



# AMERICAN DAFFODIL SOCIETY, INC.

## MIDDLE ATLANTIC REGION

District of Columbia - Maryland - Virginia - West Virginia

### NEWSLETTER

Delia Bankhead, Regional Vice President

489 Arnon Meadow Road, Great Falls, Virginia 22066

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#### Regional Directors -

1989 - Mrs. J. Raymond Moore, 904 Applewood Lane, Baltimore, MD 21212

1990 - Brent C. Heath, Route 3, Box 208-R, Gloucester, VA 23061

1991 - Patricia M. Crenshaw, 1047 Walker Mill Rd., Great Falls, VA 22066

#### ADS Committee Chairmen -

Finance - Mrs. P.R. Moore, Jr., 16 Maple Ave., Newport News, VA 23607

Membership - Quentin Erlandson, 9 Burnbrae Rd., Baltimore, MD 21204

Public Relations - Joseph Stettinius, 311 Oak Lane, Richmond, VA 23226

Test Gardens - Nancy Whitlock, Route 2, Box 239, Berlin, MD 21811

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March, 1989

Dear Daffodil Friends,

Our favorite time of year is almost at hand, and I'm sure you're all as ready for it as I am. After see-sawing between Washington and West Virginia all winter, I have no idea how much moisture my daffodils have received, but am sure not enough. Daffodils need at least 1" of water per week from now till the foliage dies, so if our region continues to be so dry, water all you can.

Speaking of drought, I just read about a series of new products on the market designed to help gardeners during times of drought. I'm not sure if these could be used for daffodils, but they sound quite useful for vegetables, annuals and perennials. The products are a starch based poly-acrylamide gel that absorbs thousands of times its weight in water, then gradually releases the water as needed. Soil treated with this gel is, "ideal for starting seeds, rooting cuttings, planting in window boxes and even supplementing compost and mulch in a border of perennials," according to the New York Times. Another use they suggested is for transplanting trees and shrubs, using a slurry of gel mixed with soil.

Soil treated with the gel has the ability to hold water until plant roots need it. Once the gel has released the water, it can replenish its moisture supply when it rains, or the ground is watered. It could remain in the soil for as much as five years before it is broken down by microorganisms, which use it as an energy source, according to the Times. It is sold in crystal form under a number of names - Terra Sorb, Broadleaf 4 Water Grabber, Moisture Miser and others, in case anyone wants to try it.

#### An Invitation...

Everyone has a favorite few daffodils, and often an interesting reason why one or two is special. Readers would enjoy hearing about your favorite, so you are invited to jot down a paragraph or so and send it to the Editor (me). Also welcome would be tales of interesting, funny or puzzling daffodil experiences.



## FALL MEETING

Forty-nine ADS members attended a most interesting and enjoyable Fall Regional Meeting in Richmond last October 22 and 23. The old Jefferson Hotel, completely restored, proved to be a beautiful and delightful venue, and was much admired by our members.

One of the highlights, in addition to those described below, was a fabulous bulb exchange, arranged and run by Anne Donnell Smith. Thanks to the many contributors this year, plus a wonderful big box of surprises from Bill Pannill, every member had at least three turns at a table loaded with fine show cultivars. I hope we see some of these at the spring shows! Thanks to everyone who brought bulbs, especially Bill, who could not attend, and Anne Donnell for her wonderful organizing job.

All the arrangements with the hotel and the Lewis Ginter Garden were made by Joe Stettinius, who did a magnificent job of coordinating our activities. To top it all off, Joe and Carolyn hosted a marvellous brunch at the Kent Valentine House, headquarters of the Garden Club of Virginia, on Sunday morning after the meeting. It was a delicious and festive occasion, in a gorgeous historical setting, and will be long remembered by us all. Many thanks to our gracious hosts, Carolyn and Joe.

## BLOEMENDAAL

From a bicycle clubhouse, to a poor children's hospital to a world-class botanical garden - such is to be the transformation of the Lewis Ginter Garden, Bloemendaal, under the guiding hand of Robert S. Hebb, Executive Director.

Members of ADS attending the regional meeting in Richmond visited Bloemendaal, a comfortable country house on the outskirts of the city. Surrounded by a sprawling 80 acres of fields, woods and streams, Bloemendaal is destined to become the site of one of the most comprehensive collections of plant material in North America. Robert Hebb, coming to Richmond four years ago from the New York Botanical Gardens, has directed a broad range of studies into every possible aspect of developing a botanical garden. Bloemendaal will combine the best features of gardens and arboreta throughout the world, according to Mr. Hebb.

Left to the city of Richmond by Miss Grace Arents in memory of her beloved uncle, philanthropist Lewis Ginter, the city discovered quickly that the cost of establishing a botanical garden was prohibitive. For a while, it seemed Miss Arents' dream would fall to the bulldozers of developers. A group of determined and influential citizens formed a foundation in 1984 to force the city to honor Miss Arents' original will.

