

WAKEFIELD & NORTH OF ENGLAND

# TULIP SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

NO 32 AUTUMN 2020



Established 1836

# WAKEFIELD & NORTH OF ENGLAND TULIP SOCIETY

## OFFICERS 2020-2021

**PRESIDENT** The Duke of Devonshire KCVO, CBE, DL

**PATRONS** K N Eyre, J L Akers MBE

**HON LIFE MEMBERS** A Turner, P Turner

**VICE PRESIDENTS** Peter Emmett, Trevor Mills,

Timothy Clark, Kate Swift, Jane Green, Anna Pavord,

Sarah Akers, Anne Smales, Carole Gude,

Barbara Pickering, Malcolm Hainsworth, John Wainwright,

John Gibson, Jan Pennings, Judy Baker, Harriet Gash.

**CHAIR** Christopher Gill

**HON SECRETARY** Sarah Brooks

email: [secretary@tulipsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@tulipsociety.co.uk)

**HON TREASURER** Jason Clements

**COMMITTEE** J L Akers, S Brooks, J Clements, T Clements, K N Eyre,

J Gibson, C Gill, J Green, C Gude, M Hainsworth, N Tyers, J Wainwright.

**EDITOR** Christine Brooks

email: [editor@tulipsociety.co.uk](mailto:editor@tulipsociety.co.uk)

**Subscription Information:** see inside back cover

**SOCIETY WEBSITE:** [www.tulipsociety.co.uk](http://www.tulipsociety.co.uk)

**ARCHIVE WEBSITE:** [wnets.org.uk](http://wnets.org.uk)

**Front cover:** Beautiful picture of *T. Wakefield Flame* grown by Emilie Wellfelt. It won 1st in Class 30 – One Flame - and also won a Glass Goblet for Best Flame in Show, at the 185th Show. Photo: Niklas Wellfelt

**Back cover:** A ceramic bowl, 11 inches in diameter, decorated with tulips, probably Hollinshead and Kirkham, Tunstall, the accompanying sale note saying 'Keeling and Walker (1946)'. Photo: Frazer Henderson

## Subscription payments made easy....

A reminder that the annual subscription remains, as it has for many years, £5 - remarkably good value, we hope you agree! (There is an additional one-off joining fee of £5 for new members.) The drawback is that it's easy to forget to pay if you are unable to attend the Annual Show in May, which is the traditional due date. If you haven't done so already, why not set up a Standing Order with your bank to make an annual payment? May 1st each year is a good date for this. You can then relax in the knowledge that your membership will always be current, but you can cancel at any time should you change your mind.

This also works for the Society as it saves paper work and postage - as does payment by online bank transfer if that is your preference.

In either case, these are the Society's bank details, and don't forget to include your name as reference:

**Bank:** Yorkshire Bank (Northgate, Wakefield),

**Sort Code:** 05-09-64, **Account Number:** 12273858,

**Account Name:** Wakefield & North of England Tulip Society

We are sometimes asked if we can take payment by Direct Debit; alas, the answer is no.

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## Call for submissions

The annual WNETS newsletter is dependent on the members of the Society for content. If you have a tulip-related article - whether about history, cultivation, WNETS, other tulip societies, or art - that you would like to share, please send it to [editor@tulipsociety.co.uk](mailto:editor@tulipsociety.co.uk) for consideration for next year's issue. We request that all photos be high resolution (at least 300 dpi) to ensure they reproduce correctly in the magazine.

The deadline for contributions is 18th October 2021, shortly after the AGM.

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# Editorial

## Christine Brooks

Sadly, the most significant feature of this year's Newsletter is the absence of a Show in Wakefield. Even two World Wars did not prevent Shows taking place. This year would also have been special, the plan being to hold the show at Outwood where, I understand, the first Wakefield Florists' Society meeting took place (though not with Tulips) on 27th April 1807.

We do not know of any consequences for the growing and showing of English Florists' Tulips during the 'Spanish Flu' pandemic of January 1918 to December 1920 because the records are thin for this period. So, it would seem that 2020 is likely to be the first time in the Society's history that the Wakefield Show has been cancelled.

Traditionally, the day that many growers use for planting their tulips is the day of the Lord Mayor's Show held in London for centuries. This year, November 14th would have been the 692nd but it too had to be cancelled; the last time this happened was in 1852 for the mourning period for the Duke of Wellington.

However, in spite of this year's cancellations, members grew their Tulips which have continued to flower and multiply, ensuring that every cultivar is perpetuated, one of the Society's aims.

Our Swedish members are to be congratulated for their staging of an English Florists' Tulip show which members of the Committee have designated as the 185th. An account of this can be found later in this Newsletter (see page 16).

On another positive note, my delving into the Archives for old Newsletters has confirmed just how successful the Society has become in recent years, based on the levels of participation. In 1989, with about 100 members, only 15 were showing their Tulips, at a time when 'over the history of the Society the number of showing members has rarely exceeded 20'. Currently, 40-50 show their flowers and who knows how many more will do so in 2021.

My thanks go to all the contributors for providing the usual mix of erudition and humour, and to Sophia Conner for her technical and creative skills used in the production of this Newsletter.

# Chairman's Report

## Christopher Gill

I find myself writing this report on the day we should have held the AGM. It is a time of year I always look forward to. It is a chance to meet up with exhibitors and friends, spending time over a common interest. It rounds the year off nicely whilst inspiring you to think about planting your bulbs.

This year has been unprecedented. COVID-19 has been really disruptive and it is by no means over at the time of writing. Here in Calderdale we are experiencing enhanced restrictions and they will potentially run until March next year. We have had to learn new terminology - social distancing, new normal, and support bubble. Oh for things to return to normal.

After a discussion at the last AGM about show venues and the fact that we have outgrown Primrose Hall - what a fantastic position to be in - a thriving Society, the committee has managed to find a new and larger venue in Outwood. It was going to make the showing and socializing a far more pleasurable experience.

Unfortunately, our shows did not happen, so you will have to wait until next year to experience the space on offer. We are a Society that is based on showing. It would be lovely, now that we have found a large venue, that we could fill it. If you are new to showing and feel it might be a little daunting, don't worry, I'll guarantee you help, even if you only have one bloom to show.

We discussed many options to make the 185th Show happen under the COVID-19 restrictions. The most realistic was possibly to have a postal show. Lack of time and a reduced postal service meant this wasn't feasible. Not all was lost. We did have an English Florist Tulip Show that members were welcome to attend. This was held in Sweden and live-streamed over the Internet. How technology has advanced. A big thank you to Ulf Hansson, Lennart Muller and friends who held a limited show which mirrored some of the classes we hold at the Annual Show. I spent an enjoyable afternoon participating online. It was a first for me to be able to talk and get answers in real time from my house to theirs in Sweden.

Social media has helped in these difficult times. Facebook has been a real success in lockdown; a big thank you to Sarah and James for agreeing to be administrators. I appreciate it is not for everyone, but I urge you to give it a go. It's a private group for the Society. The pictures have been fantastic. There have been some interesting questions and expert answers. Hopefully it will grow to be bigger and better.

With no shows for me to attend this year I have had a wonderful opportunity to let my tulips grow and mature without cutting, giving me time to reflect and appreciate the beautiful blooms over many weeks.

Remain positive, stay safe and enjoy your tulips.

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## Secretary's Report

Sarah Brooks

I introduced myself as the new Secretary last year safe in the knowledge that I had 2020 mapped out for me in the form of former Secretary Teresa Clements' "Secretary's Year", an instructive calendar of what to do, when to do it, and who to contact, so that the business of the Society could carry on as smoothly as possible. Provisional bookings for the shows and the AGM were duly confirmed, dates of other horticultural events were publicised, and options for the garden visit were discussed.

With Covid-19 nothing more than a story of another disease from an obscure part of China which, a little unnervingly, had slunk through the ski resorts of Europe, I drafted my first letter to members in March and commented that 'the Committee will review the situation as it develops and keep you up to date with any changes to events'.

Well, it didn't quite go to plan did it? As Spring progressed news filtered through of the demise of other horticultural shows and lost opportunities to meet up with friends and acquaintances to display florists' flowers. Then, unbelievably, the WNETS shows were cancelled, followed by the garden visit and finally, having endured seven months of uncertainty, our own AGM.

But despite what didn't happen in the UK, a show did go ahead in Halmstad in Sweden. English Florists' Tulips were displayed in brown beer bottles, and prizes were awarded for the best breeder, best flamed and best feathered tulip during an afternoon of friendly competition. I, like many others, watched the show as it was live-streamed on Facebook and momentarily forgot about the restrictions in place at home.

It was great to see English Florists' Tulips being displayed, admired and discussed by the Swedish members of the Society, accompanied by afternoon tea with crust-less cucumber sandwiches, sausage rolls and cake which struck a lovely balance between gentle fun and authenticity. As a reflection of the success of the show it was designated as the 185th Annual Show and again our congratulations and thanks must go to the organisers of the event and its competitors.

In the UK tulips still grew and flowered and were welcomed with anticipation in what was one of the best Spring seasons for growing. The work of the Secretary continued with new members joining throughout the year, responses to enquiries (my apologies if any have gone astray!) with those from the public tending to coincide with the profile of the tulip in the media either at planting or flowering time, and copies of the Society's books being posted out as far afield as Australia.

Additional letters to members conveyed the sad news of each cancelled event, but hopefully also provided a focus on good practices for growing and selecting English Florists' Tulips and controlling the influence of Tulip Breaking Virus on tulip stocks. The irony of the current situation here is all too obvious - the effect of one virus enriches our lives by providing a pleasant distraction from the everyday and the effect of another has had quite the opposite effect.

Several members sent photographs of their tulips for display at the AGM - now displayed here in the newsletter (see page 8) - and others posted pictures on the Society's new Facebook page. Both of these opportunities were initiated by the Committee as a means of providing an alternative way of displaying tulips and to support members to share their experiences during the lockdown. The use of social media as a tool to bring people together has proved to be a benefit to the Society and over 80 members have joined the new Facebook page. At the height of the restrictions it enabled members to display their tulips and to ask questions and receive advice from experienced growers, and it continues to be a forum for discussion.

The Committee met once in early March before the lockdown and later, via Zoom, in September, when it was apparent that meeting as a group was just not feasible but at least it allowed us to discuss Society business more effectively. Meeting together to show English Florists' Tulips and discuss Society business will always be the primary objective, but the use of social media and the Internet has allowed some interaction within the Society and is there to be taken advantage of.

I still have the "Secretary's Year" pinned up in front of me - a few more notes and reminders added - and I want to thank the members of the Committee, particularly Teresa Clements, for their practical support, advice and contributions over the past year. With the hiatus of the past eight months in many ways I think I have been let off lightly!

Planting time is imminent and it is the start of a new tulip-growing year. The dates for the 2021 shows have been pencilled-in with the prospect of using our new Annual Show venue at Outwood Memorial Hall next May. Despite the news around us there is much to look forward to and I hope you will enjoy the next tulip year too.

