

LILY GROUP Newsletter

SPRING 2016



The Lily Group
Bulb Auction 2015
Pershore College

full details on pages 9-11

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Editorial

Pontus Wallstén

Well, here we are, in early May, in what still almost feels like winter here in Switzerland. Up until recently, daytime temperatures struggled to get over 5° C, while lower than usual nighttime temperatures caused quite a severe late frost a few days ago, something that had never happened in Switzerland during my lifetime. This had disastrous consequences on some plants, which, due to recent heavy rains, had sprung vigorously into growth. My emerging *Lilium regale* took a lot of damage, and now smell like boiled rhubarb!... Only time will tell if they will recover for the 2016 season! A few lily hybrids were also severely damaged (see inset image, above). All of this after one of the warmest winters on record in Europe. Indeed, in late December we had 15° C, barely any frosts and above all, almost no snow at 1,700 m altitude in the Alps (see above), which all arrived

in mid-January. This mild winter also had consequences for our beloved lilies, which were a bit lost in this weather mess. Here, *Lilium hansonii* and *L. longiflorum* began making above-ground growth in early–mid February. In the UK, Richard Hyde and other growers reported 20–30 cm tall lily hybrid stems outdoors already by mid-January. But despite a few losses, it is still always possible to look back fondly through your *Lilium* archives, where, I am sure, pictures and notes demonstrate your past successes. Some of these are featured in the new “mini-series”, on pages 12 and 13 of this issue. If you wish to share images and anecdotes of your jewels from the past, do please send them by e-mail for the next issue to: pontus.wallsten@bluewin.ch. I wish you all a good lily season, and hopefully some warm sunny weather to accompany the gorgeous lily blooms!

Chairman's letter

Nuala Sterling

The RHS Lily Group was formed from the Lily Committee in 1932, as more RHS members wished to grow and understand the expanding introduction of lilies from their distribution around the Northern hemisphere.

Over the years the Lily Yearbooks have contributed wisely and scientifically to our expanding knowledge—for which I treasure the Lily DVD 1932–2014 or even better the paper edition, if in my Library. (Browsing the 1976 *Lilies and other Liliaceae* for instance, I delighted in Sir Peter Smithers' account of his lifelong involvement with bulbs, the spending of his school history prize on E. H. Wilson's *Lilies of Eastern Asia*, and the creation of his new garden in the Southern Alps.)

Several differing accounts of advice on lily cultivation followed! My favourite guidance comes from Derek Fox which I try assiduously to follow. However oversight or accidents can occur, and on a frosty February morning I discovered a neglected tray of seedling pots full of ice-cold water. As I prepared to clear them out I was astonished to spot six tiny germinating seeds 4 mm long—now in March with warmth and care a full tray of Western American seedlings—sometimes the plants try to educate you.

Nowadays we gain much benefit from electronic communication both in the distribution of the *Lily Group Newsletter*, the Seed List ordering, and ease of contact. Of course with this goes responsibility enshrined in the data protection legislation. Personal information on members is held by the Treasurer and Membership Secretary, and shared only with officers of the committee on a 'need to know' basis for administrative



matters. If a member wishes to contact another we will forward that request and leave the responder to reply if they wish. Although we do list seed donors' names we no longer publish a Membership List—younger members may think this should change—so do give us your views.

A committee member proposed that experienced members might be prepared to share advice with newer members in their geographical area—an excellent idea. So suggestions as to how we might promulgate this would be most welcome.

The 2015 AGM and Lily Bulb Auction is reported on pages 9–11. Despite being an enjoyable day, the quantity of bulbs for auction resulted in only a very small profit for the Group. The 2016 meeting will be held during the 'Shades of Autumn' Show in the Lawrence Hall at Vincent Square and we hope that many people will contribute interesting bulbs for that special event.

Below, Rimmer de Vries' seedling,
Twisty Lime x Beautiful Victoria.



