

WAKEFIELD & NORTH OF ENGLAND

TULIP SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

NO 35 AUTUMN 2023



Established 1836

WAKEFIELD & NORTH OF ENGLAND TULIP SOCIETY

OFFICERS 2023-2024

PRESIDENT The Duke of Devonshire KCVO, CBE, DL

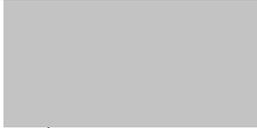
PATRON K N Eyre,

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, Teresa Clements

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Front cover: Best Flame in Show: Lord Stanley, Jackie Kendall. Photo: Michael Chapman

Back cover: How do orange trees connect with the history of tulip growing in the north of England? Find out on page 44. Photo: Eموke Denes/Wikimedia Commons

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Chairman's Report

Christopher Gill

Who could have thought Royalty would disrupt a Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society show – not just Royalty, but King Charles III and Queen Camilla? Traditionally show day is a Saturday, but this year precedence went to the Coronation, leaving show day Sunday. It was a well-supported show, some mentioned a little early for Northern growers, and perhaps not as many English Florist tulips as in a good year, but nevertheless, a good selection of Dutch was exhibited. This year, we held a unique class – a Coronation class. It was a floral decoration to celebrate the Coronation. It was lovely to see Florence Bell win this gaining her the Elizabeth Smith silver medal. I do hope this will encourage her to continue within the Society.

The BBC stated February was the driest for 30 years and the Met Office said that March was the wettest for 40 years. Could this have contributed to the increased numbers of complaints of Tulip Fire? The Society has produced advice and suggestions relating to the problem, but if you have found anything that helps, let us know and we will pass it on.

I was very pleased to hear that Keith Eyre, a patron of the Society, has been presented with the Harlow Carr Medal at the RHS awards ceremony on the 6th March 2023. Keith's unique contribution to the survival of the English Florists' Tulip was recognized by his being presented with this medal, an award made annually to someone who has made a significant contribution to horticulture in the North of England. For Keith, a Yorkshireman, and lifelong tulip enthusiast, the award affirms his remarkable record in conserving English Florists' tulips and encouraging others to do so. Well done Keith.

Lynn and I had a productive and enjoyable day helping Teresa and Jason with this year's bulb distribution. We tasked our newest Committee member, Dan Smith, with his wife and son, Amy and Jo, to help. It was nice to be able to give an insight into what is involved. Approximately 50 orders were processed. By the time we were finished we were as a well-oiled machine. We can only supply bulbs that members return. If you requested specific varieties, hopefully you received most of what you wished for.

At this year's AGM, after a great deal of soul searching, I chose to give notice of my intention to step down as Chair. This will happen at the 2024 AGM. By that time, I will have been chair since 2017 and vice-chair for the previous year. It is overdue that we welcome a new face with fresh ideas to take the Society forward. If you have any



**Keith Eyre was given the Harlow Carr Medal at the RHS Awards in the Spring.
Photo: courtesy of the RHS**

suggestions, or would like to propose someone, please contact our Secretary, Sarah Brooks, or any member of the Committee.

I look forward to next year and the shows. Please make every effort to attend, keeping this wonderful Society well supported.

Secretary's Report 2023

Sarah Brooks

In terms of Society events 2023 was successful with two shows (albeit with the date of the Annual Show moved to the Sunday to avoid the Coronation), a garden visit and the AGM, each of which brought members together to share their common interest in tulips and specifically English Florists' tulips. However, for many growers it was also a frustrating year due to the prevalence of Tulip Fire, and a cold, wet and dull growing season further delayed flowering of EFT in the north.

The show reports provide the detail of each day and highlight the contribution of dedicated growers of English Florists', Dutch and species tulips, whether they brought armfuls of flowers or single blooms. As always, the efforts of volunteers in providing lunch and running stalls was invaluable, and Carole Gude's patriotic decorations in the hall at the Annual Show reminded us that we were sharing the weekend with another significant event. One of the highlights of the shows, when the benches were busy with either judges or members straining to view the winners, were the reference tables (well – the reference bar at Ossett!) which included some rarely seen varieties. Another highlight was the success of Class 37 – the Coronation Class – at the Annual Show and the added bonus of being able to award the Elizabeth Smith Silver medal to its winner Florence Bell. The imaginative entries and level of skill involved in the arrangements were an intriguing and entertaining contrast to the uniformity of the other show benches.

The implications of Tulip Fire for the Society and EFT revitalised a high level of discussion between growers followed by advice to all members about how to best

**“It seems likely
that Tulip Fire
will become
more common...”**

manage the disease in a way which conserves the stock of good quality EFT bulbs as much as possible. The effects and management of Tulip Fire in the context of a public garden with mixed borders were also discussed at the AGM during a Q&A session with Katy Merrington who is the Cultural Gardener at The Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield (read more about Katy's talk on page 16). With changing weather patterns, it seems likely that Tulip Fire will become

more common and so we must improve our understanding of this disease and its management in order to protect and support EFT in future years. There is further advice later in the newsletter too (see pages 56 and 60).

In an equally frustrating summer weather-wise we struck lucky on the day of the Society's garden visit to Beningbrough Hall near York and made the most of the afternoon's pleasant sunshine. This was a more informal visit than most, without a guided tour, and members met briefly at the allotted time and wandered through the gardens at will, gathering later in the afternoon for a chat and a cup of tea (and cake of course).

The Committee met online throughout the year and was faced with some challenging issues to consider which ultimately proved to be useful to have to work through. The older varieties of tulips seem to be particularly popular and this filters through to the Society as requests from the press for information, enquiries about membership, and this year a higher than usual number of approaches from writers, photographers and artists who would like support from the Society for their projects involving EFT. These requests are always considered in terms of the potential commitment for members, the level of publicity for the Society, and the need to ensure that EFT are accurately represented.

In addition, discussions about several apparently different issues converged to add weight to the need to increase joining and subscription rates. The Committee drafted a motion to increase the rates and this was circulated to all members in September with the invitation to the AGM. The issue was explored further at the AGM with members posing a range of views about the pros and cons of adopting the change and these are summarised in the minutes included later in the newsletter. After a lively debate the motion was passed and the new rates will apply from next year. I want to thank all the Committee members for their contributions throughout the year and acknowledge both their support and reservations about the outcomes. Read more about this on pages 12-13 and page 72.

As the Secretary I am more aware than most of the level of enquiries about membership, the number which translate into subscriptions and the subsequent level of support at the shows and AGM. It has been really encouraging to see both familiar and new faces at the society's events and to be able to put faces to the names I have corresponded with over recent months and years. One component of the increase in the joining fee is that the Society will now send every new member a copy of *Flames and Feathers* and *Old Flames*, the first of course being considered the EFT bible. *Flames and Feathers* – and the Society's newsletters – not only include colour photographs of many EFT varieties but also articles on the history of the Society, and advice on growing, selecting and showing EFT. Through this change the Committee felt that members of the Society would be given greater encouragement to grow their EFT in a way that will produce satisfying results and to learn how to select good flowers to show. With support, everyone can contribute towards maintaining the standards of EFT especially when they are exhibited competitively where their qualities will be scrutinised and seen by all.

Treasurer's Report

Statement of Accounts for Year ending 31st July 2023

Receipts		
	2023	2022
Subs and donations		
Subscriptions	1,249.17	1,269.96
Donations	469.26	190.00
Bequest	2,000.00	–
Total	3,718.43	1,459.96
Sales		
AGM	66.00	64.00
Postal	138.00	80.67
Main Show	102.60	188.50
Other events	87.00	47.50
Total	393.60	380.67
Bulbs		
Dutch bulbs	599.85	0.00
Total	599.85	0.00
AGM & Shows		
Raffle	324.30	294.00
Refreshments	456.70	314.80
Library book sales	0.00	5.00
Plant sales	167.40	212.00
Total	948.40	825.80
Grand Total	5,660.28	2,666.43

Statement of Assets	2023	2022	Change
Cash Assets			
Virgin Account	5,974.54	6,960.11	-985.57
Lloyds Account	2,807.00	–	2,807.00
Cash in hand	126.46	154.63	-20.21
Total	8,908.00	7,114.74	1,796.42
Other Assets			
Sales table stock	196.58	404.36	-207.78
Office equipment	28.27	28.27	0.00
Total	224.85	432.63	-207.78

Payments	2023	2022
Administration		
Newsletter (print and post)	1,374.32	1,185.71
Insurance	250.00	240.00
Stationery, office kit, software	2.00	3.84
Postage	163.74	121.86
Bank Charges	37.54	–
Internet site services	26.40	14.40
Total	1,854.00	1,565.81
Purchases		
Sales Table	0.00	3.16
Other	32.00	87.00
Total	32.00	90.16
Bulbs		
Dutch bulbs	446.36	–
Annual distribution	140.45	157.09
Total	586.81	157.09
AGM & Shows		
Hall hire	426.50	502.00
Food etc	311.70	142.80
Miscellaneous	16.00	–
Trophies: Re-plating	240.00	–
Trophies: Engraving & Tumblers	396.85	55.50
Total	1,391.05	700.30
Operating surplus/deficit	1,796.42	153.07
Grand Total	5,660.28	2,666.43

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 1st Aug 2023 and found them to be in order.*
2. The £2000 bequest is from the estate of Don Barnes.
3. Unusually, two of our trophies needed re-plating this year. There were no engraving costs in 2022 as only a few trophies were awarded in 2021, so the winners' names were added this year along with those for 2022.
4. Hall hire costs have not fallen (far from it); the apparent drop from 2022 to 2023 is due to a 2023 deposit being paid early, in the 2022 accounting year.
5. At present, we have two bank accounts. In time, all our business will be moved from Virgin Money to Lloyds to avoid the transaction charges the former have introduced.

James Akers

4th November 1937 – 1st November 2023

As this newsletter was being prepared, we received the worrying news that James Akers had been taken ill and despite the care and love he received, he very sadly passed away shortly afterwards. It seemed surreal that only a few weeks before James was his usual self at the AGM and was also making plans to write an article for the newsletter about the Society's archive webpage which he had carefully developed over many years to be the invaluable resource that it is.

James' two horticultural passions were miniature daffodils and English Florists' tulips and for his 'voluntary contribution to tulip horticulture' he was awarded the MBE in 2008. Both James and his wife Wendy were very active members of the Society, with James holding the positions of Secretary and Treasurer and also instigating the publication of this annual newsletter. He was a grower and shower of tulips and daffodils and also raised new varieties of each from seed including *T. 'Rory McEwen'* and *T. 'Ruth Duthie'*, names that are still frequently seen on the show bench. James continued to be a member of the Society's Committee and latterly helped to oversee the Society's Facebook page welcoming new members and passing on advice.

Many will remember James with respect and gratitude for his contribution to the Society and with affection and smiles for his straight-talking approach. He was generous with his advice to members, his time and dedication to English Florists' tulips, and as a host often inviting members to share a drink after a show or AGM. While we commemorate his passing at this time the Committee would like to invite members to share their memories of James, and their stories of how they came to know him, and these will help to shape a full appreciation of his life in next year's newsletter. Please send any contributions to the Secretary using the email or postal address details inside the front cover.

Sarah Brooks

James and Wendy Akers in 2008 at Buckingham Palace when James received the MBE. (Family photo.)



Minutes of AGM

Saturday 7th October 2023

The meeting was held at Wrenthorpe Village Hall, starting at 11.30am.

1. Chairman's Welcoming remarks.

Chris Gill welcomed everyone to the AGM and during the meeting noted the sad loss of Harry Fogg, a former member of the Society. James Akers described Harry as a quiet man who as a consequence was perhaps not well known but who contributed greatly to several horticultural societies including the WNETS.

2. Apologies for absence.

Twenty-four members sent individual apologies before the AGM and a list was made available for members to view, and Ulf Hansson sent best wishes on behalf of the Society's Swedish members. Forty-one members signed the attendance list. Numbers remain below pre-lockdown levels.

3. Minutes of the previous AGM.

The minutes of the last AGM were published in the 2022 newsletter which was sent to all members. The Chairman asked that the minutes be accepted by the AGM:

Proposed – Trevor Myers; seconded – Jane Green. Agreed by the members' show of hands.

4. Matters Arising: none.

5. Secretary's Report – see page 4.

In line with a request at last year's AGM, the Secretary reported that the Society had approximately 290 memberships (mostly single) of which 22 were new memberships and 10 members had left the Society. James Akers asked about the circumstances under which people leave the Society. The Treasurer confirmed that losses were occasionally due to members passing away or resigning, but more frequently it was due to non-payment of subscriptions (despite two reminders).

6. Treasurer's Report – see page 6.

Roger Hinchliffe suggested that ideally the monies received from donations and bequests would be put into an interest-bearing account. Polly Nicholson asked whether winners were responsible for organising the engraving of the trophies they had won, and the Treasurer confirmed that a company in Wakefield is used to ensure consistency in appearance and reinforce local ties.

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 Mrs. T. Clements.

