

WAKEFIELD & NORTH OF ENGLAND

TULIP SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

NO 33 AUTUMN 2021



Established 1836

WAKEFIELD & NORTH OF ENGLAND TULIP SOCIETY

OFFICERS 2021-2022

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, 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, Harnet Gash.

CHAIR Christopher Gill

HON SECRETARY Sarah Brooks

email: secretary@tulipsociety.co.uk

HON TREASURER Jason Clements

COMMITTEE J L Akers, S Brooks, D Bonser, J Clements, T Clements, K N Eyre, J Gibson, C Gill, J Green, C Gude, N Tyers, J Wainwright

EDITOR Christine Brooks

email: editor@tulipsociety.co.uk

Subscription Information: see inside back cover

SOCIETY WEBSITE: www.tulipsociety.co.uk

ARCHIVE WEBSITE: <https://archive.tulipsociety.co.uk>

Front cover: Front cover: Photograph of T. Talisman breeder, awarded 2 trophies in the 2021 Show – the Albert Tear Memorial trophy for overall Premier Bloom and the Keith Eyre Trophy for Best Breeder Tulip in the show. Photo: Christopher Gill

Back cover: Lithograph, hand coloured, from approximately 1850 by Jane Loudon.

The inscription is: '1. Tulipa Gesneriana 2. The Duke of Sutherland (a Bizard) 3.

The Duchess of Montrose (a Rose) - seedlings produced this season by Mr Groom.

4. The Claude (a Bibloemen) 5. The Parrot Tulip'. Photo: Sarah Brooks

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.

Will Your Contact Details Change?

Please remember to let the Secretary know if your contact details change so that we can continue to keep in touch by email and/or post. Send any changes to the Secretary's email or postal address - details are inside the front cover.

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Editorial

Christine Brooks

This year's Newsletter contains the usual wide variety of articles in spite of there being a reduction in 'normal' activities. So, thank you to everyone for your contributions.

The most important achievement this year has been the holding of the 186th show in Wakefield, open to all members. Thank you to those who took on the responsibility of caring for, staging and judging the entries, and then filming the whole process - this was a considerable commitment. While there were fewer entries in number, they were nevertheless of a high standard which augurs well for next year. Covid rules meant that maintaining no more than six people meeting together in the same room was no mean feat.

Those of us who grow our tulips single-handedly, in small plots and often under limiting conditions, should reflect on the circumstances of earlier growers. As late as the 1960s, I believe, bulbs had to be purchased from other members, some perhaps, in the early days, for sums the average working man (or woman?) would find difficult to manage. There are many, like me, who were attracted to the Society largely because of its principle of sharing bulbs freely and the complete lack of commercialisation involved. As the authors of *Flames and Feathers* put it: 'Success cannot be bought, ensuring a truly amateur society'.

From reading about Sir Daniel Hall, it is clear that part of our pride in the Society is that it has enabled the survival of flowers, bred and judged to common standards, over centuries. But it is equally important to recognise that this is not a 'museum' of flowers but very much a vibrant, 21st Century Society. The last new cultivar to be named as recently as 2013 was *T. Halmstad*, bred amongst many other cultivars by John Wainwright, but grown for 10 years as seedling G91-2. Judy Baker grew these on - what patience they both showed! Fortunately, altruism has prevailed and I and many others am now a proud grower of *T. Halmstad* because of the generosity of fellow members.

Speaking of Sweden, I am pleased to say that Ulf hopes to be able to complete his trilogy of 'Identifying' articles next year with one on 'Roses'. We shall look forward to that and to meeting up over the show bench - and the pork pies.

In this edition, we have a refreshing and honest account of the experiences of a novice grower, Dan Smith. However much we research and listen to others' advice, which in this Society is given freely, we all need to have hands-on experience in order to learn. There are no shortcuts, it does not come quickly but always makes sense - in hindsight.

Sadly, there are 4 obituaries in this Newsletter; I would like to thank those who have written them, for giving us an insight into the lives of such interesting people who have made real contributions to the Society. Those of us who are not fortunate enough to have known them, are given a flavour of their characters in phrases such as 'chuckling over the latest stories', 'a stylish dresser', 'kind and generous friend' and 'very much a Midlands man'. Thank you.

A last thought - what would Jane Loudon have thought of 'tulipselectiekar' ?

Chairman's Report

Christopher Gill

It was lovely to finally have the opportunity to meet up again. Members travelled to a new venue at Stanley for this year's AGM, even though there were uncertainties due to fuel shortages. It's been two years since we last met in person and the world has changed; a lot has happened. Thankfully a vaccine has been found for the pandemic with most people being double vaccinated. Chatting on the day I found one member had had their third, the so-called booster.

We had two excellent presentations at the AGM, both from very knowledgeable and experienced members. Keith Eyre and Jane Green gave members the opportunity to re-live the show and see how the judging process worked. James Akers then spoke on the history of the Society and the early shows. Many thanks to Jane, Keith, and James.

Malcolm Hainsworth has decided to lighten his workload by stepping down from the Committee. Many thanks for all his hard work and commitment to the Society. He still remains very active in the background. A personal thanks from me, he helped when I was Vice-Chair. His gift of bulbs and advice has been priceless. This left a vacancy in the Committee and we are thankful that Dave Bonser, a keen grower and exhibitor, has agreed to join the Committee. A warm welcome to Dave.

Whilst still under restrictions we managed a show this year. Even though it wasn't conventional, there were some nice examples of English Florists' Tulips. Most of the flowers to be exhibited had been sent by post, a first for the Society. Some of the exhibits had travelled from as far afield as Sweden. Most of the posted blooms, after being refreshed in water were as good as locally grown. After last year's Swedish show being live-streamed, and such a success, it was decided we would attempt a live-stream for members to share the day. I had a pleasing response from some of the members saying how much they had enjoyed witnessing the judging of the tulips by Keith Eyre and Jane Green. It



Despite the difficulties caused by Covid, we still managed to have an Annual Show. Photo: Christopher Gill

Teresa and Jason Clements assisting with the Society bulb distribution. It was good to see how the process worked, with members donating a good selection of bulbs and then having them re-distributed to fulfill members' individual requests. Hopefully you'll have managed to receive most of what you requested. We can only distribute what has been donated. It's nice to see that people appreciate we are custodians of the bulbs.

I was interested to hear about John Snocken's latest venture. He is going to be out of the tulip loop whilst he concentrates on ceramics and glazes. John's an excellent grower, exhibitor and judge. I learnt a lot when I had the opportunity to walk round with both him and Judy Baker. Hopefully he will soon be back to lift some of the silverware. All the very best to you John.

Here in Southowram it was a cold start to the year. Temperatures dropped to -7C. I have heard it mentioned in the past that cold years make for better feathered flowers. It seems to have been the case this year. In the past I have had very few feathers, but from the same bulbs that produced the flames last year, the markings have been lighter. Unfortunately, I didn't have any good examples. Another noticeable effect of the cold weather was some of the emerging tulip leaves were tinged red, some more pronounced than others. As the weather warmed up and the tulips grew, these turned back to the usual green.

It appears that no two years are ever the same. I'm looking forward to the forthcoming year when hopefully things will be back to as we remember.

was noted this year that most of the main prizes were won by ladies. This was fantastic to see and shows the inclusivity of the Society. Come on gents, we must try harder in 2022.

A new venue has been found for the 2022 annual show, after members felt we had outgrown Primrose Hall. The venue will be the Ossett War Memorial Community Centre. It's a fantastic venue with ample parking. It will be ideal for our show, and I look forward to seeing you all with plenty of tulips to make it a special show.

Recently, Lynn and myself spent an enjoyable day with

Secretary's Report

Sarah Brooks

Prior to the AGM I had to remind myself that last year we had cancelled the meeting due to the social distancing restrictions which made it unfeasible at the time and it was with relief that we were able to meet on the 2nd October under what were almost normal circumstances. But it has sometimes felt like taking two steps forwards and one step back this year for several reasons, not least of which was the double-booking of Wrenthorpe Village Hall for the AGM. My thanks go to the Committee and the members for attending the meeting on the day, and to St. Peter's Church Centre for welcoming the Society at short notice when it became apparent that we couldn't meet at Wrenthorpe.

Overall, the Society has had a good year where both the 186th Annual Show and the AGM have taken place. Much activity has gone on behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of the Society and the support offered to members. However, the cancellation of the Society's garden visit to Mulgrave Castle - when the estate abandoned its open day - was frustrating, especially for Carole Gude who had carefully researched what promised to be a very interesting destination.

In February I took part in an online webinar organised by the RHS to learn about how the Affiliated Societies (of which the WNETS is one) used digital technologies and social media to stay in touch with their membership during the lockdown. This was a welcome interruption which coincided with the height of the 2021 restrictions and it was interesting to see and hear what different organisations have been doing and how their efforts have been received by their members.

By increasing their digital provision, many societies have seen a greater involvement of their members, particularly younger members, and the consensus was that digital engagement will continue to have a higher profile and should be taken advantage of. I came away feeling that we have it about right for now - a private Facebook page for members who like to stay in touch virtually and two public websites which let the world know the Society has a rich history and tradition and is still very active. Even emailing correspondence is one aspect of this technology which we take for granted. At the AGM members also raised the issue of social media platforms and the Committee, which had previously discussed the issue earlier in the year, will continue to review the Society's digital and social media offer.

February also saw a meeting between several Committee members - James Akers, John Wainwright, Jason Clements and myself (very much as a bystander!) - and Noel, James' son, who together reviewed and subsequently updated the Society's websites in terms of



Blooms grown by Swedish members for the Annual Show are revived after their journey from Scandinavia. Photo: Teresa Clements

how they are managed and hosted. The archive site in particular should now be more accessible on mobile phones and tablets and it also has a new address (www.archive.tulipsociety.co.uk). This ongoing support from members and non-members alike is invaluable to the smooth running of the Society and their involvement is greatly appreciated.

The Committee continued to 'meet' regularly online including several additional meetings in advance of the Annual Show and AGM this year. There are still some hurdles to jump to make the technology work for everyone but it does mean that involvement in Committee life can be easily shared more widely, and this has encouraged Dave Bonser from Craster in Northumberland to become a Committee member. Earlier in the year the Committee also discussed how the Society's library could be made more accessible. Thanks to Lynn Gill our Librarian we now have a fully catalogued library database which can be sent to members upon request, and most items can now be borrowed by post.

In February we also began to consider the feasibility of holding an Annual Show. By this time the Government's Roadmap was pinned on the wall and, with the suggestion

that from the 17th May six people could meet indoors, the Committee tentatively began to plan ahead. Luckily one of the reserved Small Show dates fell beyond the main period of restrictions and members were invited to participate by posting or dropping off their English Florists' tulips for the organisers to stage and judge.

In Sweden members celebrated show weekend with a garden party on the 22nd May where we were serenaded online with Ulf Hansson's rendition of *Tiptoe through the tulips*, and on the 23rd May the 186th Annual Show was held at Wrenthorpe, albeit without members and the public in attendance. Even this constraint proved to be an opportunity and the show was filmed by John Wainwright and livestreamed on Facebook so that we could see and hear in real time the show being set up, the classes called and, significantly, the deliberations of the two judges on the day, Keith Eyre and Jane Green. Thanks to all involved in setting up and participating in the show, and to Ulf Hansson and Joseph Wellfelt for their assistance in subsequently making the videos available for John to format for showing at the AGM. I am sure that next year we will be able to welcome members and visitors alike to our new venue at the Ossett War Memorial Community Centre for the 187th Annual Show.

In this digital age we are increasingly used to quick results and amazingly this can also happen with English Florists' tulips. Often though, the early successes of growing these tulips are a result of the previous bulb owner's skill and the quality of flowers can gradually subside. The slower process of learning and responding to a succession of challenges each year can be satisfying though, so don't be put off if your breeders break or your bulbs rot or get eaten by pests! Starting again with a particular cultivar is possible through the generosity of those members who donate their bulbs to be re-distributed. In addition to chatting at the shows, advice on growing and storage can immediately be found in past newsletters on the archive website. Just pick one at random and you will find something that will inform your next step.

Recently-joined members have also taken the plunge to send in articles for this year's newsletter and to share their early experiences of growing English Florists' tulips from which we should all take some encouragement. I sympathise with Dan Smith's sense of being overwhelmed by how easily tulips multiply (some varieties anyway) and I am determined to be more ruthless and root out the poor flowers this year. Your contributions are always welcome to help steer the direction of the newsletter and to inform future readers who will undoubtedly find themselves looking for advice!

