



The Scottish Rock Garden Club SHOW REPORTS Ponteland 2011



**Forrest
Medal
Best
Plant in
the Show
Nerine
humilis
Shown
by
David
Boyd**



I always look forward to the trip to Ponteland Memorial Hall because it means an autumn drive through some of the prettiest scenery in

southern Scotland, whether you travel along the A 68 or the A 1 and then cut across country. This year I thought there was something seriously wrong with my Volvo because as we neared Ponteland it seemed to lose all power. I am indebted to Sam Sutherland and Peter Maguire and the Volvo garage in Newcastle for helping me. On my return from the garage I enjoyed the Joint Rock Meeting, a super lunch [thanks to Alan and Brenda & Co.] and the plants in the show. According to the news, the 90-year old Memorial Hall is showing its age and a major refurbishment is required to make it fit for purpose in the twenty first century. Half a million pounds, £500,000 are needed for a new central heating system, insulation, extensive repairs, a fully updated interior and removal of the front canopy to allow for a re-designed front entrance. As far as flower shows are concerned the venue is excellent as it has a good big hall for the show, nursery hall upstairs and a good sitting area where you can enjoy excellent local catering.

The SRGC /AGS have used the hall for as long as I can remember, because until it moved to Hexham, the spring Northumberland show was held in Ponteland. That was when Past President of the SRGC, Eric Watson was show secretary. Eric cemented the bond between growers of both clubs in the North of England which still exists today.

Eric is remembered in the **Ewesley Salver for Best Cyclamen in a 19 cm pot**. [Eric lived in Ewesley Gardens in Wideopen, a village north of Newcastle]. This year the Ewesley Salver was won by **Derek Pickard, Stockton-on-Tees with Cyclamen graecum**



Like all the shows held in northern England this one attracts growers from all over the country. Many of them grow plants for foliage effect, cushion plants, ferns and conifers as well as bulbs and flowering plants. North of the border we don't get big entries in classes for these plants but they are very important in that they make up the backbone of many shows and the flowering plants add the final touches. There are also classes for cut flowers. These add another dimension, making it easy for those who don't grow or who don't want to stage plants, to take part in the show.



ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY
 SCOTTISH ROCK GARDEN CLUB
 Newcastle AGS/SRGC SHOW 2011

CLASS 89
 Helen Kidman
 Ebchester

FIRST



A super bulb for autumn



Empodium flexile was a new plant to me.

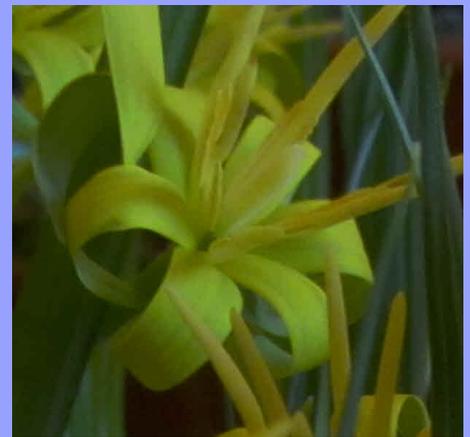
I love to see new things. They are exciting and make me want to find out more about the plants and where they come from Who found? How do you grow it? Where can I get one? How much is it? All these thoughts barge straight through my mind almost simultaneously.

Paul Cumbleton who writes the Wisley Log on the SRGC web site wrote of Empodium in Sept 2007, 'It comes from South Africa and is a small genus of just a few species. The flowers, as in the picture, often appear before the leaves. Most species are not scented, but in those that are the scent can be very strong. At home I grow Empodium flexile and a single flower can fill a large greenhouse with an overpowering scent of coconut. Wonderful! Paul's report features a picture of another Empodium, E. Plicatum, an almost sessile plant in flower. So there at least two to look out for!



Back to the Empodium flexile.

The show plant was part of Bob and Rannveig Wallis' 3 pan entry along with Cyclamen graecum and Narcissus miniatus [another plant I know little about]. It is a member of the Hypoxidaceae [like Rhodohypoxis] and grows in desert areas from Namaqualand to Oudtshoorn in South Africa. It is dormant in summer and flowering occurs when the leaves start to grow. It can be found in flower in the Little Karoo during May. The flowers are about 2cm across with reflexed daffodil yellow petals. The striking feature is that there are 6 stamens sticking out like spears ready to protect the flower from all attackers.