Since the 2013 RHS agreement, the Lily Group has reported to the Horticultural Board through the RHS Bulb Committee; Richard Hyde and I represent lilies.

In early March we flew to Holland to meet the KAVB who, since the end of the nineteenth century, have confirmed the identity, names and registration of cultivars of bulbous, cormous and tuberous-rooted plants (duncandonald@rhs.org.uk is the International Lily Registrar). Registrations are on the website database and in the classified List and International Registers (www.kavb.nl/english/registration). In snow we visited the Breezand Bulb display (photos on back page).

Seed exchange: All members appreciate those from all around the world who take such trouble to watch over their developing seed heads, prepare, dry and label their seeds to send to Pat Huff and list to George Battle. As each season brings its rewards and disappointments so the contributions vary. We should like members from the Southern

Hemisphere to consider sending us spare lily seed as their summer ends, which we can store cold until the preparation of the 2016/17 list in December.

Many popular seeds sell out before distribution is complete, but what of the spare? Some is reserved for events later in the year with instructions and an introduction to the Lily Group. Some is sent to Plant Heritage and more distributed to Botanical or Horticultural Institutions to grow on and in time re-contribute to conserve the species. Specifically we sent some to Christchurch Botanic Garden, New Zealand to replenish their species collection after the earthquake.

From Tasmania Della Cooper recorded her international appreciation and achievement with the photograph (*above, left*) of the Twisty Lime seedlings from Rimmer de Vries' donations. Such are the links around the Lily Group seed exchange!

The Nagoya Protocol (a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity) enabling the monitoring and utilisation of genetic plant resources, was agreed in October 2014 and came into legal force in October 2015 for signatories. This has implications for the collection and distribution of plant material and the requirement to keep records of collection permission for 20 years. The RHS practical guidance for seed lists is being prepared.

Thank you for updating Rose Voelcker with your contact details, ensuring your email address is correct and is matched to your name. Nataliya Cuttell has taken over the Treasurer's post and Tony Dixon is to succeed Caroline as Hon. Secretary. All the committee work and members' contributions are greatly appreciated.

Programme of Events

2016

EARLY SUMMER MEETING, SATURDAY 4 JUNE 2016

SPETCHLEY PARK GARDENS, SPETCHLEY, WORCESTERSHIRE WR5 1RS

10.00 AM

- Meet at Spetchley Park Gardens Directions are available online:
www.spetchleygardens.co.uk
- Post Code for Sat. Nav. WR5 1RS
- Coffee available on arrival
- Entrance £6 per head
- Please park in car park well signed from the road

10.30 AM

- Meet the Head Gardener Mr Mike Beak and then tour the gardens
- The gardens are justly famous for their plant collection and association with Ellen Willmott whose sister married into the Berkeley family who have owned Spetchley for many generations. Particular features are the thousands of *Lilium martagon* which are naturalised in the garden. With luck *Lilium monadelphum* should also be just coming in to flower.

12.30 to 1.30 PM

- Short address by Lily Group Chairman Nuala Sterling, followed by a buffet lunch

1.30 to 2.00 PM

- Travel the short distance to the village of Stoulton, Worcestershire

2.00 to 4.30 PM

- The Tynings, Church Lane, Stoulton, Worcestershire WR7 4RE
- Here we are invited to view the garden of Colonel John and Mrs Lesley Bryant. John has over several years built up a large and interesting garden containing many rare or unusual plants with an emphasis on trees and shrubs. He grows many different lilies, but obviously most of these will not be in flower this early in the year. This will be an opportunity to view other plants and to discuss cultural problems with like-minded folk. Entry £3.50 per head, to include tea and biscuits.

Please would Lily Group members let Duncan Coombs know if they intend to attend. Telephone: 01684 594840. Email: dcoombs@warkscol.ac.uk.

