

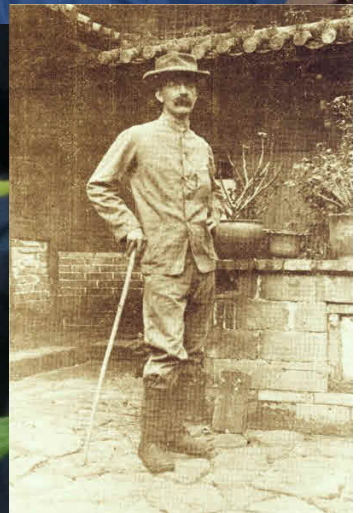


# The Scottish Rock Garden Club Forrest Medal Perth 2012



## Plant name **Cypripedium 'Ursel'** shown by Cyril Lafong

Cyril took the honours with this fabulous pan of orchids. Cypripediums are among the royalty of rock garden plants and Cyril is the Court Master who knows how to grow and present them flawlessly. It takes a many years to increase one 'tuber' up to a pan-full as big as this. **Cypripedium 'Ursel'** is a hybrid between *C. fasciolatum* and *C. henryi* raised in Germany. *C. fasciolatum* is a Himalayan plant whose range reaches into western China while *C. henryi* is also Chinese, from Yunnan, Sichuan and neighbouring provinces. I love plants with a history like *C. henryi* in that it was named for **Augustine Henry** who was born in Dundee. Soon after his birth his parents returned to Cookstown in County Tyrone in Ireland. He therefore grew up as Irish. He kept his Scottish connections by studying medicine first at Queen's, Belfast and later at Edinburgh University where he gained his medical degree. Later he studied law. He entered the Imperial Customs Service in Shanghai in 1881 as Assistant Medical Officer and Customs Assistant. He was asked to study Chinese herbal medicine and subsequently collected over 15,000 specimens in China; discovered 25 new genera; retired with the rank of Mandarin and went to work on his specimens at Kew. His other achievements are just as impressive. Cyril reminded me that I told him that this plant had been awarded the Forrest in Aberdeen when in fact it was another of his Cyps. He grows so many, so well. Congratulations to Cyril on winning the Perth Forrest Medal 2012.



Augustine Henry