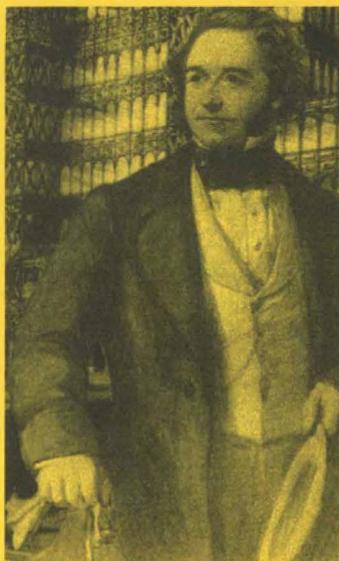


WAKEFIELD
&
NORTH OF ENGLAND
TULIP SOCIETY

ESTABLISHED 1836



NEWSLETTER
NO 15
AUTUMN 2003

WAKEFIELD & NORTH OF ENGLAND TULIP SOCIETY
(Established 1836)

OFFICERS 2002-2003

PRESIDENT	The Marquess of Hartington
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EDITOR	Mrs A Turner

Annual Subscriptions – Members are reminded that subscriptions for 2004 become due on the date of the Annual Show May 2004 and are for the sum of £5 per Member or £6 for Family Membership.

Front photograph is Sir Joseph Paxton

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The Chairmans Report

This has been an extraordinary year for our Society. Our two shows gather strength as the reports which follow confirm. Our normally hectic season was packed with additional enterprises. For some years we have committed ourselves to supporting the Tulip Days held at Constable Burton Hall. Our English Florists' bed, planted alongside this "very perfect" John Carr house offers a foil to the drifts of Dutch blooms set in the mature and extensive gardens of the house. This year both sets of flowers did well. It was pleasing to see the captivation of those visitors attracted by the rich yet subtle colours of the English breeders. This bed improves by the year and the effort behind it is made worthwhile by the deep appreciation it generates. Our thanks are again due to John and James who set themselves this demanding task and to Andrew the Head Gardener at Constable Burton Hall.

A Tulip Study Day was organised under the auspices of the RHS by our Secretary. It well merits the excellent report by Jonathan Cooke which follows. Not only did it successfully disseminate current knowledge on the tulip in its various forms but it revealed the growing interest in the flower. Alongside this enjoyable day ran the RHS Spring Show into which the Society entered an educational display exhibit. This gained a gold medal and we are proud of our efforts. Our entry was designed to interest and inform a general public on the scientific, social and historical background to the English Florists' Tulip and this is just what it did as the curiosity of those surrounding the display demonstrated. When James suggested this project I was not alone in wondering where his limitless ambition would take us. I was utterly amazed at the collective gifts and skills which your Committee brought to bear on the project. Perhaps I should not have been surprised at the imagination, visual and manual dexterity and precision, editorial competence and fine judgement displayed by Committee members. It was deeply satisfying watching such good work produced by enthusiastic collaboration. You will be able to see part of the display at the AGM. I must also record with admiration the wonderful re-creations of Dutch 18th Cent flower studies which Wendy Akers displayed and the triumph of Barbara Pickering at The RHS show.

After the frenzy of April and May came respite for some. For Joanna Spencer there was the task of organising our annual garden visits. I am a reluctant traveller but I now realise that to miss the garden visit is to miss something special and this years trip to Cheshire was a whole series of delights. The report which will follow should persuade more members to attend. No-one could be but moved by the loveliness of the two gardens we enjoyed together. I was particularly impressed by the gardeners who showed us their passion and knowledge. In one case a relative newcomer, an initiator, creating a garden from scratch and in the other an older gardener, following his father's footsteps in a garden centuries old but still evolving. Thank you Joanna.

I have devoted scant space to show results and some may wonder if this is connected to my failure to appear amongst the prize winners. I am chastened I admit.

But to those who did gain a prize, well done. We who failed must redouble our efforts. It is such a pleasure to see newer members entering more classes and making progress in them. This does assuage the pain felt by the less successful like me. I urge all with blooms to show. It is only at the show that our judgement can be refined and developed.

Malcolm Hainsworth

Editorial

This is my fourth edition of the Newsletter, and has been more of a challenge this year, as I now no longer work at the Museum (another story). I have had to have a lot of help from James Akers to get it into the format needed for the printers. (*thanks James*)

We have had yet another year that the weather decided to play tricks on us. All the bulbs we set to show at the Harrogate Show were flowered and gone by the first week in April, but with using the May flowering bulbs we still managed to find enough to show. The weather then turned quite cold in Derbyshire, this held the remaining bulbs back enabling us to have enough flowers for the rest of the shows.

It seems that, with the changes to the climate we are getting, covering the bulbs is becoming necessary to keep the flowers from being marked, unlike when we first started showing 10 years ago, they were then all grown out in the open.

We were especially glad that we had many good flowers to help Trevor Mills to launch the new venue for the Midland Society at the Daffodil Show held at Myton School in Warwick.

My thanks to every one who has written articles for this year's Newsletter, but as usual we still would like more for next year.

Anne Turner

Secretary's Report - (AGM 2003)

It has again been a very good year.

The **Committee** have met twice during the year.

Firstly 10 April 2003

To confirm details of Show dates, venues and other events.

A letter had previously been circulated to all members given these details.

Secondly 19 June 2003

To review the shows and events that were held during the year.

Harrogate – Once more it had been a tremendous show with a record thirteen entries in the Championship of Great Britain Class won by Mrs Pat King. The two judges Keith Eyre and Jane Green had done an excellent job, faced by the very large number of flowers exhibited. We were also encouraged by the number of volunteers who had come forward to man (and woman) the Society's table at the show, thus reducing the time that each member had to spend.

RHS Tulip Day – The stand prepared for display at Westminster by the team (in alphabetical order) of James and Wendy Akers, Malcolm Hainsworth, Marguerite Murray, Barbara Pickering and John Wainwright had been excellent and awarded a highly coveted Gold Medal. It had also been put forward for potential awards as Best Stand by a First-time Exhibitor at the London shows and Best Stand by an Amateur Organisation. The two displays of flowers in the style of an Old Dutch painting by Wendy Akers using flowers supplied in the main by Carole Gude had also been greatly admired.

Constable Burton - The bed of tulips planted in the old style showed a significant improvement on the previous year and was much admired by visitors.

Main Show – This had been moved at the eleventh hour from Outwood Memorial Hall to Normanton Community Centre. The advancement of the show date by one week from the 2002 date was not 100% successful. It had been a strange season and the show was definitely too early for exhibitors from the Wakefield area, but unexpectedly this had also proved to be the case for some areas further south. However it had been a very good show which was very well attended by members and the general public.

To consider future events, including the Garden Visit, arrangements for the AGM and the Annual Show in 2004.

Communication to members

After the Annual Show a letter with show results and details of Garden Visit was issued.

Garden Visit – This was arranged by Joanna Spencer for the first time and once again the two gardens were of very different character and were enjoyed by all who attended. The number of members attending was again very disappointing.

Membership. 241 (236 in 2002) UK active members and 14 (14) overseas members. There had been only a handful of new members this year, and similarly few had been removed through death or resignation.

