

# The Scottish Rock Garden Club SHOW REPORTS Dumfries Discussion Weekend 2011



## Forrest Medal Best Plant in the Show **Gentiana 'The Caley'** Shown by Ian & Beryl MacNaughton

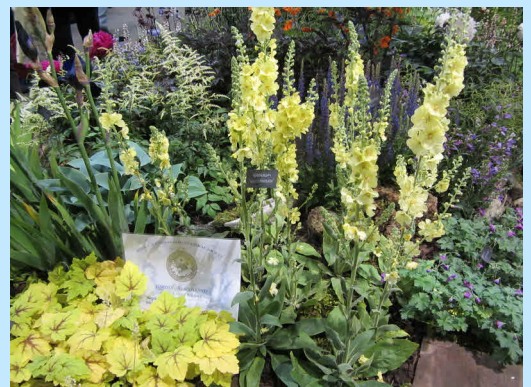


They say home made soup is best; so it must be with plants. Ian MacNaughton has been refining

gentians for many years through his careful breeding programme. He has been working towards getting plants which are more compact, with a good range of flower colours and which flower earlier than the run of the mill sino-ornatas. I have been impressed by many the hybrids he has produced in earlier years. SRGC conference goers will remember his fine display of gentians in pots, photographs and descriptions which he staged a few years ago at Pitlochry. Ian doesn't do things by half and this hybrid does him great credit. As you can see it could hardly be more floriferous. The stems are multi-flowered with several terminal flowers on each stem. The white guide lines draw your eye into the flowers and because they all stand up like soldiers you can see the outside of some flower tubes and the insides of others. Gentiana 'The Caley' was developed and named by Ian to celebrate the bicentenary in 2009, of The Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, affectionately known as 'The Caley.'

However they say there is no show without Punch or in this case Judy or Beryl as she prefers. Beryl is well known for the beautiful exhibits of plants which she stages at gardening Scotland for MacPlants. She can also be found working hard with their son Gavin at many SRGC shows on the Macplants stand. Beryl has a good eye for a good plant. It is not often I can tell you where to

go to buy a Forrest Medal winning plant but I can with this gentian. Go to Macplants where you will find it on their website along with a myriad of others of Ian's gentians. Why not build an Ian MacNaughton gentian corner in your garden?



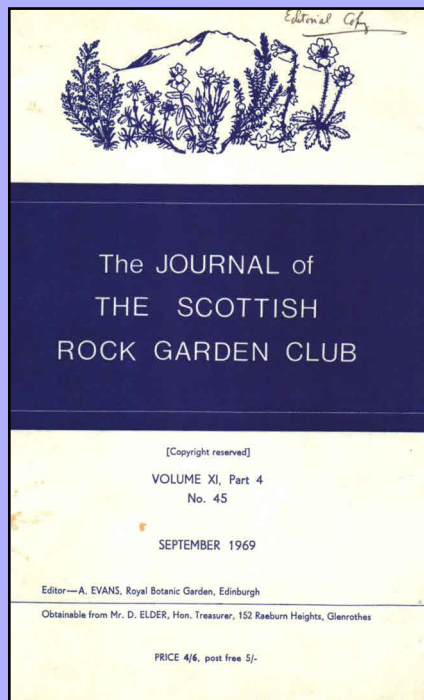
## Dumfries



### A LOOK BACKWARDS

This was the first Scottish Rock Garden Club show to be held in Dumfries since 1969! That's quite a long time. I don't suppose many people in Dumfries or in the SRGC remember that last show. Luckily we have records and all shows are written up in The Journal. Norman Brown was show secretary and in the report we read that he had a serious illness. Perhaps this was the reason that that was the last show. The Forrest Medal went to *Cassiope lycopodioides* shown by Mr McGinley from Dumfries. It is interesting that way back then, when I was a young dentist starting my career in Dundee Dental Hospital, that first names were not used! The RHS Joint Rock Garden Plant committee met at this show in 1969 just as it did in 2011. They awarded an FCC to *Phyllothamnus erectus* shown by Miss Gibson. The only name I recognised from the show report was that of Mrs Maule who came from Edinburgh. She had a wonderful garden at Balerno