# Treasurer's Report

## Statement of Accounts for Year ending 31st July 2020

Receipts		
	2020	2019
<b>Subs &amp; Donations</b>		
Subscriptions	953.61	1,071.42
Donations	60.00	560.00
Garden Visits surplus	0.00	15.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,013.61</b>	<b>1,646.69</b>
<b>Sales</b>		
AGM	116.00	67.00
Postal	142.00	270.03
Main Show	0.00	288.20
Other Events	7.50	226.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>265.50</b>	<b>851.58</b>
<b>Bulbs</b>		
Dutch bulbs	448.30	558.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>448.30</b>	<b>558.55</b>
<b>AGM and Shows</b>		
Raffle	149.00	375.00
Refreshments	204.53	863.44
Plant Sales	71.50	269.50
Vegetable Sales	20.00	24.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>445.03</b>	<b>1,532.04</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,172.44</b>	<b>4,588.86</b>

Statement of Assets	2020	2019	Change
<b>Cash Assets</b>			
Current Account	7,497.58	8,315.43	-817.85
Cash in Hand	59.52	47.88	11.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,557.10</b>	<b>8,363.31</b>	<b>-806.21</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>			
Sales table stock	499.22	540.68	-41.46
Office Equipment	28.27	82.26	-53.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>527.49</b>	<b>622.94</b>	<b>-95.45</b>

Payments		
	2020	2019
<b>Administration</b>		
Newsletter (print and post)	1,196.60	745.86
Insurance	240.00	240.00
Stationery, office kit, software	38.89	65.80
Postage	125.92	212.20
Internet site services	273.67	390.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,875.08</b>	<b>1,654.50</b>
<b>Purchases</b>		
WNETS Flyers & Banners	25.77	354.90
Sales table	82.19	117.35
Other	32.00	32.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>139.96</b>	<b>504.25</b>
<b>Bulbs</b>		
Annual distribution	171.35	139.00
Dutch bulbs for AGM	240.00	160.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>411.35</b>	<b>299.00</b>
<b>AGM and Shows</b>		
Hall hire, Table Hire	63.00	367.30
Food, etc	152.26	591.17
Trophies: Engraving & Purchase	326.02	158.50
Speakers' expenses	0.00	150.00
Other	10.98	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>552.26</b>	<b>1,266.97</b>
<b>Operating Surplus/Deficit</b>		
	<b>-806.21</b>	<b>864.14</b>
	<b>2,172.44</b>	<b>4,588.86</b>

### Treasurer's notes:

1. The Society's auditor (Mr R.Turpin) reports:

*I can confirm that I have examined the receipts, payments & statement of assets relating to the year ending 31st Aug 2020 and have found them to be in order.*

2. Unsurprisingly, the society accounts are in deficit this year. This is largely explained by the cancellation of the Annual Show where we normally make a substantial surplus.

3. However, the deficit is more than made up for by last year's surplus, and our bank balance remains healthy.

4. Subscriptions have also been somewhat down due to members being unable to pay in person. More positively, this has encouraged some to set up standing orders or pay by bank transfer, which is easier for both the treasurer and for members.

5. Last year's newsletter was bigger than the year before, so printing costs increased, but the weight also increased to just over the 100g threshold meaning that postal costs increased substantially.



# The Gallery

In the knowledge that the 2020 Wakefield shows would have to be cancelled, the Committee began to discuss how to continue to promote the growing and showing of tulips - which is one of the main aims of the Society - in the face of a new viral threat. Options were discussed for variations on the theme of a competitive show - a postal show, a virtual show, a photographic show, etc., but they seemed inadequate for a number of reasons, in addition to the difficult logistics.

Instead, members were invited to send photographs of their tulips to be displayed in a Gallery at the AGM in October, not for competition but as a focal point for discussion at a time when, it was hoped, things would be back to normal. Best laid plans were again abandoned, but now the opportunity is here to publish in print some of the photographs received.

'Exhibits' could comprise tulips grown in situ or cut for display with the option of specifying which of the Annual Show schedule classes the flowers might have been entered for. None of the tulips in the photographs which follow have been 'judged' (the consensus being that it is not possible to judge the quality of a tulip from a photograph) or are held up as good or poor examples of their kind - that is for discussion - but we are grateful to their growers for putting on a good show!

Unless otherwise stated, photos are by the growers of the blooms.



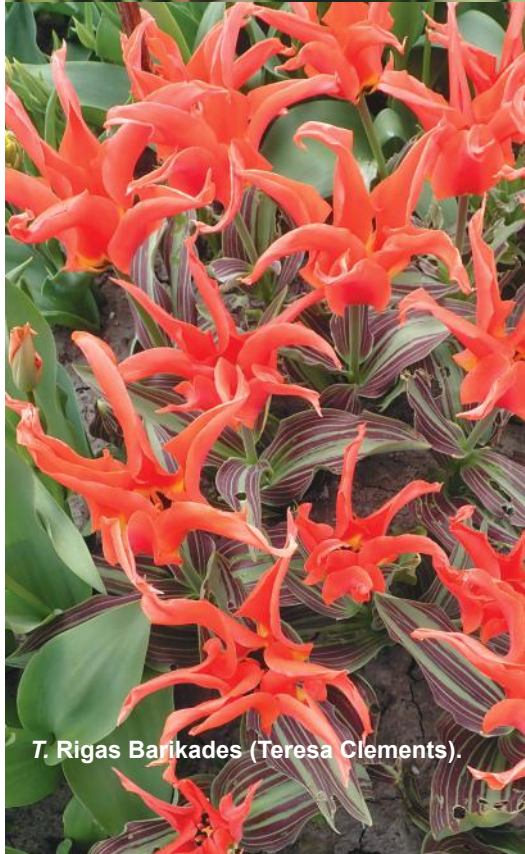
T. Triple A (Teresa Clements).



T. Mascara (Katy Merrington).



T. Purple Dream (Katy Merrington).



T. Rigas Barikades (Teresa Clements).



T. Vincent van Gogh (Teresa Clements).



T. Pomerol (Teresa Clements).

**Dutch Tulips:** Entries into Class 1 (18 tulips) and Class 2 (9 tulips) of the Annual Show schedule can be made with sufficient numbers of flowers of any Dutch variety. Not all types of tulip shown here would qualify for Classes 3 - 8 (lily-flowered, parrot, fringed, double, multi-headed and species/small-flowered respectively) although only three or five flowers are needed to enter.





*T. North Pole* (Margaret Christian).



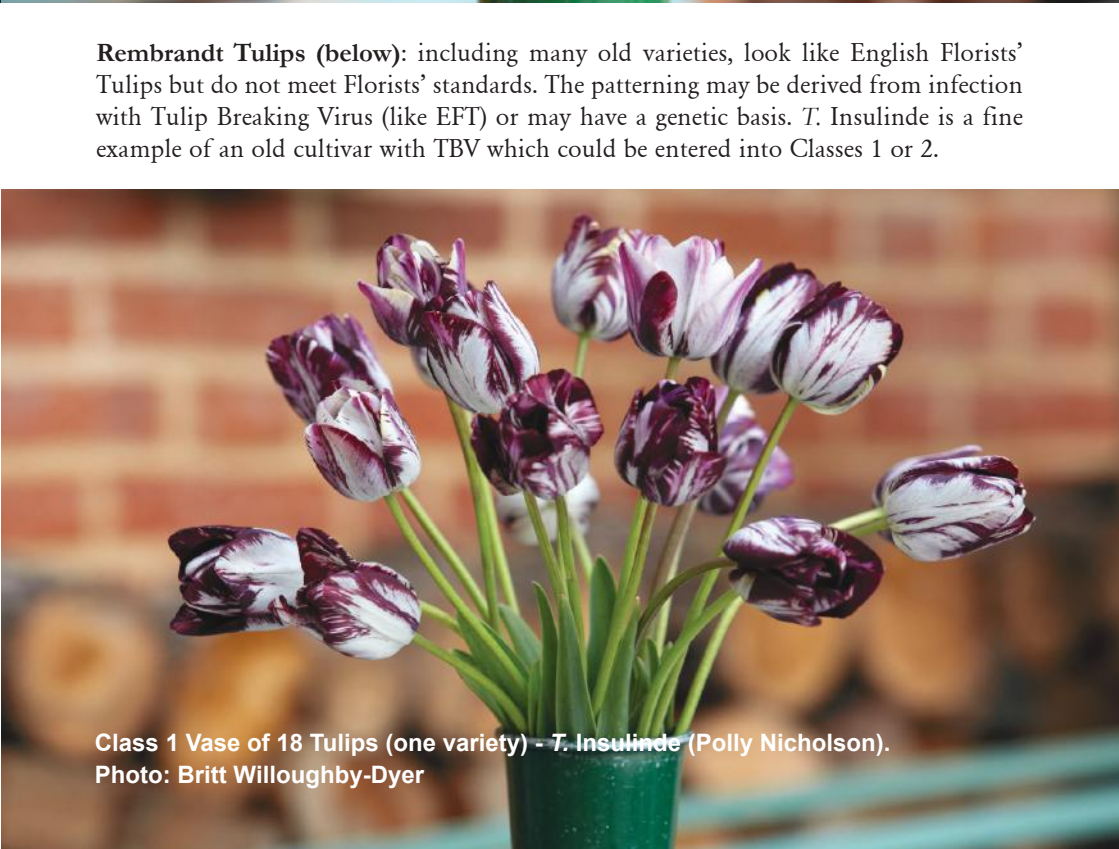
*T. Marilyn* (Teresa Clements).



Class 1 Vase of 18 Tulips - *T. Madras* (Polly Nicholson).  
Photo: Britt Willoughby-Dyer



*T. Honeymoon* (Teresa Clements).



Class 1 Vase of 18 Tulips (one variety) - *T. Insulinde* (Polly Nicholson).  
Photo: Britt Willoughby-Dyer

**Rembrandt Tulips (below):** including many old varieties, look like English Florists' Tulips but do not meet Florists' standards. The patterning may be derived from infection with Tulip Breaking Virus (like EFT) or may have a genetic basis. *T. Insulinde* is a fine example of an old cultivar with TBV which could be entered into Classes 1 or 2.



**English Florists' Tulips:** Still within the Annual Show schedule Vase Classes, Classes 9 and 10 are for displaying English Florists' Tulips *en masse*. The remaining Annual Show Classes 11 - 36 are for single English Florists' Tulips displayed either individually or in combinations, the latter gaining more points if successful. In combining the different varieties, colours and forms the exhibitor can demonstrate their skill both in growing English Florists' Tulips and planning their show strategy! Single flowers can often be combined with a different colour or form as a pair or trio in another class. An additional exhibitor number would be needed for a second entry in all classes except the single bloom classes where two entries are permitted.



Class 9 A Vase of 12 English Florists' Tulips - *T. James Wild* (Polly Nicholson)  
Photo: Britt Willoughby-Dyer



Class 29 One breeder - *T. Casius* (Polly Nicholson). Photo: Britt Willoughby-Dyer



Class 29 One breeder *T. Juliet* (Polly Nicholson). Photo: Britt Willoughby-Dyer



*T. Jack Taylor* (Mike Willison).



*T. Solis* (Mike Willison).



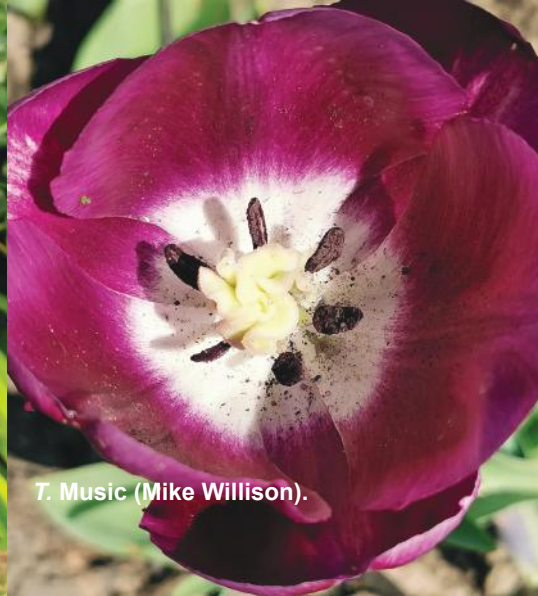
*T. Mabel* (Angela Harrington).



*T. Gloria* (Mike Willison).



*T. Judy Baker* (Graham Sole).



*T. Music* (Mike Willison).





*T. Mabel* (Tieme Wanders).



*T. Wakefield* (Margaret Christian).



Simple but stunning!  
A vase of mixed  
English Florists' Tulips  
(Margaret Christian).

**Flame or feather?** One question asked often asked at the shows with respect to rectified tulips is 'is this a flame or a feather?' Experienced growers and exhibitors can provide the answer and indicate which classes could be entered.



*T. Sam Barlow* (Margaret Christian).



Class 31 One feathered - *T. Adonis*  
(Polly Nicholson). Photo: Britt  
Willoughby-Dyer



*T. Agbrigg* or *T. Habit de Noce*? A perennial question! (Teresa Clements).