James L Akers

The 168th Annual Show Results

Class 1 THE JOHN HARDMAN MEMORIAL CLASS Vase of 18 Tulips (One variety not English Florist) (6) 1. Peter Turner (Derby): 'Maureen' 2. Pat King (Colne): 'Menton' 3. Anne Smales (Barnsley): 'Menton'

Class 2 Vase of 12 Tulips (Any variety or varieties not English Florist) (8) 1. Anne Smales: 'Olympic Flame' 2. Anne Smales: 'Maureen' 3. Andrew McDougal (Birmingham): 'Menton'

Class 3 Vase of 6 Tulips (Any variety or varieties not English Florist) (16) 1. Teresa Clements (Harrogate): 'Hilary Clinton' 2. Barbara Pickering (Newmillerdam): 'Maureen' 3. David McDonald (Wickham): Renown

Class 4 Vase of 3 Tulips (Any variety or varieties not English Florist) (27) 1. Anne Smales: 'Maureen' 2. Peter Turner: 'Maureen' 3. Anne Smales: 'Olympic Flame'

Class 5 Vase of 12 English Florist Tulips (1) 1. Not awarded 2. Not awarded 3. Emily Baker (Ipswich): 'James Wild'

Class 6 Vase of 9 English Florist Tulips (2) 1. Not awarded 2. Keith Eyre (South Cave): 'Jane L Eyre' 3. Emily Baker: 'Talisman'

Class 7 Vase of 6 English Florist Tulips (3) 1. Keith Eyre: 'Akers Flamed' 2. John Snocken (Bridgnorth): 'Lord Stanley' 3. Emily Baker: 'Mabel' (Breeder)

Class 8 NORMAN EYRE MEMORIAL GOBLET Stand of 12 Breeders (different varieties) (3) 1. Beryl Royles (Hawarden): Not recorded 2. John Wainwright (Wrenthorpe): Not recorded 3. Judy Baker (Ipswich): Not recorded

Class 9 NEEDHAM MEMORIAL CUP Stand of 12 rectified English Tulips (all dissimilar) (2) 1. James Akers (Wrenthorpe): 'James Wild' Fe, 'Lord F Cavendish' Fe, 'Dr Hardy' Fl, 'Lord Stanley' Fl, 'Columbine' Fe, 'Adonis' Fe, 'John Hardman' Fl, 'Jane L Eyre' Fl, 'Julia Farnese' Fe, 'Mabel' Fe, 'Akers' Fl, 'Wakefield' Fl 2. Judy Baker: 'Sir J Paxton' Fe, 'James Wild' Fe, 'Dr Hardy' Fl, 'Lord F Cavendish' Fl, 'Agbrigg' Fe, 'Adonis' Fe, 'Habit de Noce' Fl, 'Bessie' Fl, 'Juliet' Fe, 'Julia Farnese' Fe, 'Wakefield' Fl, 'Mabel' Fl

Class 10 ROYLES JUBILEE CUP Stand of 12 Breeders (different varieties) (3) 1. Beryl Royles: All seedlings 2. Judy Baker: 'James Wild', 'Sam Barlow', 'Goldfinder', 'Bessie', 'Columbine', 'Talisman', 'Gloria', 'Mabel', 'Hubert Calvert' 3. John Snocken: 'Sam Barlow', 'Goldfinder', 'James Wild', 'Music', 'Talisman', 'Albert Tear', 'Juliet', 'Hubert Calvert', 'Mabel'

Class 11 LOCAL SILVER CHALLENGE CUP Stand of 9 English Florist Tulips (all dissimilar) (1) 1. John Snocken: 'James Wild' Br 'Sir J Paxton' Fl 'Lord F Cavendish' Fe 'Columbine' Br 'Bessie' Fl 'Adonis' Fe 'Hubert Calvert' Br 'Wakefield' Fl 'Julia Farnese' Fe

Class 12 SILVER CHALLENGE CUP Stand of 6 rectified English Florist Tulips (1) 1. James Akers: 'Lord F Cavendish' Fe 'Adonis' Fe 'Mabel' Fe 'James Wild' Fl 'Columbine' Fl 'Wakefield' Fl

Class 13 THE G.S.HUNTER MEMORIAL CUP Stand of 6 Breeders (different varieties) (4) 1. Richard Smales (Barnsley): 'Hubert Calvert' 'Mabel' 'Talisman'

'Music' 'James Wild' 'Goldfinder' 2. Jane Green (North Ferriby): 'Hubert Calvert' 'Mabel' 'Bessie' 'Columbine' 'James Wild' 'Goldfinder' 3. Judy Baker: 'Hubert Calvert' 'Mabel' 'Talisman' 'Columbine' 'Deryn Roberts' 'Sam Barlow'

Class 14 STAGES CUP Pan of 3 stages - One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (5) 1. James Akers: 'Lord Stanley' (Br Fl Fe) 2. Jane Green: 'Music' Br 'Columbine' (Fl Fe) 3. John Snocken: 'James Wild' Br 'Lord Stanley' Fl 'Lord F Cavendish' Fe

Class 15 SILVER PLATE Pan of 3 Breeders - One Bizarre - One Bybloemen - One Rose (8) 1. Richard Smales: 'Hubert Calvert' 'Talisman' 'Goldfinder' 2. Peter Turner: 'Annie McGregor' 'Columbine' 'Goldfinder' 3. Barbara Pickering: 'Mabel' 'Columbine' 'Goldfinder'

Class 16 Three Flamed (2) 1. James Akers: 'Wakefield' 'Adonis' 'Dr Hardy' 2. Keith Eyre: 'Mabel' 'Columbine' 'Sam Barlow'

Class 17 Three Feathered (2) 1. Keith Eyre: 'Wakefield' 'Agbrigg' 'James Wild' (Best in show) 2. James Akers: 'Mabel' 'Adonis' 'James Wild'

Class 18 Pair of Flamed (7) 1. James Akers: 'James Wild' 'Mabel' 2. Keith Eyre: 'Lord Stanley' 'Mabel' 3. Jane Green: 'James Wild' 'Columbine'

Class 19 Pair of Feathered (3) 1. James Akers: 'Adonis' 'James Wild' 2. Jane Green: 'Lord Stanley' 'Akers' 3. Douglas Kydd (Oswestry): 'Columbine' 'Lord Stanley'

Class 20 One Breeder (14) 1. Judy Baker: Q92-9 2. Jane Green: 'Hubert Calvert' 3. Beryl Royles: Seedling 26

Class 21 One Flamed (16) 1. Jane Green: 'Columbine' (Best Flame) 2. Judy Baker: 'Lord F Cavendish' 3. James Akers: 'Wakefield'

Class 22 One Feathered (10) 1. Judy Baker: 'Habit de Noce' 2. James Akers: 'Lord Stanley' 3. Jane Green: 'James Wild'

Class 23 SEEDLING CUP One Seedling Breeder or Rectified raised by the exhibitor (4) 1. John Wainwright: Seedling 2. Beryl Royles: Seedling

Class 24 Three Seedling Breeders (one from each colour class) (2) 1. John Wainwright: Seedling 2. Beryl Royles: Seedling

Class 25 Pan of Three One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (3) 1. Joanna Spencer (Shropshire): Not recorded 2. Emily Baker: Not recorded 3. Not awarded

Class 26 One Breeder (15) 1. Emily Baker: 'Talisman' 2. Bob Taylor (Baildon): 'Juliet' 3. Peter Turner: 'Lord Stanley'

Class 27 One Flamed (16) 1. Emily Baker: 'Lord F Cavendish' Fl 2. Bob Taylor: 'Lord F Cavendish' 3. Isabel Green (North Ferriby): 'Bessie'

Class 28 One Feathered (10) 1. Joanna Spencer: 'Wakefield' 2. Peter Turner: 'Wakefield' 3. Margaret Cooper (York): Not recorded

Class 29 THE GINA ROOZEN CUP Pan of 3 Breeders - One Bizarre - One Bybloemen - One Rose (1) 1. Joanna Spencer: 'Juliet'

Class 30 One Breeder (4) 1. Keith Eyre: 'James Wild' 2. Bob Taylor: 'Columbine' 3. Emily Baker: Seedling

Class 31 One Flamed (16) 1. Emily Baker: 'James Wild' 2. Margaret Cooper:

'Wakefield' 3. Keith Eyre: 'Bessie'

Class 32 One Feathered (2) 1. Barbara Pickering: 'Columbine' 2. Emily Baker: 'Lord F Cavendish'

Class 33 Pan of Three One Breeder, one Flamed, one Feathered (1) 1. Barbara Pickering: 'Mabel' (Br Fl Fe)

Other Awards

F R Hunter Cup for Most Points Classes 2 – 4: Anne Smales

Peter Emmett Trophy for Best Exhibit Classes 2 - 4: Teresa Clements ('Hilary Clinton')