Chairman: Mr C Gill

Secretary: Ms S Brooks

Treasurer: Mr J Clements

Editor: Mrs CM Brooks

Auditor: Mr R Turpin

The Chairman suggested that the Officers of the Society be re-elected: proposed – Trevor Myers; seconded – Roger Hinchliffe. Agreed by the members’ show of hands.

It was noted that in 2024, the Duke of Devonshire will have been President of the Society for 50 years. He was appointed in 1974 when he was Marquess of Hartington.

The Chairman announced his intention to step down at the AGM in 2024.

8. Committee.

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

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

Due for re-election this year were John Gibson, James Akers, and Dave Bonser. John Gibson confirmed that he would not be standing for re-election and James Akers and Dave Bonser each confirmed that they were willing to stand for re-election. Dan Smith had been co-opted to the Committee during the year and had agreed to stand for election. The Secretary had received no other nominations for Committee posts.

In addition, Neil Tyers had previously confirmed his intention to step down as a Committee member.

The Chairman suggested that the existing remaining Committee members be re-elected, and that Dan Smith be elected as a new Committee member:

Proposed – Chris Gill; seconded – Pat Smith; Agreed by the members’ show of hands.

A discussion followed about the logistics of the election process and the commitment involved in being a Committee member. Members are elected for a three-year term but may choose to stand down before this period has elapsed. Each year the members attending the AGM have the opportunity to re-elect three current and any new Committee members, a process which is usually shortened (with the agreement of those present) by electing the Committee en masse.

Nominations for the role of Vice-Chair were invited either during or following the meeting. This is more of an informal, shadowing role prior to standing as a candidate for election to the post of Chair at the following AGM and doesn’t preclude nominations from other candidates at a later date. Christine Brooks asked whether and how the current Chairman had become a Vice-Chairman. Chris replied that he had accepted the role after being approached by the Committee at the time. Trevor Myers asked if the Committee would now select or co-opt a Vice Chair and Chris confirmed that nominations had been invited, but that if this proved unsuccessful then approaching a member would be an option.

It was noted that the Committee meet by Zoom. This is a less popular option than meeting in person, but has enabled the inclusion of Committee members from further afield.

9. Show dates 2024

The Society's 189th Annual Show was proposed to be held on Saturday 11th May 2024 at the Ossett War Memorial Community Centre and the Small Show on Sunday 19th May at Wrenthorpe Village Hall and all agreed. (See also Dates for Your Diary page 70 for a list of other known show dates).

10. Subscriptions – see page 72.

The Treasurer explained that subscriptions rates (£5 single/£6 joint or family) had remained the same since 1997 and barely covers the cost of membership, leaving the Society more frequently reliant on donations and income from events.

The joining fee (currently £5), originally introduced to cover the administration and postage costs of providing new members with basic information about the Society and a pack of English Florists' Tulip bulbs, no longer covers the costs involved. Postage costs in particular have risen significantly in recent years. The Committee also felt that more information about the Society and EFT should be provided to encourage and support new members to develop their interest and to grow EFT to a higher standard.

The Committee had suggested an increase in both the joining fee and annual subscription rate as set out in the motion below:

The annual membership renewal cost to be increased from £5 for an individual, or £6 for a family, to £10 – to cover anyone at the same address. The initial joining fee to be increased from £5 to £15, for which new members will receive a copy of *Flames and Feathers* and a copy of *Old Flames*. Thus the cost of joining the society will be £25 for an individual or family, and £10 for second and subsequent years. The renewal increase to apply from May 2024, and the initial payment to apply henceforth.

The increased joining fee would therefore include the Society's books which provide detailed information about the history, cultivation, and exhibiting of EFT and increases in both the joining fee and subscription rates would cover the day-to-day costs of running the Society. The issue was opened to the floor to debate and ask questions.

John Gibson suggested the higher joining fee might be counter-productive and dissuade people from joining. Chris Gill stated that the one-off payment of the fee would include the Society's books and so would be good value for prospective members with an interest in tulips.

Several members commented on the higher costs of membership of a range of other horticultural organisations and that even with the suggested increases membership costs of the WNETS would be very reasonable. The importance of circulating better information about EFT was reiterated as was the need to avoid running the Society at a loss or by relying on donations etc.

Roger Hinchliffe asked whether the higher rates were sufficient. There seemed to be a reliance on sales at events (of goods, bulbs, lunches etc.) whereas these should generate extra income, and with likely future increases in costs such as postage a greater increase in rates might be more sustainable in the longer-term.

Jason Clements pointed out that income from voluntary support at events made a significant proportion of our income and that most volunteers are members who also pay an annual subscription and don't necessarily grow or show EFT. Gill Starkey pointed out that if the increase in annual subscriptions was too great it might result in established members leaving the Society. Carole Gude suggested that although the

increases seemed large they were valid and should continue to be reviewed and Dan Smith suggested that if the change proved to be unsustainable – either too much or too little – it could always be changed again.

The Treasurer put forward the motion for a vote:

Proposed: Trevor Myers; seconded: Dan Smith. Agreed by the members' show of hands – majority for and one against.

11. Any Other Business

Trevor Myers suggested that special thanks were due to the Committee and all the volunteers who support the Society, and then the Secretary invited members to raise any questions or issues for further discussion.

James Akers stated that in his opinion the quality of broken Tulips was deteriorating year on year and urged members not to send back bulbs from flowers with poor breaks. Chris Gill suggested that there was a need to accept a level of disappointment with broken flowers – not all would be good and poor ones shouldn't be kept – educating members is an important objective for the Society and promotes good quality blooms. Teresa Clements reminded everyone that a certain number are needed each year for the bulb distribution. With careful selection some which may not be of exhibition standard are still useful for making up the numbers – it was disappointing to have to send new members immature bulbs in the knowledge that they might not flower in the first year.

The discussion turned to the potential of grading the quality of bulbs although ultimately marking good flowers where they grow is the key to ensuring that good bulbs are retained for the following year.

Polly Nicholson commented on the historic loss of breeders and highlighted the efforts of John Wainwright in developing new varieties, however answers to her question about whether other members were also breeding new varieties were inconclusive. Several established growers grow breeders with particular care to avoid contamination with Tulip Breaking Virus even growing them at a separate location to broken bulbs. Tom Baker highlighted the quality versus quantity issue – the need to maintain and improve the standards of EFT whilst still encouraging new members to show their flowers – being selective at an early stage is important.

James Akers encouraged members to ask exhibitors for an offset of a good bulb and Matt Smith asked whether there was any scope for a demonstration or instruction at the Annual Show. This would be unfeasible at the Annual Show, but the Small Show is usually a good place to study the exhibits and ask questions. Jane Green stated that if the opportunity arose it was a good idea to accompany an experienced grower to a show



Tulip Fire has been on many members' minds this year. Read more about how to deal with the disease on pages 56 and 60. Photo: Teresa Clements

and learn what is a good or poor flower. Christine Brooks suggested that the Committee might approach growers of good blooms to ask for offsets for distribution. Pat Smith asked if a record of prize-winners and donors was maintained and Jason Clements suggested that to some extent bulbs known to be from very good flowers were sent to established growers as a means of maintaining the quality of the bulb stock. Both Chris Gill and Trevor Myers stated that there were no guarantees even with a bulb from a good flower, but that a bulb from a poor flower will only ever produce more poor flowers.

Katy Merrington asked whether the Society organised trips to see experienced growers growing their tulips. This isn't something which is done formally and would also be too much of a commitment at a busy time of year, but talking to and getting to know established growers at Society events is a good way to develop the relationships that may lead to invitations.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 12.55pm and thanked all for attending.

A Cultural Gardener at the AGM

Sarah Brooks

Katy Merrington was our speaker after lunch at the AGM and we enjoyed hearing about her work as the Cultural Gardener at the Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield. Katy has been responsible for the gardens since their creation in 2019-20 and continues to work with designer Tom Stuart-Smith on the management of the gardens as they mature.

The gardens, which extend to approximately 1 acre, provide a soothing contrast to the austere concrete facades of the building whilst being linked to the gallery by outdoor sculptures which are dotted throughout the grounds. They are very much a ‘special place’ having been created with the help of volunteers and were particularly valued by local people visiting on a regular basis during the 2020 lockdown when the tulips that Katy’s team planted first flowered. A wide range of people of all ages visit the gardens and at all times of the day as they are free and open 24/7, and Katy was keen to stress how important and formative early memories of good quality urban open space are in fostering a high level of care by the public.

Management of the planting – described by Katy as being akin to ‘chess with nature’ – includes a flexible approach, particularly with respect to self-seeding perennials which are allowed to wander (within limits) through a structure of trees and shrubs. Tulips are an integral part of the scheme along with other spring-flowering bulbs, and number somewhere between 5,000– 6,000. They have been planted in repeated groups of 10-30 through the borders where spreading perennials will eventually cover their tired foliage and include a succession of bright and deep coloured Dutch tulip varieties such as *T. Jan Reus*, *T. Mascara*, and *T. Doll’s Minuet*. In a normal year an extra 20% are added to make up declining stocks but like the experiences of many growers the tulips were decimated by Tulip Fire in 2023.

Katy generously shared her experiences of establishing and growing tulips in the context of a public garden. Tulip Fire has been the latest in a succession of challenges





Katy Merrington prepares beds for tulip planting in the gardens of the Hepworth. Photo: The Hepworth Gallery

which many growers will sympathise with including bulbs being ‘feasted on’ by pests and the folly of buying cheap bulbs when a specific colour scheme is planned. Her practical response to Tulip Fire at this scale – with so much already invested in establishing the garden – was to cut off all the foliage and to wait and see what comes up next year. The presentation concluded with a Q&A session which Katy guided through a range of tulip-related issues.

Katy has written previously for the Society’s newsletters in 2019 and 2020, and she and the Hepworth Gallery gardens were featured in the Friday 13th October 2023 episode of Gardeners’ World which can be watched again on BBC iPlayer.

The 188th Annual Show

7th May 2023

The Society's 188th Annual Show took place on Sunday 7th May 2023. It would have been a day earlier, but was put back a day to avoid a clash with the King's Coronation. This comparatively early date was chosen in anticipation of an early season, but this year, the long, cold Spring was at odds with the plan and, once again, exhibitor numbers were lower than anticipated as many growers said their tulips were still green buds. We look back wistfully on the days when show dates could be agreed at short notice to ensure the flowers were at their best for exhibition.

There was some compensation in having an early show during a late season as there were a lot of Dutch tulips ready for exhibition this year. The schedule was changed after last year's show to be as inclusive as possible to make it easier for exhibitors to take part and to give a broad range of flowers for all to see. There were four entries in Class 1, a vase of 18 tulips, one variety, for the John Hardman Memorial Vase, which was won by Polly Nicholson's vase of *T. 'La Joyeuse'*. Polly specialises in heritage tulips and this old cultivar, dating back to before 1863, is smaller than the modern hybrids but the dainty flowers were delicate and pretty.

Lynn Gill's vase of nine *T. Temple of Beauty* won Class 2 for the Perkin Trophy and went on to win the Peter Emmett Trophy for Best Exhibit in Classes 2 to 8. They were such a striking, bright orange we needed sunglasses to look at them, they were a dazzling sight! They beat eight other entries in Class 2, that's 72 blooms in this class alone for the judges to check. The judges had a busy day, with 32 entries in the various classes for a vase of three blooms.

There were 18 entries in Class 8, a vase of five tulips, species or small flowered, which was great to see. These small flowers can look lost in the standard show vases, so this year the rules were relaxed a little so they could be shown in containers brought by the exhibitors. There was some friendly cooperation to assist those who didn't have a suitable vase with them and when grouped together, the collection of entries made a delightful display of form and colour.

Above: Class 13 Royles Jubilee Cup for stand of 9 breeders Judy Baker and Class 14 Local Silver Challenge Cup for stand of 9 different English Florists' Tulips Judy Baker. Below: Class 8 Vase of 5 Tulips (species or small flowered) Polly Nicholson. Photo: Eeva Rumpunen





Class 3 Vase of 3 Tulips, red, pink or orange, one variety. Eric Kendall with *T. 'Fancy'*. Photo: Eeva Rumpunen

In total, there were 303 Dutch tulips and 212 English Florists' tulips in the show. These numbers, though low, were better than expected and although comparatively few in number, the English Florists' tulips were of excellent quality, particularly the breeder tulips, which were a beautiful sight. For those who came despite having no flowers to show, it was a feast for the eyes and a chance to see the show in general and the blooms in particular in a more relaxed way.

Judy Baker brought a magnificent collection of English Florists' tulips, which she managed to stage despite the demands and distraction of a newspaper photographer. Her tulips, grown in Suffolk, where the growing conditions are more favourable, were in fine condition, though she too had more in bud at home. Not for the first time, Judy had almost a clean sweep of the prizes, but the Society's Chairman, Chris Gill, a local lad, put up plenty of good flowers and was a strong contender in almost all the classes Judy entered.

The final decision for Best in Show was between an almost perfect *T. 'Goldfinder'* breeder and a finely marked *T. 'Agbrigg'*. It was a hard decision, but Agbrigg came out on top, as a well-marked broken flower is so much harder to find than a good breeder.