Just when I think things will be quieter after the AGM the year becomes intense again with the preparation of the newsletter. I am only on the edge of the process which is driven by the Editor Christine Brooks, guided by Teresa Clements, and the final publication expertly prepared by Sophia Conner - all done, it has to be said, by making use of the digital file-sharing capabilities of Microsoft's 'Onedrive'. I hope you enjoy reading this year's publication - at a suitably slow pace.

Treasurer's Report

Statement of Accounts for Year ending 31st July 2021

Receipts		
	2021	2020
Subs and donations		
Subscriptions	1,007.19	953.61
Donations	180.00	60.00
Total	1,187.19	1,013.61
Sales		
AGM	0.00	116.00
Postal	172.40	142.00
Main Show	9.00	0.00
Other events	0.00	7.50
Total	181.40	265.50
Bulbs		
Dutch bulbs	0.00	448.30
Total	0.00	448.30
AGM & Shows		
Raffle	0.00	149.00
Refreshments	0.00	204.53
Plant sales	0.00	91.50
Total	0.00	445.03
Grand Total	1,368.59	2,172.44

Statement of Assets	2021	2020	Change
Cash Assets			
Current Account	6,920.73	7,497.58	-576.85
Cash in hand	37.78	59.52	-21.74
Total	6,958.51	7,557.10	-598.59
Other Assets			
Sales table stock	473.68	499.22	-25.54
Office equipment	28.27	28.27	0.00
Total	501.95	527.49	-25.54

Payments	2021	2020
Administration		
Newsletter (print and post)	1,135.46	1,196.60
Insurance	240.00	240.00
Stationery, office kit, software	13.93	38.89
Postage	204.74	125.92
Internet site services	6.00	273.67
Total	1,600.13	1,875.08
Purchases		
Sales table	0.00	82.19
Other	0.00	57.77
Total	0.00	139.96
Bulbs		
Annual distribution	150.05	171.35
Dutch bulbs for AGM	0.00	240.00
Total	150.05	411.35
AGM & Shows		
Hall hire, Table Hire	85.50	63.00
Food etc	0.00	163.24
Trophies: Engraving	131.50	326.02
Total	217.00	552.26
Operating surplus/deficit	-598.59	-806.21
Grand Total	1,368.59	2,172.4

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 1 Aug 2021 and found them to be in order.

2. Once again, the society accounts are in deficit, with the cancellation of the 2020 AGM and the reduced nature of the 2021 Annual Show.

3. However, our bank balance remains healthy, and it is pleasing to see members keeping up with their subscriptions. Several members have also made generous donations to the Society, for which we are very grateful.

4. The Society's main web site has moved to a different provider this year. As well as having some technical advantages, this has led to a large reduction in costs, which is very welcome. Thanks are due to Noel Akers and John Wainwright for arranging the move.

Minutes of AGM Saturday

2nd October 2021

The meeting was held at St. Peter's Church Centre, Stanley, starting at 11.30am.

1. Chairman's Welcoming remarks.

Chris Gill welcomed everyone to the AGM and thanked members for finding St. Peter's at short notice as the Society's usual venue at Wrenthorpe was unavailable on the day. It was a welcome relief to be able to meet in person having had to cancel last year's meeting due to the Covid restrictions and our hopes are firmly set on the shows next year. The 187th Annual Show in 2022 will be held at a new venue - the Ossett War Memorial Community Centre - which should be ideal for the Society's requirements.

Several members of the Society had sadly passed away since the last AGM and there was a minute's silence to remember them. Keith Eyre spoke about Trevor Mills - 'Mr. Tulip' - who passed away over the Christmas period last year. James Akers spoke about Vera Holling who passed away in November 2019, Hazel Hesketh who passed away in May this year, and Sally Crosthwaite whose death in 2017 was made known to the Society at the start of the year.

2. Apologies for absence.

Thirty-seven members sent individual apologies before the AGM and the Society's Swedish members sent their best wishes. Thirty-two members signed the attendance list and in addition several more were present at the meeting.

3. Minutes of the previous AGM.

The last AGM was held in 2019 and the minutes were published in the 2019 newsletter. Last year, due to the cancellation of the AGM, the business of the committee was set out in the 2020 newsletter. The committee was retained in-post and members were invited to raise any issues via the Secretary. No objections were received. It was proposed that the 2019 minutes and the actions set out in the 2020 newsletter be accepted by members.

Proposed - Trevor Myers; Seconded - John Gibson. Agreed by the members' show of hands.

4. Matters Arising: none.

5. Secretary's Report: see page 5.

6. Treasurer's Report: see page 8.

7. Election of Officers.

The Chairman read the list of officers as they were at the start of the meeting:

President: The Duke of Devonshire KCVO CBE DL

Patrons: Mr Keith Eyre, Mr James L Akers MBE

Vice Presidents: Mr P Emmett, Mr T Clark, Dr A K Swift, Mrs C Gude, Mrs J Green, Mrs A Pavord, Mrs A Smales, Ms S Akers, Mrs B Pickering, Mr J Wainwright, Mr M Hainsworth, Mr J Gibson, Mr J Pennings, Mrs J Baker and Ms H Gash.

Chairman: Mr C Gill

Secretary: Ms S Brooks

Treasurer: Mr J Clements

Editor: Mrs CM Brooks

Auditor: Mr R Turpin

8. Committee:

James Akers, Sarah Brooks, Jason Clements, Teresa Clements, Keith Eyre, John Gibson, Chris Gill, Jane Green, Carole Gude, Malcolm Hainsworth, Neil Tyers, John Wainwright.

Due for re-election this year were Keith Eyre, Carole Gude and Neil Tyers who had each confirmed that they were willing to stand for re-election. The Chairman confirmed that one post had also become vacant with Malcolm Hainsworth stepping down from the Committee. Chris thanked Malcolm for his long service both as a Committee member and as the Society's former Chairman. The Secretary had received one nomination for the Committee and Keith Eyre said a few words in support of Dave Bonser who was willing to stand for election. The Chairman suggested that the new and existing Committee members be re-elected under one vote.

Proposed - Trevor Myers; Seconded - Margaret Mitchell; Agreed by the members' show of hands.

9. Show dates 2022

It was proposed that the Society's 187th Annual Show be held on Saturday 14th May and that the Small Show be held on Sunday 22nd May 2022. The fixed date for the Small Show was suggested by the Committee prior to the AGM as the following Sunday 29th was considered too late in the season for showing. As a change to convention the suggestion was put to a vote.

Proposed - Harriet Gash; Seconded - Lynn Gill. Agreed by the members' show of hands.

(See also Dates for Your Diary on page 66 for a list of other known show dates at time of press).

10. Any Other Business

James Akers raised the issue of whether the size of the Committee should be increased. The Society's Constitution currently allows for the Executive Committee to comprise the Honorary Officers (President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor) and not more than nine members each serving three years before re-election.

The use of online meetings (typically via Zoom) makes this more feasible and also potentially facilitates the involvement of overseas members. Trevor Myers suggested that if necessary additional members could be co-opted. John Wainwright said that while using Zoom opened-up opportunities he questioned how additional Committee members would enhance the functioning of the committee. Carole Gude suggested that when requested the Society had always received support for its activities irrespective of whether the helper was on the Committee. Dan Smith suggested that more Committee members may lead to greater indecision. Malcolm Hainsworth thanked the Committee members for their work since the last AGM.

The subject moved to the use of social media as a potential means of disseminating information about the work of the Committee. Lynn Griffiths suggested using Twitter to share news (such as the death of a member), help people understand what the Society is about and what opportunities there may be to get involved. Lynn also suggested that Committee meeting minutes should be made available to members. James Akers confirmed that any member could ask for a copy of the minutes. Gill Starkey commented



Retired Secretary Teresa Clements was presented with this silver brooch as a thankyou for her many years of work for the Society. The presentation was supposed to take place last year, but had to be postponed because of Covid. Photo: Teresa Clements

that the Society's Facebook page was very useful and supported a good level of discussion about growing and showing tulips. Polly Nicholson suggested that an Instagram page would be useful too as a very visual means of communication. Sarah Brooks confirmed that the use of social media would be reviewed periodically, but that ultimately, whatever is used needs to be accessible to a good proportion of the membership to make it worthwhile, be effective in supporting informed discussion about growing and showing tulips, and be managed by a Committee member or members with knowledge of the social media platform and the time to manage it.

John Gibson highlighted the need for an open mic and amplifier to support the discussion from the floor so that everyone could hear and participate more easily. Sarah Brooks confirmed that these facilities would be provided at the next AGM.

Finally, Chris Gill presented Teresa Clements with a silver brooch (originally bought by Carol Gude following Teresa's retirement as Secretary, but not presented due to the disruption since the last AGM) and he thanked her sincerely for her work and support for the Society over the years. The brooch depicts two tulips and is engraved with the recipient's initial 'T'.

The Chairman closed the meeting with thanks to all for attending.

Tulips in Transit

Teresa Clements' comments on this year's bulb distribution: "I am very grateful to those people who donate bulbs and clearly take such trouble to select, label, pack and transport them for the benefit of others. It is a great act of generosity and I personally find it quite touching. These people sustain the traditions of the Society, support new growers and safeguard the future of English Florists' tulips."

Around 40 packs will have been sent out this year in response to members' requests; now packed in oatcake boxes rather than tea boxes because we had more bulbs to distribute.

Bulbs returned come variously packaged - labelled bags for dipping into, individually wrapped and labelled, in kitchen towel (soft for protection) and coloured tissue! We don't expect people to do this, but are grateful if they do.

This year, flowers were transported to the Show, some by mail, from distant countries.

Below left: bulbs carefully wrapped in tissue paper. **Below right:** Jason Clements collates the members' bulb deliveries for despatch. **Top right:** blooms for the show from Sweden in their box. **Bottom right:** a cunning method of packing bulbs! **Photos:** Teresa Clements



Another method: these small bulbs were sent by a kind collector and member of the Society from overseas. Not all are flowering size and most are not English Florists' tulips but they are of great interest to other collectors. They looked like a string of sausages! Each 'sausage' had a small group of bulbs and a separate label. All were safely contained, none were damaged in transit or muddled up and the package was small and light weight.



The Wakefield Tulip Society Archive

Jason Clements

This was mentioned at this year's AGM under two separate topics. Firstly, the web site where archive material is available to the public has now moved from www.wnets.org.uk to <https://archive.tulipsociety.co.uk> as a result of changing our Internet Service Provider. There were a number of technical advantages to this, including keeping abreast of ever-evolving versions of software which underpin the site. Equally importantly, the new provider is much cheaper, which gladdens the Treasurer's heart!

Of more general interest, James Akers gave a talk about his recent researches at Wakefield Library, which have resulted in some important new revelations about the Society's history.

This research involved many hours of scrutinising images of 19th-century newspapers local to Wakefield for reports of flower shows. In this period, these are often the only source of information available about the activities of Wakefield florists. Some such sources have been digitised, allowing them to be searched just as one might online, but many are still held on microfiche, necessitating hours of staring into a viewer, turning a handle to scan through pages of blurry type and making manual notes of the occasional nugget of information. Truly a recipe for sea-sickness and headaches!

Below: the title page from a May 1807 edition of the *Wakefield Star*. James Akers' latest research into the Society's history revealed mentions of early 19th century tulip shows in our region, and more evidence of how far back the connection between tulips and beer bottles goes. Photo: WNETS Archive



It has long been the proud claim of the Wakefield & North of England Tulip Society, that it was established in 1836 and has held a tulip show every year since. This seems to have come from a newspaper report of 1877 on the 42nd show of the Society. Thus, the inference that the first was in 1836, and one had been held each year since then, but could this be proven?

James discovered some new sources, including a long-defunct paper, the *Wakefield Star*, in his quest to find the origins of the Society. These revealed that tulip shows had been held in the area well before 1836, as far back as 1807 by the "new" Wakefield Florists Society (which probably became the Wakefield Tulip Society, and eventually the WNETS). This is great evidence that the Society is even older than we realised, but it has proved maddeningly difficult to find a record of the Society's continuous existence in those early years.

This is just the briefest of summaries of his research - you can find much more fascinating detail on the web site, and no doubt even more will be added as further documents come to light from the dusty attic of history!

