

# THE PETER BARR MEMORIAL CUP 2007: AWARDED TO JOHN PEARSON

MALCOLM BRADBURY

The Peter Barr Memorial Cup is awarded annually by the Royal Horticultural Society on the recommendation of the Daffodil and Tulip Committee to someone who has "done good work of some kind in connection with daffodils". In 2007 the cup was awarded to John Pearson.

A J R Pearson (John) was born in 1936 in Nottinghamshire where the family horticultural business had been established in the eighteenth century. His family moved to Essex in 1939 where his father had a flower and vegetable seed farm. Whilst doing his National Service John was commissioned in 1955 and saw active service in Malaya. At this point John planned to study horticulture at Reading University and spent the required year's practical work working for Guy Wilson. Having become a daffodil enthusiast, John stayed on with Guy for another year and then joined Kate Reade in starting Carncairn Daffodils. Unfortunately there was not enough business to provide enough income for a man who was engaged to be married. Consequently, John joined the Army again as a regular officer in the Royal Ulster Rifles in April 1961 and married Rosemary in December that year. Their daughter Rowan and son Duncan are now grown up, married and the parents of John and Rosemary's four grandchildren.

John began hybridizing in 1962 and despite postings in Germany, Singapore, Belize and the United Kingdom managed with considerable difficulty and ingenuity to continue doing so throughout his Army career. John resigned from the Army with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in 1982 and took a data processing job with the Access credit card business in Southend.

A move to 'Hofflands' in 1983 was followed by John's first daffodil registrations in

1987. Hoffland Daffodils was started in 1988 as an outlet for new registrations, of which there are now about 90. John believes in sowing large numbers of seeds from individual crosses, so as to find the 'exceptional', rather than the 'good average' seedling. The results speak for themselves. 'Altun Ha' 2Y-W (1987), 'Lighthouse Reef' 1YYW-WWY (1995) and other more recent introductions highlight John's major contribution to the development of reverse bicolor daffodils. John has also taken to new heights Guy Wilson's pursuit of the perfect all-white daffodil. His 'Sheelagh Rowan' (1989) wins at shows on three continents and has a particularly impressive record in New Zealand. Several more recent introductions may also have a similar impact when more widely grown. Similarly, 'Pretty Baby' 3W-GYO (1998) is but a foretaste of Intermediates to come in a wide range of colours and styles. John's selections have always been noted for their vigour and garden worthiness and several will in future be widely grown commercially. Although Hofflands Daffodils ceased business at the end of 2005 for family reasons, John continues to grow and hybridize daffodils and hopes to continue doing so whilst able.

John served the Daffodil Society as Treasurer and Membership Secretary from 1996 to 2002. He has also been a member of the RHS Daffodil and Tulip Committee since 1993 and is currently Chairman of the Daffodil and Tulip Show Schedule Panel. In this later capacity John has done much both to clarify and update the schedules for the RHS Daffodil Show and Competitions and to refine judging criteria.

John has made a major contribution to the daffodil world and is a worthy recipient of the Peter Barr Memorial Cup.



John Pearson receiving the Peter Barr Memorial Cup from the RHS President Peter Buckley with Malcolm Bradbury on the left



Three cultivars raised by  
John Pearson

'Jason's Bay' above left  
'Kuantan' above right  
'Quiet Waters' left

*(photos John Pearson)*