As the years pass it is wonderful to see so many more autumn flowering plants being grown and shown. Well done Bob & Rannveig. Thank you for your contribution to widening the range of bulbous plants available to us through your list 'Buried treasure' and your stands at the shows.



Fabulous Cyclamen

An extraordinary plant of *Cyclamen mirabile* was placed second! How unlucky are you if you grow a smasher like this and are trumped by an unbelievable *C. rholfianum*



Cyclamen confusum



These Cyclamen leaves will provide interest all winter with their intricate patterns in many shades of green and silver



Perfect Domes



Dionysia microphylla x *archibaldii* left *Dionysia curviflora* right
Both very difficult to grow to this size and to keep in perfect condition.
If you want to see them in flower: Go To Blackpool in March



Francis Masson's plants - Darren Street the grower

Darren Street expanded the range of bulbous plants by bringing some unusual South African Plants which need only protection from frost to see them through the worst weather. His three Massonia are on this page and his tantalising Polyxenas are on the next page. The pics here are of 3 Massonias and an Oxalis with Masson in the specific name. What a wonderful way to commemorate a man who was born before the Battle of Culloden in Aberdeen. **Francis Masson** was born in 1741, worked at Kew and became their first plant hunter, befriended Sir Joseph Banks [the lynch pin of British science and discovery for over 40 years], travelled with Captain Cook, knew Linnaeus, twice Explored in South Africa, the second time for 10 years, collected in north America from the st Lawrence, great Lakes as far as Minnesota and died in Montreal in 1805. He introduced Trillium grandiflorum to the UK. He may be best known for introducing Strelitzia reginea, Bird of Paradise Flower and red hot pokers. Many of his other introductions were less hard like South African Heathers and Pelargoniums. Remarkably Kew's specimen of *Encephalartos altensteinii* was collected by Masson for the botanic garden in 1773. The superb specimen of this cycad at Kew is one of the oldest pot plants in the world.

With a bit of global warming we will be able to grow more of his plants in our gardens.



Massonia pygmaea kamiesbergensis



Oxalis massoniana



Galanthus peshmennii



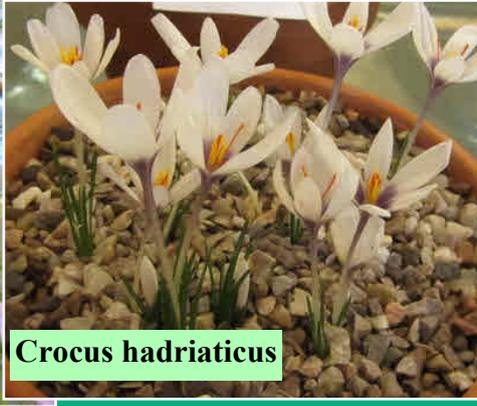
Galanthus peshmennii



Crocus mathewii



**Allium thunbergii
'Osawa'**



Crocus hadriaticus



Crocus tournefortii

3 more from South Africa



Gladiolus carmineus



Polyxena ensifolia



Polyxena pygmaea



**Saxifraga fortunei
var. inc incisolobata pilosa**



**Sedum siboldii
'Variegata'**



**Saxifraga
Black Ruby**



**Gaultheria
procumbens**



**Heuchera
Stoptlight**



**Mahuenia
peoppigei**



**Berberis
Bagatelle**



**Helichrysum
County Park Silver**

There's more to leaves than salad!

Petrocosmea

A gathering of the clan!

Petrocosmea - a small genus of rosette plants from high altitudes in southern China.. They can be grown in a frost-free alpine house with other tender alpiners and if planted in very sharply drained potting medium tolerate a degree or two of frost

[clockwise **Begonifolia** ; **sericea** ; **iodioides** ;
from top ?**Rosettifolia** ; sp. **G25 KCOO**
left]



So many cushions - so many species!



**Helichrysum
pagophyllum**

**Androsace carnea
x pyrenaica**

**Benthamiella
patagonica**

**Dionysia
aretioides**

**Saxifraga
pubescens
'Snowcap'**

**Draba
molisima**

**Gypsophila
retioides**

**Androsace
carnea x
pyrenaica**

**Benthamiella
patagonica**

**Androsace
carnea x
pyrenaica**

**Asyneuma
pulvinatum**

**Androsace
vandellii**

**Gypsophila
aretioides**



Final compendium

