

DR W A BENDER

Dr W A "Bill" Bender was born in 1914 and died suddenly on 15 October 1997, at his home in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. An outstandingly successful exhibitor at American daffodil shows, Bill's interests gradually shifted towards hybridizing. He successfully directed for many years the American Daffodil Society's (ADS) "Hybridizers Robin", of which I was briefly a member. As a novice hybridizer I found it both inspirational and practical. This "Robin" was a letter which circulated continuously between a small group of hybridizers, each of whom added their comments and questions in turn. In the USA, a large country where daffodil enthusiasts had limited opportunity to meet regularly, and before the advent of the Internet and cheap telephone calls, it was an excellent way to communicate. Another initiative was the hybridizers breakfast which Bill founded at the 1981 ADS National Convention and Show. This popular event is now attended by well over 50 people each year and has been successfully copied in various

guises around the world.

Bill Bender was twice President of the ADS who awarded him both their Silver and Gold Medals. His articles, talks and judging skills had a major influence on a generation of American daffodil enthusiasts. As is unfortunately often the case with amateur hybridizers, Bill Bender's daffodil introductions suffered from limited distribution. 'Pops Legacy' 1W-Y which he raised from open pollinated crosses by the late Phil Phillips was Bill Bender's best known flower in the United kingdom. It is reported that at the time of his death Bill had 15,000 seedlings and attempts are being made to ensure that these are not lost to posterity.

Malcolm Bradbury