Reference group, T. 'Parisii', T. 'Aonius', T. 'Lunae', T. 'Goldfinder', T. 'Deryn Roberts'. Photo: Eeva Rumpunen

The show was well attended, despite the other events of Coronation weekend, and was officially opened by Professor Jonathan Seville, a distant relative of the notable florist, Sam Barlow (1825-1893). His stories of Sam Barlow, and his remarkable life as a businessman and florist, reminded modern exhibitors of their part in a succession of enthusiasts to be beguiled by English Florists' tulips. After his opening words, Professor Seville presented the trophies.

This year, in honour of the King's Coronation, there was an additional Coronation Class, ("In celebration of the King's Coronation, a floral arrangement using fresh foliage and flowers including tulips, if possible, in any container. Suitable accessories will be permitted"). Eight colourful and inventive entries marked the historic occasion and were fun for all to see. The winning entry came from Florence, aged nine, who was also awarded the Elizabeth Smith medal as the exhibitor under eighteen years old with the best exhibit. The happy cheers of the crowd were particularly loud as Florence collected her prizes from Professor Seville.

The Small Show, with eleven classes, is for English Florists' tulips only, and was held two weeks later at Wrenthorpe Village Hall on Sunday, 21st May 2023. This year we had a late season and many growers said their tulips were not ready for the Annual



Calling the classes at the Small Show. Photo: Eeva Rumpunen

Show, so a good turnout was expected for the Small Show. However, although the number of exhibitors and flowers almost reached pre-covid levels, Tulip Fire ruined many collections this year which meant the total number of English Florists' tulips shown over both shows was significantly reduced. Disappointed growers reported their dismay at seeing much of their stock so badly affected. This is likely to have a big effect on the supply and demand of bulbs for redistribution this year. Many hope for new, clean bulbs to start afresh next year but there may be fewer bulbs available than usual.

Chris Gill, one of the two main contenders at the 188th Annual Show, had a very successful day. He won the Wakefield Vase for most points over all eleven classes and although the Premier Blooms came from three different exhibitors, his *T. 'Talisman'*, flamed, won the Billy Tear Trophy for the overall Premier Bloom. Well done Chris!

There was a good range of different English Florists' tulip cultivars to be seen at both shows. Judy Baker had flowers of some named cultivars that were not included in any of her show entries so these were singled out, labelled and put on a reference table so that they could be seen alongside the tulips in the show. A reference table was also set up at the Small Show. Overall, this is a fantastic resource, a unique opportunity to see



**Professor Jonathan Seville presenting Judy Baker with one of her trophies.
Photo: Michael Chapman**

the range of English Florists' tulips that are currently in cultivation. The displays will never be entirely complete, but access to a collection like this means flowers can be compared, their colours, form, and particular characteristics noted and recorded and photographed, to help with identification. This, together with the competition, the opportunity to meet socially and exchange notes with others, enjoy lunch together and marvel at the beauty of these rare tulips, make our shows two unmissable highlights of the year. Many thanks to everyone who contributes their time and effort to ensuring they take place.

Show Statistics

You may be interested to see some show statistics – there won't be a homework question at the end, so it is safe to read on!

Below on page 25 are a couple of tables where you can see how the number of exhibitors and tulips have changed over the past few years, including the two years that were affected by the pandemic. A gap has been left on the chart, as to link the points between 2019 and 2021 could lead to misinterpretation.



There were patriotic decorations in the hall, and the lunch table even included Coronation Chicken. Photo: Eeva Rumpunen

in 2023, the number of English Florists' tulips fell due to the late season and the incidence of Tulip Fire. After the long wait, this did feel disappointing, the recovery, following Covid, the lockdown, variable weather patterns and Tulip Fire, may take longer than we all hoped or expected. There was some consolation in the rise in the number of Dutch tulips at the Annual Show, but we are a society that specialises in English Florists' tulips, and we need to focus on rebuilding good stock, not only quantity but quality. That can only be maintained by showing the tulips competitively and propagating and sharing the best.

Keep growing your English Florists' tulip bulbs, lift them, grow the offsets to flowering size, show the flowers and mark and keep a careful record of those you have shown. When the judges award cards to the best blooms, you will know which flower came from which bulb. Give all your attention to growing the best so the stock is not only maintained, but continually improved, and we can follow in the footsteps of the old Florists who handed their tulips on to us to safeguard them for future generations.

At the Annual Show, the number of exhibitors grew steadily from 2013 to 2016, then fell slightly and levelled off. In 2021 there was a partial return to normal in an unusual way, with exhibitors' flowers arriving by post or other means of delivery. Then, for the first post-pandemic show in 2022, exhibitor numbers were half of the pre-pandemic total, rising only slightly in 2023. Fewer exhibitors also meant fewer English Florists' tulips in comparison to the pre-pandemic numbers.

At the Small Show, we had a partial recovery in 2022. This year, 2023, there does look to be a return to the pre-pandemic numbers of exhibitors and flowers, but far more were expected because of the late season so the overall total remained low.

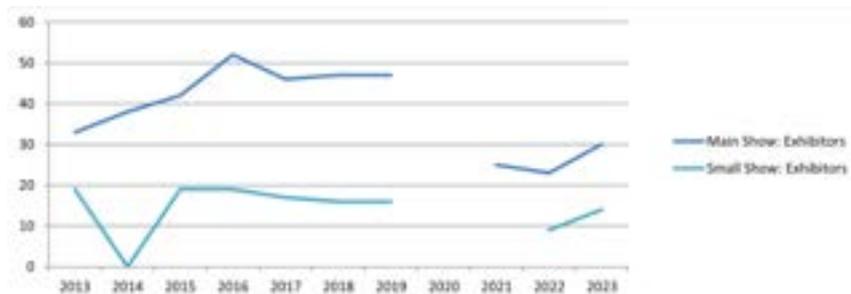
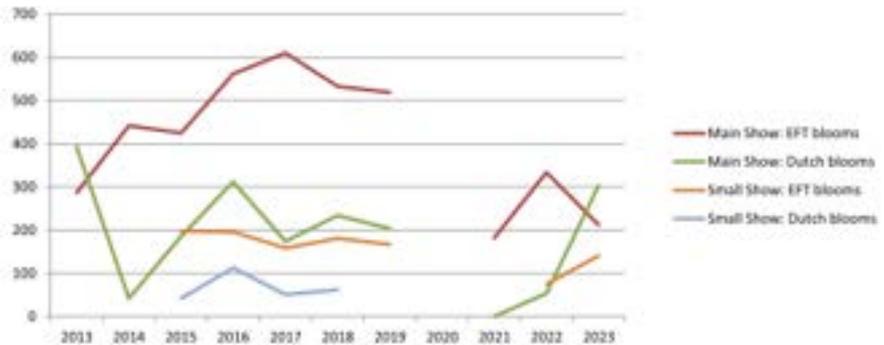
To repeat the point, although exhibitor numbers did rise a little

Show Statistics 2013-2018

		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Main Show:	Exhibitors	33	48	32	52	46	47
	EFT Blooms	287	442	425	562	610	533
	Dutch Blooms	393	42	186	312	174	234
Small Show:	Exhibitors	19	-	19	19	17	16
	EFT Blooms	252	-	198	196	159	181
	Dutch Blooms	0	-	42	113	51	62

Show Statistics 2019-2023

		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Main Show:	Exhibitors	47	-	25	23	30
	EFT Blooms	519	-	182	334	212
	Dutch Blooms	204	-	0	54	303
Small Show:	Exhibitors	16	-	-	9	14
	EFT Blooms	167	-	-	75	141
	Dutch Blooms	-	-	-	0	0



The Coronation Class

Having agreed to move the date of the show from Coronation day, the Committee thought it would be appropriate to mark the celebration by including a fun class for an arrangement including tulips. Many thanks to those who contributed, and congratulations to Florence on winning first prize, and also scooping the rarely awarded Elizabeth Smith medal for the youngest competitor.

The hall was decorated in a festive manner which added to the day rather than detracted from the serious competition, and we even had Coronation Chicken!

Carole Gude

Below: Florence Bell won first prize in the special Coronation class at this year's show. Photo by Michael Chapman (Florence's Grandfather)

Right: some of the exhibits. Photos: Eeva Rumpunen





Wholesale & Retail of Kingstons Florist Services
10000 Avenue Road, 10th May 2023

The 188th Annual Show Results

7th May 2023

Vase Classes

Class 1 The John Hardman Memorial, Vase of 18 Tulips (One variety) (4): 1. Polly Nicholson (Calne): La Joyeuse. 2. Teresa Clements (Harrogate): Russian Princess. 3. Lynn Gill (Southowram): Olympic Flame.

Class 2 The Perkin Trophy, Vase of 9 Tulips (One variety) (9): 1. Lynn Gill: Temple of Beauty. 2. Greta Smith (Preston): Ronaldo. 3. Polly Nicholson: unknown.

Class 3 Vase of 3 Tulips, red, pink or orange (One variety) (9): 1. Eric Kendall (Heckmondwike): Fancy. 2. Marguerite Murray (Wakefield): Ballerina. 3. Greta Smith: Île de France.

Class 4 Vase of 3 Tulips, white, cream or yellow (One variety) (10): 1. Lynn Gill: North Pole. 2. Marguerite Murray: Maureen. 3. Daniel Smith (Bollington): White Triumphantor.

Class 5 Vase of 3 Tulips, brown, purple or black (One variety) (5): 1. Polly Nicholson: Vincent van Gogh. 2. Sarah Brooks (Sheffield): Gorilla. 3. Daniel Smith: Blue Parrot.

Class 6 Vase of 3 Tulips, viridiflora (One variety) (1): 1. Eric Kendall: Green Spirit.

Class 7 Vase of 3 Tulips, not in classes 3-6 (One variety) (7): 1. Gill Starkey (Craster): Apricot Beauty. 2. Barbara Pickering (Penistone): Fly Away. 3. Polly Nicholson: Insulinde.

Class 8 Vase of 5 tulips (species or small-flowered) (18): 1. Polly Nicholson: Danique. 2. Linda Van Lopik (Pickering): Batalini Bright Gem. 3. Mike Wilson (Wakefield): Batalini Bright Gem.

Class 9 Vase of 12 English Florist Tulips (No entries).

Class 10 Vase of 6 English Florist Tulips (1): 3. Jackie Kendall (Heckmondwike): unknown.

Open Classes

Class 11 The Eyre Family Trophy, Stand of 12 Breeders (different varieties) (2): 1. Judy Baker (Hitcham): Gloria, Juliet, Rosie Wainwright, Lunae, Wendy Akers, Argyre, Columbine, Cydonia, Deryn Roberts, Goldfinder, Mercury, Sam Barlow. 2. Chris Gill (Southowram): Rosie Wainwright, Aonius, Juliet, Gloria, Music, Lunae, Albert Tear, Wendy Akers, Jack Taylor, Airy, Sam Barlow, Deryn Roberts.

Class 12 Needham Memorial Cup, Stand of 12 rectified English Tulips (all dissimilar) (1): 1. Judy Baker: Juliet, Solis, Akers, Gloria, Habit de Noce, Jane L Eyre, Adonis, John Hardman, Lord Frederick Cavendish, Airy, James Wild, Dr Hardy.



Best feather and Premier Bloom, Judy Baker's T. 'Agbrigg'. Photo: Michael Chapman

Class 13 Royles Jubilee Cup, Stand of 9 Breeders (different varieties) (2): 1. Judy Baker: Casius, Gloria, Rosie Wainwright, Albert Tear, Wendy Akers, Cydonia, Deryn Roberts, Goldfinder, Mercury. 2. Chris Gill: Solis, Aonius, Rosie Wainwright, Argyre, Music, Wendy Akers, Airy, Goldfinder, Deryn Roberts.

Class 14 Local Silver Challenge Cup, Stand of 9 English Florist Tulips (all dissimilar) (1): 1. Judy Baker: Judy Baker, Julia Farnese, Casius, Wendy Akers, Bessie, Argyre, Mercury, James Wild, Sir Joseph Paxton.

Class 15 Silver Challenge Cup, Stand of 6 rectified English Florist Tulips (2): 1. Judy Baker: Akers, Ruth Duthie, John Hardman, James Wild, Sir Joseph Paxton, Lemon Paxton. 2. Dave Skinner (Church Fenton): Wakefield, Akers fe, Columbine, Adonis fe, Jack Taylor fl, Jack Taylor fe.

Class 16 The G.S.Hunter Memorial Cup, Stand of 6 Breeders (different varieties) (2): 1. Judy Baker: Casius, Juliet, Argyre, Wendy Akers, Deryn Roberts, Airy. 2. Chris Gill: Aonius, Judy Baker, Music, Wendy Akers, Deryn Roberts, Sam Barlow.

Class 17 Stages Cup, Pan of 3 stages: one Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (1):

1. Judy Baker: James Wild, James Wild fe, James Wild fl.

Class 18 Silver Plate, Pan of 3 Breeders: one Bizarre, one Bybloemen, one Rose (1):

1. Judy Baker: Juliet, Cydonia, Deryn Roberts.

Class 19 Three Flamed (4): 1. Chris Gill: Gloria, Columbine, Lord Frederick Cavendish. 2. Judy Baker: Wakefield, Argyre, James Wild. 3. Dave Skinner: Wakefield, Columbine, Jack Taylor.