SPETCHLEY PARK GARDENS, THE OLD LAUNDRY TEA ROOM, GROUP VISITS' MENU

SANDWICH BUFFET

Assorted sandwich platters
Crisps
Fruit or cake
Tea or filter coffee.
£7.25 per person

FINGER BUFFET

Assorted sandwich platters
Savoury deli selection
Crisps
Fruit or cake
Tea or filter coffee.
£8.50 per person

FORK BUFFET

Quiche Salad, served with homemade coleslaw, **or** Soup-of-the-day, with a mature cheddar baguette.
Fruit or cake
Tea or filter coffee
£8.00 per person

Programme of Events

2016

**EVENLEY WOOD LILY AND ROSE FESTIVAL,
SUNDAY 3 JULY 2016**

EVENLEY WOOD GARDEN, EVENLEY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, NN13 5SH

Over the last 30 years, Tim Whiteley has been collecting lily seeds, growing and propagating lilies and planting them outdoors in his 60-acre garden.

The collection of 130 lily species and hybrids benefit from a variety of soil conditions which appears to be the key for a successful planting and growing of 3,000 plant genera. Lilies are not the only exception, there are

acid and alkaline-loving lily species and cultivars planted in the garden some of which grow in clayey humus-poor soil, while varieties such as *Lilium* 'Ambiente', *L. x dalhansonii* 'Early Bird' and *L. pyrenaicum* grow in sandy loam. Having said that, visitors can enjoy flowering lilies over three summer months. Some of the martagon hybrids or *L.* 'Theodor Haber' come out at the beginning of June while oriental hybrids close the



flowering season in August.

Lilies planted in the natural environment of the woodland garden alongside the grass-covered paths dominate in summer and, together with roses, they are a true attraction. Experts and horticulture enthusiasts will appreciate rare *Lilium* 'Evenley Jane', the lily bred and propagated in Evenley. Patches of *Lilium* 'Garden Society', *Lilium* 'Arabian Knight' or *Lilium superbum* planted in large quantities are a masterpiece of plantsmanship, when the colour of lilies matches with leaf foliage of rhododendrons, azaleas and ornamental trees in their surroundings.

If you have never been, here is your chance. Tim and the whole team from Evenley would like to invite all members of the RHS Lily Group to the Lily & Rose Festival, held on 3 July 2016. While celebrating the beauty of plants, the Garden's team would also like to share their knowledge and horticultural expertise with visitors. The

gates will be open from 11 am until 4 pm. There will be plants for sale, a talk about identifying lilies from their bulbs by Pontus Wallstén, and Kasia Howard, a local garden designer, will tell you a story about two willow-weave metal structures donated by her to Evenley.

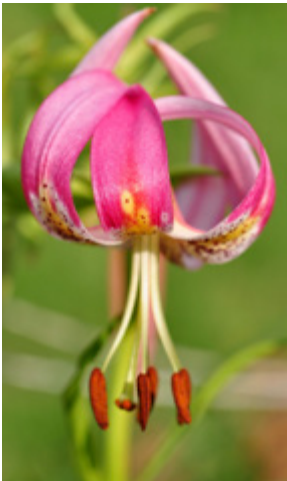
New collections of Bred British roses, climbers and ramblers are perhaps the best examples of hard work and progress that has been made in Evenley Wood in the last two years. Therefore, there will be something new to see for everybody. Don't miss the opportunity and come to Northamptonshire to spend a summer Sunday with lilies and roses.

Marketa Hermova

For more information, please visit:
www.evenleywoodgarden.co.uk

Telephone:

07776 307849 or 07788 207428



a note from Chris Hind...

I have been doing some reading about the late Derek Fox and his Bullwood hybrid lilies. These lilies are crosses from American lilies. Can anyone advise me if they have been preserved as a collection? I have *Lilium* 'Lake Tularé', but cannot find information on 'Cherrywood', 'Lake Tahoe', 'Peachwood' or 'Rosewood'. A lot of work has been done to preserve the North hybrids. We should be doing the same for the Fox hybrids, including his Bellmaid hybrids.