# The 185th Annual Show

Teresa Clements

In March, it was clear the Swedish growers would be unable to come to the show in Wakefield so were planning a little show in Halmstad instead. Ulf acknowledged this in an email, “It hurts to miss Yorkshire, the Tulips and your hospitality this year. That this joyous season gets such a horrible setting is truly sad. Our warmest and dearest greetings to you all.”

In April, plans shifted up a gear as the show in Wakefield was cancelled. The engraved glass tumblers intended as prizes were posted to Halmstad. It was a tense month, Boris Johnson had Covid-19 and so did Emilie, who was to host the show in her garden. Boris recovered, and so did Emilie, what a relief!

By the beginning of May, the plans for the show were back on track. The little show in Halmstad would be conducted in a formal way, as near as possible to the Society’s Annual Show, but with only the Novice classes.

There was a message from Ulf, everything was in place but, “pork pie... do you have a prescription/recipe?” It was a question I was unable to answer, “The recipe for the pork pie is a closely guarded secret - we probably wouldn’t want to know what part of a pig is in there anyway!”

The day that would have been show day in Wakefield came and went. It was a fine, sunny day, the tulips were at exactly the right stage for showing and we all stayed at home. Some of us did set up some entries for the classes and posted photographs online, but there was no grand spectacle of beautiful tulips in glittering bottles. There

**Left: Ulf Hansson examines a trio of blooms. Photo: Niklas Wellfelt. Right: a beautiful selection of flowers from the gardens of our Swedish members. Photo: Anders Andersson**







**The apple trees were in flower in Halmstad as Katrin Wellfelt and Niklas Wellfelt made the final preparations for the big event. Photo: Anders Andersson**

was no bustling activity, excitement, celebratory atmosphere, chatter, competition, sparkling silverware or those shared moments in great company, we missed it all so much, the mood was flat and achingly sad.

Finally, it was 16th May 2020 and so the show in Sweden began. It appeared on our screens as if seen through the eyes of a stranger. It felt both strange and familiar. We couldn't be there in person, so sharing the day online was the only way to take part and we were so grateful to everyone who took turns with cameras or phones to let us see all the details with a commentary and a speech in English.

Our friends had made a huge effort to hold a show as similar to the one in Wakefield as possible. As the classes were called, I was unable to take my eyes off the screen. Prior to the show there had been an interesting exchange of ideas in Facebook but there is nothing to compare with seeing the flowers from every angle, singly and together, being handled and in bottles. It gave me something that was missing this year. I have spent a lot of time looking at my own tulips and photographing them but there is something very special



**A socially distanced audience listens as Ulf Hansson shares the results of his latest research. Photo: Niklas Wellfelt**

about seeing them in groups on a table with someone picking them up for a close look and comparing them with others. It was perfect.

It was a shame it rained and there was a cold wind; sunshine would have made the day more enjoyable for everyone. The participants sat a virus-safe distance apart in the garden and everyone was well wrapped-up to sip tea and eat sausage rolls, cucumber sandwiches and cake. Michael Rosen deserved a special prize for his appearance as a traditional Englishman in his deerstalker hat. That evening, after the show, there was singing - Ilkley Moor b'hat 'at, of course!

In September, members of the Society's Committee voted unanimously to regard the show held in Halmstad this year as the 185th Annual Show. There is evidence that Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society has held a show every year since 1836 and we are very grateful indeed to all those who planned and took part in the 185th Annual Show for upholding the standards and for maintaining the Society's unbroken record.



# Show Report

Ulf Hansson

What was to be the 185th Annual Show was held on Saturday 16th May 2020 in the garden of Emilie Wellfelt and Lennart Hildingsson at the corner of Neptunigatan and Propelligatan in Halmstad, Sweden.

Originally it was intended as a get-together, a much-needed afternoon tea outdoors after months of isolation, in reasonably safe conditions with some good English Florists' Tulips in vases and all surrounded by the heat of May and apple trees in flower. Due to the pandemic, extraordinary preparations were required which resulted in some planning, several meetings via Skype or telephone, but also face-to-face meetings at a safe distance.

One of the last meetings was held outdoors in quiet spring rain. We did not even dare sit in the greenhouse with the door open. For a long time, we knew it was out of the question to go overseas to Yorkshire, then it was finally announced that it was not possible to have a show at all this year in Wakefield due to the pandemic situation. It was gloomy to say the least, despite our now planned small Swedish Corona Show. We wanted to be able to report something for the Newsletter - pictures of English Florists' Tulips in bottles and happy exhibitors, but no show at all in England was sad news.

Under our umbrellas, we decided that our show could not be open to the public because the Corona control group ultimately did not give the go-ahead for it. Thus, we got to be our own audience and sent an invitation to the exhibitors to expect to bring soft pencils and sharp knives and to dress in a typical Northern English outfit. Due to the late season and the uneven distribution of tulips, we also made the decision to gather all the English Florists' Tulips together for the exhibitors to select their competition entries, the aim being to prioritise a show with as many flowers as possible on the showbench.

The day of the show offered rich apple blossom, otherwise there was a storm warning on the news with alternating rain and sun. The spring heat was also absent. The majority of exhibitors had visited the Annual Show - many of them several times, but the day started with a review of the five novice classes. After this, everyone was ready for competition and with soft watercolour brushes in full swing, went straight into a Le Mans start out in the small garden to find the buckets placed at Corona-safe distance from each other and then to the tables until all were filled with about 300 Florists' Tulips, each with the variety marked on the stem with a felt-tip pen.

**Morgan Eriksson from Lahult, Rydöbruk in Torup parish, puts up a tulip on the tables under the supervision of Lennart Hildingsson. Morgan and Marit Eriksson were awarded a glass goblet for best breeder. Photo: Anders Andersson**







**Above: it was necessary to wrap up warmly while preparing the blooms for the show. Right: toasting the winners in the comparatively balmy conservatory. Photos: Niklas Wellfelt**

Slowly, the unfailing calm came when pollen was cleared away, flower stalks were cut, and labels were filled in with the competitors' code, class and tulip names and attached with rubber bands to water-filled beer bottles. In short, from now on, most things were the same as at the Annual Show except for short breaks of strong gusts and sometimes a few drops of rain.

As usual, the time went by quickly and it was soon announced that there were only ten minutes left of the preparation time. The classes were called by competition leader Lennart Müller, for the first time in the Society's history in Swedish, but they were called. Bottles of tulips were carried in by one competitor at a time, after which the classes were called out and placed on the competition table inside the greenhouse under the supervision of Lennart Hildingsson.

Judge and assistant judge, Josef Wellfelt, then went to work. During this time the contestants took a look at what the catering had served up. Besides English tea and coffee







there was for example: lemon poppy cake, carrot cake, Joanna's Rich Fruitcake, Victoria sponge cake, sausage rolls, cucumber sandwiches, but no pork pie.

Like at the Annual Show it was a get-together with dear reunions and, apart from tea and cakes of various kinds, everyone was open to mingling, albeit distanced. Everyone was therefore satisfied and ready when Niklas Wellfelt opened the show with a speech written in English that those who followed the event live via Facebook also could see and hear. It became for me perhaps the most emotional moment of the day.

Many mixed feelings, sadness but also a common feeling with all the passionate tulip lovers and exhibitors that we have got to know over the years in Wakefield and elsewhere. The show was declared open and what remained was the award ceremony and the drawing of winners in the raffle. The trophies were presented by the artist and painter Roger Hansson and the three glass goblets etched with

**Mikael Rosén from Mjälshult in a typical Yorkshire outfit, with his entry to Class 25 a pan of three, one breeder, one flame and one feather. Photo: Anders Andersson**

Wakefield 185th Annual Show attracted justified attention. Catarina Müller finally announced the winners of the raffle and it was now time to once more enter the greenhouse and enjoy these amazing flowers that have been so tenderly cared for over the years by the members of Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society.

# The 185th Annual Show Results

16th May 2020

**Class 28 Pan of Three: One Breeder, One Flamed, One Feathered:** 1. Morgan & Marit Eriksson: James Akers, Lord Stanley, Sir Joseph Paxton. 2. Niklas & Katrin Wellfelt: James Akers, Sam Barlow, Sir Joseph Paxton. 3. Mikael Rosén: Juliet, Akers Flame, Wakefield.

**Class 29 One Breeder:** 1. Emilie Wellfelt: Wendy Akers. 2. Emilie Wellfelt: Judy Baker. 3. Niklas & Katrin Wellfelt: Juliet.

**Class 30 One Flame:** 1. Emilie Wellfelt: Wakefield. 2. Niklas & Katrin Wellfelt: Agbrigg. 3. Lennart & Catharina Müller: Wakefield.

**Class 31 One Feather:** 1. Niklas & Katrin Wellfelt: James Wild. 2. Morgan & Marit Eriksson: Adonis. 3. Lennart & Catharina Müller: Lord Stanley.

**Class 32 The Gina Roozen Cup: Pan of 3 Breeders; One Bizarre, One Bybloemen, One Rose:** 1. Emilie Wellfelt: Mabel, James Akers, Trefoil Guild. 2. Roger Hansson: Solis, Wendy Akers, James Wild. 3. Stina & Olov & Fia Tegnhed: Solis, Argyre, Goldfinder.

**Glass Goblets awarded for Best in Show**

**Best Breeder:** Morgan & Marit Eriksson: James Akers.

**Best Flame:** Emilie Wellfelt: Wakefield.

**Best Feather:** Niklas & Katrin Wellfelt: James Wild.

**Some of the winning blooms on display. Photo: Niklas Wellfelt**





# Closing remarks

## Niklas Wellfelt

Welcome all - ladies and gentlemen, exhibitors and visitors to the show. Welcome to what should have been the highlight of the Spring, the 185th Annual show of the WNETS. We all wish that we could have met on the ninth of May at the Outwood Memorial Hall in Wakefield, as was planned, but circumstances are what they are.

Nevertheless, we are very grateful that this minor group of tulip enthusiasts have had the opportunity to meet in the splendid garden of Lennart Hildingsson and Emilie Wellfelt in Halmstad, in the south west of Sweden.

The show includes the five Novice classes from the 185th Annual Show schedule, as was highlighted in the newsletter (distributed 9th May) from the secretary of the society, Sarah Brooks. These five classes are:

- Pan of Three, one Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered
- One Breeder
- One Flamed
- One Feathered
- The Gina Roozen Cup For a pan of 3 Breeders - One Bizarre - One Bybloemen - One Rose

In addition, three glass goblets have very generously been provided, and sent all the way from England, to be presented to the winners of the Best Breeder, Best Flamed and best Feathered English Florists' Tulips.

So here we are, after an intense afternoon of grooming tulips and useless attempts to bribe the judge, we are getting closer to a verdict and the prize ceremony. I can see that all are looking very excited!

The tulips have been grown in the Halmstad area, primarily by Ulf Hansson, but also by Lennart Hildingsson. Katrin and I, have, as an experiment, grown four tulip bulbs on our balcony in Stockholm. Stockholm is notably a much cooler climate zone compared to Halmstad, but we have tried to bring up four breeder tulips, namely; one James Akers, one Mabel, one James Wild and finally one Casius. We haven't harvested these tulips yet as they have not had the time to completely develop, but it was interesting to see that all four tulips actually survived significantly colder climate conditions (note that it was a mild winter in Stockholm, although spring was rather chilly).



**Niklas Wellfelt gave his welcoming speech in English so as to include the many Society members who were watching via the Internet. Photo: Anders Andersson**

Well, I guess I am in the awkward position of standing between you and the upcoming banquet, so I will not hold back your anxiety or challenge your patience much longer.

Thus, time to start the prize ceremony. Prepared to name the winners is Lennart Müller. As you might have guessed, Ulf Hansson has again been doing a splendid job cultivating EFTs - and while the rest of us have had the opportunity to compete using Ulf's tulips, Ulf himself, has been acting as the almighty judge.

The prize ceremony follows...

That completes the prize ceremony of "The Swedish WNETS Offspring Sporadic Annual Show". We have tried to celebrate EFT in Halmstad this afternoon, nevertheless, we are all are looking forward to being back to the normal procedures of the WNETS. Stay safe - and we hope to see you soon.

