

The Scottish Rock Garden Club

At Gardening Scotland 2/3/4 June 2017



Two things are difficult to illustrate in a written report. The first is the enthusiasm of our members who design , plan, build, man and dismantle the club's gold medal winning exhibit. The other is the generosity of members, often the same members, who lend their plants to the Club for the display.

The show attracts around 35,000 visitors and 400 exhibitors. Most horticultural exhibitors at Gardening Scotland are specialist nurseries run by enthusiastic growers or from amateur societies like the SRGC. The other strong feature at G/S are the Pallet Gardens built by school children, gardening societies and charities. Garden Centres stage their own displays near their sales stand and in the Floral Hall. Bonsai and Floral art are always to the fore.

As usual there are excellent displays from the Meconopsis Group [their best so far, in my opinion], The Scottish Rhododendron Society, Gardens of Argyll and Bute as well as our hosts the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society.

Backing up this garden of Eden is an Aladdin's cave of artwork, jewellery, garden sundries. The Food fayre offers specialist gin, whisky, chilli chutney, pies , fudge and sweets, cheese and even venison to take home. You are never very far from a big van selling ice cream, fish and chips, venison burgers or steak and pork filled rolls. Just a snack? Donuts will do!

Societies and organisations like the Woodland Trust, Scottish Wildlife Trust, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, R.S.P. B., British Trust for Ornithology, Butterfly Conservation, the N.F.U. [I am still waiting for my lucky hamper!]

Thailand, Japan and China invite you to visit their country for a holiday.

If you still have the energy to sit and listen there are lectures and talks all day long. Experts will answer your questions. Others will disagree but it will be entertaining. Still not knowledgeable? Why not tune into a cooking demonstration. One day is not enough to take it all in but it will be a great day out with as they always say " something for everyone!"

Despite the huge choice my favourites remain the nurseries and stands show-



ing and selling wee hardy plants and bulbs suitable for the Rock or Woodland garden.

Centrepiece of this is our own SRGC stand where you can talk to people who admire 'our kind of plants' and answer their questions. You have no idea of just how much of an expert you are till you hear the questions asked. Most frequent? Where can I buy that plant? Is it hardy? Do you have seeds of that? Sales of seeds exceeded expectations due to the ease with which choices can be made now that the seed packets are all named. Well done Neil!