Jim Akers Memorial Goblet for Most Points Classes in Open Classes: James Akers
Brook Silver Challenge Cup and Glass Goblet for Most Points in Novice Classes: Joanna Spencer

Glass Goblet for Most Points in Extra Open Classes: Barbara Pickering

Elizabeth Smith Silver Medal for Youngest Exhibitor under 18 years of age: Isabel Green

Premier Blooms

Albert Tear Memorial Trophy for Overall Premier Bloom: Keith Eyre ('James Wild' Fe)

Best Breeder in Show: John Wainwright Wrenthorpe (Seedling 15)

Best Flame in Show: Jane Green ('Columbine')

Best Feather in Show: Keith Eyre ('James Wild')

Cochrane of Cults Vase for Best Bloom Classes 20 – 22: Judy Baker (Seedling Breeder Q92-9)

The Dudmaston Plate for Best Bloom in Novice Classes: Emily Baker ('Lord F Cavendish' Flame)

S Knowles Cup for Best Bloom in Extra Open Classes: Keith Eyre ('James Wild' Breeder)

Sir Joseph Paxton

Peter Turner

This is the 200th Anniversary of his birth, being 3rd August 1803 and to celebrate the occasion Chatsworth have put on various events..

He was a very talented and humble man in many respects, born of a very poor family in Bedfordshire, in a village, which is near the M1.

In and around 1818 he was working in Battlesden Park, after other jobs and in 1823 he was at the Horticultural Society now the RHS. It was here he met the 6th Duke of Devonshire, a friendship developed which lasted for many years. He was

appointed Head Gardener to Chatsworth House, one of the greatest houses in the country. It was here that he met his wife, who was to have a great influence on his life.

In 1829 he also became Head of Forestry as well and began the long process of putting the woodlands in order, as well as putting his hallmark on the gardens. He designed the great conservatory, work started in 1836 and was completed in 1840, this was 277 feet long, 123 feet broad and 67 feet high. A carriage and a pair could be taken through, it also had an upper gallery to look down on the exotic plants. A roadway to service the conservatory was built in a tunnel so that it could not be seen from the house. The conservatory took 300 tons of coal to heat during the winter, all handled by hand.

This tunnel has recently been rediscovered and is in the process of being opened up after being filled in many years ago. This building is no longer there. The rock garden he constructed is also undergoing restoration, many of the stones weighing several tons, returning it to its former glory.

From the house a Banana plant was sent out to the Caribbean, for at the time a virus was destroying their plants, from this plant all the fruit we eat today are descended. At the present time the same thing is happening yet again, so it could be that Chatsworth will, if they are asked, save the day again for they still have a descendant of the plants which are virus free.

It is not clear if Joseph had any dealings with this matter, but he would have seen this and may other exotic plants planted during his early days.

He did organise a plant hunting expedition to Canada, sending two of his gardeners. He did not take part himself and was devastated to learn that both of the men died, he never undertook anything similar again.

Further great fame came his way with his plans for the Great Exhibition, held in the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, in 1857. This building was 1848 feet long, 408 feet wide and 108 feet high, and was built in just over 6 months, for his work on this he was knighted by Queen Victoria. After the exhibition ceased it was dismantled and assembled with even more extensions in Penge Place, Sydenham, south east of London. It was a greater triumph than Hyde Park, but unfortunately burnt down in 1936. Sydenham was then to become his home.

In 1854 he became one of two Members of Parliament for Coventry and became useful in committees because of his good sense and experience.

In 1858 the 6th Duke died at Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire. He performed the final service for his friend and master, being the chief mourner at the funeral as the Duke had no near relatives, being succeeded by a distant cousin.

Paxton later resigned all his positions at Chatsworth, but was retained as an advisor. He continued working even though his health was failing, he resigned as a Member of Parliament in 1865 and died on the 8th of June 1865. He is buried with his wife in the Churchyard at Edensor, Chatsworth, near the tombs of the Dukes of Devonshire.

2003 – The Year of the Feather

BERYL AND PETER ROYLES

After many years, it was the turn of the feather to take the prize of premier overall bloom at the show. Was it a hard or mild winter on Humberside? I think it was good growing and bulb selection that gained the prize.

We had the coldest, wettest and windiest January and February for 45 years, but we were in Majorca. It was much better in north Wales.

As show time approaches Anna Pavord's wonderful book comes off the bookcase and we marvel at the feathers and flames illustrated in the book. Were these as grown or did the painter use artistic licence to please his wealthy patron? It would be marvellous if we could see the breeders that produced these blooms.

I think they would have had less pigmentation in the petals than the breeders of today. To prove my theory, I have been breeding pale coloured seedlings to eventually break when I stop my breeding programme.

An offset bulb from a pure white seedling that appeared in one of my beds broke this year giving red markings. It was not allowed to fully develop as any bulb showing the slightest trace of virus is ruthlessly rouged out. I hope to build up stock from the mother bulb. It produces a superb pure white bloom with ideal Old English requirements. It will then be broken.

We had a good season but with some anxious moments. In the warm sunny weather in March, growth was very rapid but with weak stems. Every morning, the buds would bow to the east and then to the west in the afternoon.

In the second week in April, a minor disaster occurred; Hawarden recorded the lowest April temperature in the UK for 15 years -7°C . All the tulips foliage and stems collapsed and were frozen to the ground. It was amazing how quickly they recovered. Buds that had been in contact with the soil were marked, the defect not showing until they were taken out of the fridge prior to the show.

We had a good display of blooms in our greenhouse with over 50% of our 4year old seedlings flowering. The blooms were perfectly formed but only about an inch in size.

Bybloemens had always been the weakest section but this changed completely when a 6 year old crossed both ways produced a very high proportion of good blooms. Out of 200 seedlings, about 40 have good potential, one winning the Premier Breeder at the Show. If only every cross was so productive, one in a thousand is the norm.

The Old Fashioned Way

JAMES L AKERS

There is no doubt that a large bed of tulips in flower is a very attractive sight. Visitors in their thousands flock each year to Holland to see the plantings at the Keukenhof gardens, which are a living advertisement for the bulbs that will be sold in the autumn. In the United Kingdom Bloms Bulbs have similar show gardens at Chenies Manor, Rickmansworth; Pashley Manor, Ticehurst, Sussex; and Constable Burton Hall in North Yorkshire. Usually such beds are planted with a single cultivar, because that method produces the most dramatic effect. Planting two varieties in the same bed is fraught with danger because it is difficult to ensure that the two cultivars will flower at exactly the same time; the growing height of both will differ making the arrangement of the flowers in the bed a problem; and finally getting a pleasing match between the two, or more, colours is not easily achieved.

In the nineteenth century tulip beds were also greatly admired. In the latter part of that century a councillor grew 17,000 English Florists' Tulips on allotments which were later to be used for the construction of Clayton hospital. Such was their popularity that visitors from around the area walked or came in horse-drawn carriages to admire the sight when they were at their flowering peak. These were most probably grown in straight rows in continuous beds and the quantity of each cultivar would be relatively small. Although the bulbs grown would mainly be of the recut, or broken, kind it was likely that breeders would have made up a significant quantity of the total.

The traditional way

Going even further back, the old florists had a more elaborate system of planting their bulbs to maximise the effect of their flowers while on the beds. This method is described in Sir Daniel Hall's *The Book of the Tulip* (1929) and in even greater detail by George Glenny in *The Culture of Flowers and Plants* (1860) in the chapter of The Tulip. The method used in displaying broken tulips was as follows: -

The bed was four feet wide and seven bulbs were grown in each row, the outside bulbs each being six inches from the edge and the bulbs six inches apart within the rows. Each row was separated by six inches from the subsequent row.

Within each row, no flower from each of the three colour types, rose, bybloemen and bizarre would be next to a flower of the same type. The row was symmetrical colour-wise on both sides of the central bulb; that is a mirror image was achieved.

