

THE DAFFODIL BULLETIN
THE AMERICAN DAFFODIL SOCIETY

Fall Number

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From the Society Headquarters

The President

THE 1956 CONVENTION. I have the pleasure of announcing that GUY L. WILSON, the kindly Irish Dean of the Daffodil World, will be our guest at our first Annual Convention, on April 6 and 7, 1956, at the beautiful Shoreham Hotel, in Washington, D.C. a number of noted men and women from all over the country have been asked to take part in our program, and spectacular displays of the new as well as the old varieties of daffodils from the principal growers of the world will be a feature that no one whose hobby is daffodils can afford to miss.

Chairman WILLARD KING, of the Convention Finance and Budget Committee, will soon be writing to all of you about reservations and other business details, but General Convention Chairman FREEMAN WEISS urges that you plan now to make this convention your spring vacation, an occasion not only to see Washington at its loveliest, but a Daffodil Tour to see en route a number of daffodil shows and display gardens.

MR. WILSON has expressed a special wish to see at the Convention Frank Reinelt, Mrs. Theodore Pratt, B.Y. Morrison, Mrs. J. R. Walker, Harry Tuggle (the order is random), and all the many other daffodil enthusiasts in this country with whom he has corresponded for many years.

Regional vice-presidents are asked to prepare news releases for local garden magazines, and garden sections of newspapers, regarding the Convention and its internationally famous guest.

THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS, together with the complete Society membership listed by states, will be in the mail shortly. Please read the Constitution and By-Laws carefully between now and convention time so that desired changes, if any, and its final adoption can be expeditiously disposed of at the Convention business meeting.

We welcome MRS. WILLIAM BIGLER WEAVER, JR. as the Regional Vice President of the newly delimited New England Region. Her address: Quaker Ridge, Greenwich, Connecticut. Members residing in the New England Region are invited to correspond with Mrs. Weaver regarding any suggestions or questions they may have about daffodils or the affairs of the Society.

AMERICAN AWARDS. It is proposed that American awards to daffodils shall be based on (1) all-around performance, (2) for all purposes, (3) all over the country where daffodils can normally be grown. Under this proposal there would be no special "show", "garden decorative", or "market" classifications, and our Award of Merit would fairly mean that the daffodil thus honored would grow and thrive anywhere, in addition to looking good both on the show table and in the garden. It is also proposed that a committee of experienced daffodil growers all over the country begin the program by setting up standards of appraisal and selecting the first list of candidates for consideration. What do you think? MRS. WILLIAM A. BRIDGES (10 Othoridge Rd., Towson 4, Md.), Chairman of this Committee, would like to get your suggestions before she reports at the 1956 Convention.

REGISTRATION OF DAFFODILS. At the recent International Horticultural Conference the Royal Horticultural Society of England was named the International Authority for Daffodils, but the American Daffodil Society was named the National Registration Authority for the United States. Therefore our Society will administer all daffodil registration in this country, and effect international status for American growers in turn by recording their varieties, on due application, with the Royal Horticultural Society. This amounts to very important recognition for our Society.

Now, how do we proceed? Get us a Registration Committee or individual authority? determine a registration fee? Set up rules and regulations? We hope that the British will cooperate. We believe in the idea and will do all in our power to make it work. MRS. J. ROBERT WALKER, Chairman of this Committee, has a real job on her hands and needs to hear from any of you who have ideas that will help. She will have a full report at the Convention next spring. -- Carey E. Quinn.

From the Editors

OUR AIMS. In the July Bulletin we invited expressions of opinion regarding the objectives which this Society should seek as its goal. Quite appropriately, our President has come forth with the first response to this request. Judge Quinn has thought longer and probably deeper about the purposes this Society should fulfill than any, or most, of us have had occasion to do. He has stated them so well that we are not only glad to be able to present his statement in this Bulletin, but we think he has just about told the whole story. With these purposes and goals in mind, all we need do now is to set about accomplishing them! The lists are still open, however, for further expressions of opinion on this subject. We should like to hear from other members who wish to comment, whether in agreement with President Quinn, supplementary to his state- or even contrary to it. This is a free Society (except for paying dues, which we trust all you readers have.)

FUTURE PLANS. This will be the last Daffodil Bulletin for 1955, but one more issue is forthcoming to round out our first year of publication. Normally we would close the year's literary cycle with a yearbook. As our Society got off to a delayed and somewhat confused start last spring but, through the accommodation of the Washington Daffodil Society, began publication with a yearbook, time has not sufficed since then to prepare another volume of this sort. In a sense we have already had our yearbook for 1955. The next one, therefore, is due at the end of 1956 in order to be truly a yearbook. Thus we will have a year to prepare it and it should be proportionately good. It will be, if those who sent in contributions previously will do so again, and if others will be moved to do likewise. Nothing delights an editor so much as to receive reports and communications in such volume that he needs only to select from them the best, and write nothing himself.