Chris would also be interested in: 'Dairy Maid', 'Oliver Wyatt', 'Robin' and 'Shuksan' – pioneer American hybrids from other breeders. Anyone who has information about these beautiful hybrids, please contact Chris by email: chrishind1909@gmail.com

Below, *Lilium bolanderi*, a dryland species, phenomenally rare in cultivation.

Seed distribution

George Battle

Reflections on the Lily Group Seed List 2015-2016

Every year Pat Huff and I brace ourselves in case seed donations just don't arrive. We needn't have worried about the 2015 harvest or the loyalty of our seed contributors.

The quality of species lily seed on offer was particularly high: *Lilium georgei* was available for the first time in many years; there were two forms of *L. chalcedonicum*; *L. bolanderi* and a garden form of *Lilium occidentale*. And there were plenty of other rare species to challenge the skill and patience of any grower. The enduring appeal of Div 6 Trumpet & Aurelian lilies was evident, particularly in the hybridising work of our members such as Rimmer de Vries and Jonty Somers. Seed of many other bulbs is in high demand, including *Erythronium*, *Fritillaria* and *Nomocharis*, and a good selection was available. Being able to offer 35 different species and forms of cyclamen shows how much there is beyond the lily family in our list.

The Lily Group thrives only because of our members across the globe so I was delighted that this year we had five seed contributors from New Zealand. Closer to home, I'd like to pay particular tribute to Alan Edwards who gardens in Surrey and has been a member since 1984. Every year Alan sends us between forty and sixty types of species seed, lots of fritillaries, tulips, cyclamen, narcissus as well as the likes of tecophilea. At the same time as being grateful for such generosity, I always worry about the future: will our newer members donate and help us to continue?



Nagoya Protocol

The Nagoya Protocol (2010) may not be familiar to most of us but this international agreement will impact on our seed list in future years. It imposes on our society the need to show due diligence in accepting wild collected seed that must come from an approved source. The Lily Group will be publishing further guidance on this but it shows how things are changing as regards the handling of wild plants and seeds.

Future donations

In the southern hemisphere seed will be already ripening. Please send any donation to Pat Huff as soon as you wish. Here in the north, it's still very early in our gardening year but there's time to plan what crosses to make and what seed to collect later in the year.

Below, Lily Group members at the 2015 LG Bulb Auction, eagerly looking through the bulbs on offer, a few minutes before the start of the auction.

The 2015 Bulb Auction and Annual General Meeting

Nuala Sterling

The annual meeting of the RHS Lily Group and Lily Bulb Auction was held at Pershore College, Worcestershire, 7 November 2015.

The meeting was preceded by set up and a sandwich lunch welcoming 20 members and visitors present who had travelled from Switzerland, the Midlands and the West Country.

The chairman expressed appreciation that Pershore College had provided an excellent setting and useful electronic facilities which enabled Pontus Wallstén to show us a short film taken during the Lily Group Tour of North East Turkey in June. The arrangement of circular tables and chairs in the fine sports hall created a friendly arena for exchange

of ideas and 'catch up' amongst members and introduction of three new committee members. Pontus Wallstén as Newsletter editor, Tony Dixon organising the Pollen Exchange and Natalya Cuttell to take over as Treasurer from Colin Pope in 2016. Caroline Boisset is standing down as Secretary, but will become an Honorary Member.

Electronic communication

There was widespread support for electronic communication, but no surprise that few members downloaded and printed their newsletters. Security was debated and



referred to the committee. Appreciation was expressed for the successful visits to Perth, Suffolk and Turkey.