The subsequent two rows while following the same principal would have a different arrangement of the three colour types and then the next three rows would be in the same order as the previous three.

Thus using the sequence quoted by Sir Daniel Hall, a possible sequence for the planting in the three rows would be: -

Bybloemen	Rose	Bizarre
Rose	Bizarre	Bybloemen
Bizarre	Bybloemen	Rose
Bybloemen	Rose	Bizarre
Bizarre	Bybloemen	Rose
Rose	Bizarre	Bybloemen
Bybloemen	Rose	Bizarre

To achieve the maximum effect then the two rose flowers immediately next to the central bizarre in the third row would be the same cultivar as also would the two bybloemen and two bizarres.

That looked after the colour distribution. Then came the heights. The height of the flowers in the bed was such that the tallest flowers in the bed were at the centre and then graded downwards to the shortest on the outside. Thus using the third row as an example, the central bizarre would have to be a taller growing cultivar than the bizarre grown in the two outside positions.

My ambition

It has long been my wish to grow a bed of Florists' Tulips in the above fashion, but how could I achieve it. Although I have as many broken flowers as anyone within the Society, I was doubtful if I had enough of flowering size to achieve the desired affect. In addition because showing is my aim rather than producing a display bed, the problems of splitting up each of the individual stocks of flowering size bulbs and recording where each bulb was planted seemed enormous. Nor did I fancy the system of storing a number of rows in individual planting boxes as advocated by Sir Daniel and anyway you can't get the staff these days. (Reading pages 182 and 183 of *The Tulip* is very enlightening; in tulip growing in Hall's day there was the owner, a man with a fork or, and only as a last resort, the owner's wife.)

A possible solution came about three years ago. John Wainwright my son-in-law had for around seven or eight years been raising seedling breeders from seed. Potentially good flowers, in terms of colour and shape, were selected and the flowers with impure bases and/or filaments, those with pointed petals or those with unsatisfactory colours were destroyed. Despite the strictness in which the selection had been carried out, it became necessary to be even more vigorous and ruthless in what was kept and grown on because the number to be planted was more than the space allowed. Some of the flowers to be discarded had been selected a number of years ago, and consequently there were stocks of twenty or more flowering size bulbs. So the idea came of planting a bed in the traditional way, but using breeder bulbs instead of the rectified ones as had been done in the past.

Constable Burton

The Society had the previous year been involved in having a small display at Constable Burton and so an approach was made to Charles Wyvill to see if he would be prepared to have a bed planted using the Society's breeders. Charles was very keen and so in the autumn of 2001 a bed was planted behind the hall which accommodated just over 50 rows requiring a total of more than 350 bulbs. The seedlings had been grown under numbers which allowed John to say from the cross which of the three colour types the seedling fell into. This was probably the first time in over 100 years that a bed had been planted with the colours placed in the traditional way. Andrew Moss, the head gardener, and I planted the bulbs in a specially prepared bed where tulips had never previously been grown.

The bulbs grew well and in 2002 the first flowering took place. Those members who saw the bed in the first year, along with the hundreds of visitors to Constable Burton, were reasonably pleased with the result. There were of course a number of errors in the planting where, either through an incorrect interpretation of the seedling number, or mis-labelling, the correct order of colours was not achieved. This was corrected by placing a label against each incorrect bulb saying "rose – should be bybloemen" or whatever. Despite the fact that the number of incorrectly placed flowers was small, the bed just wasn't right.

The height

Until we saw the bed in full bloom, then I don't think that any of us had appreciated the effect that the different heights would have on the overall appearance. Although it didn't completely ruin the bed, it must have made many visitors think "why have they bothered". Because seedlings had been used we had no real idea about the height of the flowers which would be produced and although the larger bulbs had been placed in the centre of the bed they didn't always produce the tallest flowers. So in addition to the incorrect colour labels, labels were now placed against bulbs which were way out of position size wise. The labels said "T" if the flower was tall and growing at the edge of the bed, and "S" if short and in the middle. When dug up the bulbs were placed individually in a 2 1/2 inch pot, and placed in their exact position in the row, across supermarket fruit boxes, six boxes in all.

Planting 2002

Before the bulbs were planted in the autumn of 2002, as part of the cleaning process, the bulbs which were in an incorrect position as to colour or growing height were swapped. A bed was then planted in a position two feet away from last year's ground, again in virgin soil. The effect on the flowering in May 2003 was significant. Firstly many of the bulbs had made very good growth the previous year and produced stronger flowers; secondly the grading of the flower heights, although not perfect, had a great effect on the appearance of the bed. It was transformed and drew a great number of appreciative comments from the visitors to the hall. Again labels were added to correct any colour and height discrepancies and I look forward to see-

ing the results in 2004. The colours of the breeder tulips are so different from the Dutch beds planted for Bloms, and certainly different. (I am trying hard not to use the word superior.) The effect however good, is less dramatic than would be achieved by the broken bulbs, where the additional effect would be the large quantity of white or yellow which would be present in each broken flower. I still therefore wonder how I can complete the exercise with broken tulips.

On a final note, within the flowers in the bed in 2003 were half a dozen which had broken, and which included two reasonably marked flowers which were labelled. These will be grown on in my broken beds. The better flower I said I would name 'Constable Burton' if it continued to produce a well marked flower. Last week I dug up all the bulbs which had once more made excellent growth, as large as tangerines, and some would not go into the 2 1/2 inch pots. Constable Burton Hall is famous for its pheasants and slugs are few and far between because they get eaten. However the beds of tulips need protection because the birds dig up bulbs and pull out labels. The good news is that they pulled up only two labels, the bad news is that one of the labels had written on it 'Constable Burton'. I may yet call the other flower 'Sod's Law'.

RHS TULIP DAY

JONATHAN COOKE

Attendees were enlightened at this event staged by the RHS in the Horticultural Hall, W1 on 30 April 2003. Many experienced their first sight of English florists' tulips. There were displays also of species and garden tulips.

James Akers introduced the day and apologised because he was not wearing a tie, a detail that would have gone unnoticed, had he not drawn attention to it. Considering the inspired effort and assiduity entailed in organising the day, the dress defect was indeed a minor detail.

Anna Pavord gave the first talk, entitled 'History of the Tulip', and commanded instant fascination by her sheer unrestrainable enthusiasm in telling of her excitement at finding *Tulipa bakeri* in the wild, her favourite garden variety 'Magier' and a discovery made whilst researching her chosen subject. An illustration in an ancient manuscript of a blue tulip was enigmatic until conversation with an expert on pigments revealed that the blue colour was probably green originally, but had altered in ageing, and was indicative therefore, of the early existence of *Tulipa viridiflora*.

Brian Mathew, (introduced as Mr. Bulb), then spoke about species tulips. With accomplished ease and assured erudition he clarified the classification and taxonomy, and revealed geographical distribution. Anna Pavord had previously shown slides of the mysterious looking dagger petalled tulips, cultivated by the Ottomans.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Fig. 3

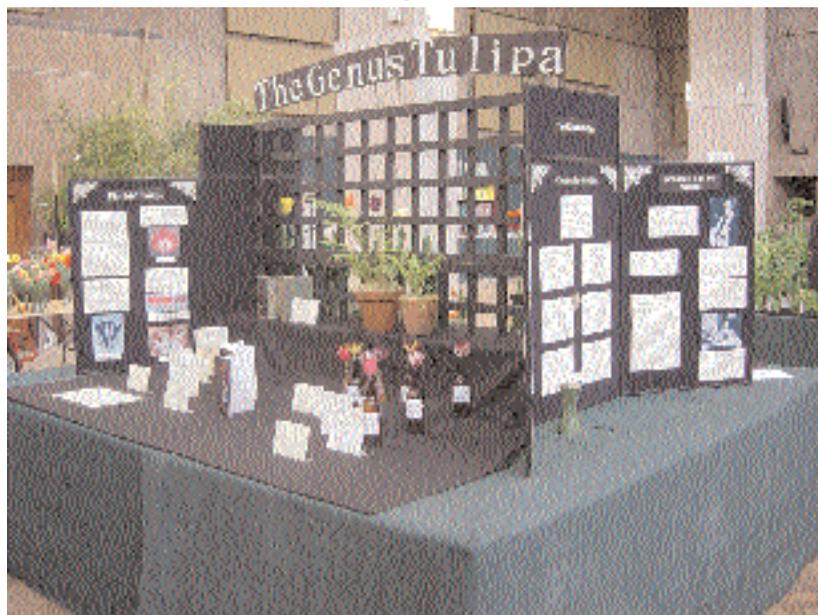




Fig. 4



Fig. 5

Tulipa acuminata resembles them, and is the only one widely grown and commercially available, but not considered a true species, so considerably has it evolved from its wild origin.