In four short years, much has already been accomplished. The house has had major renovation so that study groups may meet and workshops may be conducted. Most importantly, a comprehensive and far-reaching plan has been developed. Ultimately, this garden will focus on research. Horticulturally, the garden will introduce and disseminate new and better plants for Virginia gardens. Secondly, it will concentrate on producing a new work on the flora of Virginia. The last Flora was produced in 1720, according to Mr. Hebb.

A highly detailed scale model of the completed garden is on display in the house. Mr. Hebb pointed out that while most botanical gardens evolve, Bloemendaal will have the advantage of being completely planned from the beginning. The most striking feature of the model shows a series of three crystal 'palaces,' the largest of which will be 93 feet



in height. One of these conservatories will house a constantly changing year-round floral garden, while the other two are designated as a Tropical House and a Desert House. These domed pavilions will be connected by broad galleries which will exhibit orchids, ferns and a wealth of other plant material. Walkways and allées will connect the various areas of the gardens, which will have a 12-month interest. Dramatic uses of water include a 30-foot waterfall and a 50-foot fountain.

The visitor center will house gift and plant shops, restaurant facilities, a 300-seat auditorium, classrooms, a library, an herbarium and laboratories. A tram will be available for touring the gardens, from which visitors, some 400,000 annually, will be able to overview the many specialty gardens. An English Woodland Garden will hold special appeal for ADS members, as this is where Mr. Hebb envisions "rivers of daffodils." Over \$42,000 worth of daffodils has already been donated by Mr. Fred Pollard, and daffodil interests are well represented on the Board of Directors by Sue Robinson, Bill Pannill, Polly Brooks, Joe Stettinius and Brent Heath. Mr. Hebb wants Bloemendaal to have "the definitive daffodil collection in America."

Near the outdoor amphitheatre, a garden of the Plant Kingdom is planned. Patterned on the botanical gardens at Padua, Italy, this garden will display the families of the plant kingdom in sequence from the most primitive to the most complex. Other areas will showcase medicinal and genetically engineered plants.

Bloemendaal is indeed a project breathtaking in scope and ambition. It will take determination, perseverance and enthusiasm to make this vision a reality, and Robert Hebb has these qualities in abundance.

Joan M. George, Baltimore

#### MINIATURE DAFFODIL PROGRAM

One of the most interesting events of the weekend took place after lunch Saturday, when Mr. James Wells, in a slide illustrated talk, shared with us a very small part of his tremendous knowledge of species and miniature daffodils.

Mr. Wells is the author of Miniature Daffodils, soon to be published by Timber Press. For many years, he owned the famous Wells Nursery in New Jersey, and was one of the founders of the International Plant Propagators Society.

Mr. Wells collects, grows and enjoys daffodils in "his way," not outdoors, like most of us. In his cool greenhouse, he tries to approximate the conditions found in the hilly areas of Spain, Portugal and Morocco where many species originated. The conditions there are dissimilar to ours in that they receive very little rainfall during the long, hot summer months.

One of the most important measures in growing these little bulbs is CONTROL - control of water during the summer months. Therefore, all his bulbs are grown under glass - in cold frames, cool greenhouses, even in the entry to the Wells' home. This allows him to limit the amount of water during the summer.

Mr. Wells doesn't grow to show. He is particularly interested in obtaining, cultivating and propagating the "right form" of each of the species. According to him, this right form is something most of us do not really know. There is a good, better and perhaps, best, form of any given species. It is in propagating and sharing the latter that



interests him. To do this the best way possible, he grows in cold frames at least 18" deep, covered with several layers of plastic, with the bulbs in pots or pans. This creates the control of water during the summer months, when many of these bulbs like to be baked.

CLEANLINESS is his second important factor. In Mr. Wells' words, "I use kitchen cleanliness, as all bulbs arrive dirty." If he doesn't use strict cleanliness, he believes that 25-30% die in the first year, and up to 70% in the second or third.

All his bulbs are planted, after cleaning, in a mixture of 2/3 ProMix and 1/3 coarse grit (sand). A little lime is also added where it would be beneficial. He lifts his bulbs every year. They are completely cleaned - even the pans and labels are disinfected with Clorox. By using all these precautions, it took him nearly 10 years to eliminate basal rot in his collection.

According to Mr. Wells, with the species, we work downward from family to form. There is not at this time a truly reliable list of names for any of these. There is not one we can point to and say, this is the real Narcissus scaberulus or juncifolius. We have only, as mentioned before, a "good, better and best form, up to now." Over the years, Mr. Wells attempted to authenticate the various forms of the species. He believes he still has a long way to go.