Seed List

George Battle and Pat Huff were congratulated for the successful Seed List which included 340 Liliaceae in a total of 680 listed seed varieties, producing a return of over £1,300 for the Lily Group and the distribution of spare seed to botanic institutions and experienced nurseries to increase conservation of the species. Thirteen lily species were being propagated by the New Zealand Lily Society on behalf of the Christchurch restoration. The worldwide donations of seed from members are especially appreciated.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was in the Spring Newsletter. The alternate year's surplus and deficit relates to the cost of the biennial Yearbook production. The change in subscription to £15 p.a. has not yet been amended by all members. The successful use of PayPal for invoicing has simplified

international exchange and reduced costs by avoiding credit cards. Our reserves are healthy. Colin Pope who relinquishes the task was warmly thanked for his long and efficient contribution to the Group.

Lilies and Related Plants

Alan Mitchell indicated the 2015-16 edition of *Lilies and Related Plants* would be published in December.

Bulb Auction

The bulb auction followed which though smaller than usual was nevertheless enthusiastic under Richard Hyde and Pontus Wallstén's guidance, with help from Tony Dixon and Terry Young. The close at 3pm with tea and delicious cakes created by Caroline was followed by a visit to the Pershore Nursery for those who wished.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

THE 2016 AGM & LILY BULB AUCTION

Vincent Square, Saturday 29 October 2016 during the RHS 'Shades of Autumn' Show.

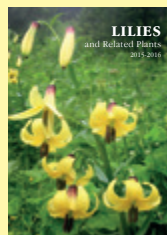
Lilies and Related Plants

Alan Mitchell, Editor

Those Lily Group members who commented on the publication of the 2015-2016 issue of *Lilies and Related Plants* were very positive about the quality and diversity of articles.

However, I'm sure the next issue could be even more interesting if Lily Group members shared their experiences of growing lilies and their many relatives. To discuss your ideas for an article, please feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail.

Tel: 07849 660754. E-mail: mitchell.alant49@yahoo.co.uk



Lily Group Bulb Auction 2015, Pershore College BULBS SOLD

From Nuala Sterling

- L. henryi* 2013 LBA
L. 'Black Beauty' 2013 LBA
L. 'Joy' red Asiatic Hybrid . . 2 x 3 packs
L. 'Black Beauty' 2 packs
Nerine undulata 4 packs

From Richard and Leigh Woods, Lilies & Chillies

- 'Leslie Woodriff' 3 x 6 bulbs
 1 x 10 bulblets
L. speciosum album 2 x 5 small bulbs
 2 x 10 bulblets
 'Scheherazade' 1 x 16/18 bulbs
 1 x 5 small bulbs
 1 x 10 bulblets
 'Black Beauty' 1 x 3 bulbs 18/20
 2 x 10 bulblets
L. regale album 1 x 5 small bulbs

From Tony Dixon

- Asiatic 'Blackout' 3 bags x 7 bulb
 Asiatic 'Red Sensation' 2 bags x 1 big
 +5 small
 Yellow Asiatic 3 bags x 7 bulbs
 "Not" *L. leichtlinii* 4 bags x 5 bulbs
 (probably a hybrid that looks like it)
L. henryi 3 bags x 5 bulbs

From Tim Whiteley

- Mixed martagons 2 bags
L. martagon (pink) 2 bags
L. martagon cattananiae 1 bag
L. superbum 1 bag
L. pyrenaicum 3 bags

From Raymond Hudson

- Asiatic Hybrid Div. 1 1 bag of 2 big ones
 +1 bag small bulbs
 Tetraploid 1ax yellow x Tetraploid Ka Yellow/
 Gold (From 1994/1995 seed list)

From Nataliya Cuttell

- Asiatic lily 'Elodie' 2 bulbs
 'Dimension' 2 bulbs
L. longiflorum 'Watch Up' . . 2 bulbs
 Asiatic lily 'Arsenal' 2 bulbs

From Pontus Wallstén

- L. candidum* scales
L. 'Black Beauty' Tetraploid Form
L. sulphureum hybrid
L. sulphureum bulbils
L. humboldtii subsp. *ocellatum*
L. 'Pink Oriental'
L. 'Flashpoint'
Sinopodophyllum hexandrum
Allium wallichii

