but coincidentally it was also the perfect time for *T. cypria*, which is endemic to Cyprus and also on the danger list for a variety of reasons. There is a tulip festival each year in the village where they grow and they have also erected giant metal tulips on the boundary of the village. We were taken on a guided tour of the site. Here are some pictures which may interest you.

*This email was received by the Secretary. It came from a friend of one of our members. Ed.*



Photos Ian Instone

*Here is another interesting picture which was sent to the Secretary. Ed.*



This box, perhaps 16th century, on which the tulip is inlaid was (I believe but cannot be sure) used to hold the keys of the walled city of Dubrovnik. I thought it very beautiful and I am delighted to be able to share it with you.

Penelope Dawson-Brown.



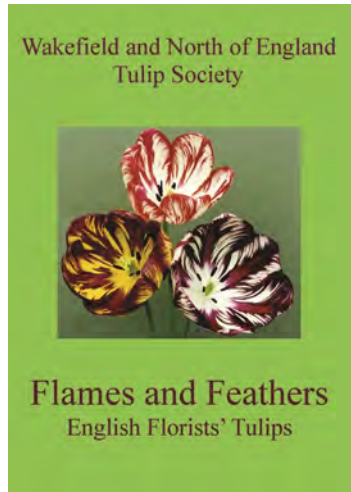
This Bassano bowl in an antique shop in Venice was for sale for €2,000, which was rather more than we could afford! Teresa and Jason Clements.



Seen in an Edinburgh lighting shop window by Frazer Henderson. Maintenance free bulbs perhaps?

## Bookshelf

### Flames and Feathers



Published in April, this is the new book from the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society. It is a comprehensive guide for all those interested in growing and showing English Florists' Tulips and is a significant update on the society's previous publications. The book includes many new colour photographs to aid identification and also has sections on the history of the society, science and art. An attractive new feature is the timeline that runs through the whole book outlining notable people and events in the society's history.

Paperback 128pp 16.5 x 22.5 cm

To order a copy, please send a cheque for £10, payable to The Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society with your name and postal address to Teresa Clements, Priory Lodge, Leeds Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG2 8AA. For overseas addresses, the cost is £12 or €15 to European countries and £15 or \$25 to the USA.

ISBN: ISBN 978-0-95-323922-1

## Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip Yearbook 2012 (RHS)



This year, there is a full page review by Anna Pavord of the society's new book, see page 75.

The publication also contains the second part of a report by John Page entitled 'Tulips of the Tien Shan'. John will be the speaker at the society's 2013 AGM.

There is a report of the Harrogate Spring Flower Show. Unfortunately, the report of the society's Annual Show was omitted this year, for which the RHS has apologised.

If you wish to obtain a copy of this yearbook, please send a cheque for £10 (made payable to RHS Publications) to John Gibson, 14, Waverley Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire. NN15 6NT. Do not forget to include your own name and address when making your request.

ISBN 978-1-907057-33-5

**The ISBN numbers** for other publications mentioned in this newsletter are:

**The Tulip Anthology:** photographs by Ron Van Dongen ISBN 978-0-8118-7708-4

**The Curious History of the Bulb Vase,** Patricia Coccoris ISBN 978-0-9568096-1-2

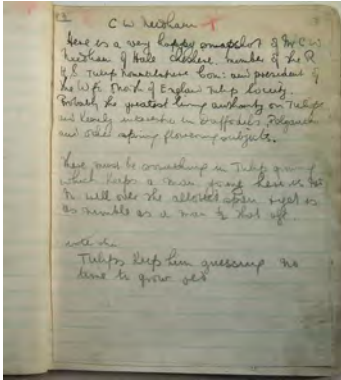
**18. Asirda Lâle [The Tulip in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century],** Ekrem Hakki Ayverdi ISBN 9756444282

## Archive Project Update

A number of the society's officers have been interested in looking back at the society's history. In the 1920s the Hon Sec Irvin Hewitt did his own research and at our AGM this year James Akers gave a talk about a slide show given by Irving Hewitt in the 1930s, which makes us aware of our place in a succession of people who act as custodians of the society.

Hewitt's talk was called 'The Romance of the Tulip' and comprised 61 glass lantern slides that are now held by the Wakefield Museum. After the AGM, Robin Spencer volunteered to attempt to match up the images from the slides

with the notes Hewitt had scribbled in an old notebook, which is part of our archive. It can't have been an easy task as the slides were in no particular order and the notes are similarly scattered throughout the book. A red cross indicated 'change slide'. Sometime later, I went to Wakefield Museum to look at the slides and record the few notes written directly on the edges of some of them. Then, finally, James Akers was able to reconstruct the original talk. Ideally this talk will be available as part of the new archive website and there is also the possibility that we can present it at Tulip Heritage Day.