Among the slides of the species were several of their hybrids. A few that I enjoyed were Mitzi, Stella Turk, Icicle, Pequenita, Hummingbird, and Kibitzer, the last by our own Roberta Watrous. Mr. Wells and several members of our group believe Tête à Tête to be the best of the miniature bulbs. He also showed us the "worst." To find out, buy his book. I intend to, as there was a lot he was unable to share with us during what seemed to be a very short period of time.

Harry G. McCrone, West River, MD

After the dinner on Saturday, Kathy Andersen, President of ADS, shared with us her trip to Spain in search of species daffodils. She showed slides of both blooms and their environment, and commented on the loss of habitat, due to development. During her trip, she and her daughter, both chemists, did soil analyses where the species were growing, see the Sept., 1988 ADS Journal.

It was a wonderful Saturday afternoon and evening, thanks to Jim Wells and Kathy Andersen. My thanks also to Joan George and Harry McCrone, for such good reporting.

#### EXCHANGE

An 'Exchange' column begins with this issue - for requests for scarce bulbs, publications, or other daffodil-related items. Send in your 'wish list,' name and address and whether you are willing to buy or trade. (At the moment, the ADS budget for this region allows for only two newsletters per year, so issues will be published in February and June/July. Please time your requests and/or contributions to arrive by the end of January and May of each year.)

(This is a sample, but a genuine request!)

Delia Bankhead  
489 Arnon Meadow Rd.  
Great Falls, VA 22066

will purchase  
or trade for

Flyaway  
Junior Miss  
Guiding Light



## 1989 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Plan to attend new shows or judging schools this Spring!

March 16-18	ADS National Convention	San Francisco, CA
April 1-2	Gloucester Show	Gloucester, VA
April 1-2	Somerset Co. Show	Princess Anne, MD
April 5	Upperville Show	Upperville, VA
April 5	ADS Judging School II	Severna Park, MD
April 8-9	London Town Show	Edgewater, MD
April 8-9	Tidewater Show	Newport News, VA
April 9	ADS Judging School I	Washington, D. C.
April 15-16	Mid-Atlantic Regional Show	Washington, D. C.
April 19	Baltimore Show	Baltimore, MD
April 22-23	Delaware Valley Show	Kennett Square, PA
April 28-29	Chambersburg Show	Chambersburg, PA

## ADS JUDGING SCHOOLS

I am pleased to announce that there will be two Judging Schools in our region this year. School II will be held on April 5 at the Chartwell Country Club, Severna Park, MD. Contact Mrs. N. Thomas Whittington, Jr. at 524 E. Alabama Ave., Salisbury, MD 21801 for details.

The Washington Daffodil Society will hold School I on Sunday, April 9 at the Administration Building of the U.S. National Arboretum, 24th and R Sts., NE, Washington D. C.

The all-day course will begin at 9 am. The fee is \$4.00 per person, and registration deadline is March 25. Anyone may audit the course, but only ADS members may take the exam. Accredited judges may audit the course for a refresher. A course outline will be mailed to all registrants. Bring a sandwich - WDS will provide coffee, soft drinks and cookies.

## REGISTRATION FORM

## COURSE I - ADS JUDGING SCHOOLS

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Fee enclosed (\$4 pp) \_\_\_\_\_ For credit with exam \_\_\_\_\_ audit only \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of ADS? \_\_\_\_\_ Need directions? \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: WASHINGTON DAFFODIL SOCIETY

Mail to: Miss Delia Bankhead, 489 Arnon Meadow Rd., Great Falls, VA 22066



The ADS has a new Executive Director, who is presently revising the membership records. In the process of transfer of records from the old Executive Director, the names of those new members who have joined ADS since last summer are unavailable for publication here.

Even if I can't greet each of you by name - WELCOME to ADS, and especially welcome to the Mid-Atlantic region!! We have a fine group of experienced and dedicated growers in our area, who are delighted to share their knowledge with new members, so if you want information, or to see other daffodil gardens, etc., drop me a postcard, and I'll send you the name of a 'mentor' near you.

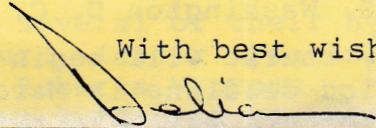
All members - please note the address label on this issue. If there are any errors on it, please send corrections (the bottom of this page with label, if you don't use it for the School) to:

Mrs Paul Gripshover  
1686 Gray Fox Trails  
Milford, Ohio 45150

Mary Lou hopes to get a new ADS membership list published soon, which will be welcomed by all of us.

I hope that you all have a wonderful, floriferous Spring, and that I'll see many of you at the shows. May your daffodils exceed your every expectation!

With best wishes,



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AMERICAN DAFFODIL SOCIETY REGIONAL NEWSLETTER