Class 20 Three Feathered (2): 1. Judy Baker: Juliet, Agbrigg, Lord Frederick Cavendish. 2. Jane Green (North Ferriby): Wakefield, Columbine, Royal Sovereign.

Class 21 Pair of Flamed (2): 1. Judy Baker: James Wild, Columbine. 2. Jane Green: Royal Sovereign, Mabel.

Class 22 Pair of Feathered (2): 1. Judy Baker: Agbrigg, James Wild. 3. Jane Green: Royal Sovereign, Utopia.

Class 23 One Breeder (8): 1. Chris Gill: Deryn Roberts. 2. Judy Baker: Sam Barlow. 3. Gill Starkey: Juliet.

Class 24 One Flamed (8): 1. Chris Gill: Lord Frederick Cavendish. 2. Judy Baker: James Wild. 3. David Bonser (Craster): Wakefield.

Class 25 One Feathered (7): 1. Judy Baker: Agbrigg. 2. Dave Skinner: Judy Baker. 3. Jane Green: Adonis.

Seedling Classes

Class 26 Seedling Cup, One Seedling Breeder or Rectified raised by the exhibitor (No entries).

Class 27 Three Seedling Breeders (one from each colour class) (No entries).

Novice Classes

Class 28 Pan of Three One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (2): 2. Eeva Rumpunen (Halmstad): Lord Stanley, Lord Stanley fe, Lord Stanley fl. 3. Lennart Hildingson (Halmstad): unknown br, Columbine fl, Lord Stanley fe.

Class 29 One Breeder (21): 1. Daniel Smith: Mabel. 2. Lynn Gill: Rosie Wainwright. 3. Greta Smith: Casius.

Class 30 One Flamed (11): 1. Jackie Kendall: Lord Stanley. 2. Jackie Kendall: unknown. 3. Mike Wilson: Columbine.

Class 31 One Feathered (5): 1. Daniel Smith: Sir Joseph Paxton. 2. Jackie Kendall: Lord Stanley. 3. Jackie Kendall: unknown.

Class 32 The Gina Roozen Cup, Pan of 3 Breeders: one Bizarre, one Bybloemen, one Rose (4): 1. Lynn Gill: Jack Taylor, Music, Judy Baker. 2. Emilie Wellfelt (Halmstad): Goldfinder, Music, Mabel. 3. Polly Nicholson: Arcadia, Columbine, Mabel.



Best T. 'Sam Barlow', Chris Gill. Photo: Michael Chapman

Extra Open Classes

Class 33 One Breeder (7): 1. Lynn Gill: Rosie Wainwright. 2. Lynn Gill: Music. 3. Polly Nicholson: Music.

Class 34 One Flamed (1): 1. Jane Green: Royal Sovereign.

Class 35 One Feathered (1): 2. Jane Green: Agbrigg.

Class 36 Pan of Three One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (No entries).

Coronation Class

Class 37 A floral arrangement in celebration of the King's coronation (8): 1. Florence Bell (Aylesbury). 2. Teresa Clements. 3. Linda Chapman (Pickering).

Points Classes

F R Hunter Cup, Most points in Vase classes: Polly Nicholson.

Jim Akers Memorial Goblet, Most points in Open classes: Judy Baker.

Brook Silver Challenge Cup (The Novice Cup) & Glass Goblet, Most points in Novice classes: Lynn Gill.



Best Breeder, Judy Baker's T. 'Goldfinder'. Photo: Michael Chapman

Glass Goblet, Most points in Extra Open Classes: Jane Green.

The Dawson-Brown Trophy, Most points in English classes + ASYF: Dave Skinner.

Bloom Classes

Elizabeth Smith Silver Medal, Best Exhibit by Exhibitor under 18 years of age:
Florence Bell (Aylesbury):

The James Akers Trophy, Best Feather in Show: Judy Baker: Agbrigg.

The Wendy Akers Trophy, Best Flame in Show: Jackie Kendall: Lord Stanley.

The Keith Eyre Trophy, Best Breeder Tulip in Show: Judy Baker: Goldfinder.

Peter Emmett Trophy, Best Exhibit Classes 2 - 8: Lynn Gill: Temple of Beauty.

Cochrane of Cults Vase, Best Bloom Classes 23 - 25: Judy Baker: Agbrigg.

The Dudmaston Plate, Best Bloom in Novice Classes 28 - 32: Jackie Kendall: Lord Stanley fl.

S Knowles Cup, Best Bloom in Extra Open Classes 33 - 36: Lynn Gill: Rosie Wainwright.

Turner Memorial Trophy, Best Sam Barlow: Chris Gill: Sam Barlow.

Albert Tear Memorial Trophy, Overall Premier Bloom: Judy Baker: Agbrigg.

The Small Show

21st May 2023

Florists' Tulips Classes

Class 1 Stand of 9 Breeders (different varieties) (No entries).

Class 2 Stand of 9 English Florist Tulips (all dissimilar) (1): 1. Chris Gill (Southowram): James Wild fl, Lord Frederick Cavendish fe, Nectar, Talisman fl, Adonis fe, Talisman, Wakefield fl, Gloria fe, Hubert Calvert.

Class 3 Stand of 6 Breeders (different varieties) (2): 1. Sarah Brooks (Oughtibridge): Talisman, Argyre, Rosie Wainwright, Mabel, Airy, Jack Taylor. 2. Daniel Smith (Bollington): Wendy Akers, Music, Lunae, Casius, Mercury, Lemuria.

Class 4 Stand of 6 rectified English Florist Tulips (3): 1. Chris Gill: Talisman, Bessie, Wakefield, Julia Farnese, Sir Joseph Paxton, Royal Sovereign. 2. Sarah Brooks: Columbine, Habit de Noce, Rosie Wainwright, Utopia, Airy, Royal Sovereign. 3. Roger Hinchliffe (Saddleworth): Jane L Eyre, unknown, Gloria, Mabel, Nectar, Dr Hardy.

Class 5 Pan of 3 Breeders: one Bizarre, one Bybloemen, one Rose (7): 1. Chris Gill: Talisman, Hubert Calvert, James Akers. 2. Gill Starkey (Craster): Music, Casius, Nectar. 3. David Bonser (Craster): Music, Lunae, Mercury.

Class 6 Pan of 3 stages: one Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (3): 1. Chris Gill (Southowram): Talisman, Talisman fl, Adonis fe. 2. Chris Gill: Nectar, Sir Joseph Paxton fl, Royal Sovereign fe. 3. Sarah Brooks: Juliet, Wakefield fl, Juliet fe.

Class 7 Pair of Flamed (10): 1. Chris Gill: Wakefield, Sir Joseph Paxton. 2. Sarah Brooks: Akers, James Wild. 3. Chris Gill: N H Eyre, Lord Frederick Cavendish.

Class 8 Pair of Feathered (2): 2. Daniel Smith: Rosie Wainwright, Lord Frederick Cavendish. 3. David Bonser: Akers, Sir Joseph Paxton.

Fine specimens of *T. 'Sir Joseph Paxton'* at the Small Show. Photo: Eva Rumpunen



Class 9 One Breeder (23): 1. Chris Gill: Mabel. 2. Chris Gill: Hubert Calvert. 3. David Bonser: Solis.

Class 10 One Flamed (14): 1. Chris Gill: Sir Joseph Paxton. 2. Chris Gill: Wakefield. 3. Gill Starkey: James Wild.

Class 11 One Feathered (11): 1. John Wainwright (Bedale): Agbrigg. 2. Sarah Brooks: Agbrigg. 3. David Bonser: Royal Sovereign.

Points Classes

The Wakefield Vase, Most points in Florists' Tulips classes: Chris Gill.

Bloom Classes

Best Feather in Show: John Wainwright: Agbrigg.

Best Flame in Show: Chris Gill: Talisman.

Best Breeder Tulip in Show: Sarah Brooks: Mabel.

The Billy Tear Trophy, Overall Premier Bloom: Chris Gill: Talisman.

Below: Class 4, six rectified tulips, including the T. 'Talisman' Flame that won the Billy Tear Trophy for Best Bloom for Chris Gill. Top right: Entries for Class 5, a pan of three breeders. Bottom right: Entries for Class 6, a pan of three stages. All photos: Eeva Rumpunen





GARDEN VISIT:

BENINGBOROUGH HALL

Christine Brooks

Our group visited Beningborough Hall near York on 20th July, a very pleasant summer's afternoon.

The garden is owned by the National Trust and also a RHS Partnership Garden. They have a number of features which distinguish them from other NT gardens. There is an elegant, modern pergola designed in 2018 by Andy Sturgeon the well-known garden designer, double and single herbaceous borders, a formal West Garden where the tulips are a feature, a walled garden with its 'historic pear arch' and the St Leger border.

This last border, South facing, has the title because allegedly Lady Chesterfield (her horse Sun Castle won the St Leger in 1941) liked to have a display for her visitors during the Autumn horse season.

Not much is known about the previous original gardens but a part of these is currently being excavated by a North Yorkshire group, The Roads to the Past group comprising voluntary archaeologists.

In the double herbaceous border, one side is backed by a brick wall, the other by a hedge. Plants identified there include *Clematis* and impressive Hollyhocks, statuesque *Thalictrum*, *Veronicastrum*, *Crambe cordifolia* and a striking red leaved vine.

The single herbaceous border, designed by Andy Sturgeon, is partitioned by shaped Bay leaf hedges into compartments, similar in style to those seen in the Dahlia walk at Biddulph Grange gardens, in Staffordshire. This results in sections, the planting different in each but with some repeated plants along its length. It was good to see that consideration had been given to succession; one section had 'hot' planting but also included white *Lychnis coronaria*, *Echinops* and *Stachys*. Other sections had *Eupatorium*, both white and deep purple *Buddleia*, the climbing Rose Iceberg and a yellow *Hemerocallis*. The red leaved vine featured in yet another bay together with *Acanthus*, *Cynara* and *Verbascum*. The vine contrasts well with a Dahlia having single dark red flowers with yellow stamens.

Altogether, these were a very pleasing set of plantings.



A magnificent purple
Hollyhock in the Double
Herbaceous Border. Photo:
Sarah Brooks



Above: Double Herbaceous Border. Top right: Water Feature. Bottom right: Cardoon in Single Herbaceous Border. Photos: Sarah Brooks

In the borders beneath the fruit arches, were pink *Anemone japonica*, herbs such as Oregano, and *Nepeta*; there were *Eryngium*, *Stachys*, *Anthemis* E.C. Buxton, purple Sage, pale yellow *Hemerocallis*, Penstemons and blue *Campanula lactiflora* Pritchard's variety.

Other areas to see include the American garden, dating from 1852, which is known for its Autumnal colour; the 2-acre Kitchen Garden and 4 Champion trees. These are special or superlative because of their size, great age, rarity or historical significance. The Tree Register of the British Isles has over 190,000 Champion trees growing in Britain.

Exciting new developments include the new Mediterranean garden due to be started in September. We were relieved to find that throughout the gardens there were well placed benches and the setting of the tea rooms offered welcome shade.

It would be good to visit again at different times of the year to see the range of planting and I would recommend a visit to Beningborough as a lovely way of spending an afternoon.



An Historic Tulip Trip

Polly Nicholson

Late this spring, in the window between the Tulip Society's Annual Show and the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, I managed to fit in a flying visit to two historic tulip collections in The Netherlands, under the guise of research for the book that I have been writing. Travelling out by Eurostar on Saturday 13th May I was concerned that I had left the trip too late, and there would be no tulips left to see. The annual flower exhibition at Keukenhof had closed the previous day, after welcoming 1.4 million visitors to the park over an 8 week period, and while I was not sad to have missed it (I find the numbers of both people and flowers – 7 million bulbs – overwhelming) I did wonder if I had my timings all wrong and my tulip pilgrimage would be fruitless. Or, rather, flowerless. Added to this, there had just been a week of destructive, torrential rain, and I had been instructed by Eric Breed, my first stop on the Sunday morning, to bring some much-needed sunshine.

