ROBERTA C. WATROUS, 1904-2000

American hybridizer of miniature daffodils Roberta C Watrous (Fig. 19), died on 28 December 2000. She had been active in daffodils for more than 60 years, and was one of the founders of the American Daffodil Society (ADS). She was chair of the ADS Breeding and Selection Committee for nine years, and from 1968-1978 was Editor of The Daffodil Journal, which she made into one of the world’s premier publications on daffodils.

Largely through her efforts, miniature daffodils enjoy great popularity in the United States, and in 1963, the ADS recognised those efforts with the creation of the world’s only large collection class for miniature daffodils, the Roberta C. Watrous Award. This is a gold or silver medal for twelve miniature cultivars or species from at least three RHS divisions, one of the most challenging classes in any show.

Roberta began hybridizing in 1944, and continued making crosses until 1984, mainly with miniatures, though her ‘Happy Hour’ 7Y-O is the earliest, and one of the very finest standard jonquils. Her best known miniatures include ‘Sewanee’ 2W-Y, ‘Kibitzer’ 6Y-Y, a quartet of orange-cupped jonquils, ‘Chappie,’ ‘Little Rusky,’ ‘Loyce’ and ‘Odile,’ and the enchanting two-headed ‘Flyaway’ 12 Y-Y.

Roberta Watrous is one of only five people to have won both of the highest awards given by the ADS. In 1972, she received the Silver Medal for service to the Society, and in 1987, its Gold Medal for pre-eminent service to the daffodil. A daffodil legend and a great lady has passed from the scene, one whose like will not be seen again. She will be greatly missed.

Delia Bankhead

W H (BILL) ROESE, 1927-2000

Readers who knew him will be sad to learn of the death of Bill Roese on 14 September 2000. Bill and his wife Rosemary were regular and popular visitors to the British Isles, mainly during the 1980’s. As well as attending the main shows in London and in Ireland they were also very welcome visitors and guests of most of the principal growers and hybridizers of the time. Bill’s infectious good humour, which he maintained despite long term and recurring migraines, and Rosemary’s warm and friendly nature ensured that wherever they went they left a trail of happy memories.

Mr Roese served in the US Navy in the South Pacific in World War II and later was Captain of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. On retirement he and his wife moved north to Santa Maria to grow and breed daffodils and to raise and race pigeons. From being a key enthusiastic and encouraging member of the Southern California Daffodil Society Bill served the American Daffodil Society in many capacities culminating in the highest office of President from 1974 to 1976. In 1984 he was awarded the Society’s Silver Medal for his many and valued services to the society.

Being a very severe critic of his own flowers he only registered ten cultivars, probably the best known being ‘La Paloma’ and ‘Rio Dell’. His greatest exhibiting success was at the San Francisco Convention when he won The ADS Challenge Cup for twelve varieties raised by the exhibitor.

My wife and I shared many days and travelled many hundreds of miles in the delightful company of the Roeses (including three trips through California to Portland). There was never a dull moment or a dreary mile as we enjoyed the ever changing scenery, checking
out the wineries and calling upon the daffodil growers and pigeon fanciers along the way. Bill's vast knowledge and obvious love for his native California made him an ideal tour guide and companion. However, he forgot to warn us about the occasional 'Big Wave' rolling in from the Pacific - which resulted in a well known Tasmanian daffodil breeder and yours truly having to change their clothes by the side of a busy highway - much to Bill's amusement. If to leave happy memories to many is a rich endowment then Bill Roece has left riches aplenty - and in sympathising with his wife Rosemary we trust that she is likewise sustained by numerous happy memories of the years when they were inseparably together.

Brian S Duncan

**DICK DE JAGER**

It is with sadness that we record the death of Dick de Jager who passed away in October 2000. Mr de Jager, born into a respected bulb growing family in Holland was the proprietor of the highly successful mail order bulb distribution business operated primarily under his own name. Dick was always interested in offering improved varieties of daffodils to the gardening public and in 1961 he acquired the specialist stocks and seedlings of Guy L Wilson. For several years he issued a separate catalogue under the name Guy L Wilson Ltd in addition to his usual de Jager catalogue. Likewise when he obtained the stocks of Wallace and Barr he also issued a catalogue under that name thus extending the availability of many novel and specialist bulbs listed by these two renowned names in the bulb business.

Mr de Jager was a member of the Daffodil and Tulip Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society for 27 years (1965-1992). In addition to his wise counsel at meetings he made a particular contribution to the success of the Daffodil Trials at Wisley, being one of the keenest instigators of the naturalising trial. For his excellent work in connection with daffodils he was awarded the Peter Barr Cup in 1981 by the RHS.

It was a personal pleasure to have Dick come to visit in Northern Ireland on several occasions. His forthright views on what constituted a good daffodil were salient; vigour, foliage and colour being his top priorities. His great sense of humour made him a wonderful companion. This sense of humour even stayed with him on an occasion when he came to the Belfast show to judge, and spent most of the afternoon evacuated to the street watching a robot bomb disposal unit do its stuff near the Show venue.

Our sincere condolences are extended to his wife and family.

Brian S Duncan

**MAVIS VERRY 1911 - 2001**

The King Country of New Zealand has produced many internationally known citizens. Former Prime Minister Jim Bolger features prominently as have several All Blacks including Cohn Meads. But in the daffodil world a little lady from Te Kuiti, Mavis Verry was every bit as well known. Indeed as Daffodil people we wondered why her old phone number was No. 2 Te Kuiti - who could be more important than our Mavis - for us she was Numero Uno.

Mavis joined the National Daffodil Society of New Zealand in 1946 and attended her first National show in 1948. I understand that at one stage she attended 50 North Island Nationals in a row. She never lost her driver's licence and she would turn up in her little car with lots of good flowers. Her world fame came from hybridizing. Many of her varieties are still shown, none more so than her delightful cyclamineus hybrid triplets - 'Tracey', 'Trena' and 'Tinkerbell' which came from 'Assini' × *N. cyclamineus*. Of these 'Trena' has taken best bloom in many shows in New Zealand and the United States of America. It has won the prestigious Award of Merit awarded by the Royal Horticultural Society in London and the First Class Certificate. It is still a show stopper and