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Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society



Flames and Feathers English Florists' Tulips

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Preface

It is nine years since the Society published the booklet *English Florists Tulips: Into the 21st Century*. In its preface we reported that interest in the Society and the flowers grown had never been greater. It is very pleasing to be able to say that the interest continues and that we have passed a further milestone, our 175th anniversary in 2010.

I well remember attending an affiliated societies' meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley in October 1988 with Wendy Akers and Keith Eyre where surprise was shown that we were still going strong. An RHS scientist even expressed great dismay that we were continuing to grow a *virused* flower. I still think of her every year when the RHS offers for sale a new range of expensive tulip pottery or on the front of one of its publications features broken tulips. You cannot get away from the fact that virused or not, English Florists' tulips are unique and beautiful flowers which continue to attract visitors to our show and new members to our Society. Long may it continue.

The Society has to date produced twenty-two Newsletters since its first in 1988. We have reproduced some of that material as it will be new to many readers of this publication. The authorship may not be fully acknowledged so I will take this opportunity to thank the contributors now, together with all the officers and members who have contributed so much to the Society over the past 176 years.

One new feature within this booklet is the Time-Line which appears at the bottom of each page recording chronologically events particularly relevant to the Society but also to the tulip in general. This was a feature requested by

Carole Gude which received immediate support from our committee. The idea is not new, the Reverend Joseph Jacob having devoted the whole of Chapter II to Chronology and Bibliography in *Tulips "the book on the Tulip being the first published in English"*, 99 years ago. No doubt many important events will have been missed out, so if you think of any please contact our Secretary who will ensure that they appear in our next publication in a few years time.

Technology moves on and I hope that you will find the photographs we have used much improved from previous years. The greatest problem that new members have is in identifying the tulips that they are growing. In the case of breeder tulips we have tried to show two photographs. The first one is looking inside the tulip so that the shape and size of the base offers an aid to identification and the second gives an indication of the shape of the petal. A word of warning however; it is very difficult to reproduce colour accurately particularly with bybloemen varieties, and in any case the colour will vary from grower to grower as a result of different soils or light and shade conditions. With broken tulips the markings will differ from flower to flower, and even petal to petal so in their case it is more important to look for matching characteristics rather than an exact match.

We have deliberately excluded any major reference to garden tulips (referred to as 'Dutch' within the Society) although we do exhibit them, but we hope that you will be able to find sufficient information about the superior English Florists' tulip to keep your interest.

James Akers - September 2011

Records of tulips in the garden of Sultan Mehmed II (1451-1481).

Tulips play a central role in Ottoman society under Süleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566).



Time
Line

1451

1520



Fig 2 - The picture on the left shows the heavily marked inner surfaces of the petals and the picture on the right shows the reverse of the same petals have finer markings.

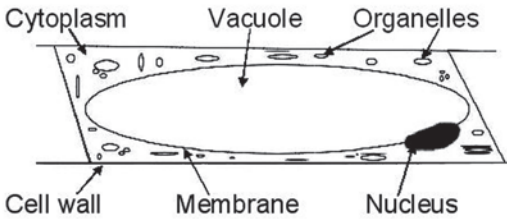


Fig 3 - A tulip epidermal cell

Fig 3 above shows a diagram of a tulip epidermal cell showing the central vacuole, where the anthocyanins are located. The vacuole, the intracellular organelles and the entire cell are enclosed by membranes. Carotenoid pigments bind to some of these membranes. The cell contents are pressed against the cell walls so the vacuole appears to fill the whole cell, see Fig 5.

The process of “breaking” in tulips affects only the anthocyanins in the petal, the base

colour remains unchanged. Rose and bybloemen flowers, which have a white base, show a white background to the flames of colour. “Broken” bizarre varieties retain their yellow base and we see the yellow background colour throughout the petal.

Plant growth starts from small regions of cell division known as meristems and these are found in very specific locations such as at the tips of shoots and roots. Cell division at the meristem results in the proliferation of tiny cells that are gradually moved down or sideways, as the meristematic cells continue to divide, into what are known as zones of cell expansion. Here they extend the growth of tissue or organ of the plant to form different structures such as stem, leaves and petals. Groups of cells might share similar characteristics and make a particular tissue or, as in the case of the tulip petals, show the same colour. The expansion of cells from the central area of

At the Annual Show, the prize for the winner of the Novice class for a pan of 6 breeders was a Silver Medal. For the winner of the class for pair of flamed and feathered by a Novice there was a prize of 5 volumes of Dickens.