Chris Blom then followed with “Modern tulips, growing in the garden and tricks of the trade for Chelsea”. He confessed nervousness as a novice speaker, but gave us a fascinating insight into preparation for Chelsea, where the Blom exhibit is always huge, extensive and spectacular. Cut tulips are cold-stored for up to 8 weeks, before re-hydration 3 days before arranging. We’d hoped to see slides of their growing fields, and notable varieties for gardening and cutting, so the computerised photographs were not very revealing. Asked for the most popular tulip, he said ‘Angelique’ far and away.

James Akers gave the final talk, about the society and its aims. He explained the classification of the English florists’ tulips, and the aspirations of the growers in the competition of showing. Survival of these tulips is tenuously assured by a small number of skilled growers, James Akers is one of them, who also has the gift and compulsion to communicate and inform upon the subject, giving rise to this remarkable day. While this was taking place in an upstairs conference room, below in the Exhibition Hall, the society’s exhibit was decorated with a gold medal. A superb assemblage included the relating of the scientific discovery leading to the understanding of the ‘breaking’ in tulip flowers, that wins their devoted following.

This day, the tulip, in all its diversity, was explored, displayed and celebrated.

TULIPS AT THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

RICHARD SMALES

The Tulip Competition at Vincent Square, held this year on 29 and 30 April 2003, has become an established event run concurrently with the Late Daffodil Competition. This year a ‘Tulip Day’ was organised for the second day and participants were treated to an additional display of tulips old and new from Cees Breed and offerings from four speakers on the history, taxonomy, culture and showing of tulips. A detailed summary is presented elsewhere by Jonathan Cooke.

In the exhibition hall apart from the usual competitive display our Society put up an educational stand featuring not only Florist’s Tulips but examples of most of the other groups also. As well as flowers there was historical information about the Society, examples of old florist literature and a summary of the work of Sir Daniel Hall and his role in unravelling the enigma of Tulip Breaking Virus (see fig. 3).

The stand was designed by John Wainwright and James Akers with help of Malcolm Hainsworth, Marguerite Murray and Barbara Pickering. It was transport-

ed to London with great difficulty by James and Wendy and erected the day before. Most of the English Tulips came from our Chairman Malcolm Hainsworth (why is he always so early in York?) and Ron Blom supplied some garden tulips. The society is indebted to them both. James was in charge and his theme was “Keep it simple” and it paid off. Our Society’s exhibit was awarded a Gold Medal by the RHS. This is a tremendous achievement. I think Wendy could have had some influence on the committee initially though. She placed two magnificent arrangements in the style of the old Dutch flower paintings in the foyer of the hall which set the tone for the spectacle that was to come (see fig. 2).

In the competitive classes there were 9 entries in class 1 (9 blooms of a single cultivar) for the Walter Blom Trophy. It was a triumph (literally) for our own Barbara Pickering on her first venture to the RHS (fig. 4). She showed the Triumph Tulip ‘Hilary Clinton’. White with a pink edge it’s a pretty flower and a good long lasting garden variety and becoming a favourite with judges. For me the petals hook-in too much and don’t sit flat upon each other. Maybe it’s the way I grow it!

Paul Payne of Norwich and daffodil fame had no trouble with wavy stems and cockled petals. He had best vase with 3 ‘Menton’ in class 5 (3 red or pink). It was a close thing between these and his 3 ‘Maureen’ in class 3 (3 whites). The length and straightness of the stems and the quality of the blooms were exceptional.

Elsewhere the judges had fun dishing out NASs and rightly so. The schedule calls for blooms not stems. Unfortunately, or fortunately for garden display, the Dutch are breeding multi-headed cultivars in all divisions when they are grown to their full potential. Hence multi-headed doubles and fringed were Not According to Schedule. It’s a shame then that the eagle eyed judges missed the second flower on one stem of Jan Pennings’ winning 3 parrots.

There were two other tulip displays in the hall. Blom’s Bulbs put on a trade stand similar to the one we have become accustomed to at Harrogate. It was interesting to see them on the day before bringing in arms full of wilting flowers. They plunged them into water and left them. The heat and light in the hall picked them up and when the show opened next morning they were standing like soldiers.

The display of pot grown species tulips from Kew Gardens owed nothing to this cavalier approach. To get so many different species into flower at the right time and at the right height conceals horticultural skills of the highest order, as anyone who has grown species will testify. This was made abundantly apparent at the end of the second day when many had become drawn and straggly or gone over. These “alpines” are not suited to three days in a warm hall.

The Tulip Day and the various displays were a great success, but for our Society, the award of the Gold Medal at the RHS surpassed all else.

Darwin and Darwin Hybrid Tulips

RICHARD SMALES

Modern tulips were launched in the mid 1880's by E H Krelage of Haarlem with the introduction of Darwin tulips. He had bought up the stocks of Flemish Florists Tulips, discarded the breaks and concentrated on the breeders. Up until this time only broken flowers had any real value among tulip enthusiasts in England and Holland. In Flanders, the lesser known Flemish Florists, while still growing breaks, seem always to have valued breeders also, especially reds.

Krelage was an entrepreneur and skilfully promoted his 'new' flowers. Firstly he needed a name. He asked permission from Charles Darwin's son to use the name Darwin. In the 1880's the implication of Darwin's thesis were starting to 'sink in'; survival of the fittest; what a name to pick!

So what was different about Darwin tulips? According to Sir Daniel Hall we have a distinct race characterised by their tall stems and by their size and vigour, able to stand up to the winds and hails and other vagaries of an English May. The petals are rounded at the top, very broad and of exceptional substance. They open to a short cup with a very square profile. There is a very complete range of colour from white through pink, rose, full crimson-scarlet and through mauve to darkest purple. The bases show every kind of variation between blue and white but never yellow. We could say they were either roses or bybloemens, never bizarres.

Whether Krelage foresaw a revolution about to happen or made it possible for it to happen his introductions pre-empted the onset of Municipal mass plantings, the cut flower trade and a wider interest in leisure gardening. This embodies a fundamental change of concept of what a tulip can be. To a florist a single tulip is viewed from inside where the subtlety and symmetry of the markings can be appreciated. This is a far cry from a mass planting where only the outside of the petals can be seen and a group is viewed as a whole.

Spurred on by Krelage's success and the increasing demand for mass produced unbroken flowers, nurserymen such as William Bayer Hartland in Ireland, Peter Barr in Britain and others in Europe scoured their respective countries for tulips being grown for garden decoration. These had originated as florist's cast-offs through their not conforming to the standards in shape, or colour, or their reluctance to break. Gleaned from cottage gardens they became known as cottage tulips. Like florist tulips they were May flowering but very varied in shape and colour. Other tulips in general cultivation were the Single Earlies which were generally less robust, flowered on shorter stems and seemingly reluctant to break.

Through the first half of the 20th century Cottage and Darwin tulips were repeatedly interbred and separation became increasingly meaningless. This was finally recognised in 1981 when Darwin, Cottage and Dutch and English breeders were amalgamated as Single Lates. Some original Krelage Darwins are still available eg 'Clara Butt' (1889) and 'Bleu Aimable' (1916), but Darwin tulips no longer exist as

a separate group.