Hewitt's Notebook.



Left, the glass slide.



C W Needham in his seedling bed.

Right, the digital image.

Images courtesy of Wakefield Museum.

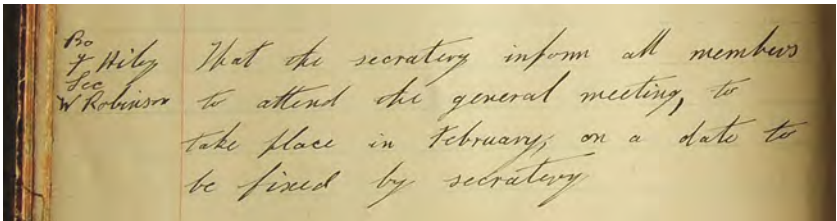
Other talks at the AGM focused on the Minute Books. Jean Higginson talked about the 1907 minute book. Tim Lever was unable to be at the AGM, so Jason Clements delivered his talk on the 1929 minute book. Earlier this year Tim transcribed the whole of this book, a magnificent feat. Thank you Tim! Alas he may never recover! These are his thoughts..

‘When asked to transcribe the Minute Book I was at first keen to help and then daunted by the scale of the undertaking.

To start with, the old handwriting was difficult to read, and sometimes impossible. Anyone who has tried will appreciate that magnifying a hieroglyph only makes it bigger, not easier to decipher.

Then there is the individual spelling encountered, that my computer would not accept until I had switched off the bit that corrects spelling, provides upper case automatically and sets margins. Once that was done I was able to type what I saw without too much trouble.

Some of the spellings have so corroded my own spelling, never my strongest suit, that for evermore Secretary will be SecrAtery, and Xmas will be Exmus every year.’



‘I got to know the officers of the Society, who seemed to get off the page and look over my shoulder as I typed and scrutinised the script. Those officers loom large in the Minutes. In general the Chairman and Secretary remained in post for long years at a time, like tulip cultivars they last for many a year. There were few new names to get to know for decades.

The lists of cultivars shown were of interest too. Some went on for the duration of the Minute Book, some only appeared once or twice only to disappear from history. I was fascinated by some of their names. Often they were quite correctly named after the better half of the household, others reflect a patriotism long gone such as” Dreadnought” and “Industry”.

There are names that recur year after year in the Minutes for their knowledge, generosity, dedication, or expertise. An example is the family Robinson, who between them fulfilled most of the offices of the Society for decades. Mr Beddows and Mr Tear also feature for their endless help to the Society during difficult years.



There is far more in the Minutes than the formal entries, and indeed, one becomes aware of so very much written between the lines in addition. To this day we present the Needham Cup annually. C.W.Needham was President of the Society, and a very fine grower too. In about 1930 the Minutes record “he brought blooms (to the Show) the like of which had not been seen in Wakefield.” When he died in 1936, it signalled the end of the only other Tulip Society, the Royal National Tulip Society. Sir Daniel Hall organised funds from that Society to purchase us a cup in Needham’s memory and also became our next President.’



The Robinson family of Wakefield

Well known figures from the society’s history were featured at the AGM, Linda Chapman talked about William Willison, who raised two tulip cultivars, which are still shown today. Teresa Clements spoke about Albert Tear, Wendy Akers’ talk was about Hubert Calvert and Malcolm Hainsworth remembered Victor Roozen.

Albert Tear was born in 1898 and until his death in 1975 was a great supporter of the tulip society. This is what was said of him in the minute book.

‘Mr Tear passed away recently aged 76 years, of these he gave 41 years service to the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society. Over the years he has given thousands of English Tulip bulbs away to try to foster new members to enter into the spirit of showing and keeping the society alive. At one time he had

over 10,000 bulbs of about 16 varieties, these have over the last few years been distributed to new members all over the UK in hopes that the English tulip will survive. Mr Tear's name will not be forgotten for it is on most of our trophies and with the new A Tear Memorial cup his name will live on.'



Albert Tear on his allotment in 1968

Having heard about the life of Hubert Calvert as a modern day florist from Wendy Akers, we gained further insight into his time as Secretary from transcripts of his many letters painstakingly transcribed by Jyll and John Thompson of Morley. Here is an extract from one dated 25th March 1965 to Mr Ellis Walker:

'There seems no chance of the society packing up yet a bit, although we keep losing our old members. Mr Midgely died 2 years ago & Teddy Robinson died last month. His brother Reg is still living but he hasn't shown for a year or two. They are the last links with the old florists of the past apart from yourself & I trust you will be with us for a long time yet.  
Yours sincerely, H.V. Calvert.'

