



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2013 AMERICAN DAFFODIL SOCIETY CONVENTION

Our March Newsletter focused on the hunt to identify a daffodil growing in Gainesville. We found Lanarth. One of the growers of this bulb is Drew McFarland, whose 53 acre farm is situated just outside Granville, Ohio. In April, attendees at the American Daffodil Society's annual convention visited Drew's farm. Talk about luck: to be able to witness first hand one of the most amazing and important daffodil projects in America. Drew's goal is to grow every historic (pre-1939) and classic (1940-69) daffodil that will bloom in Ohio. He has already planted 480 varieties. Each is recorded as follows: cultivar name, quantity, location (field number), registration date, place/country of origin, bulb source, and year planted.

The early spring in Ohio brings back memories of growing up on the other side of Lake Erie -- the rolling hills, creeks full of fallen trees, and the fresh transparency of the cold northern spring air. The old-fashioned gardens, houses and farms make for a step back in time. Drew bought the farm in 1986; the buildings date to 1866 and 1900. He gave this place a good Scottish name: Beinn Sloidh, which translated is 'a hill and gathering place'. Much of the farm is still natural with 6-7 acres planted in daffodils. Daffodils found on the property include: 'Telemonius Plenus', old yellow trumpets and N. *Poeticus*, var. *recurvus*. Recently Mrs. R.O. Backhouse (1921) and Twink (1927) were found on the property across the road.

The daffodil project started twenty years ago when Drew's Mother wanted to enter the Granville Garden Club Daffodil Show, so she planted some daffodils on the property. In 2006, his mother suggested a "cut flower" project, i.e., more daffodils and why not older daffodils that would be at home in the historic Granville area? If you want to see for yourself, the farm is on Facebook – just type in Beinn Sloidh Farm and it will come up.



Drew greeting the daffodilians



Sara Van Beck with Drew McFarland



Inspecting the dafs

One of the programs at the convention was Sara Van Beck's presentation of her ongoing research tracing the history of daffodils in America. She focused on the increase in popularity and importance of daffodils in the American garden after the Civil War.

A panel of experts discussed the characteristics and problems of introducing new daffodils in the bulb industry. Brent Heath listed all the usual attributes that a marketable daffodil should have. Here are some of his unusual ones:

- 1) easily recognizable name and pronounceable world wide
- 2) attractive foliage
- 3) takes a good picture
- 4) fragrance as an added value
- 5) multiple stemmed bulbs
- 6) sun-proof and blast resistant

In the South when we talk about blasting, we are not talking about TNT, but referring to daffodil bulbs that turn to paper because the bulb is having a heat stroke. Scott Kuntz (Old House Gardens) says there is another kind of blasting caused by inadequate root development. Newly planted or late-planted bulbs that encounter high temperatures cannot get enough water to make up for what is lost in transpiration. The bulb without enough roots may manage to develop leaves and buds, but cannot draw enough water fast enough and flowers don't open. If planted in too much shade, the bulb can't photosynthesize to fully develop.

Jan Pennings, Holland, reported that there are few Dutch daffodil growers in the cut flower trade. The volume of sales of dry bulb daffodils for fall planting is going down each year. The panel discussed the cost of bringing a new bulb to market, the big problem of basal rot, and that new daffodils will need to be "nice looking in bud" and relatively short stemmed but flower well beyond the leaves.

The ideal daffodil should be good looking in bud, may have multiple stems that will last for 7 days in a vase and the flower, will have bright colors – two colors if possible.

Daffodils in pots, in flower, is a booming business. At the international market around 125 million pots were sold.

Florida Publicity for Dafs

Highlands Today, an extension of the *Tampa Tribune*, on March 17 carried an article by Ann M. O'Phelan titled "Daffodils the scent of spring for many." The FDS provided material as well as a tazetta photo. We put her in touch with our daffodilian contact who is our official vendor for Pasco County, Pam Hamilton. She was great in providing local daf growing information. Of course, the start of the article was all about Wordsworth and spring, but even the ADS web site got in. Result was two new members and emails including one from Ireland.

STORING DAFFODIL BULBS

If by chance you have enough daffodils that need lifting and do so, then probably you will ted them in the garage. If so be aware that gasoline fumes from your car contain ethylene gas. This gas is used on daffodils to stunt their growth, so that you can purchase "miniaturized daffodils." Put a fan in your garage to remove fumes. Mature and dying daffodils give off ethylene gas which signals the daffodil to stop growing. The ethylene in the fumes in your garage will do the same thing to stored bulbs.

Remember what John Van Beck always said! "Daffodils belong in the ground, not in the garage."

BULB SALE REMINDER

Bulb Sale will be held on October 29, 2013
Jubilee Cottage
Goodwood Museum and Gardens
Tallahassee, Florida

LATE ORDERS STILL BEING ACCEPTED

MEMBERSHIP

As the new Membership Chairman, I will be contacting members who have not paid their dues this year. My email address is stephenkunj@aol.com.

Thanks, *Karen Kunz*