This amalgamation recognises the fact that all the Single Lates have a common ancestry along with the Single Earlys. The largest of all groups, Triumph tulips are often hybrids between Single Lates and Single Earlys to produce an earlier more robust tulip. Earlier flowering is always a goal for tulip hybridizers. What is important is that throughout the centuries and for the first 40 years of the twentieth century all garden tulips were derived from one Near East wild parent. They are classified as *T. gesneriana*, but the wild ancestor has never been found. Belonging to a common stock, they were all diploids and fertile with one another.

In 1929 Sir Daniel Hall had envisaged the production of decorative varieties by crossing the large species like *T. kaufmanniana*, *praestens*, *greigii* and *fosteriana* on to the better garden varieties. In the event, experimental crosses were probably already being made by various Dutch growers led by D W Lefeber. He registered the first Darwin Hybrids in 1942. Most of the early introductions used *T. fosteriana* 'Madame Lefeber' (syn. 'Red Emperor') as one parent. This has been described as the most brilliant of all tulips. The glossy scarlet petals can be 15cm long. (see fig. 1) It grows 30 to 60cm tall and flowers in the latter half of April. It was originally a clone selected from wild collections by Tom M Hoog of Van Tubergens. In most cases, the other parent remains a mystery to me.

The definition of Darwin Hybrids in the *Classified List and International Register of Tulip Names 1996* (KAVB) states they were originally hybrids between Darwins and Fosteriana, but it also adds that they can be hybrids between other cultivars and botanical tulips. Looking at the early Darwin Hybrids and bearing in mind the hybridizers eternal goal of earliness, single earlys and Triumphs are more likely parents and I doubt that Darwins were ever used. So why call them Darwin Hybrids? It may infer a Darwin type flower arrived at by hybridization. Certainly the flowers are borne on strong straight stems though probably not so long as the original Darwin. Flower shapes vary but the hybrids' petals are longer and the square profile is no longer evident. The petals have the same fleshy substance and tend to lie more smoothly upon each other rather than the hooking in of some Darwins. In the best example of Darwin Hybrids they open out to a goblet shape reminiscent of the best English Florist Tulips. It seems more likely however that the name Darwin had stood the trade in good stead for 50 years so why change it? It is the Hybrid part of the name that is significant. For the first time genes other than those from *T. gesneriana* entered the equation. This means that Darwin Hybrids are triploids and to all intents and purposes sterile. Put simply they are mules, full of hybrid vigour displaying some attributes superior to those of either parent, but unable to reproduce themselves.

I can support this argument by looking at the pedigree of two popular Darwin Hybrids. 'Apeldoorn' came from a cross between 'Madame Lefeber' and the bright red Triumph 'Madame Curie'. The latter is a hybrid between 'Brilliant Star' (1906) a scarlet Triumph and 'Couleur Cardinal' (1854) a scarlet single early. All three tulips, 'Madame Curie' and her parents were red on a white ground. 'World's

Favourite' (1988) came from a diploid *T. fosteriana* seedling crossed with a tetraploid *T. gesneriana* seedling ('Denbola' x 'Merry Widow'), both of which are bright red Triumphs with a white edge on a white ground. Both 'Apeldoorn' and 'World's Favourite' and indeed the majority of Darwin Hybrids are red on a yellow ground. They are bizarres and owe their colour to their Fosteriana parent.

In the *Classified List* (KAVB) 1996 there are about 123 Darwin Hybrid registrations. 54 are original seedlings and 69 are sports of these. 38 of the original 54 seedlings are shades of red on a yellow ground. 17 of these were registered by D W Lefeber and Co between 1942 and 1957. They began with 'Lefeber's Favourite' in 1942 and progressed to 'Oxford' in 1945, 'Apeldoorn' in 1951 and beyond. As the registrations show however, it is the colour sports from Darwin Hybrids that make them special. All tulips consist of two layers of colour. The ground colour is more or less stable and either white or yellow. This is overlaid by a second layer of colour, the anthocyanin pigment which is less stable. Hence when the flower is affected by Tulip Breaking Virus this anthocyanin pigment is concentrated and dispelled to the edge of the petals, leaving streaks of colour in it's wake and exposing the unaltered ground colour. When the Darwin Hybrids throw colour sports the cause is entirely different from TBV, but the mechanism whereby the red anthocyanin layer is modified over the stable yellow ground bears some similarity to TBV. Examples of this are easy to find among Lefeber's reds.

In 'Koningin Wilhelmina', 'Oxford's Elite' and 'Apeldoorn Elite' the red gives way to flecks and shading on the yellow ground giving an overall orange glow. In the extreme cases the red disappears entirely as in 'Golden Oxford' (except for a very slight edge), 'Golden Apeldoorn' and 'Olympic Gold'. Both the latter and 'Koningin Wilhelmina' are sports of 'Lefeber's Favourite' one of the original 1943 introductions. In a rare reversal, 'Olympic Gold' itself sported in 1971 and the red reappeared as splashes of colour on the yellow ground. It was named 'Olympic Flame' and is a popular show flower.

Only we English have the obsession of putting tulips in vases to compete with our peers. We are fortunate that Darwin Hybrids are at their best at the end of April and we have ready made venues at Harrogate and the RHS late Daffodil Show. The Dutch Tulip classes at our own show are mainly filled with Single Lates which being cousins of the Florists Tulips flower in mid May. Without the efforts of florists for over 300 years neither group of tulips would exist.

Dutch classes are always multi-bloom classes and in judging the precepts of both mass planting and those of the florist can be observed. A vase should be judged externally for blooms held upright on long straight stems, balance, size, uniformity, colour, quality and overall condition. The florist can scrutinise the insides of each bloom for completeness (6 petals plus 6 stamens), cleanliness etc. All the signs are that the resurgence of interest in exhibiting Dutch Tulips looks set to continue and flourish.

A Seventeenth Century Tulip Painting

CELIA FISHER

Earlier this year - in fact at about the time when the last tulip ceased to flower - a fascinating painting came on to the market. Most seventeenth century Flemish flower paintings give due prominence to tulips but normally they are surrounded by other flowers, this painting showed a vase of no less than eighteen rose tulips, displaying a variety of markings, but all red and white. Better still, eight of the tulips had tiny numbers inscribed on their stems and at the bottom of the painting, where the vase rested on a ledge, a scroll of paper weighed down by an inkpot listed the names of the tulips against their numbers. In order to catalogue the painting the search was on to match these names (written as they were with odd flourishes and even odder abbreviations) to known tulips.

The artist, Jan Philips van Thielen, lived from 1618 to 1667, so although the painting is not dated it is reasonable to assume the tulips belonged to the mid seventeenth century. One identification was easy - appearing on the list as tulip number 3 - 'Semper Augustus' was the most famous and expensive tulip of all time, one of those fantastic objects commanding unheard-of sums of money, perhaps because it was not in fact for sale. The story of 'Semper Augustus' can be sourced to Nicolaes van Wassenaer, teacher, physician and writer who lived in Haarlem and Amsterdam and described the tulip craze in *Historisch Verhael aller Gedenwaerdiger Oheschiedenissen* (1624-5). 'Semper Augustus' was first raised in Northern France from seed and sold to a Dutchman who developed it but refused to part with it - others scoured France but could never find the original grower. There were probably never more than a dozen 'Semper Augustus' bulbs between 1624 and the collapse of tulipomania in 1637. Perhaps just one of the original collection had been sold early on, around 1614, for 1000 guilders and from its offsets 'Semper Augustus' was perhaps available to a few collectors and illustrators. The real stuff of legend was the original collector who remained completely anonymous and would never part with a single 'Semper Augustus' bulb however huge the price he was offered (e.g. 1624 - 2 or 3 thousand guilders offered per bulb; 1633 - 5500 g.; 1637 - 10,000 g.) Of the two recent chroniclers of the tulip Anna Pavord believes the owner was Adrien Pauw, ambassador, statesman and a director of the Dutch East India Company who had a fantastic garden in Haarlem where his splendid tulip collection was augmented by mirrors. Mike Dash however argues that such a very public tulip collector could hardly have been the reclusive owner behind the legend of 'Semper Augustus'. There were more illustrations of 'Semper Augustus' in the tulip books than any other flower. Each 'Semper Augustus' has quite different markings although all the illustrations - let alone the hyperbolic descriptions- do suggest an unusual symmetry in the flames and feathers and great brilliance in the contrasting red and white markings. As it sits in van Thielen's vase of tulips occupying the centre ground, a modern judge might still single out 'Semper Augustus' as having the finest rounded shape, the clearest colours and most beautifully regular markings.