The transcripts show that 1966 was a particularly busy year for him as



Secretary. He wrote many letters to publicise the society's Annual Show with the aim of attracting new members. This letter was sent to the librarian, Mr Willox, at Drury Lane, Wakefield.

'I enclose Schedule for our 130th Annual Show, will you please display it for us in the library entrance.

We are badly needing new members & it would help us considerably if you could display the enclosed membership forms.'

Hubert was interested in other florists' flowers, and raised gold-laced polyanthus as well as tulips. His tulip cultivar, Agbrigg, is one of our best feathered bybloemens.

Rose breeder 'Hubert Calvert' was raised by Jim Akers around 1980 but did not flower until after Jim's death. It was named by his son, James Akers. Hubert Calvert died in 1997, aged 88 years.

Hubert Calvert



Agbrigg feather



Hubert Calvert breeder

Our Patron, Victor Roozen, was the subject of a talk by Malcolm Hainsworth. They are shown together here in Victor's later years.

Victor supported the society by encouraging members to raise new breeder cultivars and by establishing a link with the Hortus Bulborum in Holland. The society benefits from the connection to this day by being able to buy back breeder bulbs to supplement our stock. We also have the Gina Roozen Cup, which Victor donated to the society in memory of his daughter.

A collection of short pieces from the sound archive rounded off the day at the AGM. Keith Orrell and Mike Young have made recordings at events and compiled interviews and comments from members.

Following some highly individual accounts of cultivation methods, there was much amusement as we listened to the sound of competitors' footsteps approaching the showbench, class by class, in time-honoured fashion. The echoing footfall caused great amusement.

The archive project is far from over. The displays featuring archive material were recognised with awards. A series of talks has been arranged for gardening clubs and the ones already given have been received with interest.

Students from St Aidan's School in Harrogate are working on transcribing the minute books; Jyll and John Thompson are transcribing more of the carbon copies of letters; the sound archive recordings are ongoing; the archive website continues to develop and we are hoping to make a return visit to the Borthwick Institute in York.

Preparation for Tulip Heritage Day is already underway, make sure you have the date in your diary, don't miss it!



## If

(With apologies to Rudyard Kipling.)

If you can keep your bulbs when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming bugs and rain.  
If you can trust your labels when others doubt you  
And take well-meant advice without it being in vain.  
If you can work and wait in hope for many years  
To hybridise and raise new cultivars from seed,  
Then cast aside failed offspring without tears  
And be prepared to follow where others lead.

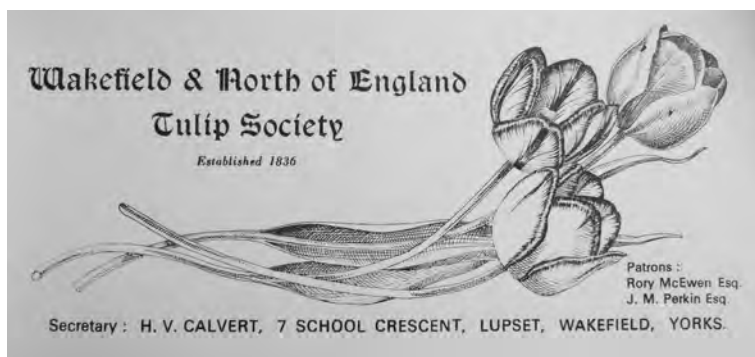
If you can plant your bulbs in perfect rows  
And fend off hail and rodents, slugs and birds,  
Then bring them into bloom in time to show  
And pick with book in hand, abide by every word.  
Snap each with short stem so all the leaves remain,  
Choose only those you need, the best preferred,  
Keep in good order; mark each one with its name,  
Breeders before breaks so no virus is transferred.

If your blooms will travel safe by car or bus  
And stand up proud in bottles, clean and neat,  
If you can stage them on the bench without a fuss  
And not throw in the towel when you are beat.  
If you enjoy a lunch of pie and mucky fat,  
And win or lose, can raise your head and smile.  
Then choose the blooms you want and after that  
Keep a note for next year's order on the file.

If you come to every show and AGM  
And pay your subs and bring a raffle prize.  
If you make new members welcome and then  
Stop at the sales table for essential buys.  
If you laugh at all the Chairman's jokes and stifle snores,  
And help to clear the hall when meetings end,  
You'll be a credit to t'Society, but what's more  
You'll be a proper modern florist too my friend!

Anon.

**Summer 2013: a major exhibition of the work of**  
**Rory McEwen**  
**The Colours of Reality**  
will be held at  
**the Shirley Sherwood Gallery,**  
**Kew Gardens.**



**The engraving in this letterhead is from notepaper printed in the 1960s and was designed and made for the society by Rory McEwen.**