To read more of James' research, and find more about the history of the Society and tulip growing, go to <https://archive.tulipsociety.co.uk>

Keith Eyre writes:

Dear Sarah,

As a Patron of the Society and Tulip Judge, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to yourself, the committee and members of the Society, for the exceptional effort in producing a brilliant show under difficult circumstances. I trust the membership appreciate the time and effort of yourself and the committee. To put on such an event, which included the livestreaming video over the two days for Facebook, which I'm sure members would appreciate, was a great effort.

So a very big thank you to everyone.

Kind regards,

Keith N. Eyre

The 186th Annual Show

Teresa Clements

There was an air of resignation as the committee realised that, once again, the pandemic had ruined our chances of having the Annual Show in the usual format. Last year, our Swedish members saved the day by holding the 185th Annual Show in Halmstad, which maintained the society's unbroken record of annual shows dating back to 1836. This year, with much planning and cooperation, the 186th Annual Show was held in Wakefield with a schedule of 12 instead of 36 classes and tulips arriving by post or being dropped off at Wrenthorpe Village Hall.

Timing is always critical for exhibitors, having your tulips in top condition for exhibition is a fine art. This year the show had to be held later than usual to comply with covid guidelines that allowed no more than six people to gather indoors. Our Secretary sent precise instructions for postal entries to be sent to volunteers who would then stage them. It seemed a lot to ask. The weather didn't help, the dry days and cold nights of April were followed by storms and hail in May and many potential exhibitors saw their blooms perish before they could think of packing and posting them. However, despite all obstacles put in their way, there were 27 exhibitors and 182 English Florists' tulips on the showbench, a wonderful achievement!

The show was set up on Saturday 22nd May 2021 and judged the next day, Sunday. For those of us who were in the room to help, the rich colours of the blooms in bottles was a sight we had longed to see. Eleven people sent tulips by post, only one box failing to arrive on time. Three exhibitors from Sweden shared a box that arrived the day after posting. The tulips travelled dry and soon revived when the stem was recut and plunged in water. They were in excellent condition and cleaned up well to reach a prizewinning standard. The box contained three folding sunhats, as stated on the Customs Declaration form, with the tulips as, er, 'packing'. This perfectly reasonable arrangement aroused no unwanted attention regarding the importation of plant material.

Gill Starkey's T. 'James Akers' won the James Akers Trophy. Photo: Christopher Gill



A selection of blooms awaiting transfer from their decidedly non-official official beer bottles during the staging of the show. Photo: Sarah Brooks

Gill Starkey from Craster sent her tulips by post and had the most points in the five Novice Classes, for which she won the Brook Silver Challenge Cup. Just one point behind Gill was Eeva Rumpunen of Halmstad, Sweden, who won the Gina Roozen Cup for a set of three breeder tulips. Eeva's tulips also earned the Wendy Akers Trophy for the best flamed tulip in the show, a finely marked bizarre, T. 'Lord Stanley', and the magnificent Turner Memorial Trophy, for the best T. 'Sam Barlow' tulip in the show.

There were seven Open Classes, four of them won by Christopher and Lynn Gill of Southwram. Their tulips were of exceptional quality and one of their breeder tulips, an old cultivar, T. 'Talisman' raised by Dr D W Hardy c. 1860, won the Keith Eyre Trophy for Best Breeder Tulip and went on to win the Albert Tear trophy for Best Bloom in Show.

Last year's Annual Show was live-streamed from Halmstad so members of the Tulip Society's Facebook group could watch the show in real time. This was done again this year, with John Wainwright behind the camera. Keith Eyre and Jane Green judged the show and kindly agreed to their deliberations being recorded. It was a great opportunity to see and hear the process of judging. The commentary from Jane Green as she and her father, Keith Eyre, worked their way along the exhibits is a masterclass not to be missed

by anyone wanting to select and show English Florists' tulips.

For those of us in attendance, it was a quiet show without the usual cheerful bustle of excitement, anticipation and conviviality we enjoy so much. This was particularly evident when the prize-winners were announced with no audience to clap and cheer. We wore our sunhats to show our allegiance and as a nod to Swedish success but missed the celebrations that will have taken place in Northern Ireland and the North East of England as well as Sweden.

There were some positive aspects to the quiet 186th Annual Show, we learned that you can post your tulips if you are unable to attend the show in person. We also have that invaluable record of the two judges at work, which would have been impossible to film with the same detail and focus in the usual circumstances of a full schedule in a busy, noisy hall.

Many thanks to the Hon. Secretary, Sarah Brooks, and Chairman, Chris Gill, for organising the show; to John Wainwright for filming it; to the volunteers who made it happen, to our judges and to all of those who made such a fantastic contribution by exhibiting their tulips - if there were no exhibitors there would be no show. My fingers are already crossed for next year when we will have perfect growing conditions, the full schedule and a proper show!

Left: Eeva Rumpunen's trio of T. 'Sam Barlow', T. 'Albert Tear', and T. 'Aonius' won the Gina Roozen Cup. **Top right:** Teresa Clements won the Stages Cup for one Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered with T. 'Mercury', T. 'Arcadia fl.', T. 'James Wild' fe. **Photos:** Christopher Gill. **Bottom right:** the table of trophies. **Photo:** Sarah Brooks



The 186th Annual Show Results

23rd May 2021

Open Classes

Class 17 Stages Cup, Pan of 3 stages: one Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (6): 1. Teresa Clements (Harrogate): Mercury, Arcadia fl, James Wild fe. 2. Ulf Hansson (Halmstad): Judy Baker, Wakefield fl, Wakefield fe. 3. Maureen Shortland (Spalding): Casius, Casius fl, Casius fe.

Class 18 Silver Plate, Pan of 3 Breeders: one Bizarre, one Bybloemen, one Rose (9): 1. Chris Gill (Southowram): Mercury, Music, Hubert Calvert. 2. Sarah Brooks (Sheffield): Jack Taylor, Talisman, Hubert Calvert. 3. Barbara Pickering (Newmillerdam): James Akers, Wendy Akers, Mabel.

Class 19 Three Flamed (5): 1. Chris Gill: Dr Hardy, Bessie, Wakefield. 2. Lynn Gill (Southowram): Dr Hardy, Bessie, Wakefield. 3. Sarah Brooks: Sir Joseph Paxton, Talisman, Wakefield.

Class 20 Three Feathered (2): 1. Chris Gill: Royal Sovereign, Adonis, Julia Farnese. 2. David Bonser (Craster): James Wild, Adonis, Casius.

Class 21 Pair of Flamed (No entries).

Class 22 Pair of Feathered (No entries).

Class 23 One Breeder (16): 1. Barbara Pickering: Utopia. 2. Teresa Clements: Albert Tear. 3. Ulf Hansson: Sam Barlow.

Class 24 One Flamed (14): 1. Lynn Gill: Lord Frederick Cavendish. 2. Re Mainer (York): Sir Joseph Paxton. 3. John Wainwright (Bedale): James Wild.

Class 25 One Feathered (17): 1. David Bonser: Julia Farnese. 2. Re Mainer: Royal Sovereign. 3. Chris Gill: Royal Sovereign.

Novice Classes

Class 28 Pan of Three: one Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (6): 1. Gill Starkey (Craster): Lunae, Jack Taylor fl, Julia Farnese fe. 2. Eeva Rumpunen (Halmstad): Juliet, Wakefield fl, Wakefield fe. 3. Emilie Wellfelt (Halmstad): Juliet, Wakefield fl, Julia Farnese fe.

Class 29 One Breeder (17): 1. Jules & Dave Hardy (Omagh): Talisman. 2. Emilie Wellfelt: Mabel. 3. Gill Starkey: Solis.

Class 30 One Flamed (13): 1. Eeva Rumpunen: Lord Stanley. 2. Emilie Wellfelt: Wakefield. 3. Daniel Smith (Bollington): Wakefield.

Class 31 One Feathered (9): 1. Gill Starkey: James Akers. 2. Jules & Dave Hardy: Julia Farnese. 3. Daniel Smith: James Wild.



Teresa Clements prepares the blooms for the show table. Photo: Chris Gill

Class 32 The Gina Roozen Cup, Pan of 3 Breeders: one Bizarre, one Bybloemen, one Rose (4): 1. Eeva Rumpunen: Sam Barlow, Albert Tear, Aonius. 2. Gill Starkey: Lord Stanley, Trefoil Guild, Utopia. 3. Emilie Wellfelt: Sam Barlow, Music, Juliet.

Points Classes

Brook Silver Challenge Cup & Glass Goblet, Most points in Novice classes: Gill Starkey.

Bloom Classes

The James Akers Trophy, Best Feather in Show: Gill Starkey: James Akers.

The Wendy Akers Trophy, Best Flame in Show: Eeva Rumpunen: Lord Stanley.

The Keith Eyre Trophy, Best Breeder Tulip in Show: Lynn Gill: Talisman.

Cochrane of Cults Vase, Best Bloom Classes 23-25: Barbara Pickering: Utopia.

The Dudmaston Plate, Best Bloom in Novice Classes 28-32: Jules & Dave Hardy: Talisman.

Turner Memorial Trophy, Best Sam Barlow: Eeva Rumpunen: Sam Barlow.

Albert Tear Memorial Trophy, Overall Premier Bloom: Lynn Gill: Talisman.

Sir Daniel Hall

Teresa Clements

The RHS Bulb Committee has a new trophy that was awarded for the first time in 2020. It was named in memory of Sir Daniel Hall, who was associated with both the RHS and the Wakefield Tulip Society. He was a notable figure of the early 20th Century and was regarded with respect and affection by the many people who knew him. Sir Daniel wrote several books and the last was called *The Digressions of a Man of Science*. His status as a 'Man of Science' was important to him throughout his life.

Alfred Daniel Hall was born in 1864 in Rochdale. His father and grandfather traded in flannel, a soft cotton cloth for which the town was famous. The family was wealthy enough to send Daniel to a private school where he prospered under the care of an inspirational teacher and earned a scholarship to Manchester Grammar School and from there to Balliol College, Oxford. He was a good all-rounder and was popular. He was fortunate in making friends who were influential figures in later life.

After Oxford, Hall became a teacher, he went from the new Hulme Grammar School in Manchester to become Senior Science Master in Birmingham, where he in turn encouraged and inspired his pupils. While working in Birmingham he met and married Mary Brooks, the sister of an old friend. Three years on, Hall became part of a group teaching University Extension Courses. This was a cause that appealed to him very much. He travelled to the South Eastern counties and met people with rural occupations and considered how scientific knowledge might help them in their work. His answer was to establish an Agricultural College.

The 1890s was a difficult time to start such a project as there was little appetite or enthusiasm for lectures and academic endeavour amongst potential students, but Hall was not deterred. He identified a suitable building in Kent, gathered a team of distinguished staff and not long after it opened in 1894, Wye College was recognised as a new and high-achieving institution.

Hall lectured on agricultural chemistry and was equally at ease with academics, students or agricultural workers. He became a great gardener, competing with rose growers and tulip fanciers as well as observing the details of agricultural practices. Recognition of Hall's work at Wye led to his being appointed as the Head of the Rothamsted Institute for Experimental Agriculture in 1902. He was reluctant to leave Wye but his pioneering spirit made it irresistible to take on a new venture. In that same year he also joined the RHS Daffodil and Tulip Committee.

Soil analysis was of vital interest to farmers and Hall realised how inconsistent and unreliable the results could be. Chemical remedies alone were insufficient, a full analysis involved more than the N P K levels. In 1910, he produced his first agricultural book, *The Soil*. This was followed by research into crops, particularly wheat used for breadmaking, the 'strong' flour being imported from America was becoming more popular than English flour and Hall's analysis revealed its properties.

Around this time, he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society (1909) and was invited on a lecture tour of America but he did not lose touch with British farmers. His tours with his colleagues resulted in another book in 1913, *A Pilgrimage of British Farming*, an account of British agriculture in the early 20th century. Hall's continued interest in tulips led to his being one of the first to join the Tulip Nomenclature Committee, set up in 1913, in order to deal with complaints about multiple names.

As if all that wasn't enough, Hall was one of the eight commissioners governing a development fund established by Lloyd George in 1909 to finance new ventures in the countryside. Unlike the other commissioners, Hall had direct experience and understanding of country life and eventually he gave up his position at Rothamsted as the commission work took up so much of his time. With his guidance, the commission established Agricultural departments at Universities and Farm Institutes to educate young people, research work and organised visits from farmers overseas.