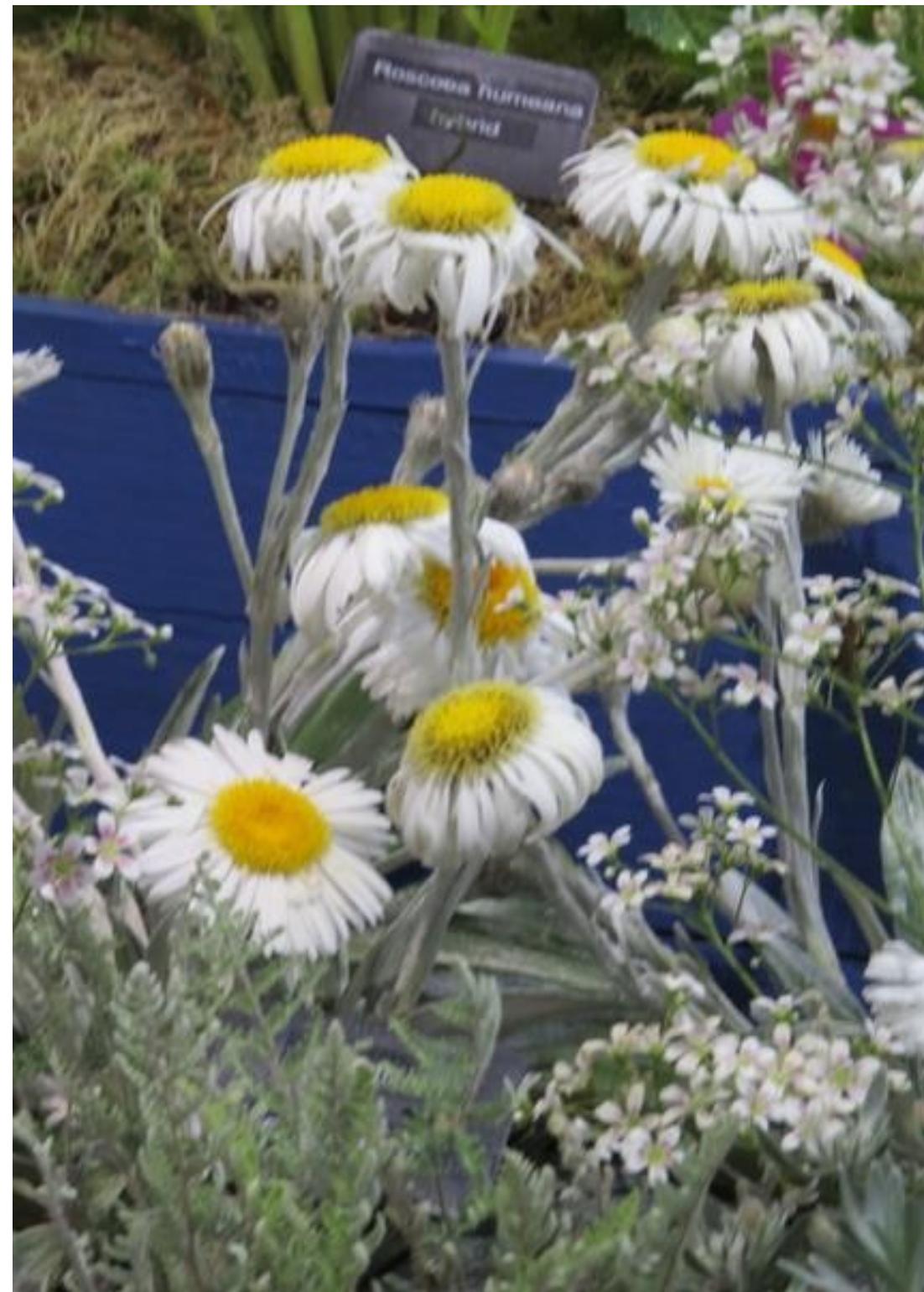
As you can see from the pictures SRGC members did not have far to walk for a delicious cup of coffee and perhaps a wee pastry.

