
floridadaffodil societynews



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ANNUAL MEETING

Past President Dot Roberts presided at the FDS Annual Meeting. Marge Orrick gave Linda Van Beck's report. Linda gave 18 programs, including one each in Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana, with the rest in Florida. Current President Clara Jane Smith is happy to introduce the new FDS Board members, Treasurer Pete Millett (Francis in the phone book) who is a retired lawyer, and Vice President Lori Johnson who has chaired the Annual Flower Show for the last 2 years. While no one was looking, Lori entered the Georgia Daffodil Show in Atlanta and won a blue ribbon. Membership Chairman is Mary Maude Sharp (7020 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee 32311), and E-mail Chair is Linda Williams (lindamwil@earthlink.net).

BULB SALE NEWS

We are pleased to report that the FDS now has wholesale status with Brent & Becky's Bulbs. In ordering large quantities, wholesale status pays off. Monal lists at 100 for \$70 – but wholesale is 600 at 56¢ each, a savings of 14¢ per bulb! Van Bloom, our source for Carlton and Ice Follies, has also given the Society a good rate. We appreciate this help. Bulbs and shipping are continuing to clime in cost, but the Bulb Committee is optimistic that our original practice of 50¢ a bulb will remain in place. Last year there was a mix up and Bittern was not Bittern. A free batch will be delivered and last year's purchasers will be contacted in October. This year over seventy members have pre-ordered bulbs.

PEPtalk

FDS member Dianna Norwood is editor of this large Florida State University publication for the Division of Finance and Administration. She organized an article on daffodils at FSU, complete with flower photo. In 2002, FDS helped Hal Walton, Director of Grounds, purchase 1,000 Carlton and FDS donated 1,000. More daffodils have been added and FDS will donate 350 Ice Follies this year. David McMannus, formerly of Esposito's, is the new assistant director and author of the *PEPtalk* article. He lists the main FSU planting sites, and adds a short history

of dafs as well as folklore: "... Arabs once used juice of the wild daffodil as a cure for baldness." The FDS website is referenced at the following website www.dir.gardenweb.com/director/fds/ "to learn more about these fascinating, beautiful and historic bulbs."

DAFFODIL SHOWS

In the American Daffodil Society's *Journal*, June 2006 issue, Keith Kriedler writes about the success of the Dallas, Texas, Flower Show in an article called "Hey, Don't Touch That. They had a "touch and smell" table for adults and children, chairs for fatigued grandmothers and a table and chairs set up with coloring pages of daffodils, but still had some problems with touching of displays. At most FDS shows we do not have many children, except those at the "everything goes in the mouth" stage when we warn parents not to give the child a daffodil, even when wrapped in a paper napkin. We hand out free dafs right away which seems to keep the hands full and off the displays. It would be fun to hand out pages to color, especially as the FDS already has an illustration complete with identified flower parts.

Our greenhouse space is small and not air conditioned so the fragrance almost knocks you over when you come in after 10 AM. By then the refrigeration has worn off, and the dafs start to emit fragrance – and lots of it! As most of our dafs are historic, tazettas and wild species, we generate fragrance. By now most of you know what Erlicheer can do in a house, and usually we have about 25 in the Show. In fact, not a year goes by (#7 coming up!) without someone complaining about the odor. They have sensitive noses and are allergic to the smell. But most of all, it makes anyone who has had Paper Whites compelled to tell you whether they are pro or con the compelling fragrance. Volunteers do discuss and demonstrate the difference between tazetta and jonquil fragrances.

Kriedler describes a boy thrusting his face into a bouquet of Golden Dawn and "drinking in" the fragrance. Well, we sold Golden Dawn this year, and forgot to put a "F" for fragrance next to its name, so you all need to take a good sniff next year. Catalogs are starting to emphasize fragrance, even that of Thalia and Tresamble. Scott Kunzt's *Old House Gardens* has listed fragrance for years.

DOTHAN, ALABAMA

Jan Incho, FDS member and liaison with the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens, was "fit to be tied." The FDS demonstration bed, on the upper left side of a cement walk, had vigorously bloomed, but the Carlton, on the other side, didn't bloom and were diminished in number. As the ground was dry when Incho planted, how could it now be wet and filled with rotting bulbs? Recently this mystery was solved by the disclosure of a forgotten, broken irrigation pipe in the area.

The bulbs, when tested, were found to have 2 kinds of fungal rot. Pythium root rot is a common fungus when soils are continually wet. David Burdick, daffodil grower in Massachusetts, reported planting dafs in an affected area 6 years after the rot was found, and lost all the dafs. But he relayed good news – quack grass is immune, so this area can return to sod.

The other fungal rot was *Fusarium oxysporum f. narcissi* (f. stands for form), i.e., the main fungal disease of southern daffodils – basal rot. Once, in the Van Beck garden, rain flow was accidentally channeled under the mulch and into a planting of St. Patrick's Day

daffodils. Autopsy showed that small side bulblets rotted first and infected the basal plate. Affected bulbs (those which showed squishy black or white bumps) were destroyed and the unaffected ones were dipped in fungicide. The water was diverted, the area dried out and successfully replanted.