Hall preferred to live out of town but settled in Wimbledon to be near the John Innes Horticultural Institute where Bateson, whose friendship he greatly valued, was Director, and where he was able to grow his tulips that he had bred at Wye, nursed carefully at Rothamsted, and now grew to flowering size. He was invited to join the Athenaeum Club and became a popular and greatly esteemed member.

Then came the war, 1914 to 1918. The activities of the commission were reduced and in 1917 Hall left to become Secretary to the Board of Agriculture and was made KCB



Sir Daniel was a pioneering agricultural and horticultural scientist. He was a friend of the Society, and served as president in the 1930s and early 1940s. Photo: The John Innes Centre

(1918). Sadly, for Hall, this was a very dark period, both his sons were serving and the oldest, Roger, was killed outright and then his younger son was severely wounded. Lady Hall died soon afterwards leaving Hall bereft and lonely.

Hall was ill-suited to his new position as a Civil Servant, he was frustrated by the slow process of decision making, the need to consult the Treasury and to factor in political considerations. He was used to independence and action rather than delays and uneasy compromises. After three years he gave up being Secretary and became Scientific Advisor to the Board, which suited him far better. While on business at The Hague in 1921, Hall met a workers' delegate, Ida Beaver, who he married in 1922.

Hall's friend Bateson died in 1926 and Hall took up his position as Head of the John Innes Institute, bringing with him his particular interest in tulips. Under his supervision one of 'Bateson's ladies', research scientist Dorothy Cayley, investigated the phenomenon of 'breaking' in Tulips and showed that this was caused by a transmissible virus (1927). Hall's tenure is remembered as a time of breaking down departmental barriers between the horticultural and scientific departments and he stayed on well beyond the expected retirement age and left in 1939 aged 75.

Hall remained active within the Royal Horticultural Society while maintaining his interest in agriculture and wider affairs. The RHS awarded him the Victoria Medal of Honour 1935, the Veitch Medal of Honour 1939 and made him a Vice-President of the Society in 1936.

After retirement, Hall continued his energetic involvement in good causes, he became a trustee of an educational scheme for the children of agricultural workers and continued his research. He had little interest in technology and didn't drive a car but he did enjoy broadcasting and recognized its potential. He loved music and the gramophone was one device he particularly enjoyed.

It was said that "Throughout his life he had enjoyed exceptional good health; he had always lived temperately and he was spared the pains of long illnesses often associated with old age. He never became old, never lost his freshness of outlook, his vigour or his kindly helpfulness to younger people." After a short illness he died in a London nursing home on 5 July 1942. (Russell, *RS obituary*)

Hall was well respected as a scientist and pursued his many and varied interests with great enthusiasm. His association with the Wakefield Tulip Society came towards the end of his life. He studied tulips with the rigour of a scientist, the eye of an artist and the enthusiasm of a florist. His two books about tulips are still cited as reference works today and one of the tulips he raised, Columbine, appears regularly on the show bench. Given his background, it is little wonder the members of the Wakefield Tulip Society were very proud to be associated with him.



Wye College, in Wye, Kent, which Sir Daniel founded and worked at. The building itself has a Yorkshire connection, it was built in 1447 by John Kempe, Archbishop of York. Photo: Wikimedia Commons/redlentil

Hall is first mentioned in the old minute books in 1934 as a friend of Needham, who was then the Society's President. This was when Hall was head of the John Innes Institute and only seven years after Cayley's ground breaking discovery.

The transcripts below are exactly as they were handwritten in the 1907 minute book.

From the minutes of the meeting on 21 June 1934,

"The committee were delighted by the efforts of Mr Needham in trying to persuade Sir Daniel Hall to make a donation to our Society in the form of bulbs to be sold to new members."

On the 25th October that year,

"The secretary then stated that he had received a quantity of bulbs from Sir A D Hall, via Mr Needham to be sold to members and the money received to be entered as a donation from Sir A D Hall. After a long



Sir Daniel with his second wife, Lady Ida Hall, seen in their gardens. Photo: The John Innes Centre.

discussion it was dissided to divide them into 20 separate lot each lot to be sold at 5/- . Pro A T Meens sec W Beddow} That each member shall pay 1/- toward bulbs on receipt of same."

At the AGM on 7th March 1935:

"The correspondence included a letter from Sir A D Hall accepting the honour of a Vice Presidencie of our society and expressing satisfaction at the £5 his bulbs had raised for the benifit of same."

Later...

"...pro W Beddow sec A T Meens} That secratery ask Mr Needham to try and secure Sir A D Hall to open our centenary Show."

Unfortunately, there is no record of Sir Daniel ever attending a tulip show in Wakefield.

In the minutes of 6th April 1936:

"The first item of correspondence was letter from Sir Danial Hall, which mensioned the Death of Our very valued President Mr Needham this was the first intimation to be recieved and came as a great shock to all members as it evidently append some few weeks previusly."

"Sir Danial Hall in his letter, stated that since the death of Mr Needham, (The Royal National Tulip Society) to which he was Tresurer, and ? President, is now defunct and is winding up the affairs found a small account in the Bank to the credit of the above society. He had consulted with Mr Peter Barr the only other member and they agreed if we would accept, to purchas a cup or a piece of silver, and present it to our society in memory of Mr Needham pro Mr Hiley sec AT Meens} That we accept the cup or silver and create a new class to be called the Needham Cup class, and to be open to all exhibitors open and Local pro T Lockwood sec R Robinson} That the New class consist of a stand of Nine Tulips 3 Breeders 3 Feathered 3 Flamed ie Bizare Biblomen & Roses."

On 17 June 1936:

"On view at this meeting were the silver Trofyes sent on by Sir A D Hall on behalf of the National Tulip Society, which consist of one large Cup one small cup and one piece of Plate, these were greatly admired by the committee."

Hall was again named as President in 1940. The committee met in April 1941 but the war prevented another meeting until 1 May 1942 and by then Hall was nearing the end of his life. He was a benevolent, charismatic and prestigious friend to the Wakefield Tulip Society and we can remember him with affection and gratitude.

Sources

Thanks to Tim Lever, who transcribed the minutes from the old minute books.

The Book of the Tulip, Sir A Daniel Hall, Published by Martin Hopkinson Ltd. 1929.

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Hyacinth Vases

Frazer Henderson

What sometimes starts as curiosity can gravitate to an interest and, if one is not too careful, it can quickly become an obsession. And so it is with me in respect of hyacinth vases.

In the 2012 WNETS newsletter, Marguerite Murray reviewed *The Curious History of the Bulb Vase* and shared pictures of some of her own hyacinth vase collection. I was curious. I had four rather basic yet transparent vases of my own in the greenhouse in which occasionally I had grown hyacinths and narcissi.

Anyway, I was sufficiently intrigued by the article to purchase a copy of the aforementioned book the following year. It is an informative read. I then started noticing vases in charity and antique shops, nothing exceptional but nonetheless sufficiently different to those I owned. In that first year of collecting I must have picked up a dozen or so. Over subsequent years I have become more discerning and eschewed notions of colour variations of standard shapes to seek out the unusual.

I've been fortunate to secure French, Scandinavian, Dutch, Austrian, Belgian and British examples. The collection, which also includes crocus and amaryllis vases now stands at over sixty vases. I keep some in the summer house within a display cabinet, some in the greenhouse and the majority, when not on display or in use, tightly wrapped in storage boxes.

I've presented below a selection from my collection ostensibly to illustrate the variation in shape and form.

Fig 1 presents examples of the conventional squat hyacinth vase popular in the Victorian era. On the left is a tight-waisted glass version in muted caramel tones. The middle vase has been over painted in a style which is both naïve and sentimental. Its black opaque ground does not allow light to shine through and thus the artwork compensates



Figure 1: A trio of Victorian hyacinth vases, showing the classic squat, bulbous style that was favoured in the 19th century. Photo: Frazer Henderson

for a lack of refraction. To the right is a dark, full-bodied green vase which with sunlight behind it casts an attractive soft light.

The vases in Fig 2 are from the early twentieth century. The two caramel-hued vases feature in the Carter bulb catalogue of 1911 and both are imaginatively called 'New Shape'. They were available for purchase for 5d each or 4/6 shillings a dozen. The middle vase was marketed by the Anglo-Belge Glass Association in 1912. It was imported



Figure 2: English and Belgian vases made on the eve of the First World War. Photo: Frazer Henderson

Sugared vases (Fig 4) from eastern Europe started to arrive in the UK in pastel shades in the 1950s with brighter colours appearing in the 1960s. The sugaring is created by gluing powdered glass (known as frit) to the vase, which is then fired to fuse the frit. These vases, though of variable quality, can still be readily obtained as they were imported in their many thousands. Some have gilded or scalloped rims. There are also numerous examples of tall vases often known as Queen vases, a selection of which is illustrated (Fig 5). The three at the back are of pressed glass whilst the two at the front have distinct pontil marks where the glassblower has attached the glass to the rod. These vases are all of continental design.

The final selection shown (Fig 6) are of miscellaneous designs. The caramel vase at the rear left is elliptical rather than the more conventional circular. It is, from its design from the late Victorian or early Edwardian era. The vase on the far right has an external rim on which a wire loop support would rest with a single extension pointing skywards for

Top right: Figure 3 Shows ceramic Dutch vases with decoration ranging from ultra-traditional to futuristic. Bottom right: Figure 4 shows sugared glass vases in a style developed in Eastern Europe. Photos: Frazer Henderson

to the UK and despite the name was probably made in Scandinavia. It is certainly one of the most attractive within my collection with its bell-shaped base and contrasting flared opening.

Some vases (Fig 3) are clearly designed with the tourist market in mind. The four examples shown here were acquired in the Netherlands. The near right pottery vase illustrates a rural Dutch scene with the obligatory windmill. The far left vase portrays a scene of Amsterdam. These two relatively modern vases are very common and can often be found in charity and antique shops in the UK as well as a range of internet auction sites (often at vastly inflated prices). The porcelain vase at the front, which was acquired from a Dutch contemporary art gallery, has an attractive incised geometrical design whilst the rear vase, in total contrast, is of smooth, mirrored glass.





Left: Figure 5 shows the tall style known as a Queen vase. Right: Figure 6 includes a range of unusual designs from different periods. Photos: Frazer Henderson

about 4-6 inches with a terminating loop to provide support to the flower stalk. Inside the top of the vase is a moulded bottomless cup to provide support to the bulb and prevent it falling into the main chamber of the vase. It is an intricate design but clearly demonstrates the interest of the Victorians in combining the practical and the aesthetic. The central mauve vase is a French production with the upper section which has been machine ground to give a pleasingly tactile matte effect upon its smoothly polished tower. The small vase at the front is a dainty promotional Belgian vase produced around the 1970s or early 1980s which would have formed part of a retail display. It is, of course far too small for the growing of any bulb (even a crocus). The collection is still growing but much more slowly - either my obsession is waning or I have, indeed, become much more discerning.

More information on bulb vases can be found at <https://www.hyacinthbulbvases.com/index.html> and for those on social media a dedicated international Facebook group has been established at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/157068571901894>.

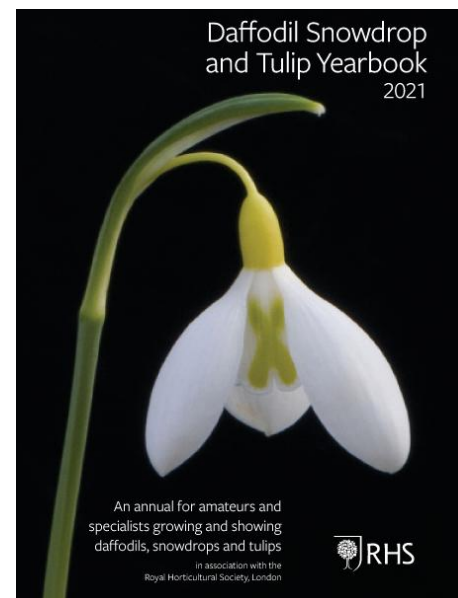
I hope that this short article has stimulated an awareness of hyacinth vases but be careful because it could lead to obsessional activity!

The RHS Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip 2021 Yearbook

The *RHS Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip 2021 Yearbook* is available at a discounted price for *Tulip Society* readers to buy.