Since there will be no 1955 yearbook in the literal sense, the January 1956 Bulletin will cover in retrospect, and necessarily in miniature, the American daffodil scene this year. Show news of 1955 will be obsolete by then, but what has been learned from daffodil shows and from garden observations and hybridizing experiments will be newsworthy. Before you who managed shows last spring, or who made interesting discoveries in your gardens, finally put daffodil subjects to bed for the year, will you not tell your story to us, so that we can relay to all our members as much as possible of the significant daffodil news of 1955?

And looking to the future, your editors appeal to all prospective daffodil show chairmen (and chairwomen!) to send advance notice of show dates and information about noteworthy displays of daffodils so that we can list the earliest of these in the winter bulletin, and complete the list 'ere Convention time, April 6-7, by which time we faithfully promise, the spring bulletin will have made its appearance.

TRoubles AND Cures FOR THE AMERICAN DAFFODIL GROWERS
By Carey E. Quinn

The American Daffodil Society has been asked many times just what the Society proposes to do by way of policy and program to help those interested in growing and hybridizing daffodils on this side of the Atlantic ocean. I have in turn as president asked a great many of our members (now numbering over 500), and especially the commercial growers and distributors, just what they thought the Society should and could do in the premises. I am setting forth herewith without quoting names some of the typical answers and suggestions we have received.

(1)

The most generally repeated suggestion in one form or another from the commercial growers runs as follows: "The Daffodil growing industry in this country is young and needs help, especially since we have to compete with foreign growers whose labor costs are much less than ours. I think you should urge all American gardeners to "Buy American". Another grower in the same vein says "We buy, grow and test all the better foreign introductions many of which are found to be poor performers in this country. We thus relieve the average buyer of bulbs of the gamble in buying bulbs of foreign origin and especially newer varieties. In addition, we guarantee our bulbs and since we are reputable people who can be easily reached by mail or in person incident to enforcing our guarantee, we believe we give a protection which deserves the greatest consideration from American gardeners. We believe American buyers should be urged to buy American".

(2)

Another line of comments runs as follows--we quote a typical one, "Varieties of American or Canadian origin as a practical proposition do not have a chance to win one of the important Dutch or English awards that do so much to both encourage hybridists as well as to secure the recognition that helps so much in introducing and selling daffodils. Also a great many daffodils of foreign origin have won honors (no doubt merited in their own country) at home which they in no way live up to over most of this country. Perhaps we should test foreign varieties and give our own awards on the basis of their performance in this country. I suggest we seek registration of all American varieties and give out our own awards".

(3)

Two suggestions are summed up as follows: "We need a practical proven manual or text developed for the culture and health of daffodils. Nothing of that sort has ever been done--at least in this country. We are traveling on a lot of presumptions some of which I am sure are not right".

(4)

An important chief in the U. S. Department of Agriculture says, "The American growers of daffodils have concentrated too much on growing just one variety -- namely King Alfred--whereas the public has finally discovered that there are a great many other and better varieties in many colors and forms. The American growers should play to the average gardener's wants and needs more--wider range of better varieties and types would whet the buyer's appetite and interest. And display and test gardens set up in nice seeable fashion where Mrs. America that spends most of

the garden dollar could see typical plantings of good daffodils in proper settings and perspectives--would help a lot. This is something the foreign competitor cannot very well provide. The rose growers have set a good pattern in this respect".

(5)

And many of the commercial crowd have said "Just stir up more interest in buying and using more daffodils in gardens. Somehow we'll get our share of the business".

(6)

And again we are urged, "Have a lot of daffodil shows and display gardens all over the country where people can see daffodils--nothing sells daffodils like seeing them".

(7)

And finally several insist, "The Department of Agriculture can and should bar entrance to all foreign bulbs except for test purposes."

As president of the American Daffodil Society perhaps I should shut up right here after grouping the seven principal complaints and suggestions set forth above. However, I am sticking my neck out to the following tune:

(1) The Society as such would hesitate to propose a campaign to "Buy American Bulbs" because it believes to date that its membership, being overwhelmingly amateur buyers for home use, would not support such a campaign. There are a great many reasons, some traditional, some economic, and some foreign propaganda for the apparent attitude.

(2) The Department of Agriculture by its proper agencies has no power to prohibit bulb importations-- except as a matter of specific health and pest control.

(3) The American Daffodil Society has set in motion programs dedicated to problems above set forth as follows:

(a) A program of Awards for new varieties of American and Canadian origin, as well as for foreign varieties, based upon show and garden experience over the country is being evolved and put in operation.