# Growing Lady Catherine Gordon

Timothy Clark

I commenced growing Florists' Tulips about 1965. I contacted Hubert Calvert, the then Secretary, who sent me a bulb of *T. Lincolnshire* to learn how to handle them. This brought me into contact with Keith Eyre, who gave me a series of single bulbs all dating from before 1900. I always considered that the bulbs bred after this date did not quite fit in with the architecture of the garden. One day he and Val made the four-hour journey here to come for lunch, and we were discussing the relative merits of each variety. I said that *T. Royal Sovereign* was easier to propagate than *T. Lady Catherine Gordon*. He turned to my wife and said 'He knows how to grow them.' I realised then that each variety had its own characteristics. It has taken until last year to get sufficient to give away to keen growers after thirty years of growing the original two every year.

My garden is on very light loamy soil. If it rains once a week you can grow anything. If there is a drought then you have to be very careful of what you can keep alive using tap water. In those days the soil was fertile because I kept about 10 steers, the manure was used on the garden, and this helped to hold the water. Climate change has not shown in the tulips. It first appeared in the Tudor Primroses and only in the last few years have I been able to create them to tolerate spring droughts and higher temperatures.

I noticed about 10 years ago, that the quality of all the bulbs I was sending back to the Society was deteriorating. I put this down to the warmer winters. About three years ago James Akers and Teresa Clements called to see the growing bulbs and they said they were looking paler than they should. I was uncertain what to do, and in the absence of Benlate decided the best thing I could do was to continue with the growing regime I had by this time probably used for 30 years. When Keith first gave me the bulbs, he advised me to do what the old allotment holders did, which was to grow the tulips after potatoes. This fitted the vegetable garden well enough.

There are a series of columns which run down the garden and this creates eight sections. Two of these are taken up by asparagus and raspberries. I adopted a regime of ample manure for the potatoes. When the potatoes left the garden at the end of August, I gave the ground a dressing of fishmeal, put in a green manure, dug it in during the first



**A *T. Lady Catherine Gordon* showing its characteristic patterns. Photo: Maurice Evans**

week of October and then planted the tulips in the first week of November before the land got compacted. The tulips came out the last week of June and in went the Brussels Sprouts. No part of the garden was wasted, the tulips growing in the vegetable garden created great interest when the garden was opened for the National Garden Scheme.

Two years ago, I had the worst attack of Tulip Fire I have ever known, and I realised that something was seriously wrong in the way that I was growing the tulips. I decided probably a trace element deficiency had built up over the years. I was no longer keeping cattle and the potatoes were being manured by the garden compost, made from keeping ten chickens, rotted with lawn clippings.

The quality of the bulbs I planted were the worst ever planted last Autumn and I realised I had a problem if I could no longer keep the bulbs going. After the heavy rains of February, the bulbs came through and still looked paler than they used

**“I had the  
worst attack  
of Tulip Fire  
I have ever  
known...”**





**The interior of a *T. Lady Catherine Gordon* bloom. Photo: Maurice Evans**

to be. I decided that I would give them a half strength dose of Miracle Grow. This made no visible difference, however I persisted, and then the drought began in April. I realised the flowers would not be worth seeing when the National Garden Scheme Open Day came along if I did not water, so every other evening I would water down the rows a very weak solution of Miracle Grow sometimes, before flowering, with a foliar feed of Maxicrop as well. Slowly the quality of the flowers improved, and if the garden had been open there would have been a reasonable show. I managed to keep this regime going until the third week of May when I ran out of rain water and knowing that the tap water was too alkaline I ceased watering.

I had a great number of gaps when I came to lift the bulbs, but where they had survived the drought there were many pleasant surprises. Most had made their usual increase but my best bulb of *T. Lady Catherine Gordon* had made five small offsets. I will continue this regime next year because if it were possible to get these older varieties with bulbs large enough to grow flowers for show into the hands of experienced growers it would be a pleasure to see them grown as they were two centuries ago.

# The Hepworth Wakefield Garden: Bulbs 2020

**Katy Merrington**

Last year we planted 9,360 tulips and daffodils amongst the perennials in our brand-new garden at The Hepworth Wakefield. These bulbs were intended as a celebratory display for our very first Spring – of course as things turned out – the Coronavirus lockdown was announced just as the bulbs began to bloom! The gallery had to close its doors and all our special events were cancelled. However, as our garden is a uniquely free and open public space in the city centre, it was able to remain open and we asked people to abide by the government guidelines.

Local people began to re-route their daily exercise to take in the garden and some people discovered the space purely by chance on a walk – they were astounded at the carpet of vibrant colour. The sheer luminosity of the tulips and a sense of new life brought hope to those uncertain months and the flowers were a joy for all who were able to see them. I was grateful to live close to the garden and working outside I was able to continue gardening and to tend to the young perennials during that unseasonably warm and dry spring.

**The gardening team at The Hepworth Wakefield have been busy, despite Covid. Photo: Katy Merrington**







**Above & right: Tulips in bloom at The Hepworth in the spring. This year 2,000 more tulips were planted. Photos: Katy Merrington**

Creating year-round interest has been central to the design of our garden and during the first year, visitors have delighted in watching the planting change, such that every fortnight there is something new to see in bloom. This autumn we are adding another 40,000 earlier flowering bulbs to the display, so that in combination with those that we put in last year, they will bring spectacular waves of successional colour to the very earliest months of the year. We are incredibly grateful to the Finnis Scott Foundation who have supported us with a grant to buy this year's bulbs, which are primarily *Scilla sibirica*, *Chionodoxa luciliae*, *Puschkinia libanotica*, *Anemone blanda* and *Anemone nemorosa* Robinsoniana. We are also planting 2,000 extra tulips, including robust varieties such as 'Mariette' and 'Negrita' which we hope may be perennial for us. To complete the picture 10,000 snowdrops will be planted in-the-green, in springtime.

Fortunately, I have not been alone in this huge mission and we are very grateful to our brilliant team of committed garden volunteers who have been vital in all stages of the process, from counting the bulbs in the shed, to digging thousands into the ground. We have managed to work socially distanced and in small groups and happily succeeded in planting all the bulbs just as the second lockdown started.

As one of our volunteers said - with each bulb 'we are digging our energy and care into the soil' and this will come back to reward us with hope and new life, just when we need it in the still cold months of early spring.



# My obsession with Class 14

Chris Gill

If I were asked what my favourite class was at the Annual Show, without much hesitation I would have to reply Class 14, the Local Silver Challenge Cup. It is one of the Society's oldest awards, presented for nine English Florist Tulips in the open section - Breeder, Flame and Feather from each of the three colours. It is a real challenge to enter, but rewarding to win. Even more so, if the same cultivar is used for each of the stages. This is achievable, but it is highly unlikely it will be seen. When seeing the stages, if the same cultivar is used, you cannot always appreciate they are the same as they look so different. In my opinion, if you can win this class, you are entitled to call yourself a successful tulip grower.

The difficulty I have in entering this class is that I find I am unable to grow breeders without preventing them from breaking. Where I grow my tulips there is a number of mature sycamore trees which host many aphids. These have long been suspected of transferring the Tulip Breaking Virus. In an attempt to grow breeders cleanly I have taken inspiration from seeing how John Wainwright grows his - a physical barrier in the form of a mesh enclosure would be needed.

I constructed a housing which measured 3.1m x 1.2m x 1m high from slate lath, 50mm x 25mm, which had been pressure treated with a wood preservative. This would accommodate 24 Hadopots, 250mm x 250mm. These are folding pots which I favour for growing my tulips. The mesh covering had to be fine enough to exclude aphids whilst still allowing water and air through. Enviromesh ticked all the boxes and was sold in a suitable size 6m x 3.66m. I obtained some breeder bulbs from the Society and planted them in pots the second week of November. The pots then went directly into the enclosure. I find the mesh lets the rain through but offers protection from the wind and hail storms. It has been suggested that the temperature inside the mesh could be slightly higher than on the outside. This is something that I didn't particularly want. I would have to assess if this were true. I have found the tulips grew well and very clean with no splash marks on the foliage. For added protection from the tulip breaking virus I sprayed with a systemic insecticide every two weeks. The blooms were fantastic. I find growing in pots allows you to select the growing medium and the amount of water they receive, and you can also select the aspect of where they grow. I appreciate pot growing is controversial but I find it works well for me.

Two bulbs succumbed to the Tulip Breaking Virus. The uncertainty here is did I receive broken bulbs from the Society (the donors try their very best to provide clean bulbs, but occasionally an infected bulb gets through), or had they become infected in my



**English Florist Tulips growing in their specially constructed experimental shelter, next to a south-facing stone wall. Photo: Chris Gill**

care. I rogued these out as soon as it became evident they were broken. Four bulbs did not flower, but produced a large sail-type leaf. Hopefully these will be clear of the virus and growing another year will confirm this. An observation made was that the blooms were very clean on the inside. No disturbed pollen, as pollinating insects have not had access. This is ideal for when exhibiting. Was the temperature warmer inside the frame? It is difficult to say. I sited the frame south-facing in front of the house wall. Some evenings you could feel heat radiating from the stone.

In comparison, my broken tulips are grown in the back garden in a more open aspect. The first breeders opened before the breaks, the first break to flower was five days behind the breeders. I suspect the heat from the wall played a part in this more than the greenhouse effect caused by a fine mesh cover. The tulips definitely benefited from having a windbreak, remember we had three named storms in February - 5th February, Ciara, 11th February, Dennis and 22nd February, Jorge. I found that the Enviromesh also had a slight shading effect. This can be desirable as it can help prevent scorching from strong sunlight.

In summary, I would say the experiment was a success. To be more conclusive I need to repeat for a second and third year, hopefully giving me plenty of clean breeders to enable me to enter Class 14.



# The Sheet

Carole Gude

Newer members among you may, or may not, have wondered how the show results were recorded before the very smooth-running operation we now have, done by computer. Longer standing members will remember "The Sheet", which, whilst not a thing of beauty, at its best encapsulated the whole day.

This no-tech system comprised a very large piece of paper, 20x30 inches (52x78 cm), clipped to a board. Some preparation was required, with a pre-drawn grid for exhibitors and results. Bit of a guess as to how many exhibitors there would be, so space required for extending the grid!

Illustrated is one of my better efforts, a sheet for the Dutch, or Little Show as it was also known, of 1995. This show was discontinued when the Society decided to accept an invitation to have a presence at Harrogate Spring Show. (The world turns and we now have no Harrogate and a second show again.) Despite the name, there were classes for those members who had English Tulips ready to show, but the whole occasion was much less complex than the main show, which could be rather difficult to fit on to one page. Having said that, there was entry money to take, and prize money to calculate and distribute. This of course had to be signed for, even if it was often only fifty pence.

As you will see on the sheet, there are a creditable 19 exhibitors, several of them sadly no longer with us. Prizes are recorded in red and points in green, the winner of the Billy Tear Trophy in blue. The other trophy winners, number of entries, winning varieties, subs paid, show account and a copy of the schedule are there. No space for the weather on the day! Embarrassingly, the show account does not seem to balance. Prize cards were hand written, and if I persuaded Wendy Akers to do them in her immaculate script even more worth having.

Some things never change - the camaraderie on the day, the awarding of the trophies, the hard work put in by the committee and other members, and a huge sense of achievement when it was all over. We all look forward to a time when we can enjoy the shows again, technology or not.

**How we used to live: the results sheet. Hand-made paper spread sheets were key to working out the show results. Photo: Carol Gude**

THE DUTCH TULIP SHOW : WRENTHORPE VILLAGE HALL : SATURDAY 6TH MAY 1995.