Publication of the book Tulips by Rev Joseph Jacob.



Time
Line

1911

1912



Pictures on this page

Top 'Sam Barlow' flame inner

photo Hubert Calvert

Middle 'Sam Barlow' feather inner and outer

Bottom 'Sir Daniel Hall' flame inner and outer

photos Maurice Evans

Pictures on the following page

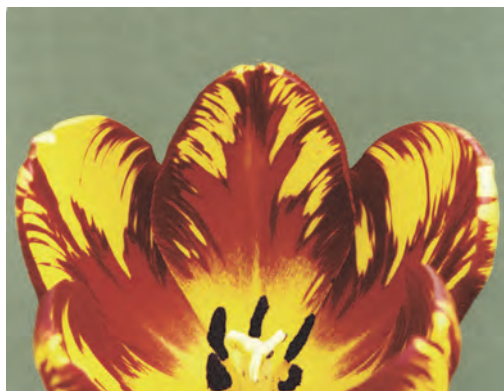
Top 'Sir Joseph Paxton' feather inner and outer

Middle 'Sir Joseph Paxton' flame inner and outer

photos Maurice Evans

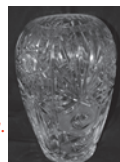
Bottom 'Tom McRae' feather and flame inner

photo James Akers



At the Annual Show, BBC Radio Leeds and BBC TV Nationwide 'Look North' both made recordings featuring Mr Jim Akers, our oldest exhibiting member, discussing the English Florists' tulip.

Victor Roozen presented a small silver cup, The Gina Roozen Cup, for a new Novice Class for three breeders. Lord Cochrane of Cults presented a glass vase, awarded to the best bloom in single bloom classes.



Time
Line

1978

1979

The Local Challenge Cup

The decision to purchase a second cup by the Society was taken on 2 February 1932 and a sum of £8 was allocated to procure the same from Messrs Perkins of Wakefield. The cup was to be won by the member scoring the most points in the Local Classes on a scale decided at that meeting. In 1935 it was decided to introduce a class for nine tulips as in the Open Classes and award the cup to the winner of this class.

Now awarded for nine tulips in the Open section, breeder, flame and feather from each of the three colours, it is the collection class which is most pleasing to the eye. Of the three cups featured here it is also the one which has been least dominated by just a few exhibitors. In the last twenty years there have been eight different winners and two years not awarded.



The winners of this cup have been:-

- 1932 Frank Fox Normanton
- 1933 Frank Fox Normanton
- 1934 Frank Fox Normanton
- 1935 Robert Robinson Horbury
- 1936 Counr G A Brook Altofts
- 1937 G A Brook Altofts
- 1938 W E Brook Altofts
- 1939 J W Midgley Halifax
- 1940 E H Robinson Horbury
- 1941 G Hunt Horbury
- 1942 G Hunt Horbury
- 1943 G Hunt Horbury
- 1944 R Robinson Horbury
- 1945 N H Eyre Horbury
- 1946 W Beddows Altofts
- 1947 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1948 K Robinson Ossett
- 1949 K Robinson Ossett
- 1950 K Robinson Ossett
- 1951 W Beddows Altofts
- 1952 A Robshaw Wakefield
- 1953 J Burton Normanton
- 1954 W Beddows Altofts
- 1955 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1956 Counr Mrs D. E. Briggs Horbury
- 1957 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1958 J Burton Normanton
- 1959 J Burton Normanton
- 1960 H V Calvert Lupset
- 1961 A Tear Altofts
- 1962 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1963 J Hardman Normanton
- 1964 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1965 J Hardman Normanton
- 1966 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1967 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1968 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1969 J T E Akers Altofts
- 1970 J T E Akers Altofts

Hubert Calvert died aged 88 years. He was a fine florist, raising polyanthus cultivars as well as tulips. He raised the outstanding bybloemen 'Agbrigg' and is remembered for his work as Hon Secretary and as a true gentleman.