My fears were not realised. The next morning dawned bright with sunshine, and I arrived in Lisse (40 minutes south-west of Amsterdam by car) to find a field checkered with beautifully tended tulips. Eric's collection, inherited from his late father Kees, numbers some 3500 different varieties including 350 species and species hybrids; wild tulips have been a passion of Eric's for decades, and he has conducted multiple trips to hunt and photograph them in their often inhospitable native habitats. Few species tulips

were in evidence when I visited, as they tend to flower much earlier in the season (although there was a pleasing patch of *Tulipa aximensis* which I also grow in Wiltshire), but I was there primarily to see historic examples and there were plenty of eighteenth, nineteenth and early-twentieth century cultivars on show. Most of these rare tulips were breeders from the



A statue of renaissance doctor and pioneering tulip scientist Clusius (1526-1609) at the Hortus Botanicus in Leiden. Photo: Polly Nicholson



Eric Breed with some of his blooms. Photo: Polly Nicholson

Single Late division, hence the late flowering time, and there were plenty that I had not seen before. I was particularly drawn to *T.* ‘Louis XIV’ (c.1913) long-stemmed with goblet-shaped flowers of vibrant violet edged in bronze, with white stigma and jet black anthers. Nestled amongst the Dutch cultivars I spotted a few English Florists’ tulips, including *T.* ‘Columbine’, *T.* ‘Talisman’, *T.* ‘James Wild’ and *T.* ‘Sam Barlow’ but these were not given special status. I was fascinated to learn of the Inglescombe types (Eric grows *T.* ‘Inglescombe Scarlet’ and *T.* ‘Inglescombe Yellow’) bred by W.T. Ware at Inglescombe Farm in Somerset, c.1900, just a few miles from where I grew up in the village of Dunkerton. Additionally there were quite a few mid- to late-twentieth century cultivars that I would happily grow, were they commercially available in the UK, such as *T.* ‘Niphetos’ (1933) a slender-stemmed, buttermilk cream single late variety, attractively streaked with cadmium yellow, and *T.* ‘Witty Picture’ (1992), a delightful pale pink Coronet cultivar with the rolled and reflexed petals distinctive of that new division (created in 2018).

In addition to tending his collection entirely by hand, Eric is undertaking a breeding programme to create super-tall tulips. This is still in its infancy, and very much under wraps, but I can report that I have never seen tulips of the heights that he is achieving and wish him every success. His husbandry was highly inspiring, and clearly responsible for the vigour and general health of his collection. Virtually no Tulip Fire was

evident, which he puts down to generous spacing of the tulips with decent gaps between varieties, along with meticulous deadheading. Like other commercial growers he is permitted to use specialist treatments to target *Botrytis*, which will most likely have played a part during a difficult growing year such as this – for the Dutch had very similar warm, wet weather to us throughout the spring. Other factors I noted were an enviably free-draining soil with a high sand content (common to all Dutch tulip fields), wind-proofing which doubles up as rabbit-proofing, and crystal-clear labelling: white plastic markers were 18” tall, plunged deep into the soil, with the names written legibly in black pen. The beds were punctuated every so often with clumps of tall sticks, and these were used to mark unwelcome breaks – I could see Eric continuously scanning the beds, and he would regularly condemn a tulip to the compost heap by marking it with a stick. Surveillance is everything.

I could have stayed with Eric all day, listening to his stories and gleaning as much as I could from his great expertise, but it was time to head off to the Hortus Botanicus at Leiden. This is the oldest botanic garden in the Netherlands, where the botanist Carolus Clusius (1526-1609) became director towards the end of his life. He is known to have grown a sizeable collection of tulips including *T.* ‘Duc van Tol Red and Yellow’ (c.1595) which I grow at home. Clusius and the Hortus Botanicus have become intrinsic in the story of the tulip, and I have long wanted to visit, but there was virtually no evidence of tulips and surprisingly little information available (although there was a handsome, much-photographed statue of Clusius). However, if orchids are your thing then I would urge you to visit for the spectacular collection housed across a series of glasshouses. I can vouch that the café is worth a visit too.

On the second and final day of my tulip tour I drove to the Hortus Bulborum, a living museum of 2500 tulips (plus narcissus and hyacinths) hidden away in an industrial estate at Limmen, 45 minutes north-east of Amsterdam. I had caught the last day of the season and was expecting crowds, but it was virtually empty apart from Eric Breed (who must have thought that I was following him) and the Chairman called Piet Apeldoorn, whose discovery was pleasing as *T.* ‘Apeldoorn’ (along with ‘Golden Apeldoorn’) was one of the most enduringly popular tulips of the twentieth-century. Tulips run in the blood of the Dutch. He was extremely helpful, answering some questions about the origins of certain cultivars that I hadn’t been able to resolve.

The breeder and broken beds were still in full flower, and I was slightly horrified to discover that the whole lot were doomed to be deadheaded the following day, while being simultaneously delighted that I had caught them just in the nick of time. Again, it was a lesson in good husbandry – sacrifices, such as mass deadheading, sometimes have to be made in order to maintain the health and quality of a collection. Breeder beds were located at the far end of the site to the broken beds, but I would still have expected to see considerably more unwanted breaks amongst the ranks, given the relative proximity of virused bulbs to those uninfected by TBV. No doubt constant vigilance by a steady



Eric's garden contains 3500 different varieties of tulip. Photo: Polly Nicholson

stream of volunteers ready to weed them out plays a part (although I also have no doubt that extra hands can play havoc, if my own experience is anything to go by). The sight of bed after bed of Rembrandt tulips was mesmerising, and the quantities of each cultivar quite overwhelming, especially in comparison to my own modest stocks. Each cultivar was clearly marked with its name, division and date of registration and there were handy information boards throughout the garden, explaining the origins of the different divisions; the Hortus follows its own grouping system, which differs somewhat from KAVB (the Royal General Bulb Growers' Association) and has separate sections for Cottage Tulips and Breeder Tulips. Large bunches of historic tulips were for sale in the shop (alongside an interesting selection of tulip books), but I resisted the urge to take any back home with me on the train, however tempting.

I would encourage any tulip enthusiasts who are planning a trip to The Netherlands in the future to seek out smaller set-ups like those I visited, rather than simply gravitating towards the larger, better-known destinations such as Keukenhof. The Poldertuin Anna Pawlona also features on my list of favourite tulip spots, having been introduced to it on the Society trip to The Netherlands. Hortus Bulborum has a useful website www.hortus-bulborum.nl and information relating to Eric Breed's flower photography and tulip hunting can be found at www.tulippictures.eu and www.tulipsinthewild.com (please note that his premises are not generally open to the public).

Eurostar is closing its London St. Pancras – Amsterdam route for a projected 12 months from June 2024, but this will still allow for visits next spring.

The Tulip and The Orange Tree

Dan Smith

“Down in the heart of rich and glorious Cheshire, hidden among wooded hills and the greenest of green pastures, there exists an institution the history and surroundings whereof give one an enchanting glimpse of the physical and moral beauties of English pastoral life. For more than half a century a quaintly managed show of tulips has been held at the house of Mrs. Kitchen, the Orange Tree Inn, in the village of Butley, about three miles from Macclesfield. How tulip culture comes to flourish here as a fine art we will tell anon.”

This introduction comes from an article on Cheshire Tulips, published in the *Liverpool Weekly Courier*, on Saturday 21st July, 1877. It is a fascinating piece, full of interest for those who grow and show tulips, and also providing an insight into the Butley Tulip Society. I have reproduced it almost word for word merely removing its history of the tulip, Tulipmania etc: which many of us know.

“According to Beckmann there are few plants which acquire, through accident, weakness, or disease, so many variegations as the tulip. When uncultivated, and in its natural state, it is almost of one colour, has large leaves and an extremely long stem. When it has become awakened by cultivation it becomes more agreeable in the eyes of the florist. The petals are then smaller, more diversified in hue, and the leaves acquire as it were a grand colour, but the more beautiful it turns the more skill and attention it requires to preserve its delicate beauties.

Let any one who desires to verify this, and to see the tulip in its gayest and highest state of culture steal a quiet visit to the show held at Butley, generally on the last Friday in May or the first Friday in June.

A quainter or more artlessly-entertaining sight he won't meet with, in all England. In a homely-looking building, which for flower-showing convenience might have been specially built, the blooming tulips are 'staged', that is, placed in rows of tiers, each flower being deftly fixed in no more pretentious receptacle than a ginger-beer bottle, and each row is set off with a background of white paper.



The Orange Tree Inn in Butley, near Macclesfield, no longer stands. This late 19th century photo shows it as it looked when it was host to the Butley Tulip Society. Photo: Cheshire Archives and Local Studies

Here are to be seen the simple breeders, from which come the finer and grander varieties; the flamed roses, bybloemens, and bizarres, and the feathered varieties of these species.

The contrasts and degrees of culture are extremely interesting to the botanical student; but the science is too profound for us to dilate accurately on the contending merits of the richly-coloured blossoms. An enthusiastic cultivator could instruct us on points that would form a day's entertainment. There is no fear that the judges will be imposed upon for the perfection of culture is secured by the strictest rules, that make success at the show an honour well earned and worthy of competition. Exhibitors 'must prove upon oath if required' their flowers to be their 'own property and blooming'. No

artificial tampering or dressing is tolerated. The only interference with the petals permitted is that a camel hair-brush may be used to clean out the interior, so that the delicate tints may be free from dust and fairly seen.

Instances have been known where the brush applied was not innocent of a touch of paint, just to complete a defective feather, or an unshapely flame but the practised eyes of the judges detected the imposition, and the unconscious exhibitor was for ever after debarred. Now and then a leaf has been skilfully inserted or abstracted so as to have the symmetrical number; but the fraud has been detected. Stolen flowers have appeared at the show, but the owner, who knew his tulips as well as he knew his own children, exposed the thief, who could not avoid an avowal of his sin against the true faith of the tulip grower.

How this delightful little institution of a tulip show originated, and the associations of its long career of fifty-two years, would be a story not devoid of romance if we could tell it. Mainly, it would appear, the society has existed for the mutual enjoyment of exhibitors and subscribers. Of the former there were originally a good score; but the vicissitudes of time have reduced them to half a dozen. A substantial list of subscribers, continuously among them the names of Mr. Gilbert Greenall (now Sir Gilbert Greenall, and member for Warrington), and other leading Cheshire gentlemen, has supplied what finance the show needed for prizes.

The premier prize, we gleaned from the well-kept minute book, has invariably been a silver cup; general prizes, copper kettles, which have become proverbial in the district, scarcely a house being without one won at the Butley Tulip Show. A grand dinner of tulip growers and their friends at the Orange Tree Inn (alias 'The Flash' and a house of note in the old coaching days) is one of the features of this institution, at which annual reunion, on the last occasion, Mrs. Kitchen, her children and grandchildren, made up a large section of the company. The venerable lady, whose tulip lore is always ready for the entertainment of the inquiring stranger, has acted as treasurer of the society since its formation, and she has kept the accounts with scrupulous and amusing accuracy. He would be a churl who would cavil at the modest sums put down for 'liquor *before dinner*', the peppermint drunk by the young exhibitors and the moiety of tobacco smoked by the judges and the elder members of the company. Mrs. Kitchen's own subscription of a guinea stands well up in the list for the last fifty-two years.

The tulip beds in the gardens of the exhibitors – some of whom are cottagers – are perhaps the most naturally interesting features of the institution. These are made up with the utmost care, protected on the sides by close wire netting, and overhead by an awning of canvas to shield the tender flowers during rough weather. Where the flowers have a tendency to grow awry and unevenly a little shade of wood is placed over the bloom to give it desired lean or correct the fault. The utmost solicitude in the growth of tulips is shown by the owners, who know each flower and its precise condition and habits.

One gentleman, so intent upon the welfare of his blossoms, was known to have worn the knees out of his trousers creeping round the beds and peering eagerly into the petals, afraid as it were to prejudice their growth by the sound of his footsteps. Another anxious grower, on giving vent to his fears respecting the success of his blooms, was piously consoled by his spouse with the reflection that the flowers had had “au t’sun at ivver God could give ‘em” for, indeed, the good lady had been up by sunrise every morning for many weeks, removing the awning, and giving the tulips the benefit of the sunlight.

The approach of show day naturally increases the anxiety of the growers lest anything should happen to injure the flowers intended for exhibition. A story is told where the owners or their friends actually slept by the flower-beds for several nights for fear some malicious person should come and damage them. More innocent occupation or pardonable solicitude could hardly be conceived than growing tulips or having a nap along with the flowers just to keep them company. These tulip beds are in reality of considerable value, some of the owners reckoning their bulbs worth altogether from £50 to £100, so that after all they constitute a property well worth a night watch.

Long as the institution has existed, it is still, barring the inevitable decrease in exhibitors, flourishing; and after a day’s enjoyment among the rural delights of the Cheshire landscape, one cannot help wishing the modest fame of Cheshire tulips may not soon die out.”

It appears that the first show was held in 1825, numerous reports confirm this; and I have found records of tulip shows being held in and around Macclesfield in 1825. However, the earliest show report for Butley that I found comes from a publication called *An Account of the Different Floral Exhibitions, held in Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, and other Parts of the Kingdom, in the Year 1831, consisting of Auriculas, Tulips, Ranunculuses, Pinks, Carnations, Dahlias &c.*

This show report is remarkable in that we see Mrs. Kitchen in the list of exhibitors. I am not aware of any other instances of women appearing in tulip shows from the 19th Century.

A newspaper report from 1842 describes a show “Held at the house of Mrs. Kitchen, the Orange Tree, in Butley, May 27th”, where a silver cup was won by Mr. Lawton, with Mr. M. Grimdsitch and Mr. G. Chadwick also having blooms that were ranked. Their names re-occur again in the show reports of 1857 and 1858 from the *Midland Florist*.