The front cover gives a perfect description of the book as 'An annual for amateurs and specialists growing and showing daffodils, snowdrops and tulips.' The back cover gives more detail, and you can be sure of some fascinating reading, helpful advice and superb colour photographs to enjoy.

If you wish to obtain a copy of the 2021 *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.



Bright pops of colour

Daniel Smith

When I was little I spent many happy hours in the garden of my Grandma and Grandad. They had a large garden with apple trees, a vegetable patch, chickens and a greenhouse that was full of tomatoes. At the front of their bungalow was a small neat front garden, much more formal than the garden at the back and the sides. We didn't often visit the front garden because we nearly always used the 'back' door, which faced in the same direction as the front door and was the nearest to where we parked. In fact I don't really remember the front door ever being used - perhaps because the Queen never visited.

However, one spring time I was in this front garden looking at what was growing. I remember seeing some tall red flowers, ones I had not seen before. Their petals felt smooth like satin and their colour was a rich crimson. In today's gardening parlance perhaps the phrase to use would be 'bright pops of colour' but I was only seven or eight so really bright red would be the best description I would have used. I thought they were poppies because poppies were red and had black centres but when I asked my Grandma she told me they were tulips from the Netherlands. She also told me that the Dutch were very enthusiastic about tulips and that at one time they had bought and sold bulbs for large sums of money.

So it was that I first learned about tulips and Tulipmania. Naturally, at that age I had absolutely no idea what variety the tulip was but I suspect it could have been *T. Apeldoorn*. I have always been interested in history. It was my favourite subject at school, helped by very good teachers and also my family. When I was living and working in London, I spent many a Sunday browsing the bookshops of Charing Cross Road. One of the books I bought was *Tulipmania* by Mike Dash, which I still own and which I would probably recommend except I suspect it's a subject we all know a fair bit about.

The red tulips in my grandparents' garden, whilst beautiful, were nevertheless common and it seemed extraordinary that people would have spent vast sums on them. However, this book has illustrations of some of the most valuable of the flowers. When I saw pictures of *T. Semper Augustus* and *T. Viceroy* I could see what all the fuss was about. These were true beauties.

It was only when I had a garden of my own that I really got into gardening. Even now, it is merely an excuse to get outside, as well as a feeling that it is wrong to own a garden but not look after it. The elder of my two sisters was a member of the RHS and she used



***T. Apeldoorn* grown by his grandmother inspired Daniel Smith to grow his own tulips. Photo: Daniel Smith**

to pass on copies of *The Garden* when she had finished reading them. It was in one of the issues (April 2016) that I saw an article about Timothy Clark and his collection of English Florists' Tulips. When I saw the pictures I was once again the young boy in his grandparent's garden looking at tulips and saying "Wow!".

In December 2016, my youngest sister bought me a year's membership of our Society as well as *Flames and Feathers* for my birthday present. I joined after the bulb distribution so it wasn't until autumn of 2017 that I received a parcel in the post containing my first few bulbs. I've only been growing tulips for the last four years so I'm still a novice. What I can tell you is what I've done and why; and that there are many others in the society who know a lot more than me.

With the exception of this year, 2021, I have always planted my bulbs in pots. There are a number of reasons why but the main one is this is what works for me. I don't have a dedicated area in my garden where I can nurture tulips and, with at least eight neighbouring cats fighting over any patch of bare soil, I have no wish to provide them with even more. Cats may make good pets but they are dismal gardeners with awful planting

schemes. I do know that tulips will grow better in the ground and I'm sure one day I'll get around to it.

In my first year I had just two pots, one for breeders and one for broken tulips. Last autumn, 2020, I think I was up to about fifteen pots, which were all for broken tulips. The breeders were planted at my allotment. Most years I've made a mixture of horticultural grit and compost for planting in.

Last year, because I had half a bulk bag of sharp sand I used that instead. Both seem to provide pretty good drainage with maybe the sharp sand just edging it although perhaps that could be because I had a lot of the stuff and I was using it up. If things get really wet then I tend to stand the pots on house bricks. Bollington is just outside the Peak Park and in the hilly part of Cheshire and, like most of the North West of England, it gets its fair share of rain.

I like growing tulips in pots, they make the place look decorative and I can move the pots around. One year I moved my pots into the back garden, which is north facing and therefore cooler and with more shade, another year I moved them into the front garden, which is south-facing so as they could warm up and come on quicker. Also when heavy rain or hail threatens I've moved them under trees and next to the house to try and protect them. I find emptying the pots when the tulips are finished much easier, certainly there are no cases of me slicing through bulbs with spades. I also like that I don't have to do the job all in one go.

I used to mulch the top of my pots with 25 millimetre slate chippings. This made them look decorative but in recent years I've found it hard to come by so I re-used what I had. However, this is not something I would recommend as diseases and pests could linger in the soil particles that invariably become attached to the slate. Last year I used composted bark, which was just as effective as the slate in suppressing weed growth but I did notice signs of digging in the pots. I'm guessing it was birds looking for worms and grubs. I suspect squirrels would have made more of a mess.

Up until this year I never saw a squirrel in my garden (cats do have their uses) but a few weeks ago I opened my back door to see one sitting on the steps in my back garden. We looked at one another with the same expression, "What are you doing here?" "I own the place," I told the squirrel, "That's not what the cats say," it replied before giving an irritated chatter and running off.

The spring of 2019 was very wet and mild and there was an infestation of aphids. In 2020 many of my breeders broke, which I suspect was caused by the aphid plague of 2019. This year also saw a lot of my remaining breeders continue to break; I only had four breeder flowers to choose from and one of them was growing amongst all its broken 'siblings'.



A very fiery broken T. Ballerina: Photo: Daniel Smith

I used to grow both breeders and broken tulips at home and because they were in pots I thought as long as I kept them in separate parts of the garden all would be fine. I always pot and lift the breeders separately and I store each in separate boxes, although both boxes by necessity are in the same cupboard on different shelves. I don't have room to store them in my garden shed and I would be worried about them going mouldy if I did.

I have now started growing them in completely separate places. Last year, I took on an allotment and planted my breeders there. I bought aquatic pots and filled them with a mix of sharp sand and compost. I planted these pots in a raised bed and covered them with a thick bark mulch and finally with chicken wire to keep the pests at bay. I would like to say that growing them at the allotment was a success but to be honest I was a bit disappointed. Something, whether it was a squirrel, jackdaw or magpie, took great delight in ripping off the petals and eating the anthers and stigma. This is one reason why I didn't have many breeders to show.

I'm going to try growing them at my brother's this year, which as he lives about twelve miles away should mean there's a good separation between breeders and broken tulips.



T. Habit de Noce from this year's season: Photo: Daniel Smith

One thing I have noticed is that with some tulips you can see that it's going to break when the bud is still green.

This year some of my tulips got 'tulip fire'. The Dutch bulbs were badly affected and all have been thrown away, including rather sadly a Ballerina tulip that broke most beautifully. The English Florists' Tulips did not seem to be so badly affected but I shall keep an eye on them next year. I have got quite a few broken bulbs but I didn't want to distribute any without knowing for certain that they are clean and that they are good quality.

When I first joined the Society I found it impossible not to treat each bulb as special. I kept each tiny offset thinking that one day it would grow into a champion. In reality they are too small and dry up during storage. So, I am now being a little bit more ruthless. Tulips multiply pretty well and there's no need to keep ones that will never amount to much. The same harsh discipline was enforced with a *T. Lord Stanley* that had broken in a most disappointing way, half of it was red, the other yellow. I don't think that would have gone on to become a better break.

One thing I won't do is cut off all the heads of the tulips after the shows even though I know this would strengthen the bulbs. I do dead-head the tulips, once their petals start falling but that is a sad day. I want the blooms to last for as long as possible. There is nothing better than walking in the garden on a fine spring day and looking at these marvellous flowers because then, for a moment or two, I'm back to being that young boy in his grand-parents' garden staring at tulips and saying "Wow!".

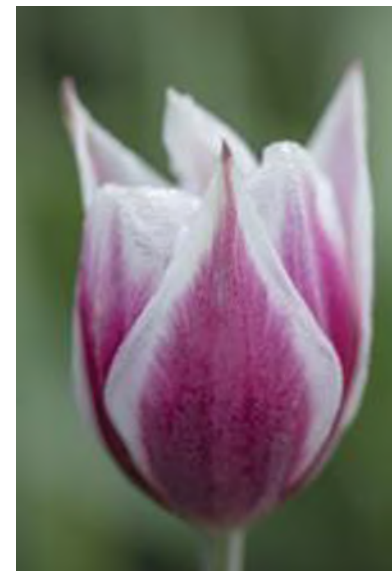
Becoming a National Collection Holder

Polly Nicholson

The successive Covid lockdowns over the past two years afforded me the opportunity to quietly catalogue the historic tulips I grow at Blacklands in Wiltshire, and after some deliberation I took the step of applying to become a National Collection holder with Plant Heritage. However, my incentives as stated in the application 'to help conserve these endangered bulbs, which are in increasingly short supply, and to create a living resource with which to educate and enlighten others', overruled my fears and in late spring I took the plunge.

The application process began officially in May 2021 when Lucy Pitman from Plant Heritage head office and John d'Arcy, coordinator for Wiltshire, came to inspect the plants and the premises. It was towards the end of the flowering season, but there were still enough tulips for a full picture to be gained. Subsequent to the visit I was asked to proceed with an initial collection proposal, which was received positively by the board, and then invited to make a full submission under the Historic category. Fifteen closely-typed pages later the paperwork was complete, and on the 9th September I received news that the application for *Tulipa* (historic tulips) had been awarded full National Plant Collection status.

The label 'historic' isn't very illuminating, but it was the category which I was directed towards by Plant Heritage. Dutch historic tulips form the greater part of the collection, as they are easier to obtain and tend to produce offsets more reliably. I have around 60 cultivars, the earliest being *T. Lac van Rijn*, c. 1620, a Single Early with pointed purplish petals edged with pure white and a bright yellow basal blotch. The bulbs were originally obtained from the Hortus Bulborum in Limmen where this cultivar can be seen flowering in May, and it has increased well under our custodianship. Its small stature and neat shape are not particularly



T. Lac van Rijn grown by Polly Nicholson: Photo: Britt Willoughby-Dyer

eye-catching but it is a tulip that resonates with age and confidence and is a suitable starting point for a collection whose members tend to become bigger and bolder as the centuries progress. *T. 'Striped Sail'*, registered by P. Bakker Mz in 1960, stands a little taller with similar colouring but is an altogether less elegant flower with a lumpen head and irregular markings. I grow it because I am interested in the differences between the tulips and a particular flower does not have to be a favourite to earn its place. That said, I do of course have favourites, and have recently started adding the dazzling Single Early *T. Duc van Thol* tulips which date back to the seventeenth century, and I adore breeders such as *T. Fairy Nymph* and *T. Superba* tall and elegant in muddled hues, which were registered between the first and second world wars.

English Florists' tulips are kept completely separate from all the others I grow, breeders well apart from broken. In the past I obtained some false *T. Columbine* and poorly broken *T. Mabel* and *T. Bessie* which do not meet Florists' standards. These are in a separate bed and I cut a few for London florists who cannot find them elsewhere.

I use a mesh cover stretched over a coppiced hazel frame for most of the EFT, to protect them from the harsh weather conditions we can be subject to at the foot of the North Wessex Downs (we have a lot of hailstorms) and to shield them from the sun as the site is open and south facing. I also think that breaking may have lessened since I started using the mesh - I have a quantity of *T. James Wild* breeders outside the covered frames and they have broken significantly in the last two years. The Dutch bulbs are left to fend for themselves with no cover.

I hold a minimum of 10 bulbs of each tulip registered in the National Collection, up to a maximum of c. 250 per cultivar. We are not short of space but I have learnt that it is important to keep numbers under control, as the planting, harvesting, storage and sorting of the bulbs is laborious and time-consuming. I have a small team who work with me for my flower business, but even when their help is enlisted the digging in late autumn and lifting in July is quite an exercise.