DUTCH CLASSES										JUDGE : MR F. SMITH OF ALTOFTS					ENGLISH CLASSES					JUDGE : MR K.N EYRE											
MARY TEAR MEMORIAL TROPHY.																															
No.	EXHIBITOR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	POINTS	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	PRIZE MONEY PAID						
1	MR E. BINGHAM					3rd				1	1st			1st																	
2	MR F. R. JACKSON				1st					1			2nd																		
3	MR E. CRABTREE			1st	1st					2	2nd		2nd																		
4	MISS A.K. HADGAGE																														
5	MISS A. TYLER																														
6	MRS A. HAEPER					1st	3rd			4																					
7	MR M. HAINSWORTH					3rd	1st																								
8	MR P. TURNER	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	3rd	21	2nd	2nd	2nd				1st				2nd	1st									
9	MR T. BULLS																1st			1st	2nd	1st									
10	MRS S. GAINWORTHY													1st							2nd	2nd									
11	MRS A. SPALAN	2nd								2																					
12	MR J. HARMAN			3rd		2nd				5																					
13	MRS B. PICKERING					2nd				2																					
14	MR R. SMILES																	2nd	1st	1st		2nd	2nd								
15	MRS L. BOGGS													2nd																	
16	MR J. AKERS																	2nd		3rd											
17	MRS W. AKERS			1st	1st			1st		9	3rd		1st	3rd																	
18	MR A. HAYWARD			3rd	5th			3rd					2nd																		
19	MR I. ROBERTSON																														

WINNING VARIETIES

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
2	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
3	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
4	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
5	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
6	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
7	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
8	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
9	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
10	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
11	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
12	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
13	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
14	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
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21	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					
22	1. BRILLIANT 2. VIKING 3. BURNING 4. GEMMA 5. BURNING																					

# More Viruses

Teresa Clements

Occasionally I see a Dutch magazine called *Greenity*. Jan Pennings often brings a copy when he visits us, and it is possible to look at back-copies online. To understand anything in detail I have to rely on Google Translate, which is pretty good for general conversation but when it comes to anything more technical or specialist the translations have to be regarded with care. Two articles caught my eye in the online edition from 4th September 2020.

## Increasing virus problems in tulips a matter of concern.

The article reports on the various causes of disease seen in tulips this year, saying the problems with viruses in tulips were especially worrying. The main virus in question was TVX, which was first described in 1982. It is known to be transmissible by physical contact between bulbs, and this year bulb lice were thought to be the most common vector. It was thought pest populations were high in May due to the hot, sunny Spring weather causing insecticides to rapidly degrade.

As growers of English Florists' Tulips, we are all aware of Tulip Breaking Virus (TBV), but until reading this article I was unaware of TVX. It is restricted to tulips as a host and causes yellowing of foliage and/or necrosis, and flower break in red, purple and pink coloured cultivars. That sounds familiar! TVX can now be found in many tulip-growing areas, including the UK. It can be transmitted 'mechanically' by contact and by tiny lice and bulb mites that feed on the bulbs as they stored over Summer. If like me, you avoid using insecticide, we have to remember that vigilance and hygiene are vitally important in maintaining our stock of bulbs.

*Fusarium* (a fungal rot), was less of a problem this year, probably due to the dry period in late Spring and Summer. At last, some cheerful news!

A few cases of the bacterial infection Hellfire were observed. It is often initiated by night frost. Damaged leaf tips turned brown and rotted, but later this dried up, limiting



**Fasciation means 'banded' or 'bundled' and often shows as flattened stems but also, as in this photo of a pink tulip, it results in multiple stamens and stigmas. It is thought to be caused by a hormonal imbalance affecting the meristems and/or random mutation or a virus transmitted by insects – or- a bacterial infection (*Rhodococcus fascians*). Photo: Teresa Clements**

the damage, said the advisers. They did notice that the tulip crop was under more stress this year due to the wet conditions and poor rooting.

Augusta flower (aka TNV, Tobacco Necrosis Virus, it affects all parts of the plant and at all stages of growth causing wilting, necrosis and ultimate collapse) was somewhat more common this year and sometimes very intense with certain cultivars.





**Demand for organic floriculture rose significantly this year. Photo: Teresa Clements**

*Rhizoctonia solani* (Tulip Grey Bulb Rot, a fungal disease.), was also more common this year. Not a happy note on which to end, but it is useful to know which diseases are more prevalent as we adapt to different growing conditions.

### Cautious growth in organic floriculture

The growing consumer demand for organic flowers has resulted in an increase in the number of companies engaged in organic floriculture from 94 in 2018 to 102 in 2019, an increase of 9%. There was also striking increase in the number of companies using organic methods to raise cut flowers outside, for example by means of picking gardens, there are now 39 in total. The organic cultivation of flowers under glass is still very limited, only five companies so far. The number of organic perennial growers comes to 17. There will be a total of 59 certified traders in organic floriculture in 2019. Good news for the environment, especially bees and other pollinating insects.

These articles were in the Dutch magazine *Greenity* and reflect the situation in the Netherlands, but the information about pests and diseases of tulips applies to our bulbs too. Don't be discouraged by reading about the onslaught of p & d, we need to know the enemy!

# Whitby mystery

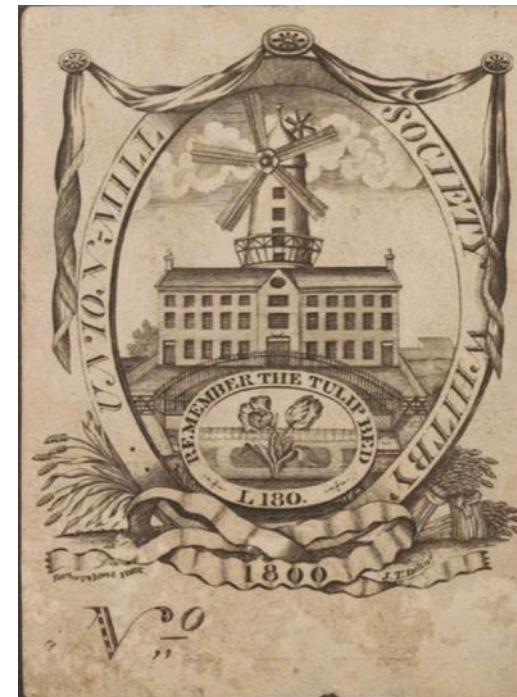
Linda Chapman

In late August 2020, a Whitby resident sent me an image of what transpired to be some form of subscription ticket associated with the Union Mill Society, Whitby. The lady from Whitby had found the image on a local Facebook page. She sent the image to me because she had attended a talk that I had given, in 2016, about the Willison family and their connection with tulips. She wondered if the image reference to tulips could be attributed to the Willisons. She asked me what the words 'REMEMBER THE TULIP BED L 180.' might mean.

Having been presented with this somewhat intriguing question I began to think about how to develop some sort of answer for the lady. My initial reaction was that the date reference on the image was too early for the Willisons. William Willison, who bred the original *T. Juliet* and *T. Sir Joseph Paxton* tulips (still grown by WNETS members), was not born until 1805. His father, Alexander, a Scot by birth, was a relatively new resident in Whitby, only arriving there in the late 1790's. However, by 1800 he had established a local greengrocer's shop and had a market garden located near to the site of the windmill. We also know that Alexander was interested in tulips because, at some time between 1800 and 1812, he had purchased a copy of *The Florist's Directory* by James Maddock. The *Directory* includes details of how to plant a tulip bed. We know about this book courtesy of Mike Higgins, a member of WNETS. Mike purchased Willison's actual book at an auction, his pleasure at having secured the purchase increased significantly when he found that the book was signed by Alexander and, later, by William Willison. Alexander signed as living at Woodlands Hall. My own research has confirmed that Alexander did live at Woodlands between 1800 and 1812.

It has been a little difficult to research the image that I was presented with by the lady from Whitby, with its reference to a tulip bed, due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions which have resulted in local archive facilities being

**The engraving that sparked the investigation: what did 'Remember the Tulip Bed' mean? Photo: Linda Chapman**



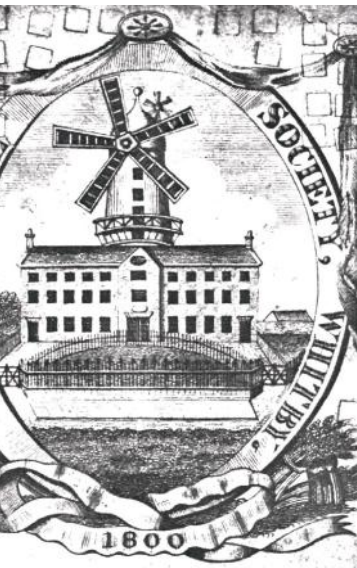


closed. In an attempt to advance the research, I enlisted the help of James Akers and together, but separated, started to undertake some research using the internet.

Our initial research established that the image was very similar to images on the Internet that presented ‘subscription tickets’ associated with the Union Mill Society, Whitby. Below is an image of an actual ‘subscription ticket’, with stampings.

In the late 18th century, yield from grain crops was extremely variable and, during the last decade of the century, there was a run of bad harvests. Bread was a staple of the diet for lots of people. The poor harvests led to significant fluctuations in the price of bread, with consequent difficulties for large numbers of people. In Whitby, leading townsfolk convened meetings to discuss how these difficulties could be better managed. These meetings resulted in calls for a ‘subscription mill’ whereby discounted flour would be sold to the poor and needy. The principle of a ‘subscription mill’ was not uncommon, some 15 others are recorded in England and Wales. The principle of the ‘subscription mill’ led to the formation of the Union Mill Society, effectively a ‘co-operative society’. It transpires that the Whitby society was one of the very earliest ‘co-operative societies’.

The Society then developed and built a substantial mill and granary. The mill and granary were sited about half a mile inland from Whitby’s West Cliff, in a prominent position overlooking what is now Pannett Park (which at the time was the site of Alexander Willison’s market garden). The five-sailed windmill was a substantial landmark on the Whitby skyline. The mill’s foundation stone was laid in 1800. The mill functioned for some 80 years, until storm damage forced its closure in 1888. The windmill was eventually demolished in 1923.



I eventually discovered that the original image, with tulip bed reference, is now part of the Raymond Burton Yorkshire Collection, which is archived at the University of York. Raymond Burton, founder of Top Shop, and son of the clothier Montague Burton, was a collector of Yorkshire ephemera. On his death he bequeathed his collection to the University of York. Unfortunately, as a stand-alone piece of ephemera, there is no contextual information as to the meaning of the phrase ‘REMEMBER THE TULIP BED L180’.

York University has described the original image as being that of an engraving on delint paper. The

engraving is the same physical size as the actual subscription tickets, 86mm x 64mm, and, apart from the distinctive tulip bed design, it differs from images of actual tickets as follows: unnumbered and unsigned, slightly different lettering and cloud formation and the engravers are named as Barber & Whitwell, York, and artist as J.T.

Barber & Whitwell were high quality silversmiths who worked together from 1814 to 1822. Such an engraving, as the subscription ticket, is not typical of the high quality work that Barber & Whitwell normally undertook. It is assumed that the subscription ticket, with tulips, was produced between 1814 and 1822.

In addition, the University of York record the engraving as having a decorative frame, perhaps this was also made by Barber & Whitwell. If so, given Barber & Whitwell’s background, one might assume that the mounted engraving was a presentation piece, which would probably have been a relatively expensive item. If so, what was the basis of the presentation, and to whom was it given?

I’m hopeful that when the Whitby archives open again (perhaps early 2021), I will be able to continue my research and be able to develop answers to the above questions and even find an answer to the original question - ‘REMEMBER THE TULIP BED L180’.

Our latest thoughts on the remaining mystery are that we have established that Barber & Whitwell only worked together during the dates 1814-1822. In this date period it is a possibility that the Willisons had developed an interest in tulips and may therefore have had some involvement with the mill. As shown, perhaps more clearly on the numbered ticket, there is a rectangular area in front of the fence. Is this the site of the ‘Tulip Bed’? Does ‘L’ simply stand for length? 180 feet? or 180 Yards?

Undertaking the somewhat unsuccessful research has been an interesting diversion during the various Covid-19 restrictions.



**The Union Mill in Whitby. This photo was taken in the years around 1900. By that time the mill’s sails had been destroyed by a storm. Photo: Historic England**



# Identifying Bybloemens

Ulf Hansson

Following my article on how to identify bizarres (in the 2019 issue, pages 46-50), I have continued in the same spirit to look at our bybloemen tulips. Unlike the bizarre group, I found it more difficult to find distinguishing marks among the bybloemens for a secure identification.