Several exhibitors appear in more than one show, R. Nunnerley, E. Warhurst and D. Potts seemed to have done the rounds with their blooms. Mrs. Kitchen doesn’t appear but Mr. W. Kitchen does. It also appears that Mr. Kitchen is the landlord, something that reflects on the assumptions of the time, but we’ll come back to this subject later.

Mr. Nunnerley appears to have been rather well-travelled. A Mr. Nunnerley took part in the Great Northern Tulip Show in Manchester in 1849, where he placed 12th with a flamed bizarre called Truth. (reference on page 225 of the *Midland Florist* 1849/50). And in 1851 (*Midland Florist*) a Mr. Nunnerley appears in a show at Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

Mr. R. Nunnerley also took part in the ninth annual meeting of the Royal and National Tulip Society held in Manchester on Friday, May 29th 1857. Whilst he only won fourth prize for “six clean and pretty but small flowers” he was up against stiff competition: a certain Mr. S. Barlow! (reference on page 208 of the *Florist Miscellany* of 1857).

As an aside, I found an obituary in the Macclesfield Courier for a Mr. Richard Nunnerley, who died on 5th May 1900. He was a bank manager and members of the Congleton and District Horticultural Society attended his funeral. His father was also a Richard Nunnerley. I’m inclined to think that one of them, or perhaps both, was the same R. Nunnerley who showed at Butley and in Manchester.

The show report for Butley from 1858 again shows Mr. W. Kitchen doing well and our Mrs. Kitchen placing eighth in the Feathered Roses class.

In all the reports I have found concerning the Society, all its shows were held at The Orange Tree. This seems to be in contrast to other tulip shows that flit from one venue to the next. Could this have been a reason for the Society’s longevity?

I was fortunate to get the following information from Mike Waters of St. Peter’s Church, Prestbury, who kindly answered an enquiry I made regarding the Kitchen family. He says:

“The Orange Tree was located opposite Flash Lane and appears on a map for the first time in 1831. At the time of the 1841 census, it was called the Flash Inn and the publican was Ann Kitchen, a widow with four children, there is no record of whether she took over the licence from her husband. She ran the pub until her death in 1883, renaming it The Orange Tree sometime between the 1861 and 1871 censuses.

Ann was succeeded as landlady by her daughter and then her granddaughter, also called Ann. She married a William Potts in 1892, and he then became the landlord as a trade directory from 1896 lists him as the publican of The Orange Tree. In 1903, when the licensing authorities reduced the number of public houses in the area, The Orange Tree was ordered to close and it did so by 1910. The building was later demolished.”

Morris & Co’s *Directory and Gazetteer of Cheshire* from 1874 lists Mrs. Ann Kitchen as landlady of The Orange Tree inn and Kelly’s *Directory of Cheshire* from

1896 lists Wm. Potts as landlord of The Orange Tree. However, Kelly's directory from 1902 has Mark Barton as landlord.

I think it is fair to say that Mrs. Kitchen and her family were instrumental in keeping the Society running, and we know from show reports that they also grew tulips. Doubtless, the show was good for custom but over time the show itself became a 'custom'. Could the courtship and eventual marriage of Miss Ann Kitchen and Master William Potts, have been a direct consequence of their families' involvement at the annual tulip shows?

As entertaining and illuminating as the article in the *Liverpool Courier* is it touches upon a problem beginning to afflict many societies: there were only six exhibitors.

Our own Anna Pavord, in her superb book, *The Tulip*, says "when on 25 May 1894, members of the Butley Tulip Society met at the Orange Tree Inn for their sixty-ninth annual show, how many of them could have predicted that within a few years, the Society would be defunct?"

Adonis Feathered grown by Judy Baker 2023. It was Adonis Feathered that won 1st Prize at Butley Tulip Show in 1881 for Mr W Kitchen – 142 years earlier. Britt Willoughby Dyer



Show reports show a significant change had taken place. Gone, it seems, were the workmen and weavers with their small plots, replaced by the gentlemen growers of the Royal National Tulip Society. I believe that the Mr. W. Kitchen of Marple was the same Mr. W. Kitchen who dominated the 1881 show. In the 19th Century there was a train line from Bollington to Marple.

Perhaps the links between Butley and the Royal National had already been formed in the 1840s and 1850s when Mr. R. Nunnerley travelled to Manchester. Doubtless in the conversation that flowed with the wine and food after the shows he would have told his companions about events in his home-town, and in Butley.

Of particular interest are the names of Mr. Needham and Mr. Bentley. Charles W. Needham was originally from Royton, near Middleton. He later moved to Hale, near Altrincham, Cheshire and was very influential in those societies that still survived at the end of the Nineteenth Century. One of the cups we compete for at the Annual Show is named in his honour, and in the Society's archives there are copies of letters he sent to the Chairman of the Wakefield Society.

Mr. J.W. Bentley of Stakehill, Middleton was the nephew of Samuel Barlow and the inheritor of his tulip bulbs. Like Mr. Needham, he was also very influential in the remaining societies. He was President of our Society in the early 1920s. He died in 1924. Both men gave talks on the English Tulip at the Great Tulip Conference of the Royal National Tulip Society, held at Regent's Park, May 12th, 1897.

It would also appear that both men were good friends. In a letter dated 8th October 1925 Charles Needham praises Bentley's judging saying "Bentley had an eye like a hawk and could spot the weak spot in a stand in two minutes." However, in the same letter and much more telling he goes on to say "Also I have young Bentley to father".

The show in 1900 is the last occasion when the name of Kitchen is seen. Mr. W. Kitchen now lives in Wilmslow, a couple of miles up the road from Butley The Society's cause perhaps not helped by the journalist saying "For 75 years without a break the show has been held at the Butley Ash", a different pub and still standing! As the show reports get closer to our own time the varieties start looking more familiar, such as *T. 'Mabel'*, *T. 'Julia Farnese'*, *T. 'Joseph Paxton'*, *T. 'Bessie'* and *T. 'Sulphur'*.

The show report from 1901 says this last show seems much smaller than previous ones, with only six positions in each class; and with no names of the flowers being given.

When I first read *Flames and Feathers* I was surprised to discover that from the many tulip societies that flourished in the Nineteenth Century only four made it into the Twentieth. One of which was in Butley, less than two miles from where I live.

As a place, Butley has been around for a long time. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, but it has always been small, even now it is easy to miss it. How could little Butley still support a tulip show at the end of the Nineteenth Century when so many other larger towns and villages did not?

I think there were three main factors. The first and most important is the Kitchen family. We have Ann Kitchen, the widow, running a public house and raising four children. Whether she decided to hold a show because she liked tulips or because she thought it was good for business we don't know. We also have Mr. W. Kitchen (her son I guess) who competed successfully in many shows both in Butley and further afield. We also know that from 1831 to 1900 the name of Kitchen, both male and female, is strongly associated with the shows and The Orange Tree.

I think a second factor is the venue itself. A "homely-looking building, which for flower-showing convenience might have been specially built". But also a place that for almost seventy years was run by three generations of Kitchen women. Were there perhaps flower beds near the pub? Were there exhibits inside with information about the tulip shows, or simply the knowledge that the thirsty florist could call and enjoy a pint and pick up tips on tulip growing at the same time.

Perhaps, this second factor was responsible for the third, which was the dedication of Mr. Bentley and Mr. Needham, and other members of the Royal National Tulip Society in the later years to keep the tradition of tulip shows at "this institution... the oldest one of its kind in the country" going.

Why was the 1901 show the last to be held at Butley? If by a miracle we were to find the records of the Royal National Tulip Society would there be clues within them that could answer this?

Maybe it was a combination of factors: the licensing authority's decision in 1903 ordering The Orange Tree to close may have been known in advance. The Kitchen family, tulips and the Butley Tulip Society were indivisible but perhaps the landlord at the time, Mark Barton, had no such ties and found the show and its members an inconvenience, or even worse un-profitable!

It may have been the members of the Royal National Tulip Society, who were also keeping the Middleton Tulip Society running at this time, looking at the demise of many other societies and simply accepting the inevitable deciding to finally call time.

Editor's Note: Because of the constraints of space, it has not been possible to include the Show Results tables mentioned in Dan's article. However, we hope to have them moved to the WNETS Archive site so that everyone can see them.

Planting Dates

Teresa Clements

At the beginning of December 2022, a couple of bags of Dutch tulips were yet to be planted. There were 14 *T.* 'Elegant Crown' and 12 *T.* 'Dordogne'. Why not try a little experiment with them? The bulbs were divided into two lots, the first planted six weeks in advance of the second. Would the planting time make any difference to their performance?

Four identical pots were set up with drainage in the base and a good open mix of compost, sharp sand and slow-release fertiliser granules. The bulbs were planted on a layer of sharp sand about half-way down the pot. The first bulbs were planted on 6 December 2022, a pot of seven *T.* 'Elegant Crown' and a pot of six *T.* 'Dordogne'. Two additional, identical pots and the remaining compost mix were set aside to await the second batch of bulbs, which were planted exactly six weeks later on 17 January 2023.

The pots stood outdoors in the garden where they received equal amounts of rain and sunlight. When watered, care was taken to be even-handed with each pot. As the tulips grew, they were photographed on 7th, 16th, 27th April, 1st, 13th May 2023. The *T.* 'Elegant Crown' performed well, with all seven flowering and having additional secondary blooms. The *T.* 'Dordogne' were in poor condition to start with, five of the original six flowered, but only four bulbs of the six set aside for the later planting survived, the other two being mouldy, and of those four only three went on to produce flowers. However, there was enough growth for comparison.

What happened? The flowering time was the same for both sets of bulbs. The main difference was in the length of the stems, all had flowers that were the same size, but those planted later had shorter stems. The plants were allowed to die back, and the bulbs were compared. By eye, there was very little difference, so when the bulbs had dried off and could be cleaned up, they were weighed, but again, the difference per bulb was so small as to seem insignificant.

Weights 26 July 2023

Elegant Crown (7 bulbs) planted 6 Dec 2022, Total, 150g. 21g per bulb.

Elegant Crown (7 bulbs) planted 17 Jan 2023 Total, 140g. 20g per bulb.

Dordogne (6 bulbs) planted 6 Dec 2022, Total, 85g (5 remained). 17g per bulb.

Dordogne (4 bulbs) planted 17 Jan 2023, Total, 55g (3 remained). 18g per bulb.



Does planting time make a difference to flowering time? It didn't in this case, but it was only a six-week interval. Next year it would be interesting to repeat the experiment with a longer gap. This was a very small sample so there is no scientific conclusion, but it does lead to the thought that it might be possible to pick up some late bargains when bulbs are sold off at the end of the season as despite the late planting, they will still flower.

Bishkek, a City of Tulips

Frazer Henderson

Tulip festivals have been all the rage for a number of years: Keukenhof started in 1950, the Canadian (Ottawa) Festival – the world’s largest – in 1953, Istanbul Lale (Tulip) Festival in 2006 and many stately homes, parks and cities across the UK and Sweden have celebrated the tulip, over many decades, with their own, smaller fairs, many sponsored by bulb growers and retailers.

It is somehow fitting that Kyrgyzstan, the principal centre of origin and diversity for the genus, now has its own celebrations of the flower. In 2022, the Botanical Gardens in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, initiated a tulip festival with the purpose of enabling the public to admire and learn about cultivated and native tulips and the environmental pressures the latter face. Additionally, across the city various parks were enlivened with mass plantings of tulips, primarily of Turkish-grown bulbs of Dutch cultivars. On the 12th April 2023 the Gardens held their second festival and again the city played its part, dressed in a tulip coat of many rich and vibrant colours. Whilst the Bishkek Festival may have lacked the scale and extravagance of those in the west, which isn’t surprising in view of the economic standing of Kyrgyzstan, there was nonetheless a similar level of awe and appreciation of the spectacle from locals, perhaps more so since the tulip, in particular, is associated as the harbinger of Spring and features in Nowruz, the traditional joyful celebration held on and after the Spring equinox which heralds the arrival of a new year and reinforces the annual rebirth of the link between man and nature. And perhaps that link is something that we in the west with our extravagances would do well to remember.

Displays of blooms at the Bishkek tulip festival. Photos: Frazer Henderson





Temperature and Tulip Fire

Peter Gladders

There have been numerous reports of problems with Tulip Fire this year. Even experienced tulip growers have suffered much more than usual. It is timely to look back at research on Tulip Fire and draw attention to some of the critical points in the disease cycle.

It is 50 years since I joined John Coley-Smith's research group at Hull University which had numerous projects on sclerotial fungi. Sclerotia are fungal resting bodies that are adapted to survive for long periods of time, particularly in soil. As bulbs and corms are substantial food sources for fungal pathogens, it is unsurprising that sclerotial fungi are common on these plants.

Although tulip pathogens featured strongly in the 1970s at Hull, *Allium* white rot (*Sclerotium cepivorum*) was Coley-Smith's long term research interest and he referred to the onion as the 'Queen of vegetables'. This research was facilitated by support from Chris Mitchell in the lab and Vic Swetez at the Botanic Gardens. My project was on grey bulb rot caused by *Rhizoctonia tuliparum* which is winter-active and particularly severe on tulip and Dutch iris but did not damage Narcissus. Although sclerotia of *R. tuliparum* can survive for many years in soil, grey bulb rot has been uncommon in recent years. *Botrytis tulipae* could therefore be regarded as a more successful pathogen.