According to the American Daffodil Society's Daffodil Diseases and Pests, by Dr. Theodore Snazelle, "the fungus can thrive in the soil at temperatures below 53.6 F (but) it can't infect *Narcissus* bulbs at this temperature." A method of control is to plant rot resistant bulbs deep when well-drained soils are cool. Too much nitrogen fertilizer can induce basal rot. One may also induce rot by the improper storage of bulbs. We recommend washing, quick drying and maturing in cool conditions with lots of air flow. When the outer tunic rubs off, the bulb is dry and it is safe to hang them in an open mesh bag in a cool place.

There are some gardeners who want to grow daffodils not recommended for their area, especially pink ones. As these bulbs tend to rot, a cautionary note would be to not plant these where you plant other daffodils. If you have an area that collects water, raise the bed and try a few bulbs to make sure that the fungus is not still active – it may take 3 or more years!

PAPER WHITE NEWS

John Scheepers and possibly other Dutch catalogs are offering new, improved (size, not smell) *Ziva*. *Ziva* breaks down in North Florida (too wet) but is being trialed in Central Florida. Created in Israel in 1995, stock of the new Paper White, *Inbal*, has increased to where the bulb is now on the market for the first time. The bulb was registered with the Royal Horticulture Society in 2005. Unfortunately, it is not mandatory to list the parents so the FDS has no useful information to judge whether *Inbal* will do well here. We'll buy 10 for \$7.75 to test in North Florida this year. The flower head is described as having huge trusses of large white flowers with a "lighter, more delicate fragrance than *Ziva*." In the photograph, the petals appear nearly uniform, turned up and rounded like *Compressus*. The catalog states that *Inbal* should be potted no later than mid-November. We'll plant ours in the ground.

WHAT DID YOU DO THIS SUMMER?

Q: Where are you going this year, Linda?

A: Taking a trip to Scotland.

Q: Will you see daffodils?

A: No, they'll all be gone.

Well, they weren't. I started tripping on May 19 at Lyme and proceeded to Grasmere in the Lake District, on my way to Scotland. My first sightings were the tattered remains of white trumpets, recognizably camperelli and a clump of Hawera. Then on to Rydal Mount, the home of William Wordsworth, his sister Dorothy, wife Mary and assorted children, from 1813 to his death in 1850. The gardens, designed mostly by William, cover 4 acres and are considered "the largest remaining type and unique example of the Romantic period garden." These gardens have changed little since William designed them. The house is situated on a high hill, overlooking a 9th century Norse beacon mound. The view from the garret, William's study, is Windermere. Terraces, lawns and a croquet field are bordered by flowering shrubs (azaleas, rhododendrons and hydrangeas) and flowering or colorful trees (magnolia, Japanese maples, mountain ash). Wisteria and clematis were also in bloom and plantings of rhubarb, pampas and skunk cabbage could be seen. The plant list includes 28 varieties. Surrounding the gardens are beautiful woods.

Wordsworth believed that all should harmonize and "lawn and trees carefully planted so as not to obscure the view." On the death of his daughter, Dora, he and Mary planted a field of local *N. pseudonarcissus* in her memory. This terraced garden was discovered in 1943. As with other areas in the Lake District Park, additional daffodils have been planted and there was a large yellow blooming in Dora's garden. You may remember all the press regarding the removal of introduced daffodils.

A good walk in the woods brings you to Dove Cottage, the Wordsworth's home from 1799 to 1808, complete with tourists and a tourist shop. There at last I found "Wordsworth's Daffodil", a photograph of 3 nodding *pseudonarcissus* on the front of expensive refrigerator magnets.

As I traveled, I asked three questions: Are the early daffodils white? When did they bloom? What is their name? Everyone was happy to set me straight. The color is yellow, one flower to a stem, bloomed over 3-4 weeks ago, and there is only one name – "the wild ones."

Later, I chanced to have a "rectory lunch" with a gardener from Gloucester. She sadly reported that the "wild ones" were rapidly diminishing in number. She thought that the constant flower picking was to blame.

THE DAFFODILS

If you don't have a copy of this poem, just type in "Wordsworth" and "The Daffodils" at your computer search engine, and you will locate the poem and much, much more.

At Rydal Mount, the guides were insistent that Dorothy's Grasmere Journal was the basis of the poem. On April 15, 1802, Dorothy and William walked at Ullswater. Her entry for that date reads "tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake." William wrote the poem in 1804 and revised the last stanza in 1815.

Of note: there is only one Lake in the Lake District, the small Lake Rydal on Wordsworth's land. The rest are meres or waters (old English, Anglo Saxon words for lakes) with added Norse names, i.e., Ulfrwaeter was first recorded in 230 A.D. as Ulueswater and now Ullswater. So you see why there is no Lake Ullswater (info courtesy of Derek Sharman).

On the whole, I found an amazing amount of ignorance about daffodil names and culture. My hostess in Inverness had "no luck" with daffodils, so threw them out every year and planted new. I had to give her the FDS speech, and trust she will have success in the future.

A recent news item on the telly and in the papers was recounted to me many times, a garden, now open to the public, at Brodie Castle has 250 kinds of daffodils. The count was always the same. People were impressed! They didn't seem to remember anything else.

The Brodie (chief) of Brodie Castle is a well known daffodil figure who contributed a wide range of dafs that were used by other hybridizers and thus helped the thrust of English breeders in their search for the perfect modern daffodil. Michael Jefferson Brown, in his 1991 book, Narcissus, pays homage to the Brodie of Brodie (1898-1943) as a man who "never took leave of his daffodils in the daffodil season ... and as a breeder was recognized without advertisement, or writings or show stands."