However by mid-century some descendants of ‘Semper Augustus’ - authentic or otherwise - had become more widely available, even in England, and had lost their former glory “heretofore of much esteem, hath a flower not very large but well veined and striped with deep crimson and pale yellow”. These are the words of John Rea a nurseryman from Kinlet near Bewdley in Worcestershire who in 1665 published *Flora, Ceres and Pomona* also entitled *Flora seu De Florum Cultura*. Since this work was contemporary with van Thielen’s paintings and had the enormous added attraction of being written in English, and since most famous tulips came to England from the Continent, this standard seventeenth century work on gardening and garden plants seemed the best place to look, and so it proved. 184 tulips are listed by name with detailed colour descriptions - but first I must digress because it was impossible not to be diverted into the section on cultivating tulips which included all sorts of splendid advice. (1) When the bulbs are out of the ground wrap them in paper separately and inspect often for mould - wipe it off and dry them well. (2) If a root appear rivelled and crumpled on the outside and feel soft and spongy it is a manifest sign of consumption, which to prevent wrap it in wool dipped in sallet oil and place it where it may receive some warmth from the fire. (3) As we industriously endeavour to recover such sickly roots of choice flowers, so purposely we infect others more vulgar with sickness by taking up the roots a little before they come to flower and laying them in the sun to abate their luxury and cause them to come better marked the year following. (4) Tulips languish if planted again in the same bed, but if you have store of neats dung mixed with sand (3 years old in a heap) sifted and mingled with earth of your bed in a good air about August, I have thus set my best tulips in the same bed 20 years successively where they have prospered beyond my expectation. (5) When the flowers rise cover the bed with a canvas tilt supported on a frame, at night it will prevent frosts curdling the buds and give protection from hail and great rains, but in the day it should be removed unless the sun is scorching.

As for using Rea’s lists to trace the tulip names given in the painting and discover more about them, the first name - and one of the hardest to read with its curlicues - is ‘Donee’ or ‘Denee’, which seemed to correspond to Rea’s ‘Agot San Denee’ “beautiful flower, deep scarlet and pure white, well parted stripes, agoted and excellently placed, petals sharp pointed”. ‘Agot’ was a name given to a series of tulips with a particular type of patterning thought to resemble the semi-precious stone chalcedony. The most famous bred in England was called ‘Agot Hanmer’ after the breeder, a famous gardener at the time of the Civil War called Thomas Hanmer (who himself wrote a garden book but did not give lists of tulip names like John Rea). One might assume that this tulip in the painting was originally bred in France and was named St Denis, which would explain why, in the Netherlands and England, the name was somewhat altered.

The second tulip listed is ‘G. Gauda’ or ‘General Gowda’ according to Rea’s spelling. Originally it was called ‘Generael der Generaelen van Gouda’ - the highly coveted general of generals, although this unwieldy title was soon abbreviated. The

Dutch often called their tulips General this or Admiral that, but these were not real military personalities, the title was more likely to be affixed to the place of origin, or the name of the breeder. This was the case with the fourth tulip on the list, 'G.bol' - one of a series named 'General Bol', the best according to Rea was 'General Bol Talbon'. They were all named after the tulip grower Pieter Bol of Haarlem (there was even a 'Bacchus Bol'). These two Generals, together with 'Semper Augustus' appear in the satirical painting by Henry Pot which was engraved and published by Crispin van der Passe in 1640. Entitled "Flora's Chariot of Fools" it shows the goddess of flowers riding on an unstable wind chariot which has a sail (the tulip trade was known as the wind trade) surrounded by allegorical and foolish figures, and tulips. Some are named - on the banner above Flora's head 'Semper Augustus' and 'General Bol' appear - Gouda is lying on the ground waiting to be crushed. A sad end, but it testifies to the fame of these tulips.

And so the list of odd abbreviations and allusions continues. Number five appears a 'P. Doria', which with Rea's help can be interpreted as P for Paragon (a superb type of tulip) and "Dipute Doria is a kind of Diana" ... all of which are "bright blewish and striped and well marked with deep red and pure white". Number six, 'Sedunule', is spelt 'Cedanella' by Rea, an improved type of the Zeablom tulips which were mostly "a sad blewish red colour a little marked with white, very inconstant and apt to run". Number seven, 'Robanette' is described by Rea as both an 'Agot' and a 'Paragon', much better than its forebears with their "sullen reddish colour with marks of over-worn dove colour and a whitish bottom". But there the trail went dead for, of the last tulip on the list, 'Leopoldus' there was no sign in Rea. It must have been the newest of all the tulips in the painting, not yet available in England. In 1658 the first Hapsburg Emperor to be named Leopold was elected to the throne and he subsequently became the bulwark in Europe against the expansionist policies and wars of Louis XIV of France, the so-called sun King. Since the Hapsburg dynasty also included the rulers of the Southern Netherlands, the tulip was presumably named in honour of the new Emperor either there or in Germany or Austria. The tulip was illustrated a hundred years later in Auguste Sievert's *Hortus Nitidissimus* under the name Kaiser Leopoldus.

While leafing blissfully through some of Sievert's original plates in the RHS Library in Vincent Square I also came upon an early parrot tulip with petals so serrated that they did look just like feathers, and so spread out that they achieved the effect of brilliant red wings. I've never seen a real parrot tulip that struck me as bearing any resemblance to a parrot, but just as I was lost in contemplation of Sievert's illustration someone glancing from the other side of the table where I was sitting exclaimed in surprise and said "that flower looks just like a bird". So if nothing else struck you as original - how about looking at your tulips upside down?

Society Garden Visit

JOANNA AND ROBIN SPENCER

Bluebell Cottage Gardens, Dutton, nr. Warrington Cheshire

Cheshire was our chosen county for this year's garden visit on 13 July. On a blisteringly hot day we all met at the Bluebell Cottage Gardens for our visit where we welcomed by the owner, Rod Casey. Although he had a very busy schedule with a large society wedding to attend in the evening for which he and his wife had designed the garden, he very kindly showed us around.

The wild flower meadow

Our visit started in the stunning wild flower meadow buzzing with bees and colourful butterflies. Rod explained to us that when they bought the house and three acres in 1992 they had no intention of setting up a nursery, let alone an ambitious wild-flower meadow. Diane, his wife, soon found that she had a talent for gardening and propagating plants and so Rod, leaving the garden proper to Diane, turned his attention to the meadow.

Although he had no previous experience, Rod knew that he wanted a *perennial* wildflower meadow and not the traditional 'chocolate box' meadow which is composed of annuals, such as cornflowers, poppies etc. The seed mixture containing Yellow Rattle which reduces the vigour of coarser grasses was sown in September 1994 after the area had been weed killed and rotovated during that spring and summer. The following summer the meadow was a riot of ox-eye daisies. These have lessened over the years, but other species such as greater knapweed have done well. Rod has also introduced other plants which are not necessarily native to prolong the flowering season. Various hardy geraniums have done particularly well.

The meadow is mown in late July, with all the mowings gathered up, otherwise it would raise the fertility of the soil too much which would kill off the wildflowers that need low fertility to survive.

The garden

As a complete contrast, we walked from wild informality to complete perfection! The garden is Diane's province and is a testament to her gardening skills. It is an area of about 1.5 acres which has been developed from the original garden. The area is a bit of a frost pocket and the plants have been carefully chosen to cope.