There are four fungal components to consider in the disease cycle of *Botrytis tulipae*.

Sclerotia: It forms small black or black-brown sclerotia (1.0-1.5mm) on infected bulbs and on leaves and stems. These sclerotia require a cold treatment before they can germinate. Once activated, soil moisture content is not critical for sclerotial germination. Hence sclerotia formed this spring (2023) will become active in late winter or early spring 2024. Javed showed that the optimum temperature for germination is 5°C. Whilst sclerotia can produce mycelium (fungal filaments), they more usually produce spore-bearing stalks (conidiophores). Experimentally it has been shown that sclerotia need to be within 4cm of a tulip bulb or shoot for infection to occur. The shoot is most susceptible to attack. Sclerotia can survive for two winters on the soil surface or buried in soil. After germination, the sclerotia decay and pose no further threat.

Conidia: The spores (conidia) of *B. tulipae* are the explosive part of the disease cycle. They are produced on infected shoots as they emerge. Given suitable conditions of rain,

wind and high humidity, the spores disperse and cause small spots on leaves, stems and flowers on nearby (healthy) tulips within a few days. When spore numbers are high, water droplets containing spores can produce aggressive blotches rather than small spots. Heavily infected leaves look bleached and collapse: this is the phase termed Tulip Fire. Further cycles of spore production occur on the dying foliage leading to epidemics and widespread damage. Spores may be washed down the stem and infect the developing bulbs. In 2023 above average rainfall in March and to a lesser extent in April provided long periods of leaf surface wetness and highly favourable conditions for Tulip Fire epidemics. My own records showed 27 days with rain in March and 16 rain days in April.

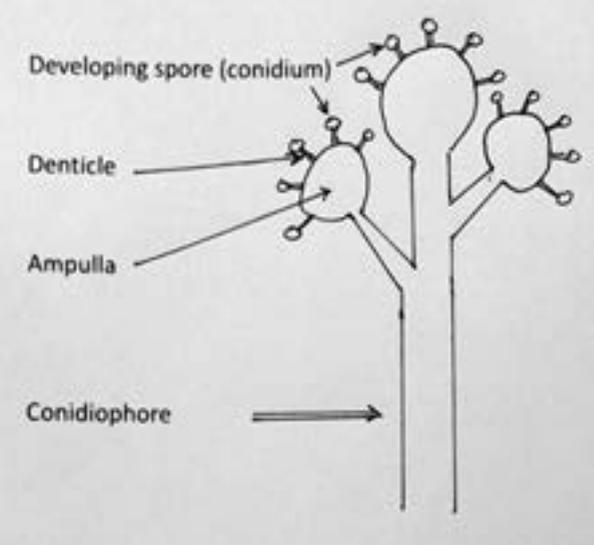


Photograph taken with a scanning electron microscope showing the early stage of spores developing on a conidiophore of *Botrytis tulipae*. Photo: Peter Gladders

Whilst sclerotia may be forming during the Tulip Fire epidemic, what happens to the conidia? Studies by Dick Castledine whilst I was at Hull University investigated their survival on moist soil in the laboratory. Conidia disappeared within a month at temperatures above 10°C but some survived for 6 months at lower temperatures. Spore survival was greater in dry soil than in moist soil. This is important as conidia produced by sclerotia are capable of surviving in soil and infecting tulip shoots in spring. Are you taking precautions to keep new tulip plantings well away from infested soil?

An interesting experiment was done at Hull with conidia from the summer of 1976 through to June 1977. Many of you will remember the hot summer of 1976 (and how it compared to the heat of 2022). This was followed by a wet autumn and cold winter. Spores only survived for 12-14 weeks when buried in soil but a few of those on the soil surface were still viable in June 1977. Parallels between 1976/77 and 2022/23 suggest climate change, particularly hot summers, will not diminish the threat from Tulip Fire. (Equally, periods of heavy rainfall in the spring proved very favourable for foliar epidemics to develop.)

Mycelium: Spores may be seen as the most important phase of the disease cycle, but mycelium is also important. Bulbs can carry small yellowish-brown lesions caused by *Botrytis tulipae*. These are termed latent infections and may pass unnoticed. After



The structure of the infection growing on the plant. Photo: Peter Gladders

planting, mycelium grows from the lesion and spreads within the bulb, infecting the shoot (which then produces conidia) and may reach the daughter bulbs. It only needs a small percentage of infected bulbs (termed “primary infectors”) to initiate an epidemic. Bulbs need to be inspected carefully before planting, particularly this year. If in any doubt about symptoms on key varieties that you are not prepared to destroy, it would be sensible to grow those with suspected disease (perhaps in containers) well away from your main stocks. Then monitor regularly to check that emerging shoots are healthy.

Microconidia: The fourth feature of *Botrytis tulipae* is an enigma. Conidia are capable of producing smaller spores known as microconidia. They are also produced by other species of *Botrytis* but their significance is unknown. Are they another survival mechanism?

Conclusions

Managing Tulip Fire is not easy given that *Botrytis tulipae* is well adapted to survival and dissemination. (For good measure, it can also be seed-borne.) It might be asked why the common grey mould (*Botrytis cinerea*) is less important than *B. tulipae* on tulips. Dutch researchers identified that *B. tulipae* is less sensitive to anti-fungal compounds known as tuliposides that are produced by tulips, and may be able to metabolise them.

The low temperature effects have been attributed to lower competition from soil micro-organisms. In water, for example, the optimum temperature for sclerotial germination is 25°C, a marked difference from 5°C in soil. Some caution is required if using sterilised composts as *B. tulipae* could be more active at higher temperatures than experienced in garden soil. The minimum interval between tulip crops should be 3 years, ideally longer to help manage other soil-borne diseases. However, the rainfall pattern in spring 2023 was mainly responsible for the severe epidemic.

Reference:

Coley-Smith JR, Verhoeff K, Jarvis WR (1980). *The Biology of Botrytis*. Academic Press, London, 318pp.

Plant Atlas 2020

Frazer Henderson

Earlier this year the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) published *Plant Atlas 2020*, the most in-depth survey of the British and Irish flora ever undertaken. Available for free online (<https://plantatlas2020.org/>) the Atlas is the result of 30 million plant records of 3,445 species (both native and introduced), collected by almost 9,000 botanists. The work builds on two previous plant distribution atlases, the first in 1962, based on data collected from 1950 to 1960, and the second in 2002, based on data collected from 1987 to 1999. The online 2020 *Atlas* features interactive distribution maps, text and graphics displaying the phenology, altitudinal range, and time-series trends for each species recorded in Britain and Ireland. It is a marvellous resource and one can quite quickly enter a rabbit-hole of inquiry, whiling away many, many hours!

Interestingly, three *Tulipa* species feature in the Atlas. *Tulipa gesneriana*, which is the specific name given to cover all garden tulips, is now well distributed in the wild particularly in the lowland areas of Britain and Ireland. As the *Atlas* states “Most cultivars rarely persist but some forms survive for many years in favourable, generally warm, sunny and well-drained locations”. There has been a marked increase in its geographical distribution in recent years, no doubt assisted by climate change and ‘helpful’ gardeners. The Cretan tulip, *Tulipa saxatilis*, by contrast has a limited, localised distribution predominantly in the south of England. The *Atlas* advises that the species was introduced into cultivation in 1878 and was “...first recorded from the wild in 1976 (Tresco, Isles of Scilly), but was lost from there when a new heliport was constructed.” The third species is *Tulipa sylvestris*, which is widely distributed though with a southern and eastern distribution across Britain, however, as the *Atlas* reports “...the species appears to be continuing its inexorable decline as long-established populations succumb to changes in land management and development.” One of the most important sites, holding a good number of the species, is Aubert Ings, near Knaresborough, a hay meadow designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (see also Linda Chapman’s article in Newsletter No. 25). The *Atlas* contains a short review of the history of the species in the UK, however, readers wishing to know more about the naturalisation of the species across Europe should refer to Anna Pavord’s *The Tulip* or the recently published article by Anastasia Stefanaki *Tracing the introduction history of the tulip that went wild (Tulipa sylvestris) in sixteenth-century Europe* (available online at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9192774/>).

Tulip Fire – Some Practical Tips

John Wainwright

It's 30 years since I first wrote about Tulip Fire disease in the Tulip Society Newsletter and this is an updated version of that earlier article with some additional practical tips on how we can control Tulip Fire. Tulip Fire can be devastating when an outbreak occurs on a prized tulip bed.

Much has changed in that time, and the milder wet conditions in February and March seem to particularly favour development of the disease. Effective fungicides previously used to treat Tulip Fire are now no longer available and licensed for use in the UK, so we are now more dependent on good horticultural practice to control the disease.

A search on the internet will reveal several articles on Tulip Fire and how to avoid or treat it. But this advice is usually aimed at the non-specialist grower who can easily dig up and discard Dutch tulips and buy in new stocks. Replacing infected bulbs is

Tulip leaves stunted at emergence and possible 'primary infector' – DO NOT IGNORE. Photo: John Wainwright



generally good advice if they are not prized ‘flames and feathers’ but this is not always necessary with lightly infected bulbs. Also, they may be so numerous that to reject them may mean discarding a large proportion of the bulbs (which the English Florist cannot afford to do).

Recognising Tulip Fire Disease

Tulip Fire is a serious fungal disease, *Botrytis tulipae*. It is common in mild, wet seasons and if not controlled can badly damage blooms and reduce bulb yield. Infected soil or bulbs carry the disease on to the next season.

Infected tulip plants which first come up stunted, twisted in a tight roll after other leaves have unfurled, or which are mouldy or discoloured (brown or red) are called ‘primary infectors’. Spores from these primary infectors are spread by wind and rain-splashing to neighbouring plants and cause ‘secondary infection’ spotting on leaves and flowers (often mistaken as hail damage). A whole bed of tulip blooms may become spotted overnight. In damp weather lesions may develop on the leaves and stem and in the axils of the leaves causing flower stems to collapse and leaves to wilt and turn brown. These damp-edged grey lesions may develop to release spores. The spores rise like ‘smoke’ when the plant is touched. An infected plant will not usually set seed because the fungus attacks both the flower and the seed pod.

Primary infector showing tulip leaves damaged, stunted and twisted at emergence. Photo: John Wainwright





Left: Tulip flower stem collapse above leaf axil caused by Tulip Fire. Photo: John Wainwright. Right: Tulip flower with light coloured fire spots, sometimes confused with hail damage. Photo: Ulf Hansson

When an infected bulb is dug up, resting bodies from the fungus (sclerotia) may be found under the skin of the bulb, especially at the base of the old flower stem. The sclerotia look like flat shiny black discs about one millimetre across. Larger brown depressions in the surface of the bulb may also be caused by Tulip Fire. A badly infected bulb may rot completely in storage before replanting time or may survive to become a primary infector. The disease can survive in the soil for at least two years.

Control of Tulip Fire Disease

Botrytis tulipae is best controlled by good growing methods. There is no effective chemical control. Roguing of 'primary infectors' is the most important method of control. The tulips should be regularly inspected from emergence and all abnormally stunted and deformed plants should be dug up, removed from the field or garden and burnt or buried. These 'primary infectors' cannot be easily saved and risk infecting the remaining tulip stock.

Secondary infection spotting on leaves and stems is less serious and if one is vigilant many of these tulips can be saved if acted upon quickly and repeatedly by removing



Tulip leaf showing damage, spotting, wilting and brown caused by fire. Photo: John Wainwright

affected parts of the growing tulip plant to prevent development and further spread of spores. In doing this, additional care will be needed not to spread tulip breaking virus, so handle non-virused ‘breeder’ tulips first.

Extra care in handling, cleaning of lifted dried bulbs at the end of the flower season, and when replanting can prevent further damage to bulbs and the spread of the disease.

A three-year rotation and planting bulbs into fresh soil each year can help prevent the disease (the traditional grower grew his/her tulips to follow a planting of potatoes or another crop).

Top Tips

- Thorough cleaning of dried lifted tulip bulbs is essential. Remove all loose soil, skins, stems and debris.
- Dispose of badly damaged and infected tulip bulbs. If large numbers of tulips or prized bulbs are affected, then it is inevitable that some infected bulbs will be replanted.



Tulip bulb showing slightly sunken yellowish-brown lesions which may bear sclerotia. Discard badly damaged bulbs. Photo: John Wainwright

(Differing views on the degree of infection and importance of particular bulbs will guide a decision on which to retain and which to reject).

- Handle bulbs carefully during storage and replanting to avoid damage.
- Do not return debris from storage bags or containers into the planting furrow.
- Rest soil for two, preferably three years between planting. Use fresh soil for pots or containers.
- Inspect the crop regularly from emergence and remove primary infectors.
- Regularly inspect the tulips and remove affected parts of the growing tulip plant (leaves, flowers, stems).
- Cover the tulips and protect from rain-splashing. Water tulip plants carefully at the base of the stem. Avoid wetting leaves, flower and stems.