From Madeleine Tinson, Parkhead Gardens

- North Hybrids:
 'Odysseus' 1 pack
 'Europa' 4 packs
 'Pan' 1 pack
 White Henryii 1 pack

From Richard Hyde

- L. parryi*
L. canadense
L. monadelphum

Bulbils via Pat from seed distribution

From Lachlan Cameron

- L. lancifolium*

From Gene Mirro

- L. bulbiferum*

Members' archives

NEW FEATURE

Dive into members' greatest lily successes over the years. These may be regarding success with flowering a very rare species, or managing to grow successfully a species or hybrid reputed to be very difficult, or maybe nurturing a very slow species from seed to flowering size...

Richard Hyde Reading, UK

Lilium wenshanense

Richard Hyde obtained a few bulbs of this rare species from China in 2005.

He recalls "pictures taken on 22 June 2006. It survived for a few years in pots until we had a very bad spell of cold weather in early November, temperatures down to -15° C, which killed many of my species plus a 30 year old orange tree, as well as the phormiums in our garden. It grew from curious looking, flattened bulbs with tight pointed scales. It was tricky to grow to perfection. Unfortunately my plants never produced any seed. If seed was available I would think it should be fairly easy, 3–4 years to get to flowering size."



Peter Shotter UK *Lilium majoense*

Peter has for many years grown a spectacular specimen of this now very rare species.

Peter says "My *majoense* is growing among daphnes in a woody soil in pretty full shade. I had two bulbs, equally vigorous, but one didn't appear one year. There is a small offshoot on the main bulb so I hope in time to establish a clump. I only wish it set seed more easily: the last two years the weather was so wet when it flowered that there was no pollination."



Susan Band Scotland

Lilium primulinum 'Rock's Variety'

Susan Band has been growing this rare colour form of *Lilium primulinum* for quite a few years.

She cannot remember the exact, original source, but recalls "I presume I grew it from seed but from where I don't know. It was outside in a gritty bed nearly getting overgrown by an iris so it must have been there for sometime before it flowered, which it did beautifully last year, quite late in the season, in September."

Melvin Herbert UK

Lilium pyrophilum

Melvin Herbert obtained some bulbs of this species in 2007.

The plants were kept well watered in the summer and fed with a weak liquid feed every two weeks. They were heavily mulched in the autumn and the mulch covered with plastic sheet to shed excess winter rain. Over the following years the clump increased in vigour, sending up more and taller stems and flowering well each August/September.

In the spring of 2010 three mature bulbs were transferred to my garden in west Wales from my garden in Germany, where conditions are very different. This is one of the wettest places in the UK, with generally cool summers and mild but very wet winters. The soil is an acidic clay based loam. The bulbs were planted in a prepared bed with added compost and leafmould but had largely to fend for themselves. They were protected from the heavy rain each winter. Sadly two were lost but the third has grown into a monster compared to



those in Germany, reaching over 2.5 m They flower regularly but very late, this year the first flowers opened in mid-November and others were still opening in the first week of December!

Interestingly when I lifted them there were several individuals with strong and healthy looking bulbs which had not sent up growth above ground that year.

PBS wiki lily bulb ID project

The ongoing project started a few years ago by Pontus Wallstén and David Pilling, webmaster of the Pacific Bulb Society wiki encyclopedia pages, is nearing completion, now with 87 species bulbs pictured, and a few more coming in this autumn.

The aim is eventually to have pictures of almost all known *Lilium* species, however the full completion will not be an easy task, as some species are phenomenally rare, and some are not even currently in cultivation, such as *Lilium pyi*, *Lilium stewartianum* and *Lilium nevadense*.

