

Breeder sends Scottish bloom home.

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MARTIN DE RUYTER/Nelson Mail

John Hunter of Hope with the daffodil variety 'Perth' he has grown for the gardens at Brodie Castle in Scotland.

In the grounds of a remote Scottish castle, a rare daffodil once feared extinct has bloomed again - thanks to a breeder from Hope.

John Hunter came to the aid of Scottish gardeners searching for the 'Perth' daffodil, which was bred at Brodie Castle near Inverness early last century.

Mr Hunter said the daffodil had been registered in 1929, and was one of more than 360 developed by Ian Brodie, one of the world's most prolific daffodil breeders.

The castle had been taken over by the National Trust a few years ago, and the task of finding all those daffodils began.

Mr Hunter said he had heard through friends a few years ago that the gardeners were looking for the flower.

He knew he had it, and had grown it for years, but was down to one bulb.

The 'Perth' had been sold in New Zealand in the 1940s, and Mr Hunter had grown it since then.

After growing more, he made sure the bulbs were healthy and strong before sending them on such a long journey.

The daffodils from Hope bloomed for the first time in more than half a century at the castle this northern hemisphere spring.

Mr Hunter said the 'Perth' daffodil would no longer be considered a show flower, but would make a good garden variety that was resistant to disease.

The renowned breeder said he had other exciting new daffodils ready for display at this weekend's Brightwater Spring Show, to be held at the Brightwater Hall from 1pm to 4.30pm on Saturday and 9.30am to 4.30pm on Sunday. Overseas judges would be on the panel this year.