A few days after opening, in good weather, a bybloemen tulip from a good-sized bulb usually gives a sufficiently well-developed flower for the experienced grower to make a safe identification. Identification after the flower matures and develops becomes increasingly reliable, if not unmistakable, even for the more “difficult” varieties.

This applies for fully mature specimens but newly opened buds, small cultivars, small examples of larger cultivars or incomplete flowers are often bafflingly similar to each other. As a less experienced grower, it can be really difficult to navigate among the bybloemen varieties. It is often also easy to get lost between varieties in different stages of development.

Personally, I often forget which variety is which and confuse the names. When there is a problem, you have to do as the ornithologists do, when they do not hold the bird to be identified in their hand – they resort to the exclusion method.

At the beginning of flowering, when the bud has not yet opened, bybloemens generally have a round base and a smooth stigma. This is especially true for small specimens from small-sized bulbs that have just managed to set a minor flower.

As the tulip matures, the inner petals grow and the base, with some exceptions, looks trefoil in shape, like the symbol that warns of radiation. *T. Talisman* is a well-known example where it seems to be in the unpigmented base that most of the late growth of the inner petal takes place.

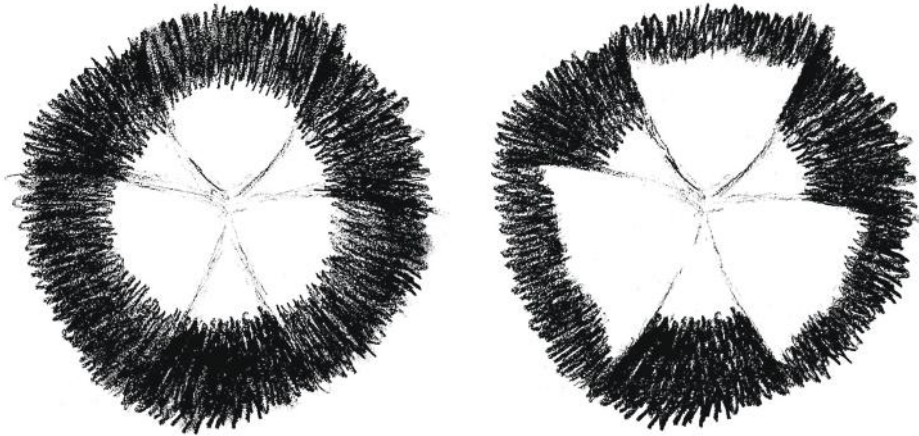
Likewise, the stigma becomes more and more knobby as the flower becomes more mature. Small specimens of *T. Music* also have a smooth stigma but it soon becomes more twisted.

*T. Bessie*: the one that stands out on the group photo (right) and is probably the easiest for a novice to identify. A rather dark purple, almost beetroot red flower which

Right: a selection of bybloemens. Photo: Ulf Hansson







**Above left: Fig 1: Very young bybloemens often have a rather round base. Above right: Fig 2: The base typically expands and becomes trefoil shaped as the flower matures. Art: Ulf Hansson**

is early to bloom. The three outer petals fold down in the slightest bit of heat and sun which give it a pitiable appearance. As it grows, the base becomes clearly trefoil in shape.

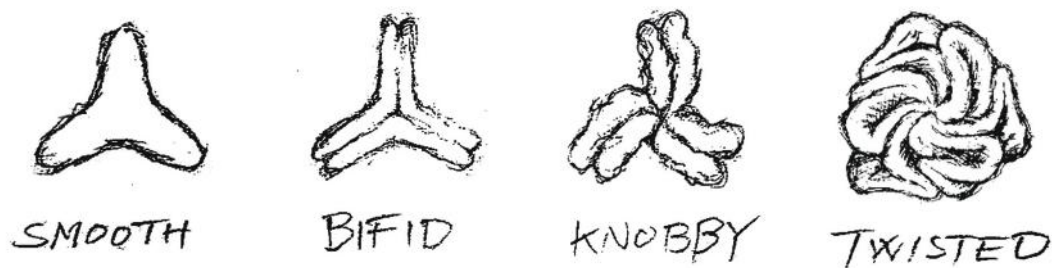
*T. Trefoil Guild* and *T. Wendy Akers*: both belong to the lightest coloured bybloemens. When newly sprung, the difference between Trefoil Guild and Wendy Akers is non-existent I believe. However, towards maturity Wendy Akers soon pulls away and leaves the Trefoil Guild behind with its well-shaped flower cup - the largest in competition with *T. Columbine*. The shade of both is very light with a pure white base, the border of which on Wendy Akers is sometimes not well defined. But I think Wendy Akers is all over a magnificent and graceful tulip in every respect with proportionately well-placed anthers and stigma.

*T. Music*: is often the first in the group to give flowers, which last quite a long time. The longer it stands and grows, the better the flower gets. The petals are evenly rounded and the outside of the cup is slightly waxy with a red shade. The most significant feature is without doubt the stigma, the only one in the group where it is properly twisted and increases in size throughout the whole flowering period. For small and young specimens, the twist may take some days to show. The outer base is smaller than *T. Halmstad* and *T. Argyre*.

**Facing page top: Two Bessies at their second day of flowering - the base is still reasonably round but becoming more and more trefoil. The base has a yellow tinge when young but soon whitens in the sun. Facing page bottom: Columbine: Two sizes of Columbine - the stamens are the same size but the big specimen has a more knobby stigma. Notice the whitewashed base. Photos: Ulf Hansson**







**Above: Fig 3: Four different forms of stigma - sometimes it starts smooth and then splits, at first evenly then becoming increasingly knobby (*T. Columbine*). Only *T. Music* among bybloemens has a really twisted stigma. Below left: The interior of a *T. Cydonia*. Art & Photos: Ulf Hansson**

***T. Talisman*:** I can confuse Talisman with most varieties and individuals can vary but a fairly sure feature is the purple colour of the petals, which in Talisman in comparison with all other bybloemens is a more even spread of an almost neutral purple colour - purple and pure like a fresh cup of Winsor and Newton's cobalt violet watercolour (# 192). This condition matched well on all available specimens of large and small Talisman in Halmstad. Also, Talisman blooms late in Halmstad, taking its time to fully open up its cup. As mentioned before, the inner petals eventually extend past the outer ones and the initially round base soon becomes clearly trefoil-shaped. The stigma is knobby or with a small twist. The petals fade in colour and shade in the last days of flowering.

***T. Columbine*:** the young specimens are also very difficult for me to identify. The mature Columbine is a large flower on a long stalk. The stamens have short filaments that support long, black anthers, which contrasts to the large white and radiant base, which looks almost like it has been whitewashed directly over the purple petals with talc or chalk. The stigma and the anthers look comparatively small as the petals grow. The outer base is smaller. The petals are finely veined, patinated and a little papery. In a young or small flower, the petals may sit unevenly but in a fully ripe flower they form a good bowl. Columbine usually opens early in the season, but in more frigid weather it is later from the starting blocks.

***T. Cydonia*:** can be confused with Columbine. More mature, and even smaller, specimens show a greater depth of shading in the purple near the base. The stigma is more clearly split than in Columbine.

***T. Albert Tear*:** something triangular rests over this variety. The stamens are placed in a triangle and the base is initially also triangular. The outer petals of younger specimens

are shaped a little like gothic church windows, pointed with flat parts, but the flower cup produces a slightly funnel-shaped but proper bowl. The stamens are usually grouped in a triangle around a knobby and split stigma. The central beam of the inner petals is often framed with two pallid stripes.

***T. Argyre*, *T. Halmstad*, *T. James Wainwright*:** for these, I could not find really good individual identifying features, so one is left to determine them only by direct comparison. They all have a good, fairly large, round base that fits well with the equally long anthers on slightly shorter filaments. The stigma is divided and becomes slightly knobby with age. All give flowers that keep well over time.

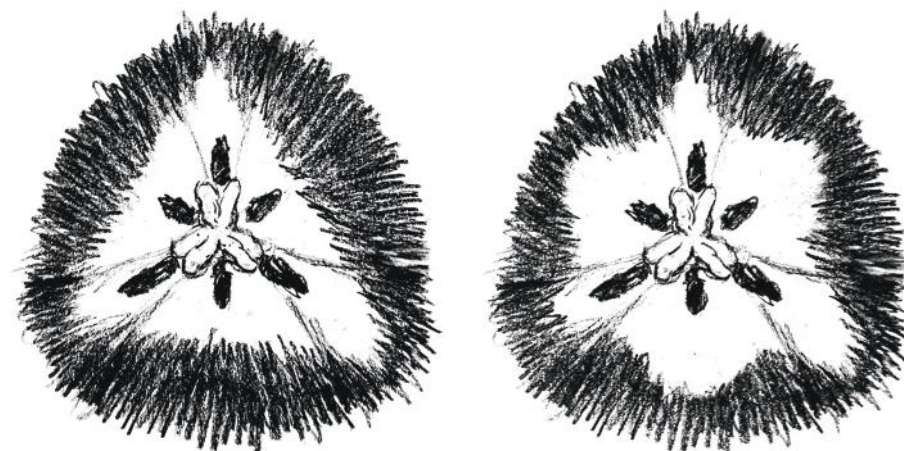
Argyre is appreciated by exhibitors and growers. Even in the bed, the freshness of this variety is noticeable. It is also, except for Bessie, the darkest with a colour that goes to red-purple, something of a 'rosy-byb'.

It is reported that large bulbs of Halmstad give many petals and deformed stigmas, while smaller bulbs give fewer than what is required by the show's judges. Therefore, select the right size of the bulb if it is to get a place in the competition bed. I have noted only a few broken Halmstad at the shows but that may quickly change.

Before the photo shoot, I noticed how much redder a couple of Halmstad became after a few days in the dark of the fridge, maybe that is generally worth knowing.

***T. Lunae*:** is not a bybloemen!

**Below *T. Albert Tear*: The base growth in an Albert Tear is often a bit odd - in the young flower (left) it is rather triangular in shape but eventually growing into a six-pointed star shape. When really old (right) it usually becomes trefoil.**  
Art: Ulf Hansson





# Librarian's Report

Lynn Gill

Did you know... the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society has a library? It contains books, newsletters, yearbooks and ephemera spanning the period from 1820 to the present day. Quite a number are little gems, and one of my favourites is an incomplete collection of *Gossip of the garden: a handbook for the florist and suburban horticulturalist*. These were produced monthly and we hold quite a number of them from 1859 to 1861. It is the list of contents which make me smile with 'the ladies' page, 'pomological notices' and 'floriculture versus fraud' being some of the more unusual contents. They also make you realize the number of flower shows lost to time.

The library also holds books by noted tulip authors such as Pavord, Clusius and Hall, and not all the books are specifically about tulips. We have a book on the history of the bulb vase, which is an item that seems to be enjoying a revival of interest at the moment, but also books on florist flowers, foliage plants, wild flowers, botanical illustrations etc.

If any member of the Society would like to see a list of books held, please contact the Secretary on [secretary@tulipsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@tulipsociety.co.uk), and if you would like to borrow an item

from the Library let the Secretary know. Books can be requested and loaned for two months. They can be posted out to you, and they will require returning by recorded delivery. Not all books are available for loan, and those not available can be viewed at shows and meetings.

**The Society's library contains rare books and texts dating back 200 years. Many of them can be borrowed by members. Photo: The Wellcome Trust**



# A Request from Down-Under

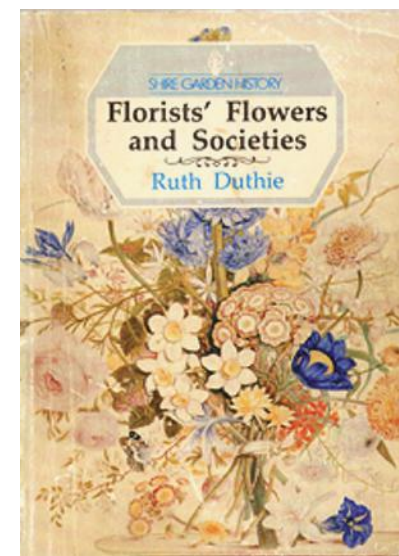
Sarah Brooks

Over the past twelve months I have received a number of requests from the public via the WNETS website for information about English Florists' Tulips. One enquiry from an Australian correspondent for suggestions for books and reference material was particularly searching so in addition to the references included in a typical reply, i.e. the Society's book *Flames and Feathers* and *Old Flames* and a search through past newsletters on the archive site, I drew up a list of publications that would provide a fair grounding for anyone new to the subject.