Most of the tulips are planted in open ground in a fenced-off tulip field, grown on a 4 year rotation, but a quantity are kept separately in terracotta pots and sited in our garden away from the main collection. This is a preventative measure in case of a tulip fire outbreak, and it also allows me to display container grown tulips at the workshops and lecture days I hold during the spring. We are certified Soil Association Organic, adding nothing to the soil except homemade compost and mulch, organic slug pellets on the sand layer at planting and nematodes later in the season. Voles are actually our main issue; they use abandoned mole tunnels to wind their way from bulb to bulb and we had



Polly Nicholson among the tulip beds in her garden at Blackland House: Photo: Britt Willoughby-Dyer

to call in a pest controller for the first time this Spring. After flowering we deadhead then use a seaweed feed.

Rather than being onerous, the process of becoming a National Collection Holder has been a positive experience. It has helped me to gain a greater understanding of the collection and how I would like to take it forward, and I have been well supported by Plant Heritage at every stage.

The garden at Blackland House is open in aid of the National Garden Scheme on 22nd April and 1st May 2022, pre-booking advised www.ngs.org.uk (please note that the tulip field will not be accessible on these days)

Polly Nicholson is a small-scale commercial flower grower in Wiltshire.

Jane Loudon - forgotten artist

Christine Brooks

Jane Webb was born to a wealthy Birmingham manufacturing family in 1807 and lost her mother when she was only 12. She and her father Thomas travelled in Europe for a year which enabled her to learn several languages. But her father's business failed and he died penniless in 1824 when she was still only 17.

She was well educated and to support herself, she began writing, poetry first, then in 1827 she published her book, anonymously, in 3 volumes, called *The Mummy!; or a Tale of the Twenty Second Century*. This was an early example of what we now describe as a Science Fiction book. www.projectcontinua.org- 'women who persist'- describes it:

'Her fictional depiction of a utopian society with pre-feminist ideas of equality and scientific advances, written at age 21 to earn a living, illustrates a unique young woman's mind unafraid to tackle the unknown'.

One of the scientific advances she describes in *The Mummy!*, is a steam powered plough and this attracted the attention of John Claudius Loudon, a leading horticulturist and designer, when he reviewed the book. Subsequently, they married and had a daughter, Agnes, who went on to write children's books. Sadly, John Loudon died age 51, of lung cancer. His business had failed too, requiring Jane, once more, to support herself and Agnes. This time, using the experience gained while working with her husband, she turned to writing about Horticulture and also became a self-taught and acclaimed botanical artist.

The V&A web site says that 'she was to Victorian gardening what Mrs Beaton was to cookery. Her beautifully illustrated books on gardening and plant identification sold in their thousands and women all over the country were enthused enough by them to take up gardening as a hobby'.

Jane Loudon as a young woman, seen in a period photograph. Photo: Wikimedia Commons



A well-known book of hers was *The Ladies Flower Garden of Ornamental Bulbous Plants* published in London by William Smith in 1841. The photograph on the back cover of this newsletter is of a lithograph from that book. In a chapter on Tulips, in particular the *T. Gesneriana* tulips, she writes about the raising of new bulbs from seed, contrasting methods in The Netherlands and Britain. Broken tulips were clearly the most desirable:

'The mode of raising tulips from seed in England was till lately a very strange one, and quite unworthy of the advanced state of science at the present day. The seed was saved from the unbroken flowers, or breeders, as they were termed, and consequently the young plants were always self-coloured. To make them break, that is to vary their colours, the strangest methods were resorted to; sometimes they were planted for one season in a hotbed, and the next in the poorest soil that could be procured; and sometimes they were removed to a distant county, twenty or thirty miles from where they were first grown, and then brought back again; but in spite of all the care bestowed on them, they were generally from seven to ten or twelve years before they showed any symptoms of variegation, and some never did at all. A more rational method is now pursued; and the seeds of the handsomest tulips being saved, showy flowers are frequently produced the second year; and bulbs of three years old often produce flowers fit for winning prizes'.

Jane wrote a number of books including *The Ladies Companion to the Flower Garden* 1844 and *Gardening for Ladies* 1851. In 1849, she began editing *The Ladies' Companion at Home and Abroad* which at first was very successful. After a decline in her book sales, she was asked to resign as editor. In 1858 she died, impoverished, despite having been awarded an annual pension of £100 from the Civil List, when she was at her most famous. She was a remarkable woman who lived a sad but remarkable life.



Original frontispiece from *Gardening for Ladies*, one of Jane's best selling books.

Photo: Baylor University/Armstrong Browning Library & Museum

GARDEN VISITS 2021

Christine and Sarah Brooks

Sadly, it was not possible to arrange a garden visit for members this year. These are always enjoyable not just for the places we visit but also for the opportunity to meet up with others and share news.

When Covid regulations allowed, we decided to plan some of our own garden visits over two days in August, managing two gardens each day. If you are ever in the vicinity of these you might like to visit. On our first day we went to:

Morton Hall

This is a privately owned garden, open on certain days for groups but also for individuals to join a 'blended group' of about a dozen for a half day visit. The garden was designed by Charles Chesshire and it features a beautiful Japanese 'Stroll' garden with a tea house and shaded pools. There were few flowers here but an elegant yellow Kirengoshima was thriving near the water. The owner, Anne Olivieri and her husband, visited Japan as part of their research for this. Other notable areas include a walled garden, herbaceous borders, a kitchen garden that includes flowers and parkland that has Fritillarias and Narcissus in the spring. They have a clever way of growing three roses around a central Clematis, with supports. The group size made it easy to ask questions and seek advice.

Every aspect of the garden is extremely well maintained from the raked gravel drives to the organisation of the tour given by the owner - very knowledgeable - and the provision of an excellent light lunch. The impression is one of almost military precision! But the effect is memorable. The website too is extensive and has the *Head Gardener's Journal* with lots of useful ideas, advice and pictures arranged monthly. There is a 'Tulip festival' in May (just Dutch) and a NGS open day. Highly recommended. After lunch we visited:

Top right: Part of an herbaceous border at Morton Hall. Photo: Sarah Brooks.
Bottom right: The Tea House in the Stroll Garden at Morton Hall. Photo: Clive Nichols





Above: Does anyone know the name of this plant at Packwood House? Facing page top: *Morina longifolia* and *Berkheya purpurea* – both very prickly! Facing page bottom left: Herbaceous borders leading to the Folly at Stone House Cottage Garden. Facing page bottom right: August borders at Stone House Cottage Garden. Photos: Sarah Brooks

Packwood House

This is a National Trust property, the house being Tudor in origin with grounds and gardens. These are well known for the topiarised Yews, some dating back to the 1600s. Some of them are understandably showing signs of dying, so the gardeners are taking clever steps to save them. There are however, more interesting parts including herbaceous borders, raised alpine beds and an excellent kitchen garden. The huge wooden circular cover for the dipping pond in the centre of this is remarkable and is stored safely on a wall in a vertical position when not in use.

NT gardens often seem to be similar in their planting but there were some more unusual plants seen here - a dark purple *Dierama* and *Berkheya purpurea*. Some of their own plants were available for purchase, at a reasonable price, always a welcome feature. I succumbed to a very nice pale pink *Watsonia*. Worth visiting if you are in the area. The second day we went to:



Middleton Hall

The house and grounds are run by an independent charitable trust set up in the 60s after a group of walkers came across the derelict property near some old gravel workings owned by an aggregate company. Probably the main interest here is the building which has a long and chequered history.

The Georgian Garden is set inside a red brick walled area and was constructed in the 18th Century. The original walls are notable in being heated and amongst the oldest of their kind. There is an original bothy on the corner. The herb garden is in recognition of the two famous 17th Century naturalists who lived there, John Ray and Francis Willoughby. There is a heritage orchard and a lake. Worth visiting if you are in the neighbourhood. In the afternoon we went off along the M42 to see:

Stone House Cottage Garden and Nursery

An RHS Partnership Garden, this is a private garden owned and run by Louisa Arbuthnott, a well - known and very knowledgeable plantswoman. The garden is small, just 0.75 acre, but full of unusual and special plants most of which are available from her nursery at very reasonable prices. She keeps an extensive list of herbaceous plants, shrubs, trees and climbers, many of which are shown to good effect against the red brick walls of the follies built by her husband. Pictures of these can be seen on the website framing the borders, always full of desirable plants.

Having stopped off there several times on my way to and from Wales over the years, I have accumulated many of her plants though some I have lost. I found a replacement for one of these (*Anemonopsis macrophylla*) on the nursery bench and tentatively asked her if by some chance she might have *Thalictrum diffusiflorum* - another rare and delicate plant; she went off saying 'I'll see what I can do' and returned bearing one - in flower too. One new plant I bought was one of the few shade loving Asters, *Aster Macrophyllus* 'Twilight' which we had seen flowering in the stroll garden at Morton Hall. Highly recommended.

Visting

For more information, opening times and travel details for the gardens, please consult these links:

Middleton Hall (near Tamworth) www.middleton-hall.co.uk

Morton Hall (near Redditch) www.mortonhallgardens.co.uk

Packwood House (near Lapworth) <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/packwood-house>

Stone House Cottage Garden and Nursery (near Kidderminster) www.shcn.co.uk

The Bothy

The two-storied Bothy, nestled in the north-eastern corner of the Walled Garden, is Grade II listed, but its construction date and purpose are a bit of a mystery. The garden walls were built in 1717 but this building was added later. In the 1924 auction catalogue it was referred to as a bothy, but when it was awarded its listed status in 1951, it was described as a pavilion.

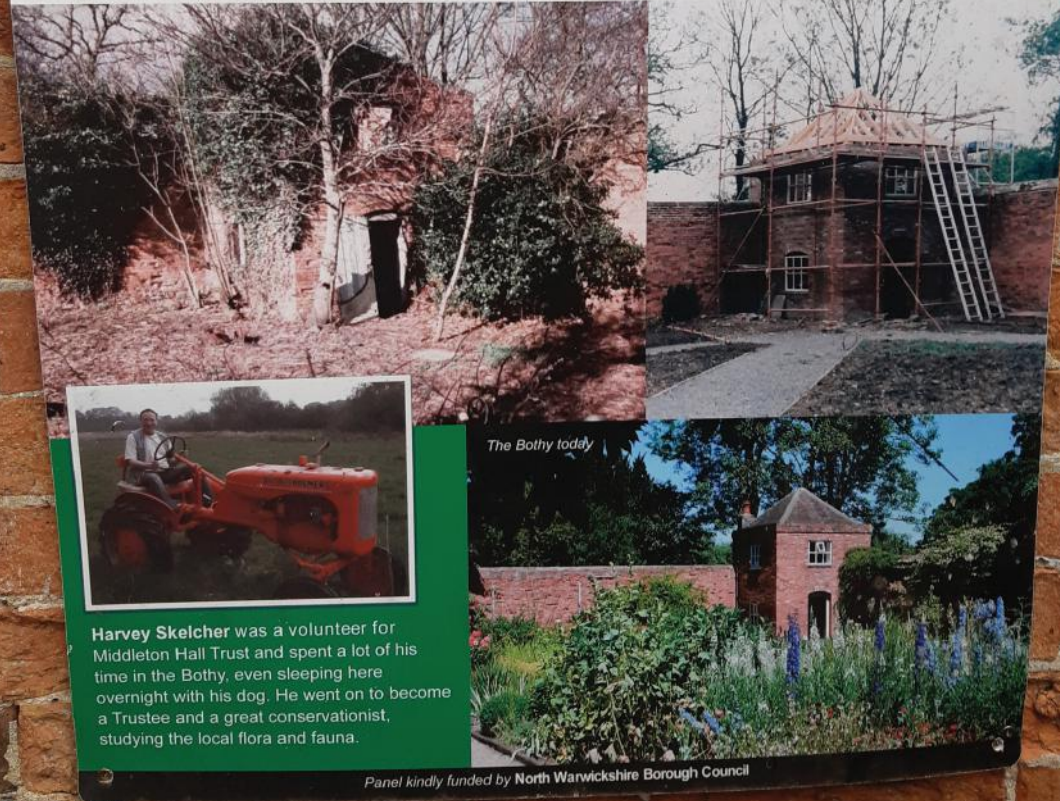
The Bothy's use must have changed over the years as the role of the gardens adapted. Its original use was most likely to provide shelter and warmth for the gardeners who had to tend the fires that heated the walls of the Walled Garden, morning, noon and night.

Originally the building had a flat roof which was altered to its current style by John Averill during his ownership of the Hall (1925-1955).

The Bothy was completely restored from its derelict state by the Trust in 1985.