- Space tulips apart with good ventilation and air flow between plants to prevent damp conditions.

Conclusion

Tulip Fire can be devastating when an outbreak occurs on a prized tulip bed damaging the whole tulip plant, but effects can be reduced and managed. Tulip Fire nearly always has its origin on the grower's own holding and everything possible should be done to eliminate sources from which an attack may develop.

References

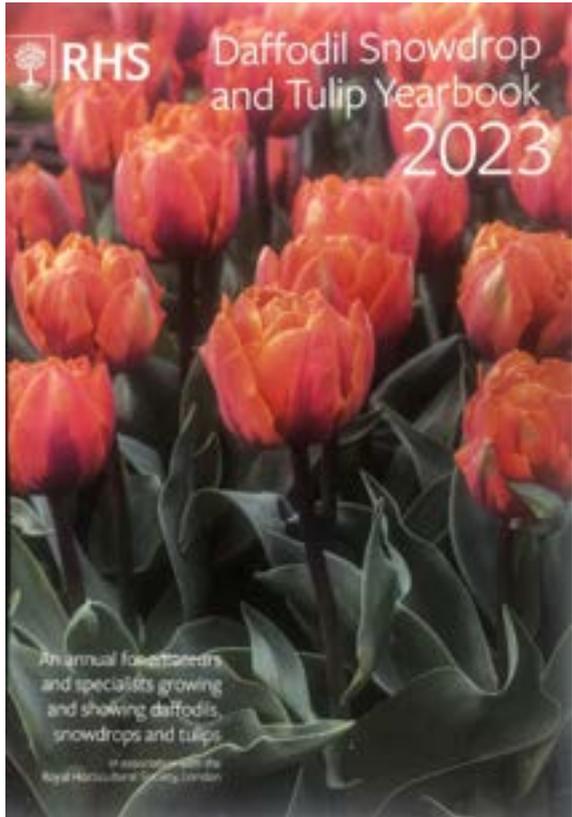
Useful reference can be gained from an old publication which is out of print but sometimes seen in second-hand book shops *Tulip Fire – Advisory Leaflet 536 (revised 1970)*, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The RHS 2023 Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip Yearbook

The 2023 *Daffodil, Snowdrop & Tulip Yearbook* features over 125 pages perfect for any bulb enthusiast. There are tulip delights aplenty with vibrant displays at RHS Garden Rosemoor and Hever Castle. Overseas, the publication takes a look at tulip species in Asia, work here to save threatened tulips is also discussed. Find out the results of the latest RHS tulip trials and read of show and award winners from across the 2023 season. Daffodils ‘all in white’ take centre stage and browse through pages of new snowdrop introductions. Not to be missed!

Due to substantial increases in printing and postal charges, the price of the 2023 *Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip Yearbook* has increased. If you wish to obtain a copy of the *Yearbook*, please send a cheque for £15.50 (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@ntl-world.com which overseas readers may find is more convenient. PayPal payments are £15.50 for delivery to UK Addresses. To EU addresses it costs £20 and to the rest of the world the price is £23.00.

Camilla Bassett-Smith,
Yearbook editor



Tulipa regelii

Frazer Henderson

Earlier this year I was fortunate to travel to Kazakhstan and took the opportunity to seek out *Tulipa regelii*. The most striking feature of *T. Regelii*, which is unique within the genus, is its single, arcuate leaf with longitudinal ridges which wave left and right, except for the ridge closest to the leaf margin, in the transverse plane. The ridges often, but not always, possess a weak claret colouration with a much deeper and richer blood-red hue on the leaf margin and apex due to the presence of anthocyanin in the cell-sap. The reasoning for the ridges is not really understood: it could be to aid moisture collection or retention and yet the plant grows, certainly at Kurty – where I located the specimen pictured – in close proximity to, and under the same climate (very cold winters, little precipitation and broiling summers) as, *T. biflora* which possesses leaves that in contrast are smooth, long and narrow

The flower stem, or at least that above ground, was between two and six cms in length from those inspected. The stem colour varied within a continuum of cinnabar to burgundy. The flower, in colour, was similar in many respects to those of the *T. biflora* complex being predominantly white with an egg-yolk yellow centre on the inside of both the inner and outer tepals. The exterior of the inner tepals was usually white, though a few possessed rather attractive carmine striations. The exterior of the outer tepals was by contrast stained with a reddish blush. The filaments were yellow and could clearly be seen to be pubescent with wispy hairs. The anthers were also yellow as was the style. Though a solitary flower is usual, I did find – and it really did take some searching – a single specimen with two flowers.

Originally discovered by the Russian geographer Andrei Krasnov (1862-1914) at Kurtyin 1886 and formally described by him in 1888, *Tulipa regelii* commemorates the German-born Eduard von Regel (1815-1892) the then Director of the Imperial Botanic Garden, St Petersburg, Russia and who himself had been at the forefront of *tulipa* taxonomy, indeed he described 25 species including, notably, *T. greigii* and *T. kaufmanniana*. The species is in the Red Book of Kazakhstan and is listed as Endangered by IUCN, which estimates the total population for the species to be





A classic *T. Regelii* growing in its homeland of Kazakhstan. They are fiendishly difficult to grow anywhere else. Photo: Frazer Henderson

between 3,000 to 5,000 mature specimens across just ten geographical locations within Kazakhstan.

Alas, *T. regelii* is fiendishly difficult to grow in cultivation, though specimens have been produced very occasionally by major UK botanic gardens and a single specimen was exhibited at a recent Alpine Garden Society plant show which had taken 11 years to flower. If you want to try and grow this most unusual species then bulbs are available in the UK from Kevock Garden Plants and Rare Plants but be warned prices for a single bulb start at £35!

Book Review – *A Gardener’s Guide to Tulips:*

Ensuring Successful Cultivation in the Garden

Matthew Smith and Grete Smith.

Published by The Crowood Press Limited, 2023. ISBN:978-0-7198-4203-0

The forward to this book states that it has been written by enthusiasts for enthusiasts and the authors Matthew and Grete Smith are both enthusiastic and commercial growers of tulips at their plant nursery in Lancashire. An important aspect of their business is exhibiting tulips at shows from the RHS Chelsea Flower Show to regional and local events, so they know a thing or two about growing tulips, selecting the best flowers, and combining them for maximum effect.

This book includes a diverse range of practical information about tulips and insights into tulip-related topics. The authors’ approach is thorough and comprehensive, and the layout makes the information very accessible. Each chapter includes side panels with a case study such as the authors’ own bulb growing trials, Q&A sessions with Dutch bulb breeders and cut flower producers, and the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society’s Annual Show as an example of an amateur tulip show. The book is well-illustrated throughout with clear, bright photographs which complement the range of topics covered.

A brief overview of the origins of the tulip is followed by a simple explanation of their categorisation, and later a range of tulip varieties is discussed in relation to flowering times. Advice is given on how to select good bulbs followed by tips on planting preparation and cultivation. ‘Tulips in the garden’ sets out the practicalities of site selection, aftercare, planting in containers, perennialisation, and pests and diseases (the latter including advice on dealing with Tulip Fire which is entirely appropriate for Dutch Tulips but less so for English Florists’ tulips). ‘Tulips in garden design’ explores the aims of combining tulips with other plants, planting densities, heights and flowers for cutting. Amateur and professional perspectives on the process of tulip propagation and breeding are included, and later chapters consider tulip gardens to visit in the UK and abroad and showing tulips in both a commercial and amateur context. The last chapter provides a short synopsis of tulip history whilst hinting at alternative interpretations. A useful bibliography provides pointers to a range of academic and other respected publications for those who want more.

A Gardener’s Guide to Tulips has many attributes of a coffee table book but comes in a handy size with a soft cover and some excellent advice for the tulip enthusiast.

Sarah Brooks

Harry Fogg

Harry Fogg died earlier this year, he was 84 years old. His wife, Ann, came downstairs on a fine, bright Spring morning to the sound of birdsong and found that Harry had passed away peacefully in the night.

Harry was a member of the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society for many years. He and Ann regularly attended our Annual Shows and AGMs, where Harry would have a quiet and contented day looking at the flowers and Ann would expend far more energy helping with the catering. Did you buy a jar of jam or marmalade at the AGM? That was home-made by Ann, proceeds to support the local church.

As a young man, Harry gained a degree in Botany at King's College, London, and came back to a job with the Blood Transfusion Service as a laboratory Scientific Officer, which is where he met Ann, who also worked there. Why this kind of work after botany? 'People are like plants', said Harry, and thereafter his love of plants was his hobby rather than his occupation.

When they were young, Ann's father showed daffodils in the local Horticultural Show, he took heavy pots of *N. 'King Alfred'* to the show in a wheelbarrow. In later years, daffodils were shown as cut flowers, much easier to transport! In their turn, Harry and Ann became active members of the Wisewood and District Horticultural Society, Harry as Treasurer and Ann helping with baking and catering.

Harry became a judge at daffodil shows and was a grower and exhibitor of both daffodils and tulips until poor health slowed him down in his last few years. Ann has 'downsized' from the house and the large garden that gave her and Harry so much pleasure and is now settled into a cosier home with just a postage-stamp sized garden to make her own.

Our condolences to Ann and family and best wishes from her friends at the Tulip Society.

Teresa Clements

Harry Fogg. Photo: Teresa Clements



Dates for your Diary

The Ancient Society of York Florists' Spring Show: Saturday 6th April 2024

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 (by arrangement) 4.30-8pm, Saturday 8 – 10.15am. Viewing – Saturday, 11am-3pm. Further details: <http://www.ancientsocietyofyorkflorists.co.uk>

Alnwick Spring Show: Saturday 20th April 2024

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 25 to Sunday 28 April 2024

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 4th and Sunday 5th May 2024

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 27th April – Saturday 11th May (provisional dates).

Burnby Hall Gardens Pocklington. YO42 2QF.

Check website for further details – <https://www.burnbyhallgardens.com/event/tulip-festival-5/>

Constable Burton Hall Tulip Festival No date at present – usually early-May bank holiday weekend

Constable Burton Hall, Leyburn, North Yorkshire. DL8 5LJ

Check website for further details - <http://www.constableburton.com>

The Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society's 189th Annual Tulip Show: Saturday 11th May 2024

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: Sunday 19th May 2024

Primrose Hall, Green Park Avenue, Horbury, Wakefield, WF4 6EG. 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 from 2.30pm

The AGM: Saturday 5th October 2024

Wrenthorpe Village Hall, 1 Wrenthorpe Lane, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield, WF2 0NE. Speaker to be announced.

Keukenhof: 21st March to 15th May 2024.

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

Finance Matters (Please Read!)

Finance may matter, but I know it's not what you read this newsletter for, so I'll keep it brief. There are two things I need to bring to your notice:

1. Increase in Annual Subscription

It's often remarked that the Society's subscription is an absolute bargain at £5 a year. This is true, and in fact it was last changed in 1997 when £5 would have bought you 3 pints in the pub. Now, it barely covers the price of one (Wetherspoon's excepted). You will see from the accounts on pages 6-7 that we made a surplus this year, but only because of a handsome bequest, and some generous donations. Without these, we would have had a deficit of nearly £700. With this background and considering we ought not to rely on such unexpected windfalls to cover our normal running costs, the Committee brought a proposal to the AGM to increase the annual subscription to £10. This would cover an individual and any family members at the same address, and the proposal was duly approved. To summarise, the annual subscription for all members will be £10 from 2024 onwards.

2. Change of Bank Account

The Society has long banked with the Yorkshire Bank, as seemed only fitting. But some years ago, the bank was taken over by Virgin Money, and in the last year, they have begun levying transaction charges, notwithstanding our non-profit status. These amounted to £37.54 this year, but will increase, so the Committee decided to move our business to Lloyds, who offer free banking for Societies. Many of you pay subscriptions by bank transfer - for which I am very grateful, it cuts the administration – so you will need to make note of the new details:

Bank: Lloyds; **Sort Code:** 30-99-50; **Account:** 58475968; **Account name:** The Wakefield & North of England Tulip Society

This especially applies to those of you who pay by annual standing order, as you will need to cancel the existing arrangement and set up a new one (for £10 a year!). I will be contacting you individually with a reminder as well.

I would strongly encourage others to consider setting up a standing order too – it saves having to remember to pay your subscription if you are unable to do so in person at the Annual Show, and the cost of posting a cheque. Most members who do so instruct their banks to pay the Society on 1st May each year.

Jason Clements, Treasurer

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 October 2024, shortly after the AGM.

News from the Society and Contact Details

The Society sends news and information to members throughout the year, as either email or hard copy letters (usually in March before the shows, in June with the show results, and in September before the AGM). The printed Annual Newsletter is usually posted to all members before the end of the year. 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.

Flames and Feathers

Flames and Feathers, the essential guide to growing English Florists' tulips, can still be purchased by existing Society members. The book costs £10.00, including p&p, for UK-based members, postage costs for overseas members can be confirmed. Contact the Secretary for more details and to get your copy.