The selection included references that I, as a novice EFT grower, have found useful and interesting, supplemented by the more authoritative and discerning suggestions from Teresa Clements, former Secretary of the Society (now Chair of the RHS Bulb Committee). It is by no means a definitive 'top ten' and I have doubled-up a few to squeeze them in! Most are still available to purchase although a couple are very rare and included for their place in tulip lore. Having devised the list in response to an enquiry from the other side of the world I thought it might also be of interest to members closer to home.

1. Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society. (2012). *Flames and Feathers*. Available from the Society for £10 inc P&P- contact the Secretary. Includes numerous additional cultural and scientific references (see <https://tulipsociety.co.uk/index.php/publications> )
2. The Society Newsletters on the WNETS Archive Site at <http://wnets.org.uk/newsletters/>
3. Royal Horticultural Society. (2020). *RHS Daffodil Snowdrop and Tulip Yearbook 2020*. Available at a discounted price to Society members (see page 56). Back issues available to purchase online.
4. Pavord, A. (1999). *The Tulip*. Anna Pavord's definitive account of the history of the tulip in Europe to the present day, including a chapter on English Florists' Tulips.

**Ruth Duthie's *Florists' Flowers and Societies*, a copy from the Society's library. Ruth was a member of the Society for many years. Ruth had a tulip named after her. Photo: WNETS archive (wnets.org.uk)**





5. Two books by Sir Daniel Hall written during his time as the Director of the John Innes Institute:-

Hall, A.D. (1929). *The Book of the Tulip*. Includes a chapter on English Florists' Tulips.

Hall, A.D. (1940). *The Genus Tulipa*. With 40 colour illustrations by H. C. Osterstock.

6. Duthie, R. (1988). *Florists' Flowers and Societies*.

7. John Innes Centre - this blog has a very accessible three-part history of tulip research - <https://www.jic.ac.uk/blog/tulip-research-springs-into-life-part-1/>

8. Dorothy Cayley's original research into Tulip Breaking Virus is now available to view via a paywall on the online Wiley Library at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/> :-

Cayley, D.M. (1928). *Breaking in Tulips*. *Annals of Applied Biology*, Volume 15 Issue 4 pp529-539

Cayley, D.M. (1932). *Breaking in Tulips II*. *Annals of Applied Biology*, Volume 19 Issue 2 pp 153-172,

9. Anonymous. *Midland Florist and Suburban Horticulturist*. This is the old *Midland Florist* magazine now bound as several volumes.

10. Wilfrid Blunt's informative text accompanies two collector's books of botanical illustrations:

Blunt, W. (1950). *Tulipomania*. With 16 colour plates.

Blunt, W. (1977). *Tulips and Tulipomania*. With botanical illustrations by Rory McEwen.

## Yorkshiremen find a new way to protect tulips!



# Judging a gardening book by its cover

Frazer Henderson

Whilst browsing the gardening section of a well-known, second-hand book shop in Keswick I chanced on this charming *Penguin Handbook*. The faded spine gave little away - the author's name and the Penguin number PH42. Indeed, had it not been a small book placed incongruously between two sturdy books on woody perennials I would have passed it over. However, an urge to sort the shelf - and who among us has not done that? - caused me to extricate it with care. As I took it into my palms I looked down on a vivacious flower-filled cover. It was instantly recognisable as an early design by David Gentlemen, an artist who later became, probably, our best commemorative postage stamp designer and also, in my view, our least appreciated designer in terms of public honours.

Anyway, in his cover vignette he has captured wonderfully a village summer flower show in the late 1950s. All the characters are present: the earnest vicar, with his new camera, engaged in a long monologue with the local, ex-military squire who is studiously avoiding eye-contact whilst bracing his frame with his shooting-stick; the self-absorbed middle class couple, centre-stage; the flat-capped allotment holders; two young beaux one in a blue jacket the other brown, for whom the main attraction is their flaxen-haired companions; the competitive gardeners, father and son, in short-sleeved order; and, the well-order woman, in yellow, repositioning the place cards to enable the public to see better her husband's 1st prize. What is abundantly clear from the image is the sense of occasion - everyone has clearly made an effort for the event, as can be seen from their dress.

It is often true that one should "Never judge a book by its cover" however the content of *Flower-growing for Shows* by E.R. Janes is, as one would expect from someone hailed 'as the greatest horticultural showman in the world', a *tour de force*. In 224 tightly packed and well-illustrated pages, we are given all the information we require on how to be a successful flower-show competitor: covering tools, cultivation (including an A-Z of plants suitable for showing), selection, preparation, packaging, transportation, presentation and exhibition.

On tulips, Mr Janes discusses only Dutch varieties. His advice on cutting and selection holds true today: "Tulips should be cut just below the first leaflet on the stem and above the second whole leaf, either in the cool early morning or late evening, while they are





**The cover of E.R. Janes' classic guide gives a glimpse of flower shows as they were in the post-war era. Photo: Frazer Henderson**

turgid. They should be bunched and placed upright at once. If, in spite of efforts, the blooms begin to flop, an upright stick should go down the centre of the bunch to keep all the blooms upright. Select closed blooms about three parts expanded.”

On preparing for the show he states “there is little to be done except to check them if too far forward or to advance them if late. Forward blooms may be retarded by placing a silken thread around the middle of the bloom to prevent expansion, and by putting a few hundredweight of ice in the room or shed in which they stand – treatment which cools the air instantly”. Good advice, but fortunately now most, if not all, have access to a refrigerator which is much more convenient than sourcing a few hundredweight of ice and turning, perhaps, a modern shed into an indoor paddling pool.

The advice on packing remains true today as witnessed in blooms arriving by air to our shows from Sweden – “stems in bundles lain flat in a paper lined box”. On presentation we are advised to keep the blooms closed with thread and released just before the announcement that judging is to begin so that for showing the flower “should not be fully out but should be

quite self-supporting”. If tulips are shown in pots then it is recommended that lengths of 14 gauge wire should be used to ensure that the plants remain upright.

The best advice on growing and showing tulips is contained in his final sentence which simply states that “Showing tulips is an absorbing pastime which all will enjoy as long as attention is given daily and not in fits and starts”. How true, yet tricky when we lead such busy lives.

I have been absorbed, informed and entertained by the content of *Flower-growing for Shows*: I was clearly right to purchase (and judge) the book on the basis of its cover. It is not the first book I've purchased for its cover and, I dare say, it won't be the last.

## Gardening – by chance

Frazer Henderson

**F**or a couple of hours, on a dreich early summer morning sheltering from the rain, I lost myself in a bound copy of Volume IV (1883) of *Gardening* (*A weekly journal for amateurs and gardeners*). Within its clearly written and well-illustrated pages I searched for tulip references. They were few. However, I read that the two best single tulips that year were *T. Brutus*, a fine crimson, and *T. Canary Bird*, a yellow. I believe that Canary Bird was still in cultivation well into the 20th century but of Brutus I drew a blank for any more recent references.

The advice imparted by *Gardening* on growing tulips remains relevant today; in September we are recommended to “Trench it [the ground] 2 ft deep at least, and mix some rotted manure with the soil. Prepare some fibrous turfy loam, place 3in. or 4in. of it on the surface of the beds, and in this the [tulip] bulbs should be planted. Place some sharp river sand round each root [bulb] at planting time, which should be in November.” and in April we are directed to “Cover over the [tulip] beds to protect from a sharp frost after rainfall.”

There are, alas, no mentions of broken flowers or shows, which is a shame, though in truth the focus of *Gardening* is on growing plants and vegetables rather than discussing the merits of exhibiting or the reporting of shows.

I was struck, however, by the use of the term 'Dutch Flower roots' in the advertisements when used to describe bulbs exported from the Netherlands. I hadn't appreciated that the term I had associated with 16th and 17th century botanical/gardening publications was still in circulation on the cusp of the 20th Century. I noted also the cost of the 'roots', of which there was considerable variation in price.

For a single guinea (one pound and one shilling or £1.05, today) George Coling & Son, of Bath, would supply 1000 roots (including 50 single and 50 double tulips) for collection at any railway station in Britain. If a thousand was too much, then William Cliburn of Oldfield Nurseries in Altrincham would supply named tulip varieties at the rate of 100 for 6s 6d (32.5p today) or Dickson & Robinson, in Manchester, could provide bulbs in quantities of a dozen at between 1s and 2s 6d (5p-12.5p today) depending on the variety. Reviewing the advertisers I wondered how many of the nurseries and wholesalers of tulips are still in business however a brief Internet search showed that they all - Daniel Bros., (Norfolk), Coling & Son, Dickson & Robinson, (Cliburn), Schmelzer (Glasgow), Jansen (London) and Veitch (London) - were long gone.



Though material on tulips was scarce, the general advice on gardening and keeping fowls and bees and other matters of interest - as the magazine advises - to the suburban and rural home was informative and engaging. Indeed, amongst the volume's treasures were numerous articles about auriculas with one especially fine series by Rev. Horner on its history and culture. (Do clergy still write such discursive, entertaining and educational material today?)

Anyway, what was a chance diversion plucked from the library on a drizzle-filled morning has become an oft-visited volume providing welcome and enjoyable distraction when I ought to be undertaking more pressing non-gardening or plant-related matters such as the 'chores of domesticity'. Now that's a phrase redolent of the Victorian era - the volume has clearly got to me!

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## The RHS Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip 2020 Yearbook

*The RHS Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip 2020 Yearbook* is available at a discounted price for Tulip Society readers to buy.

In the absence of many shows this year, many of the pages that would usually be filled with show results are packed with an extra helping of interesting articles and beautiful photographs. There are some show reports, including one by James Akers, who gives a view from Yorkshire of the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society's 185th Annual Show, held in Halmstad, Sweden.

If you wish to obtain a copy of the 2020 RHS yearbook, please send a cheque for the discounted price of £10.00 (made payable to RHS) to John Gibson, 14 Waverley Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire. NN15 6NT. Do not forget to include your own name and address when making your request. If you prefer to order it online, you can pay by PayPal, to John's email address, gibbo.john@ntlworld.com which overseas readers in particular may find is more convenient. PayPal payments are £10 for delivery to UK addresses. To EU addresses it costs £14.70 and to the rest of the world the price is £17.30.



# Pests!

Christine Brooks, Sarah Brooks  
& John Gibson

**W**hy is it that tulip bulbs and crocus corms are so attractive to rodents? Maybe they are 'sweeter' bulbs compared with daffodils and scilla though apparently erythroniums too are eaten by mice and voles.

I have learned this because this year I lost almost all of my flowering size tulip bulbs, English Florists' and Dutch, to squirrels. I grow my bulbs in pots, of necessity, and soon after planting I noticed holes had been excavated and I watched a squirrel sitting on the arm of a bench near the door munching away at a large tulip bulb. I thought some Dutch tulips had escaped when they grew beautiful flowers and I thought I might just plant them in a border when they had finished. However, one morning I found a large number of flowers on long stems had been felled at ground level when the squirrel excised the stems to get at the remains of the bulbs.

After I had gone through the stages of 'I'll never grow these again' I set about researching ways of preventing this next year.

Chris Blom of Bloms Bulbs outlines methods people have used including dipping bulbs in paraffin, protecting the ground with holly leaves, growing Crown Imperials nearby to disguise the scent - even a dangerous one from the 1970s - using red lead powder!