The Bothy in its dilapidated state, early 1980s

Restoration begins, 1985



This display describes the restoration of the Bothy, a pavilion in the 18th century walled garden at Middleton Hall. Photo: Sarah Brooks

Timothy Clark recollects...

Elizabeth Parker-Jervis 1931 - 2010

While botanizing on holiday on Mount Olympus during the 1970s, Elizabeth and her husband Johnny found a superior form of the Scarlet Lily of Constantinople, *Lilium Chalcedonicum*, for which she obtained an award of merit from the RHS. It was subsequently listed in her catalogue. I had been a customer long enough for it to be flowering in my garden when Tony Venison, then Gardening Editor of *Country Life* visited. In those days he did a column of useful plants, design and planting. Elizabeth was delighted to have this lily mentioned in *Country Life*. The following years made us closer friends and when Johnny died, we would have regular discussions on plants and gardening, frequently over Mary McMurtrie's gardening whom she had known, when her father moved to Scotland. I wrote a book on Mary McMurtrie's care of antique plants.

Many of these conversations would mention Uncle Gussie, her godfather, and how at the age of ten he commenced to teach her how to grade the crocus he grew from seed each year. More importantly he taught her how to judge their gardening potential; selecting a bed of seedlings, marking out the best; then returning four or five days later, taking a second look. This was extremely interesting to me because this was E.A. Bowles of Middleton House, whose books, now mostly a century old, nevertheless retain great knowledge of growing plants. Her father's friendship with Augustus Bowles lasted over many years. Elizabeth was extremely proud of the painting which Augustus had done for her bedroom door just as he had done for all the other children.

I had been growing Tudor primroses for some twenty years. I realised that if I could not make them deal with the changing climate they would be lost forever. Now that I have achieved a strain of Hose-in-Hose, Jack-in-the-Green and Gallygaskin primrose that are reliable during the climate change, they become very like the florists' tulip.

Our relationship was sound. Many people found it difficult to keep a conversation going, not realising that her dyslexia was a hindrance in her communication with others. I realised I learned more about growing plants from her than any book could tell. If she lost her temper with me I would wait for about ten days then telephone her, apologize, and we would start where we had left off previously.

None of the snowdrop books that give her a footnote as the daughter of Dick Trotter mention how he had taught her garden design. She had an unerring eye to appreciate how small details could be corrected with little effort, these were greatly rewarding once completed. One occasion, Elizabeth asked John Grimshaw to drive her to lunch to see the primroses I was growing. Our walk through my garden that day changed the garden

forever. I have a long north wall, shaded by old apple trees, the edge of which bordered the lawn and tended to lose its straight line. She stopped and said, 'this breaks the whole line of the beds growing hellebores or primroses. This garden needs straight lines and no weed'. The courtyard is shaded for most of the day, in the centre is a statue of a shepherdess. The courtyard needs colour during the winter. I used to grow winter pansies which Tony Venison said were the longest flowering winter bedding plants he knew. She said the flowers were too gross. In future I needed to grow smaller flowered violas which were more in keeping with the scale of the courtyard. The following year I did just this. It has given great pleasure to many visitors from the NGS to see the effect.

She was always concerned with improving the quality of the plants that I grew. At the end of every growing season, she would send me a parcel of what she called her orphans. These were the bulbs she had lifted and had not considered good enough or popular enough to be sold through the nursery. Many of these were rare enough to be constantly treasured; *Galanthus viridipice*, Trotters Merlin, the true Merlin, even the *Colchicum* Violet Queen which someone from the Low Countries requested in the Spring in the *RHS Journal*. I must admit when we had one of our misunderstandings, under my breath I re-christened it Violent Queen, but I am not proud of the thought. She was a most honourable friend. I could never understand how, when walking through her own garden she would break off the head of a really rare plant, crush it, then throw it away.

The year that Primrose Warburg died was when we regularly chatted. They had been such close friends, she really missed their daily chats. We went to David Bromley's snowdrop party together, and as we drove to her home, she remarked that her family and their happiness remained the reason she worked so hard to hold the nursery and the house together. In this respect she had the advantage of having taught household care before her marriage. We both agreed we had enjoyed the Queen of Puddings served that day. She did not let me leave until I had written down how to make Queen of Puddings.

A few years later Jenny Robinson was brought to me by Wol and Sue Staines for lunch. Elizabeth and Jenny entertained the table deciding who was eldest, who should sit at the head of the table. She said later that getting away from the nursery made the day a great pleasure.

Although she did not care for the plants that I grew overmuch, there was one she encouraged me to grow. For this I will always be grateful. For some sixty years a pink bluebell has seeded itself around the garden. She told me to let it go wild to see how the seedlings developed. In 2001, following her advice, I submitted an article to *The Plantsman* on various cultivars and their history. I added in the bracteate bluebell, several other hybrids, and produced one of deep magenta and another with a pale blue picotee. They are in my opinion, some of the plants which will cope with the climate change and in this garden will be a lasting memorial to one of our country's most able gardeners of the late twentieth century.

Judgement Day

Sarah Brooks

The 186th Annual Show provided a unique opportunity to record the process of setting up and running a show and allowed the judging of English Florists' tulips by Keith Eyre and Jane Green in the tranquillity of an almost empty hall. By listening to the deliberations between Keith and Jane we can appreciate the level of concentration needed to undertake this task and hence the need for peace and quiet during the judging process. The videos were livestreamed on the day of the show and reshown during the afternoon of the AGM where members were able to ask the judges any questions. They are still available to watch on the Society's Facebook page.

This note is a summary of the key points raised during the judging of three multi-bloom classes which included breeders, flamed and feathered tulips. The Stages Cup is awarded for Class 17 which is for a pan of three stages (one breeder, one flamed and one feathered) and all the flowers must be of one colour (all bizarres, bybloemens or roses). In addition preference is given to blooms of the same variety and quality. In Class 18 for the Silver Plate the requirements are for a pan of three breeders, one from each colour group, and in Class 19 three flames are required, again one of each colour.

The flowers in each group or set should ideally be of uniform size and shape, larger flowers are better than smaller flowers but a set of good small flowers may be judged better than a set of mixed or larger sizes with defects. In single-bloom classes larger flowers are preferable. Broken or 'rectified' flowers should have symmetrical markings without large blocks of solid colour and there should be a clear distinction between the flamed and feathered flowers with the flame having a beam of colour down the middle of the petal. English Florists' tulips are judged from the inside so it helps if the flowers are open although defects on both the inside and outside of the flower will be marked down. As in any tulip class all flowers should have six petals and six anthers. From an initial inspection of the entries good sets of flowers are usually quickly identified and selected for further scrutiny.



Judges Keith Eyre and Jane Green examine the blooms at this year's Annual Show. Behind them John Wainwright films the action so that members were able to watch via an Internet livestream. Photo: Christopher Gill

In Class 17 the breeders are judged first followed by the flames then the feathers. Breeder petals should have only clear blocks of colour with no other markings. Patches of more intense breeder colour but no streaks of base colour are likely to indicate 'black break' (infection with the wrong tulip breaking virus) and the flower (and the set if in a multi-bloom class) will be discounted. Weather marks on the petals (often from rain or hail) or signs of disease (such as tulip fire) detract from the flower's quality, as do crease lines (often caused by rapid opening and closing which can happen in variable weather conditions). The petals should be rounded without tears, 'jimps' (where the base colour appears at the top edge of the petal so to disturb the continuous line of the broken

colour in the rectified blooms), 'nicks' or 'pips' (indentations and protrusions respectively at the top of the petal) although the latter two can be a distinguishing characteristic of some varieties.

The petals of flamed flowers should have a 'beam' of colour up the centre with markings extending out towards and around the edge. The patterning should not be too heavy, i.e. too much breeder colour.

Feathered tulips are the most difficult to grow and the last to be judged in Class 17. They should have continuous colour around the edge of the petal without any 'skips' (where the base colour has broken through), or 'plated' (too much breeder colour forming a block), and the markings should extend to the base. The beam of colour found in flamed flowers should be absent in feathered flowers although a 'thumb' mark of breeder colour at the top of the petal is allowed.

Flowers which are too young or too old may be marked down. Young flowers may not exhibit the full extension of the petal to achieve the desired shape of the flower (and often don't open very well), and old flowers may be faded, exhibit leaching (where the breeder colour runs into the base colour), or curl easily (and often open too much). 'Quartering' may occur where daylight can be seen between the base of the petals and the flower no longer holds its shape and this will be marked down too.

Beyond these principles the individual characteristics of different varieties can influence success as well. For example, the Trefoil Guild discussed in the judging of Class 18 exhibited a yellow shading in the base (bybloemens should have a clear white base) and a brown tinge on the purple petals and the set was marked down accordingly. Where there is no better alternative it is still acceptable to use flowers with characteristics of a lesser quality.

First-placed sets are usually quite obvious but second and third places require the sets to be more closely compared. This can involve a points system or ranking of the individual flowers so as to determine which set has the greater number of the best flowers. In some years the sets may be distinguished by the range and severity of defects and at other times differences in sets of good quality may be more evident.

Throughout the process the judges will maintain a mental note of good individual flowers which may be candidates for Best Breeder, Flame or Feather. These flowers may have been entered into single-bloom or multi-bloom classes.

Additional information about judging English Florists' tulips can also be found in the Society's publication *Flames and Feathers* (available for £10 inc p&xp), and guidance about the judging of Dutch tulips was provided by Keith Eyre in the 2013 newsletter (<https://archive.tulipsociety.co.uk/newlettersnew/>).

Inspector Robot

Teresa Clements

Researchers in the Netherlands have developed a robot that can detect early signs of Tulip Breaking Virus by scanning the foliage as the tulips grow in the fields. Traditionally, this work was done by experts who would walk the rows and inspect the foliage by eye. This was a long and tedious job and required experience and stamina. Infected tulips are swiftly removed to prevent the spread of viruses and protect the remaining crop.

Further research is needed but so far, the robot's results are promising. A tractor pulls the robot unit whose sensors recognise signs of virus infection in the leaves. The robot 'learns' from repeated observations of tulip crops and the detection rate of the software has now improved so that the robot can produce more reliable results than its human counterparts.

This work is funded by a Dutch Public-Private Partnership and is not yet in use commercially as the next step is to develop and perfect the way the robot removes infected plants. Other research groups are working on similar projects [1, 2] and there is much at stake commercially in perfecting the automated system of detection. Minimising the expense of labour and lost stock and protecting the plants from disease without the use of chemicals has financial and ecological benefits for everyone.

For more information:

<https://www.hortibiz.com/newsitem/news/computer-learns-to-recognize-viruses-in-tulip/>

[1] <https://www.greenity.nl/nieuws/tulpenselectierobots-getest>

[2] Polder, Gerrit & Westeringh, Nick & Kool, Janne & Ahmad Khan, Haris & Kootstra, Gert & Nieuwenhuizen, Ard. (2019). *Automatic Detection of Tulip Breaking Virus (TBV) Using a Deep Convolutional Neural Network*. *IFAC-PapersOnLine*. 52. 12-17. 10.1016/j.ifacol.2019.12.482.

The Tulipselectiekar robot roams the fields checking the young plants. Photo: the Dutch publication Greenity



A visit to Ham House

Teresa Clements writes: "We stayed in Richmond for a couple of days in September 2021 and walked along the path by the side of the Thames to Ham House, a National Trust property. By chance it was a day when the cabinets in the house were opened for visitors to see inside. It was a delight to explore the rooms, especially for someone with an interest in tulips. The Seventeenth Century marquetry cabinet was magnificent and there were tulips inlaid in tables and on tapestries throughout the house."

"In September there were no tulips in the garden but it was beautiful and the tea on the terrace was very good too."