in a quarry. By the mid 1970's when I first met her, she was introduced as ShY]la. In 1969 Mr John Mowatt whom I also met in his garden in 7eres in Fife was SRGC President. Alf Evans was editor of the journal. Mrs Spillar of the Stirling group and Angus Small of Renfrewshire are the only other council members whose names I recognise. It is wonderful to think that the enthusiasm for plants and dedication to the SRGC and its events and publications which was there when the club was founded in 1933 has passed through several generations and is still maintained by our active band of Scottish rockers today. I am certain they would feel at home at today's shows. They would enjoy the journal indeed they would marvel at our extravagant use of colour. The 1969 journal had 2 pages of colour photographs. Indeed it is not so long ago that groups would subsidise the production costs of the journal by paying for a page in colour. What would they have made of the internet?



Cairndale Hotel,  
Dumfries.  
Join us in 2012!



# Autumn Gentians

Gentiana 'The Caley'



G. 'Oban'

G. 'Eugen's  
Allerbester'



One good thing about multiple plant classes is that you can see differences between varieties much more easily when the plants are sitting side by side, than if you see one on its own then another on its own. Trying to remember what a particular plant looked like is not always easy when you are looking at a piece of plant on the bench. Here are quite a spectrum of Gentiana 'sino-ornata types'. Just look at the nicely rolled over sepals on the flowers of G. 'Oban' [again bred by Ian MacNaughton] above and compare them with the sharply defined petals of G. 'Weisser Traum' below.

G. 'Shot Silk'



If you fancy a change then there are doubles, the best known of which is G. 'Eugen's Allerbester'. I don't know if that means 'Alabaster' or 'All the best'. It seems to translate as 'all kinds of the most desirable'. Why did he not call it 'Eugen's Double'?

Gentiana 'Shot Silk' from Aberconwy nurseries is one of the top prize winners of recent years.

G. 'Lucerne'



G. 'Weisser Traum'

# Autumn Foliage and Berries



**Asteranthera ovata** is 'pqt segn very often. kxu a member of the Gesneriaceae. Tha means it is related to Ramonda, Haberlea and African Violets. To my untrained eyes it looks nothing like them except that has hairs on the flowers. It has been in cultivation since it was introduced by Harold Comber from Chile in summer 1925/6 or 1926/7. In Chile summer is our winter hence the 2 years in each collecting period.



Comber at one time worked in the RBGE., where he knew George Forrest. He also worked in many famous English gardens eventually ending up in Oregon. Then as now, gardeners and gardens were well interconnected, so that plants and information and knowledge of jobs and expeditions ur tgcf "gcukx{ 'kp" 'yj g" i ctf gpkpi "eqo o wpkx{ and

kh{ qw'cf f 'yj g'dki "dqwple'i ctf gpu"( 'yj g'Tq{ cn'Uqelgv{ "v" 'yj g'o kz "{ qw'ecp"ugg'j qy 'o gp"]cpf 'k'y cu'pgctn{ "cny c{u" 'o gp\_'ltqo "cr r ctgpn{ "qduewt g'r rægu"j gt"gpf gf "w' rqqnkp{ 'hqt 'r ræpvu'kp'gxgp'o qtg'f kucpv'r rægu'cdtqcf 0 Comber'collected from areas which could be reached relatively easily and which had similar weather to the UK.

He tried to collect his specimens from as high as possible to ensure their hardiness at home. I don't know if the Asteranthera at Dumfries was a Comber plant or derived from later collections.

According to RAMON REYES on the Gesneriad web site, it is a creeping and climbing plant, stems of 30 - 40 cmlong, hirsute, flexible, climbing over fallen trees, standing or crawling on slopes of the roads. It has aerial roots that allow it to adhere to the trunks.



Photo by Walter Teague, Asteranthera ovata growing in nature in Chile

# A LAST LOOK



Best Cyclamen was Sandy Leven's  
*Cyclamen africanum*



Sue Gill's *Cyclamen mirabile* lived up to its name. MARVELLOUS!



Sandy Leven