(b) A series of large and small test and display gardens over the country where the public can see representative daffodils well grown and used are being established.

(c) Tests and experimental work has been begun to make possible an authoritative text or handbook on health and culture of daffodils. The text will also be illustrated and set to slides for mass showing.

(d) Plans have been perfected by most of the Regional Vice-presidents of the Society to sponsor and encourage a much greater number of daffodil shows, garden tours and lecture series over the coming year.

(e) Both National and Regional Symposiums on daffodil experience in this country will be presented by the Society to the public on or about January 1, 1956.

(f) The commercial group is being requested to suggest further program.

NOTES FOR A DAFFODIL LIBRARY

BY Mildred Benton

Jefferson-Brown, J.M. THE DAFFODIL, ITS HISTORY, VARIETIES AND CULTIVATION. 264p., illus. London, Faber and Faber, Limited, 1951.

This book heads the list because it represents the most exhaustive account of the daffodil published to date. Written by a man who has, since childhood, loved, studied, grown and bred the versatile flower, it offers a great deal of valuable information. The leading breeders, past and present, are introduced, followed by illustrated descriptions of the many varieties for garden or indoor use. "Secrets" of cultivation are free for the reading, and the chapter on pests and diseases is a good reference tool.

For those who take their daffodils very, very seriously, there is a summary of the work of Portuguese Dr. Abilio Fernandes, who has devoted twenty years or more to the cytological study of the Narcissus genus; a list of specific names; and a bibliography of some 35 titles including the botanical studies of Dr. Fernandes.

Gray, Alec. MINIATURE DAFFODILS. 54p., illus. Hollywood, Florida, Transatlantic Arts, Inc. 1955.

For those primarily interested in miniature daffodils this little volume is a "must". Alec Gray is a recognized authority on the dwarf varieties; and this book is, to a large extent, an account of his personal experiences with cultivation, hybridizing, and pests and diseases. He devotes the most space to descriptions of the virtues as well as the faults of species and varieties, with the objective of helping readers to select those which appeal to them and are most suitable for their purposes.

Jefferson-Brown, J.M. DAFFODILS FOR AMATEURS. 96p. London, Faber and Faber, Ltd., '52

This book is advertised as the first small book on daffodils to be published for more than forty years. It is a condensation of the author's monograph, "The Daffodil", published a year earlier and is specifically designed as a guide to newcomers to daffodil growing. There are hints on general cultivation, decoration and exhibition, and recommendations for "fool-proof" varieties for the majority of gardens.

Watrous, Roberta C. MINIATURE DAFFODILS. Popular Gardening 6(9):42-43, 60-61. September 1955.

This recent article prepared by the Secretary of the Washington Daffodil Society is a suitable compendium to Alec Gray's book. Well illustrated and quite readable, it further documents the performance of the small daffodils, concerning which there seems to be ever-increasing interest.

NOW ISN'T THIS A NICE WAY TO PUT IT?

Associate Editor ELEANOR BOLTON writes that on September 6 MARIE BOZIEVITCH, President of the Washington Daffodil Society, addressed the Garden Department of the Tuesday Afternoon Club in Fairfax, Virginia, as the first in a series entitled "A Primer in Daffodils". Mrs. Bozievitch described the A,B,C's of Daffodil culture as follows:

A: Ardent and Artistic. If you are ardent, daffodils never fail you. If artistic they are the most wonderful flower in the world. They seem to fulfill everything you want.

B: Bulb. Think first about the bulb (or plant) and not about the flower. Know its life cycle and what it likes. Unless your plant is happy, your flower isn't forthcoming. Each scale in the bulb is a leaf. The only way you can fail is to put the bulb in a wet place where it will rot. By early September it has already started growing.

C: Culture: It is important to have something to nourish the plant below the bulb. There is good nourishment in compost, potash, and phosphate (superphosphate especially). Depth of planting depends upon the texture of soil, size of bulb, and vigor of the variety. Mulch deeply.

HOW MANY OTHER FIRSTS?

How many of our members belong to local daffodil clubs that organized, or held their first daffodil shows, this year? It would be interesting to know, and to learn whether their enthusiasm was so whetted by the first experience that they are simply bound to repeat.

From MRS. PEM WHITESIDES, of Cos's Creek, Kentucky, came word too late for notice in our Summer Bulletin of the first Daffodil Show staged in Nelson County, Kentucky. It was organized by the Nelson County Homemaker's Garden Club, and held April 2. Accompanying Mrs. Whitesides' report were several photographs to illustrate the winning artistic arrangements featuring daffodils. (We surmise that daffodil planting is enjoying a full-scale boom this fall in the vicinity of Bardstown, Ky.- Ed.)