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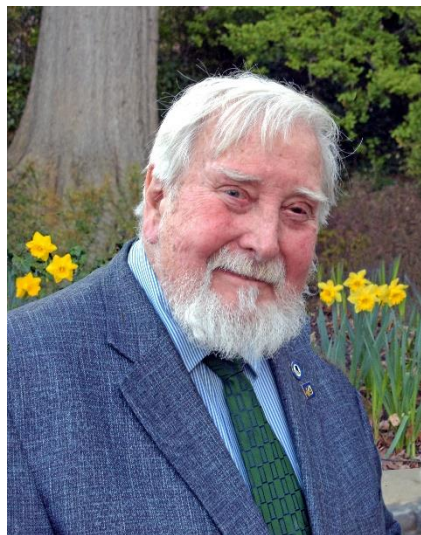
## AMERICAN DAFFODIL SOCIETY (ADS) 2023 GOLD MEDAL RECIPIENT ANNOUNCED!

**Atlanta, GA** – Robert Darling of Fayetteville, PA, was awarded the 2023 American Daffodil Society Gold Medal on March 10, 2023, at the American Daffodil Society Convention in Atlanta, GA.

The Gold Medal of the American Daffodil Society may be awarded once each year to recognize creative work of a pre-eminent nature in the understanding and advancement of daffodils. The ADS Gold Medal for 2023 was awarded to Robert Darling who has given us new ways to view and enjoy daffodils – through photography.



During the 1980's Robert joined the Washington Daffodil Society (WDS) and began active involvement with the US National Arboretum (USNA) working with Paul Botting. Members of the American Daffodil Society planted several special show beds at the USNA to showcase new hybridizing by several noted US, British and Irish daffodil hybridizers. These daffodils were grown on for several years, some dug and returned to the hybridizer's, others absorbed into the USNA collection. The collection was greatly expanded by Marie Bozievich, Roberta Watrous and other ADS, Baltimore and WDS members. Robert also served as Vice-President and then President of the Washington Daffodil Society. He became an ADS Judge, enjoying judging daffodils at the many shows on the East coast from the Mid-Atlantic to Nantucket, as well as judging assignments with the Northern California Daffodil Society in Livermore and Murphys, California.



Robert Darling has been a member of ADS for almost 25 years and has served the American Daffodil Society in many important roles. In 2003 Robert worked closely with Mary Lou Gripshover designing the Logo and pin for the Asheville, NC, ADS Convention. He also provided the same services for the 50th ADS Convention in 2004, producing photos of all 50 ADS Silver and Gold Medal recipients as a part of the Founders Lounge, coordinating the scrapbooks of regional societies, and making a gathering space at the convention. Having worked for 20 years in Strategic Planning for a wide number of not-for-profit, Governmental, and for-profit groups, Robert was asked to lead a strategic planning session at the 2015 ADS Fall Board Meeting. He facilitated intensive forward thinking, long-range planning sessions resulting in important ideas for the direction of the American Daffodil Society.

Robert Darling's most influential role has been his introduction and vigorous championing of photography as a way to, as he says, "*Celebrate the Daffodil*". At the 2005 ADS Fall Board Meeting, the American Daffodil Society voted to include Photography sections in their show reports. The 2007 ADS Convention in Tacoma, WA featured a large photography show in which the best photo in the show was awarded for the first time to Robert Darling for a macro photograph of *Skookum* a 3Y-Y grown by Murray Evans. In 2008 ADS President George Dorner asked Robert to join the Board for the first time and lead an ad hoc committee to develop the photographic Section for ADS Shows. At the 2008 ADS Convention in Richmond, VA Robert chaired the new Photography Section Show for the first time.

Robert has led classes in the techniques of photography and the judging of photographs. He has chaired photography divisions at local, regional, and national shows, including virtual shows where we depended on photographs to share our enthusiasm for the daffodil. When all daffodil shows were cancelled in the Spring of 2020, Robert worked to create a "virtual" Mid-Atlantic Regional Photography Show which became very successful by any measure. During the Fall of 2020 Robert was asked to devise an online ADS Photography Show for the 2020 ADS Fall Forum. This effort attracted photographers from all over the world, who exhibited almost 500 entries at the ADS Photography Show.

Some comments from his nominations include,

*"The ADS' Photography Section would not exist today without (him.)"*

*"Because of this new competition, other photographers have discovered daffodils as a subject. They have entered some very creative photographic art, checked the flowers entered in the show, and have even become interested in growing daffodils themselves."*

*"The photographic display attracts an ever-growing number of (show) visitors who might not (have) realize(d) that there are (these) other ways to admire and enjoy daffodils in our lives."*

The American Daffodil Society has a tradition of honoring individuals who have contributed to the betterment of daffodils. Robert's Gold Medal is well deserved. His time and service to the American Daffodil Society and his creative photography have expanded our celebration of the daffodil. Mr. Darling joins a prestigious group of individuals from around the world who continue their creative work towards the understanding and advancement of daffodils.