Photos: Teresa Clements

The Ancient Society of York Florists' Spring Show Schedule

The Dawson-Brown Trophy is awarded by the WNETS to the exhibitor with most points gained in the Ancient Society of York Florists' Spring Show (Sections A to D of the Spring Show schedule) and the WNETS Annual Show (Classes 11 to 36 - English Florists' tulip classes). Section B of the ASYF schedule covering Dutch tulips is reproduced below for information and the full schedule can be found at <http://www.ancientsocietyofyorkflorists.co.uk/Spring%20Show%20Schedule.htm>

Section 'B' Tulips

- Class 34:** 3 Tulips, 1 vase, any variety or varieties
- Class 35:** 9 Tulips, 1 variety
- Class 36:** 3 Lily-flowered Tulips, 1 variety
- Class 37:** 3 Parrot Tulips, 1 variety
- Class 38:** 3 Double-flowered Tulips, 1 variety
- Class 39:** 3 Yellow-flowered Tulips, 1 variety
- Class 40:** 3 White-flowered Tulips, 1 variety
- Class 41:** 3 Pink or Red-flowered Tulips, 1 variety
- Class 42:** 3 Tulips any other colour, 1 variety
- Class 43:** 5 *T. Kaufmanniana*, *T. Greigii*, or *T. Fosteriana* cultivars
- Class 44:** A Bowl or Pan of Species Tulips containing not less than 5 bulbs
- Class 45:** 1 Pot/Bowl Tulips not exceeding 7"
- Class 46:** 1 Pot/Bowl of 5 miniature Tulips

The magnificent Dawson-Brown Trophy is awarded by WNETS to the member with the most points gained at the Ancient Society of York Florists' Spring Show. Photo: WNETS Archive



The RHS Tulip Competition 2022

The RHS holds an annual Tulip Competition that for the last two years had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. However, plans are in place for the competition to be held again at the RHS Garden at Harlow Carr, Harrogate, on Saturday, 30 April 2022 and Sunday, 01 May 2022. This is a great opportunity for growers to take part in an RHS horticultural show and new and regular exhibitors are encouraged to join in and bring their tulips to make it a spectacular event. Remember that as an exhibitor you will have free admission to the garden to set up your exhibit and to view the results after judging. The schedule is as follows.

The Tulip Competition

Saturday 30th April 2022 and Sunday 1st May 2022

*Competitors may stage any number of **different** cultivars in any class.*

Class 1: Nine Blooms of one cultivar, in one vase.

First Prize: The Walter Blom Trophy

Class 2: Double Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 3: White Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 4: Yellow Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 5: Pink or Red Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 6: Purple or Black Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 7: Tulips of any colour, but not eligible for classes 3 to 6, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 8: Lily-flowered Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 9: Fringed Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 10: Bicoloured Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 11: Viridiflora Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 12: Parrot Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 13: Darwin Hybrid Tulips, 1 cultivar, three blooms in one vase

Class 14: *T. Kaufmanniana*, *T. Greigii*, or *T. Fosteriana* Tulips, 1 cultivar, five blooms in one vase

Class 15:** Multi-headed Tulips, 1 cultivar, three stems in one vase

Class 16:** One Species Tulip, five stems in one vase

Class 17:** One Species Tulip, one pot or pan of at least 5 bulbs in bloom

Class 18:** One vase of tulips, to be judged for diversity and decorative effect. All blooms to be named if possible



The competition will take place at the RHS gardens at Harlow Carr. Exhibitors will have free access to the gardens. Photo: Teresa Clements

*** Note: multi-headed blooms may be shown only in these four classes.*

Best Vase: A crystal trophy will be awarded for the Best Vase of three blooms in the Competition

The Tulip Competition is held alongside the Late Daffodil Competition and the Rhododendron Competition, so as well as the beautiful garden at Harlow Carr there will be plenty more to see and enjoy.

Contact the Shows Department for further details and an entry form, there are no entry fees.

The Shows Department, The RHS, 80 Vincent Square, London, SW1P 2PE

The Show Manager is Georgina Barter

Email: georginabarter@rhs.org.uk

Tel: 020 7821 3142

You can find out more by looking at the RHS website,

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/rhs-horticultural-competitions>

Sally Crosthwaite

1944 - 2017

Sally Crosthwaite was a distinguished botanical artist and an enthusiastic supporter of this Society. She became a member of the society in 1999 and asked for some English Florists' tulips to paint. Wendy Akers was Secretary at the time and friendly messages were exchanged between the two correspondents with tulips being sent on more than one occasion. Sally thanked Wendy for the first batch by saying, "Thank you so much for sending the tulips - all wrapped up and beautifully labelled etc. They arrived the next day, I cancelled my time away in order to be here to paint them. I painted through the nights in order to catch them while they are still alive. They are lovely! Such a thrill to be able to paint them."

Sally's work can be seen as paintings, prints, greetings cards and notably on Limoges bone china plates. It is included in the Highgrove Florilegium and in collections at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Chelsea Physic Garden and other renowned institutions. She was awarded an RHS Gold Medal on two occasions for her outstanding work. In 2006, Sally lent the Society three paintings for the exhibition held at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and six years later sent artwork for a display that was part of the Heritage Lottery Fund archive project in 2012.

The correspondence with Wendy Akers continued until Sally died just a few months before Wendy died in 2017. Neither knew about the frailty of the other and it was only during the past year that the Society became aware that Sally had passed away. We can look back and remember her now as a highly talented artist who loved English Florists' tulips and as a kind and generous friend and benefactor to the Society.

Teresa Clements

T. Mabel painted by Sally Crosthwaite.



Hazel Hesketh

1929 - 2021

Hazel Hesketh was a familiar face at many Tulip Society events. At her funeral, we heard the song *Bright Eyes* from the film *Watership Down*. It reminded us of Hazel's bright eyes, which, with her striking white hair and her walking sticks, made her an instantly recognisable and memorable figure.

Hazel's energy and artistic talents were evident in early life, she was a stylish dresser, enjoyed sport and exercise and gained a National Diploma in Illustration, specialising in Lithography, before qualifying as a teacher. This eventually led to her teaching Art and Crafts at Barnsley Girls' High School, where a colleague introduced her to Trevor Hesketh, later to become her husband of 56 years.

Trevor was heavily involved behind the scenes in making the film *Kes* and acted as a form teacher. Hazel particularly enjoyed being with him at the film premiers and reunions. During their long and happy marriage, they and their two sons, Francis and Paul, enjoyed a family interest in canal boats and waterways. Together they restored a wooden canal boat and moored it at Calder Grove.

Hazel's artistic talents came to the fore in photography and garden design. She designed and helped construct a community garden at Pilley. She also taught art for community groups and charities such as Age Concern (later, Age UK) and the Workers Educational Association. She was always on the lookout for models for her life drawing class at Coopers Art Gallery, Barnsley, and designed 'wanted' posters.

Trevor Hesketh died in 2012 (see newsletter 24); he and Hazel regularly attended Harrogate Spring Flower Show when the Society had a stand there and came to our Annual Shows, AGMs and other events. They enjoyed being part of the Tulip Society and sharing their interest and enthusiasm with others. Hazel was proud to be a long-standing member and, with the help of her son Paul, and despite her mobility problems, she continued to join in with most of our activities until her health failed in her 92nd year. Hazel's lively and engaging conversation will be remembered and much missed by all who knew her.

Teresa Clements



Vera Holling

1927 - 2019

Vera Holling was a familiar face at our shows and AGMs. She gave a lot of support to the Tulip Society over many years and had a friendly and welcoming face with a kindly smile that put you at ease. She spent hours in the kitchen of various halls, often with a big knife in her hand, slicing cakes, making sandwiches and pouring countless cups of tea. As well as being one of the team with the regular helpers in the kitchen, she could often be seen catching up on the news with Bob Bingham, the two of them leaning across the table and chuckling over the latest stories from Barnsley.

Vera died on 30 November 2019 in her 93rd year, a few months after Bob, who had died in July. The distractions of the pandemic in 2020 meant our loss of Vera was not reported in the 2020 newsletter and although this tribute comes a year later than it was due, that does not reflect the high regard and affection many members of the Society have for her.

Vera was used to hard work and always expected to give her best effort to whatever she did, whether it was catering, dressmaking, floral arrangements or any of the other practical tasks she could turn her capable hands to. She was talented and had a 'good eye' but took her own accomplishments lightly. In her later years, with failing health, it was frustration at not being able to get on with life in her usual way as well as coping with the ailments themselves that was hard for her to bear.

Before us, in 2022, is the prospect of holding the 187th Annual Show in the traditional way. There will be gaps where familiar faces once were and Vera will be one of those we will sorely miss. She will be remembered with warmth and gratitude for all she did for us. Vera and her daughter, Carole Gude, were a great team; commiserations to Carole on her loss and thanks for sharing your much-loved Mum with us.

Teresa Clements



Trevor Mills

1935 - 2021

We very sadly learned of Trevor's death in early January of this year. Trevor joined the Society in 1976 and took a keen interest in the English Florists' Tulip, he was made a Vice President of the Society in 1988.

Trevor also had many other connections with the growing and showing of plants, sweet peas, and many other flowers and vegetables over the years.

Because he was very much a Midlands man, he decided to help our Society by taking a Stand at the Malvern Show with the help of his wife Margaret. This was in 1996 which created interest in the area. He then formed the Midland Tulip Society, which grew from strength to strength during the following years.

Trevor's first Show of tulips was held in Warwick. This was in conjunction with The Daffodil Society. Following this success, Trevor held his own shows in his hometown of Burntwood, near Lichfield for many, many years. Both English and Dutch tulips were presented for judging. Keith Eyre was invited to judge on these occasions. After each of his Shows, Trevor would organise a 'tulip feast' in the traditional manner. Trevor was always looking to help his Society and he arranged numerous trips out to Gardens, including helping at a 'Tulips Weekend' at Shugborough Hall. He also did bus trips abroad, one of which was to the Keukenhof and Floriade.

He always attended our own Tulip Shows in the Wakefield area. One thing which he found irksome was the different beer bottles and beer labels we used. He very kindly arranged for Bass Brewery to supply 20 dozen brown and unlabelled bottles which he felt would not distract from the beauty of our tulips. This was in 1989.

Over the years, Trevor and Margaret helped with the Wakefield Society in many ways. He was a dedicated committee man, travelling to our meetings in Barnsley. He was a lovely man.

Keith Eyre



Dates for your Diary

The Ancient Society of York Florists' Spring Show: Saturday 9 April 2022.
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, 4.30-8pm, Saturday, 8-10.45am. Viewing - Saturday, 11am-3pm.
Further details: <http://www.ancientsocietyofyorkflorists.co.uk>

Alnwick Spring Show: date to be confirmed
Willowburn Sports and Leisure Centre NE66 2JH (just off the A1).
Further details: <http://www.alnwicksspringshow.uk> or email: gmstarkey@virgin.net

Harrogate Spring Flower Show: Thursday 21 to Sunday 24 April 2022.
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

The RHS Late Daffodil and Tulip Competition: Saturday 30 April and Sunday 1 May 2022.
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. Competitors benefit from free entry to the gardens. 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 to register as an exhibitor or request a schedule by post.

Burnby Hall Gardens Tulip Festival: Saturday April 30 to Saturday May 14 2022.
Burnby Hall Gardens, The Balk, Pocklington, York, YO42 2QF.
Further details: <https://www.burnbyhallgardens.com/event/tulip-festival-4/>

Constable Burton Hall Tulip Festival: date to be confirmed (usually the early May Bank Holiday weekend - Saturday 30 April and Sunday 1 May 2022).
Constable Burton Hall, Leyburn, North Yorkshire. DL8 5LJ
Further details: <http://www.constableburton.com>

The Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society's 187th Annual Tulip Show:
Saturday 14 May 2022.
Ossett War Memorial Community Centre, Prospect Road, Ossett, WF5 8AN.
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:
Provisionally Sunday 22 May 2022 at Wrenthorpe Village Hall, 1, Wrenthorpe Lane, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield. WF2 0NE

The AGM: Saturday 1 October 2022.
Wrenthorpe Village Hall (as above). Speaker to be announced.

Keukenhof: Saturday 24 March to Sunday 15 May 2022.
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 and check destination web-sites for any Covid-19 restrictions such as pre-booked or timed tickets.

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 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 2022, shortly after the AGM.

Sophia's Tulip gallery

Sophia Conner is the art director of a publishing company and gives her time and expertise, both technical and artistic, pro bono, to helping us produce our annual Newsletter to such a professional standard. These are just some of the photos she took of last Spring's tulips (her first) that we gave her as a small but inadequate token of our appreciation for the work she does for the Society.



Pink and
Stripey AKA T.
Judy Baker



Big Cabbage AKA T. Orange-Princess



Star tulip AKA
Tulipa clusiana
stellata



Orange flame
AKA T.
Ballerina



Pink globe AKA
T. Russian
Princess

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.

Will Your Contact Details Change?

Please remember to let the Secretary know if your contact details change so that we can continue to keep in touch by email and/or post. Send any changes to the Secretary's email or postal address - details are inside the front cover.