There are deep *herbaceous borders* filled with beautiful and unusual plants, I particularly liked the range of colours and forms, all lush and healthy. The borders are divided by a young yew hedge, already five foot high, from a *tranquil pond* where an enormous Koi carp lives. This is surrounded by gravel beds full of little beauties including a celemisia and unusual hebes.

Winding around the house are deep beds of luscious plants, too many to name and all mouth wateringly good! A smaller pond, full and un slug eaten hostas (the

trick apparently is a handful of slug pellets hidden behind each plant and renewed frequently!), a *shady tree seat* with plants trailing through, leading to a *stunning grasses garden* complete with sculptures. An *immaculate vegetable garden* bordered with box through to the *patio* by the house brimming with pots of tender subjects and even an artist at work!

Exhausted from the feast of colour and form, we were restored by wonderful refreshments served by Rod in their garden lecture room. After a (too!) swift tour and (extensive!) purchase of luscious plants in the adjoining nursery, we gave our thanks to Rod and Diane Casey and departed for our second venue.

Arley Hall, Cheshire

Arley Hall is the ancestral home of Viscount and Viscountess Ashbrook, situated about 10 miles to the west of Manchester airport. The soil is very heavy clay, and the garden is well protected by mature trees, which provide shelter from the cold damp winds that blow across from the Welsh mountains just over the border. There has probably been a garden here for several centuries but the earliest records date from 1744.

We were met by Deputy Head Gardener Ken Littler, who started working at Arley Hall in 1954 at the tender age of 14, following the footsteps of his father who sadly died earlier that year. He gave an informal tour to the Tulip Society members as we ambled through the garden, and was able to provide many delightful anecdotes drawing from memories of trees planted, such as the *Davidia* which has only just flowered, and borders he created or has relaid during the second half of the century just ended.

The garden is a complete contrast to our first stop. The scale of the garden is enormous, over 8 acres and has had the benefit of generations of gardeners and planners setting out walls and terraces, ancient topiary and formal vistas. Arley is famed for its double *herbaceous borders* dating from 1846 within a walled garden an imposing stone alcove, carved and embellished at the far end. The borders are massive and have to look good throughout the year, Ken explained how he and his team dead head frequently to keep the plants looking fresh rather than cut to the ground when a particular plant is past its best. Also how they plant dahlias in front of plants that finish in early summer, such as oriental poppies and delphiniums.

We were led through an archway to the *Tea Cottage* garden where some of us were delighted by sun loving beauties and roses in abundance! This led through to the magnificent *Ilex Avenue* composed of 14 holm oaks shaped into massive cylinders. This happened because during WW1 they were left unclipped for many years. When the gardeners returned this was the only shape they could manage as the trees had grown so large. The trees were also badly hit during the winter of 1981-82 which had record low temperatures but have since recovered.

From there we went down the steps past huge hydrangeas to what is called the Sundial Circle. In late spring this area is heavy with the scent of azaleas, I could still catch their faint aromatic whiff in the air! We then dived into deep shady shrub-

bery with a little path winding through ferns, this is called the *rootree* and was the height of garden fashion in the 1870's. There are candelabra primulas in abundance in spring. We then had a welcome rest on a bench overlooking what was an animal drinking pond that is now home to magnificent water plants such as *Gunnera manicata* and *Lysichiton*, the skunk cabbage.

Down a path we were in an open wild area of trees and bulbs in spring. By the time of our visit though the grass was the pale bleached colour of the newly cut. Suddenly back to formality and through into what was one of the kitchen gardens and is now a magnificent *walled garden* clothed with climbers – roses, clematis and a solanum which Ken explained had been newly pruned. As it flowers throughout the season it was a bit of pot luck as to the exact correct timing.

After a brief look at the *Kitchen Garden* with its magnificent wirework arbour we sank gratefully into the shade of the Scented garden where Ken regaled us with more stories of the estate. A quick cup of tea and it was all over!

Midland Report

Trevor Mills

The highlight of the tulip season has to be the invitation from the National Daffodil Society to bring tulips to their show at Myton School Warwick on Saturday 19th April. Thankfully Anne and Peter Turner from Derbyshire brought blooms to fill out ten of the twelve classes, with Keith Eyre coming from Hull to do the judging. Being staged in the reception area to the place, it gave a colourful entrance, to the extent that we have been offered further space for forthcoming shows. So much so was the effect that I was approached to send 20 schedules north for next year.

On the 30th April at the R.H.S. halls Tulip Day proved to be a great success. Having recorded three hours of tulip knowledge I was also able to capture the image of John Hepworth, florist of Huddersfield, credited with the breeding of the English Tulips, Goldfinder and Bessie.

Again Anne Turner came out on top at the Malvern Spring Show with her winning vase of five tulips, being judged the best vase of cut flowers in the open section, the variety being Maureen.

I have found a further outlet for my enthusiasm for the tulip by attending the various National Alpine Society shows. It is at these shows you will find various species tulips that have been collected from the wild. Varieties that you would not be able to purchase bulbs from commerce, together with descriptions where they are to be found, and if you are lucky maybe, at the venue there is seed to be had at a very small remuneration.

Miracles do happen, after giving a talk on the tulip in Birmingham, which included a reference to Sam Barlow the man and the flower. To my astonishment I found a relation to the said man in the audience. Not only providing evidence to his claim, he resembles Sam physically complete with beard. My one ambition is to

bring him to Wakefield.

The Gardener's World Show at the N.E.C. proved to be a great success bringing in another 12 members and finance to make the experience viable. The NCCPG has a theatre, with sound system attached to enable you to move among the audience, which is greatly recommended for the hard of hearing. Surely this is the way to go. With members only to willing to help on the stall Margaret and myself find it much easier to manage the show.

To be Frank

I feel I should convey notice of the death of a very sincere friend of mine, Frank Pettipher, at the beginning of the year. He was not a tulip grower, sweet peas being his forte, but the following letter is a lasting obituary to him.

Trevor Mills

Dear Margaret,

We are sorry to receive the sad news of Frank's passing away. It is very kind of you to let us know. I was thinking about him only last week when I noticed my October seedlings needed pinching out. I delayed doing the job because I wanted to check with Frank's videos. They are so good. His generous help and advice produced the longest flowering season I have ever had and I am hoping to do the same again this year.

If you remember, my husband and I had the good luck to sit with you both at the English Tulip Society 2001 Meeting*. It wasn't long before we were talking sweet peas. What I remember best is the laughter at that meeting which was sparked off by your husband. You were all so friendly and Frank's jokes kept us in stitches! I thought he was brilliant. Those are the sort of memories you value.

I imagine the quietness is very hard for you and for those who knew him well. He gave me so much help and encouragement in a short space of time, that I feel I knew him well enough to call him a friend. You must feel very proud to have married a man held in such high esteem by many virtual strangers, like us.

I felt the deep sadness in your letter, Margaret and I hope, as the warm and lighter days of summer arrive, your spirits will revive and you will find strength to cope and enjoy life again.

Frank's memory will endure amongst all people who benefited from his advice, his experience his generosity, his humour, and his friendship, and as his representative, they will remember him when they see you.

It is so hard to look ahead with the pain you are feeling. Loneliness is a terrible thing. Be kind to yourself and cry all you want to make room to enjoy all your happy memories afterwards, they are too precious to ignore.

Our heartfelt and most sincere good wishes.

Christine and Les.

* Frank helped me to select the venue for that particular Tulip Feast.

Does this Count

Trevor Mills

Always on the lookout for tulip memorabilia I saw six red tulips tied together with a pink ribbon, at the local boot sale.

Alas, it does not have the delicate refinement of a piece of Derbyshire porcelain, but reading about tiles and various items in museums with a tulip motif, could this qualify for inclusion.

I feel it could be about 80 years, maybe older, but not having a maker's mark it is uncertain where it was manufactured.

Guessing it originated from the foundries that made the fateful Titanic anchor, could it have been brought about as a mark of solace.

It stands upright, proudly displaying its flowers as a cast iron door stop.



