

Greater St. Louis Daffodil Society Genesis

(Adaptation of two articles on same by Jim Morris in the first GSLDC Newsletter and the ADS Central Region Newsletter, Spring 2001)

Our founder and first president Jim Morris, Ballwin, MO, documented our beginning as a club (later changed to society) in 1998. It began with his visits to see the extensive daffodil plantings at Susan and Steve Smith's garden in Kirkwood, MO. After several visits and daffodil discussions, Susan gifted Jim and his wife Jean with a membership in the American Daffodil Society in 1995. This opened up to them the wonderful world of daffodil growers and new daffodil hybrids. A Mitsch catalog was acquired and together with a couple of local iris friends an order was placed.

By this time the Morris's had been growing daffodils for over 30 years. Their garden included the commercially available classics such as 'King Alfred', 'Ice Follies', and 'Minnow', as well as some more modern clones such as 'Eclat' and 'Loch Owskeich'. But upon becoming an ADS member, Jim was surprised to discover that there was no St. Louis area club with which to share growing experiences.

So, along with a few iris society friends, they decided to help educate the public (and themselves) by having a daffodil show within the 1997 early iris show at Westport Mall in west St. Louis County. The daffodil display was judged by Dave Niswonger, Cape Girardeau, MO, a daffodil hybridizer who was a Master Iris Judge. Awards were made available by Kirby Fong, ADS Awards Chairman.

The show was a good experience and generated an interest in forming a club. The Greater St. Louis Daffodil Club was officially organized on February 1, 1998 at which time Jim Morris was elected president. There were 13 charter members who paid dues in 1998. Plans were immediately made to have annual daffodil shows. Also a Bulb Exchange and Auction has been held each year with generous support initially from Nancy Pilipuf (IL), Charles Wheatley (IN) and Margie Roehr (KS), as well as from our local members. Our member varietal base of daffodil cultivars has continually been updated, a fact well-noted by ADS judges of our subsequent shows.

In October 2000 the club elected its second president, Jason Delaney, Missouri Botanical Garden Bulb Curator; voted to publish a local newsletter (later named *The Daffodil Rave*); and approved placing a bid to host the ADS Convention in 2005.

Our initial small club has had great enthusiasm and member participation. No longer a well-kept secret in St. Louis, the Greater St. Louis Daffodil Society has matured and is recognized as a contributing society within the national American Daffodil Society. The future continues to look bright as our membership grows.