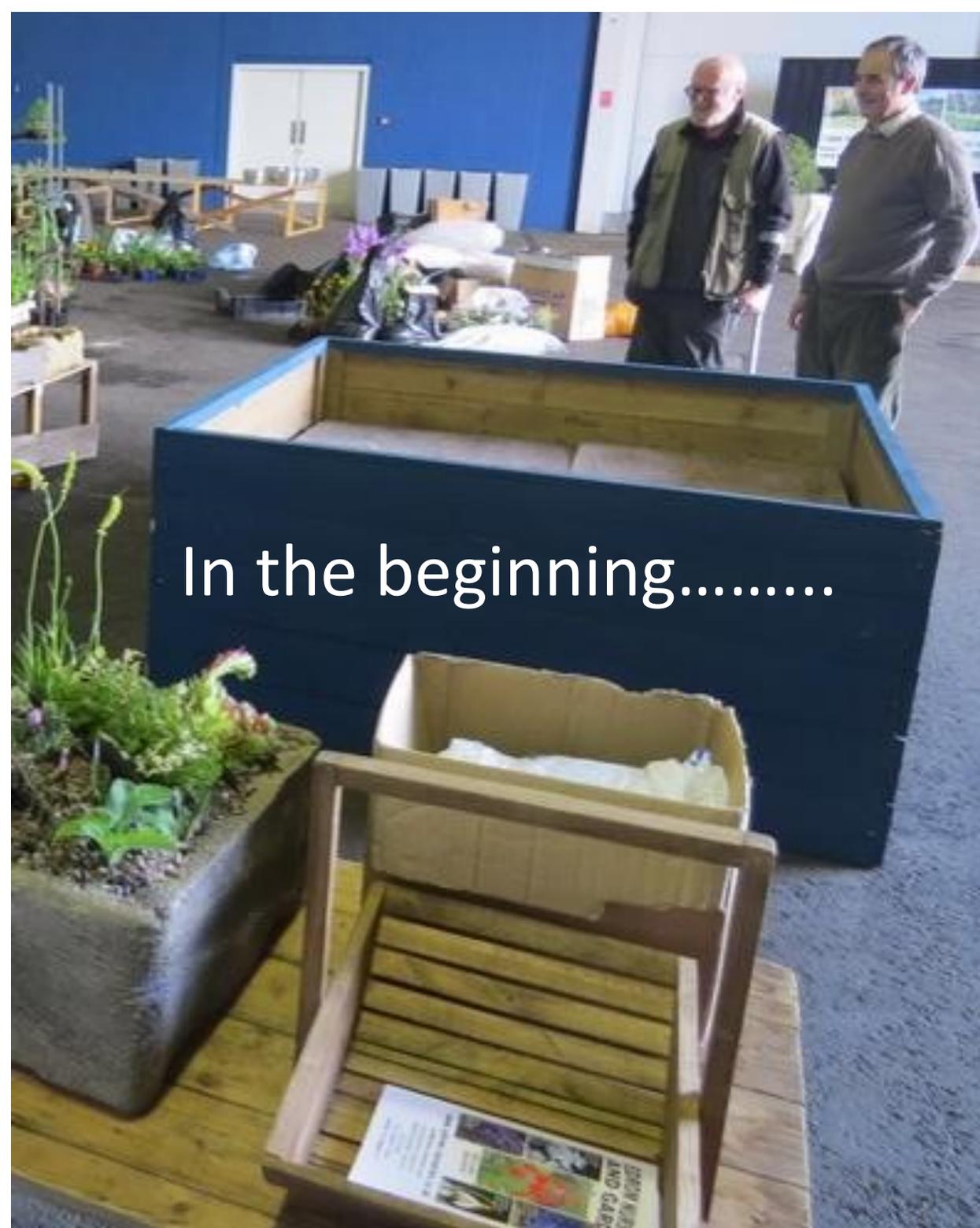
Our display had a plant for everyone. Arisaemas, Meconopses, Dactylorrhiza and



Cypripedium orchids & Primulas for shady places Celmisias, Saxifrages, Lewisias, for patios we had a wide selection of smaller ferns, Hostas and foliage plants in troughs. Sales of seeds went well. Rob Graham and Trina Rogerson and the Bainbridges worked hard. I brought some planted troughs.

WHEN TRAGEDY STRUCK! Each year for several years past our leader at Gardening Scotland has been Stan da Prato. Stan's and Ian Christie's plants have been the backbone of our displays; Stan has worked on the design; placed the plants; lifted and carried heavy bags and boxes to build the stand; he oversaw the dismantling and then made sure that everything was tidied away at the end. This year, about a month before the show, Stan's back began to give him trouble. Later he developed more trouble, the result being that he could scarcely lift a plant. Thank goodness that Ian Christie, Richard Green and Peggy Anderson were on hand to take up the slack. Although the display is billed as a Club stand only a very few people actually build it! Well done those who did!









When the plants arrive, some are in pots while others having been lifted from the garden arrive bare rooted in boxes. They don't look much lying on their side but when the yellow dwarf *Lilium pyrenaicum*, pink Primulas and *Nomocharis* and the *Arisaemas* are In situ they look as if they had always grown there!











If you missed Gardening Scotland or were unable to help there, your next opportunity will be at the Scottish Rock Garden Club Summer Event in Dunblane on Saturday 19th August.

You have plenty of time to prepare some plants and cut flowers to bring along and share them with other members.



I plan to take the troughs below which were at Gardening Scotland 2017 and were featured on BBC 1's "The Beechgrove Garden" to Dunblane for 19th August event.