If you wish to drop in once in a while and check on the project's progress, please use the following link:

www.pacificbulbsociety.org/pbswiki/index.php/LiliumBulbs



RHS Lily Group

Honorary Officers and Committee 2015-16

Nuala Sterling, Chairman

chairman@rhslilygroup.org
Vermont House, East Boldre,
Hampshire, SO42 7WX, UK

Alisdair Aird, Vice Chairman

alisdaira@gmail.com

Tony Dixon, Secretary

tonydxn@tonydxn.plus.com
45 Skegby Lane, Mansfield,
Nottinghamshire, NG19 6QS, UK

Nataliya Cuttel, Treasurer

lilygroupfinance@gmail.com

Rose Voelcker, Membership Secretary

rvlanjique@wanadoo.fr
Lanjique, 32380 St Léonard, Gers, France

Alan Mitchell, Editor Lilies & Related Plants

mitchell.alant49@yahoo.co.uk

Pontus Wallstén, Newsletter Editor

pontus.wallsten@bluewin.ch

Pat Huff, Seed List Distribution Manager

lilygroupseeds@gmail.com
Castle House, Leighton Bromswold, Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire, PE28 5AX, UK

George Battle, Seed List Compiler

gbattle7@btinternet.com
The Oaklands, Gorst Hill, Rock,
Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY14 9YR, UK

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Caroline Boisset

Chris Brickell CBE VMH

Duncan Coombs, Programme assistant
dcoombs@warkscol.ac.uk

Irene Hopton-Scott

Harris Howland, Past Chairman
harris@handahowland.plus.com

Richard Hyde, Bulb Committee Rep.

richard@hwhyde.co.uk

Colin Pope

Tim Whiteley OBE VMM JP

timwhiteley@totalise.co.uk

Photo credits: front cover, p. 2, p. 7, p. 9, back cover bulbs (Pontus Wallstén); p. 3 (Andrew Sterling); p. 4 (Della Cooper); p. 6 (Marketa Hermova); p. 8 (Rimmer de Vries); p. 12 top (Richard Hyde); p. 12 bottom (Peter Shotter); p. 13 top (Susan Band); p. 13 bottom (Melvin Herbert); back cover, Breezand Show (Nuala Sterling).

Royal Horticultural Society Lily Group
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 2016

Please send your completed form to the Lily Group Membership Secretary:

Mrs Rose Voelcker, Lanjique, 32380 ST LEONARD, Gers, France

Telephone: +33 5 62 66 43 76

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

NAME

Including first and last names

ADDRESS

Post code:

EMAIL ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

SUBSCRIPTION

Please tick as appropriate

GBP £15

until 31.12.16

GBP £30

until 31.12.17

GBP £45

until 31.12.18

PAYMENT CAN BE MADE AS FOLLOWS:

Please tick as appropriate

- CHEQUE** made payable to **The Lily Group** drawn on a UK Bank, or
- STANDING ORDER** on a UK sterling bank account in which case please signify by checking this option and you will be sent a Standing Order mandate form for completion, or
- BRITISH, US, CANADIAN OR EURO CURRENCY NOTES** using the published rate of exchange but allowing 5% extra for bank conversion charges. Canadian Postal Money Orders are accepted but not cheques drawn directly on banks outside the UK, or
- ONLINE**, in which case please signify by checking this option. You will be invoiced by email for the amount you chose to pay (GBP 15, 30 or 45) but it will not be necessary that you hold an individual online (PayPal) account to use this option.

Signature Please sign and date the form:

Date

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please notify Rose of any change to your postal address. Notifications should clearly state the link with your previous address. Email address changes should be notified in a similar way.

Breezand Show

The Netherlands 2016



The 2016 Breezand Show in the Netherlands, followed a theme based on Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales.

Amongst the wonderful display was *Lilium* 'Severn', *above right* with collections of Tulips, Daffodils and Hyacinths.

John Gibson, Richard and Elizabeth Hyde, *right*, admired the Bulbs grown to perfection.

For more pictures visit:
www.rhslilygroup.org



Lily bulbs come in a variety of sizes, colours and shapes...

Above are just some of the examples of bulbs you might have had in your hands this spring while planting up your summer borders for colour, scent and grace—for which lilies are justifiably esteemed the world over.