I am taken with the method used at Morton Hall Gardens, Worcestershire, where they plant large numbers of Tulips for their tulip Festival (sadly cancelled this year too). Chili powder is scattered in the planting hole and then over the surface, deterring the squirrels. According to Chris Blom, 25 kg of this a year is used. My order of 2 kg arrived courtesy of Amazon yesterday.

**Public Enemy Number One:  
the squirrel, who finds tulip bulbs  
extremely tasty.**





Previous Newsletters have described other pests, like the slugs which ate some of Teresa Clements' bulbs in 2016 and in 2005, Douglas Kydd, having thought he had outwitted the mice and squirrels, came home from holiday to find the sheep had eaten all his tulip flowers.

I could take the advice of a neighbour, a good gardener who grows tulips. While we stood in her garden three feet away from a squirrel munching bird seed from a tray on the ground, I remonstrated with her for attracting them there. Her reply was 'Maybe if you fed your squirrels with bird seed, they might not eat your tulips'.

## You Won't be Late Will You?

I am lucky enough to grow my English Florists' Tulips on an allotment but for the first couple of years that I grew them I had to plant the bulbs in pots due to a lack of open ground at home. They sat on the patio with the other pots and their lodgers next to the shed and the fence separating my garden from my neighbour's garden - and her decking.

Despite our efforts over the years both my neighbour and I had failed to get rid of the resident rats on a permanent basis. In the end I turned a blind eye to them - only occasionally was I aware of movement between the patio pots and a scurrying under the fence to the safety of the decking. I didn't think twice about the security of my precious EFT bulbs - the tulips in the garden had been OK - and none of the other pots had been tampered with.

**Mr Rat has denied all knowledge of any tunnelling and bulb-eating activities, and referred any future questions to his lawyers. Art: Wikimedia Commons**



Winter deepened, and one day I noticed that the surface of the soil in one of the tulip pots had been disturbed but I thought no more of it. Then one morning I found a tulip bulb unearthed and half-eaten. Stupid me! I had ignored the signs and now I was losing these precious bulbs.

I laid wire mesh over the pots but the holes were too big - there was another raid and another bulb was lost. I bought wood and fine chicken wire but didn't have time to make anything of it and a couple more bulbs were savaged. Eventually the cage that I had planned was built but only on the day that I was due to travel with my family to spend

time with my Mum. It was an important day - either Christmas Eve or a birthday - I've blanked it out due to the trouble I got into. Suffice to say we went in separate cars and I was very late for the celebrations. But at least the bulbs were safe and I had won!

The following Spring the remaining bulbs grew well. In order to save the taller flowers from damage by the chicken wire I removed them from the cage. A couple were subsequently decapitated. I had to concede defeat.

## The best laid schemes?

Last year, when I removed the lid from the old laundry basket where my tulip bulbs spend the summer, I was dismayed to find that there was a lot of torn paper inside. Apparently, a pair of mice had decided that the basket would make a desirable residence. Luckily the bottom of the paper bags was intact and by carefully removing the bulbs I managed to keep the varieties separate. That did not stop me cursing the little pests.

When I got to the bottom layer of bags, I suddenly saw a pair of beady eyes looking at me and for a moment I do not know who was the most surprised, the squatter or myself. However, the Micky collected his or her thoughts first and with two leaps escaped and disappeared into a pile of pots. I was surprised how sleek and athletic it appeared to be and was reminded of Burns meeting with a field mouse and did not grudge the escape. However, I do not intend to provide rent free housing for mice or any other pest. When I put this year's crop of bulbs away, I decided that I would treat the mice to bit of cheddar. The two traps were completely neglected for a few days and then the cheese was discovered by the slugs who must have thought that Christmas had come early as within two days they had devoured the lot without fatality. Luckily the bulbs have not been touched by the mice this year.

**Caught in the act. A mouse settles in for a meal within a tulip flower.**





# Obituary

## Jenny Orrell

29th July 1938 – 2nd March 2020

Jenny Orrell, along with her husband Keith, was a very keen gardener and exhibitor at the local shows, Wrenthorpe Gardening Club, and Wakefield Paxton Society, of all forms of garden produce. Although a member of the Society from 2001 the earliest record of prizewinning at the Society's shows was in 2004 with a single second prize at Harrogate, when the Society was responsible for the Tulip Exhibition at the Annual Spring Show. In 2005 Jenny was more successful at Harrogate, and for the first time at the Society's Annual Show. Jenny was the winner of the Brook Silver Challenge Cup for most points in the Novice Section, with the added distinction that her *T. Talisman Breeder*, winner of the Dudmaston Plate for Best Bloom in the Novice Section, was subsequently Premier Breeder in Show and finally the Premier Bloom in Show. The following year, in the Extra Open Classes she had Premier Bloom in that section, with a *T. Wakefield Flame* which was also awarded Premier Flame in Show. With the declining health and the eventual death of Keith, Jenny ceased showing, but had a period of 10 very successful years, winning the Glass Goblet for most points in the Extra Open Classes on at least one occasion.

As many older members of the Society will be aware, Keith was very much involved in the Society's 2011 Heritage Lottery Fund Project in making recordings of individual members, to which Jenny gave much support and was always ready to welcome members to her home and garden. She was a very accomplished musician and taught at schools and privately for many years. In Jubilee Year she created Wrenthorpe Village Singers which has given added interest to the lives of over 50 mainly retired members. She leaves daughter Jo, sons Tim and Nick and four grandchildren. She will be sadly missed.

**James Akers**

Keith and Jenny Orrell joined the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society in 2001. It was an activity they both enjoyed, especially with their friends Pippa and Mike Young. Keith was involved in the Society's archive project and he and Mike interviewed a lot of members to record oral (Orrell!) histories for the Tulip Society's archive. In order to make the recordings, some of the interviewees were invited to visit Jenny and Keith at home and there was obviously some warm hospitality involved so it



**Jenny Orrell was a very keen gardener and exhibitor, winning many prizes for her blooms. Photo: Teresa Clements**

wasn't solely Keith who contributed. As James has said, Jenny enjoyed the competitive aspect of the shows and won prizes for her tulips at Harrogate Spring Flower Show as well as the Wakefield Shows, where her name appears in the list of prize cards in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

For several years, Jenny and Keith regularly represented the Tulip Society with Pippa and Mike at the Tulip Festival held each year at Constable Burton Hall near Leyburn; it involved having a good lunch, but they earned it! They always enjoyed spreading the word about the Society and the English Florists' Tulips, and many visitors will remember them for their enthusiasm and engaging conversations.

I have fond memories of Jenny, she didn't mince her words if she wanted something, but she was quietly kind, and always an energetic, efficient and willing supporter if asked for help.

**Teresa Clements**



# Dates for your Diary

**The Ancient Society of York Florists' Spring Show:** Saturday 10th April 2021. Recreation Hall, The Village, Wigginton, York. YO32 2LL, with 13 tulip classes. Points won in any of the Sections A, B, C and D of this show will count towards winning the Dawson-Brown Trophy when added to points won at the WNETS Annual Tulip Show. Staging Friday, 5 - 10pm, Saturday, 8 - 10am. Viewing, Saturday, 11am - 3pm. Further details: <http://www.ancientsocietyofyorkflorists.co.uk>

**Alnwick Spring Show:** date tbc. Willowburn Sports and Leisure Centre NE66 2JH (just off the A1). Further details: <http://alnwicksspringshow.uk> or email: [gmstarkey@virgin.net](mailto:gmstarkey@virgin.net)

**Harrogate Spring Flower Show:** Thursday 22nd to Sunday 25th April 2021. The Daffodil Society has several classes for tulips as part of the daffodil show. Further details: Chris Bone, 7 Royds Close, New Mill, Holmfirth, HD9 1LR or email: [cbone70@btinternet.com](mailto:cbone70@btinternet.com)

**The RHS Late Daffodil and Tulip Competition:** Saturday and Sunday 1st & 2nd May 2021. RHS Harlow Carr Garden, Harrogate, Crag Lane, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 1UE. At the Bramall Learning Centre. Staging: Friday evening. Judging: Saturday morning. Access to the public: Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Further details: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/rhs-horticultural-competitions> or contact the Horticultural Competitions Manager, Georgina Barter, on 020 7821 3142 or email: [georginabarter@rhs.org.uk](mailto:georginabarter@rhs.org.uk) to register as an exhibitor or request a schedule by post.

**Constable Burton Hall Tulip Festival:** Saturday and Sunday 1st & 2nd May 2021. Constable Burton Hall, Leyburn, North Yorkshire. DL8 5LJ. Further details: <http://www.constableburton.com>

**The Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society's 186th Annual Tulip Show:** Saturday 8th May 2021. Outwood Memorial Hall, 1-2 Victoria St, Wakefield WF1 2NE. Staging 10am to 12 noon. The classes will be called at 12 noon prompt and will be followed immediately by judging. Open to the public 2.30pm to 4.30pm.

## The Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society's Small Show:

Date and location to be confirmed nearer the time. Please remember to let the Secretary know if your tulips look likely to flower much earlier than the date of the 186th Annual Show, or if they are going to be late to flower. This information is essential to help the committee decide on the date and location of the Small Show.

**The AGM:** Saturday 2nd October 2021. Wrenthorpe Village Hall, 1, Wrenthorpe Lane, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield. WF2 0NE. Speaker to be announced.

**Burnby Hall Gardens Tulip Festival:** 24th April to May 9th 2021. Burnby Hall Gardens Pocklington. YO42 2QF. Further details: <http://www.burnbyhallgardens.com>

**Keukenhof:** Saturday 20th March to Sunday 9th May 2021. Further details: <http://www.keukenhof.nl/en>

**Further Information:** Contact the Secretary for schedules or further information about the Society's shows and events - [secretary@tulipsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@tulipsociety.co.uk) and check destination websites for any Covid-19 restrictions such as pre-booked or timed tickets.

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## Stop Press: Anna Pavord honoured

Our congratulations go to Anna Pavord who has just been awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Garden Media Guild. Anna is a Vice President of our Society, regularly supporting us at our shows.

**Renowned garden writer and tulip historian Anna Pavord has just been honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Photo: [Unitedagents.co.uk](http://Unitedagents.co.uk)**





# Tulips in Art



Above: Frazer Henderson discovered this beautiful painted metal box, shaped like a vintage tulip delivery lorry. The signs on the lorry are in Dutch, suggesting that the piece originated in The Netherlands. Photo: Frazer Henderson

Right: This set of 12 early 19th century tulip shaped ice-cream cups came up at auction earlier in the year. The cups were made about 1820-30 by the famous Sèvres porcelain factory, located just south of Paris, and are of a quality fit for the grandest

Society dinner table. At the time ice-cream was a fashionable luxury that only the very wealthy could afford. The cups went for US \$22,500 at Sotheby's. Photo: Carole Gude





## Subscription payments made easy....

A reminder that the annual subscription remains, as it has for many years, £5 - remarkably good value, we hope you agree! (There is an additional one-off joining fee of £5 for new members.) The drawback is that it's easy to forget to pay if you are unable to attend the Annual Show in May, which is the traditional due date. If you haven't done so already, why not set up a Standing Order with your bank to make an annual payment? May 1st each year is a good date for this. You can then relax in the knowledge that your membership will always be current, but you can cancel at any time should you change your mind.

This also works for the Society as it saves paper work and postage - as does payment by online bank transfer if that is your preference.

In either case, these are the Society's bank details, and don't forget to include your name as reference:

**Bank:** Yorkshire Bank (Northgate, Wakefield),  
**Sort Code:** 05-09-64, **Account Number:** 12273858,  
**Account Name:** Wakefield & North of England Tulip Society

We are sometimes asked if we can take payment by Direct Debit; alas, the answer is no.

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## Call for submissions

The annual WNETS newsletter is dependent on the members of the Society for content. If you have a tulip-related article - whether about history, cultivation, WNETS, other tulip societies, or art - that you would like to share, please send it to [editor@tulipsociety.co.uk](mailto:editor@tulipsociety.co.uk) for consideration for next year's issue. We request that all photos be high resolution (at least 300 dpi) to ensure they reproduce correctly in the magazine.

The deadline for contributions is 18th October 2021, shortly after the AGM.



