

Discussion Weekend Show 2009

GRANGEMOUTH REFINEMENT



The huge petroleum refinery at Grangemouth dominates the night sky on the upper Firth of Forth. It is a splendid sight which cheers motorists on the nearby M9 and A9. Our base for this year's Discussion Weekend was between the motorway and the refinery.

Old friends and new gathered for horticulture's most friendly weekend to see old friends, meet new ones, learn from top speakers, buy some new plants for the garden and see a good selection of autumn flowering rock plants in top condition. In recent years the number and general size and condition of the plants in the show has increased.

Sadly this year the judges did not award a Forrest Medal - Hard, hard folk these SRGC Simon Cowells and Craig Revel Horwoods! I would like a few more Cheryl Coles and Alisha Dixons: who wouldn't? Our X-Factor hopefuls tidied and preened their entries and gained lots of first, second and third prizes, only to be denied the top prize. No waltzing off with a medal for us; no quickstep with George [Forrest]; just cha cha off and better luck next time!



My Favourite

The winner of the Jim Lever Trophy for Best Cyclamen was Sue Gill's beautiful Cyclamen mirabile. Its fabulous serrated pink flowers bunched in the centre of its green Christmas tree centred silver leaves was perfection or near perfection as it did not get the Forrest! For many years I had difficulty with C. mirabile as I allowed the corm to dry out too much in summer. Like its relation C. cilicium it needs to be kept damp but to flower well it needs the heat or warmth of the sun. It is a difficult balance which I try to get by growing it in a long plastic pot. Sue has the secret so we will have to ask her.

Quite a plant for Section II

Like the C. greacums, persicums, hederifoliums and coums, a collection of different leaf forms provides interest all winter. The Cyclamen society distributes good seed of many forms in autumn when they often germinate quickly. The SRGC seed exchange has many of the same forms but in smaller numbers.

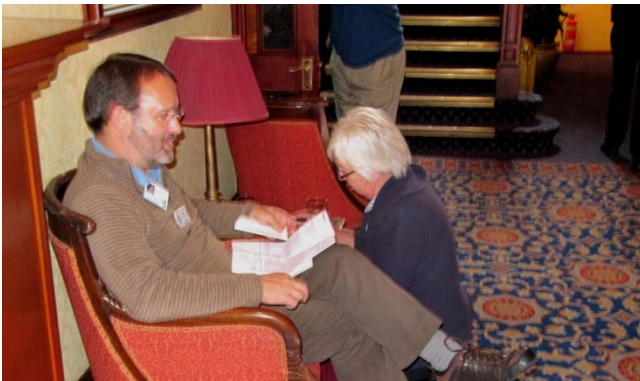


Gwen and Anne were looking for Liz to complete their Beverly Sisters tribute act. Most famous for singing 'Sisters', 'Willie Can', 'It's illegal, it's immoral or it makes you fat' this time the fab trio were rehearsing 'Mr Wonderful' for President Ian!



Ron and Joan Beeston had been shopping for plants! When they ran their famous eponymous nursery for many years rock gardeners travelled there in search of treasures. Ron is an expert grower whose propagated plants formed the basis of many good collections. It's good to see that enthusiasm never tires.

Past president Ian B can relax these days with the world at his feet at least our SRGC treasurer Anne C.



Anne L gives adds a smile when helping members choose from the new range of SRGC sweat shirts and body warmers. If you want to look the part get your Sweat shirt with an SRGC badge on it. Show the world you are part of Scotland's biggest and best gardening club.



Some Southern Stars from downunder



Fred Bundy's *Oxalis purpurea*



Christine Boulby's
Alstromeria hookeri



Habranthus robustus



Habranthus a genus in **Amaryllidaceae** which is closely related to **Zephyranthus**. They are native to **Central and Southern America**. I quote from the **Pacific Bulb Society**.

Habranthus flowers point upward BUT at an angle and have unequal stamens in 4 different sizes, and *Zephyranthes* flowers point straight up and have 6 equal stamens, or 3 shorter and 3 taller. *Zephyranthes* flowers tends to be star shaped and *Habranthus* have somewhat irregular flowers.

I forget who showed the **Habranthus robusta** but the **Zephyranthus candida** was from **Margaret & Henry Taylor** who have given me a few bulbs . The **Hippeastrum** is also an **Amaryllid**. It points up and then sideways!





Glassford Sprunt's Shortia uniflora grandiflora looks great at any time of year but is fabulous in its autumn guise, even without a single big flower!

Fritillaria pyrenaica



Harvey Shepherd's Heuchers 'Caramen' one of the new American hybrids available from many sources. Slightly on the big side for a trough they make wonderful specimens in a pan. I have found some of them 'iffy' in the open garden. I think they need to be kept young.



Stan da Prato had the The John Mowat Trophy for the Best Conifer with this Cryptomeria japonica globosa nana with rolled in needles along its stems.

Show hall, central bench.



Cyclamen dominated the show with the largest number of entries but their overall dominance was muted by a fine range of bulbs and foliage plants



Jean Wyllie won the prestigious Class 1 [and the big tankard which goes with it!] with 3 superb Cyclamen plants.

Sandy Leven had Most Points in Section 1 but had to bow to Jean in this class.

Between the two entries show are from top right anti-clockwise :- Cyclamen africanum, graecum, mirabile hederifolium white form and hederifolium pink forms.



Polygonatum odoratum



However in the Jubilee small 6 pan class, Sandy Leven won with 6 assorted bulbs- sounds like Pick and Mix! No big tankard for this class just a nice card.

Sandy's entry comprised
Allium thunbergii,
Cyclamen mirabile,
Sternbergia lutea,
Cyclamen hederifolium
confusum.

Cyclamen africanum
Galanthus reginae-olgae
 'Hyde Lodge'

Jean came a close second

Below is a view of the main bench from the other end of the hall





Correa 'Dusky Maid' with Helichrysum coralloides and 2 Aciphyllas in the Australasian Class



Nice plants in the Silver foliage classes. How about the cotyledon at the front left?







Lastly a few of my favourites

Colchicum macrophyllum – but you couldn't tell as it is leafless in autumn

Eucomis vandermerwei is from South Africa

The pans of autumn gentians mainly from Roam Fiddes

Sandy Leven

