

Greg Freeman's Garden Chronicle



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On previous page...Planted among the *Narcissus jonquilla* var. *henrequesii* and *Iris reticulata*, *Tulipa clusiana* var. *chrysantha* 'Tubergen's Gem' provides a burst of color when the other flowers have faded away. Clusiana tulips and their selections are fun and easy to grow. Unlike their fancy Dutch counterparts, they reliably return year after year without frequent bulb lifting.

The spring of 2023 was one of the most uneventful springs I have had in recent memory, where gardening and daffodil shows are concerned.

I had obligated myself to the American Daffodil Society's National Show in Atlanta in multiple ways. I also exhibited flowers, taking a couple of blues, a few seconds and thirds and one or two honorable mentions. Beyond the Atlanta show, I did not exhibit at any other daffodil shows.

As for judging, I wound up not judging after all at the Atlanta show after receiving a coveted invitation. My bowing out was due to my knowledge that some well- or perhaps better-deserving individuals had been overlooked. I had been invited to judge at two other shows in my region, but had to decline. I even wound up turning down an invitation to judge at a New England show for various reasons, but it would have been a lot of fun had I been able to make it.

On April 18, I spoke, as planned, at the Garden Club of Georgia Convention at Stone Mountain's Atlanta Evergreen Lakeside Resort, and that was it as far as events were concerned.

By most people's standards, my life is anything but boring, but this spring it might have appeared mundane to onlookers compared to past years.

That said, I thoroughly enjoyed my garden, collected some daffodil seeds from various intentional and open pollinated crosses and pondered some changes to my landscape.

Of late, there have been a lot of transitions in my life, and the timing has not been right for things that would have normally received more of my attention.

I am pleased, however, to report that I am steadily marking things off my list. I generally create an annual plan with additional goals in mind that might take five or more years to accomplish. So far, I have made good progress on my 2023-24 objectives, which cover everything from music, writing and art to horses, gardening and daffodils.

A good friend once advised me to write down my goals, whether they be pursuits of something tangible or a desire for greater knowledge and wisdom, or even matters of spiritual maturity. There is something empowering about creating a to-do list and dedicating oneself to it, but there is nothing wrong with crossing out some things that, with time, become unnecessary, appear less important or prove unworthy of pursuit. Life is a work in-progress, as are one's goals.

This is probably the sparsest *Garden Chronicle* I have ever published, but do not assume its lack of content reflects a diminishing interest in gardening or lack of recent activity on my part. Seasons of exciting news and reflections of hard lessons learned will come in due time. I promise.

Meanwhile, I hope this *Garden Chronicle* finds you healthy and enjoying your garden this summer. Please stay hydrated and safe if you are experiencing the record heat we have been having in the American South.

In the coming weeks, I will be working on some new garden-related content for a future *Garden Chronicle*, and I hope to have more video content available on YouTube soon. Meanwhile, feel free to visit [GregFreeman.garden](https://www.gregfreeman.garden) for updates, any new announcements and fresh content as it is published. Happy Gardening, my friends!

Greg Freeman, Publisher

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Garden Club of Georgia Convenes at Stone Mountain

The Garden Club of Georgia held its 2023 annual convention at the Atlanta Evergreen Lakeside Resort in suburban Atlanta (USA) in April. I was honored to be a guest speaker at the event, which was hosted by GCG's Dogwood District, and my talk was well-attended with just under 200 people present.

My presentation, *Georgia on My Mind: Twelve Essential Daffodils for Georgia Gardens*, was well-received, and several individuals approached me following the lecture to ask questions, inquire about bulbs and take photographs.

The daffodil talk preceded that of Ashley Frasca, traffic reporter and host of *Green and Growing*, a Saturday morning gardening show on Atlanta's WSB Radio. Frasca captivated the audience with her discussion of native plants and more. She and I were able to converse following her talk, which led to an invitation to appear on *Green and Growing*. The interview, already recorded at the time of this publication, is slated to air on the morning of September 30, 2023.

Events such as the Garden Club of Georgia Convention provide great opportunities for networking, as well as attaining greater knowledge and inspiration. I was delighted to make several new friends, and found the entire experience thoroughly enjoyable.



Be sure to check out
www.GregFreeman.garden for original
video content and other helpful information.



Spalding Garden Club's Lee Dunn kindly invited me to speak at the Garden Club of Georgia Convention. My 'Georgia on My Mind' lecture had been presented to Spalding in 2021, and apparently made a positive impression.



Greg Freeman and outgoing Garden Club of Georgia president, Peggy Tucker



WHEN DAD AND I WENT FISHIN'

buy it or stream it and take the kids fishing!

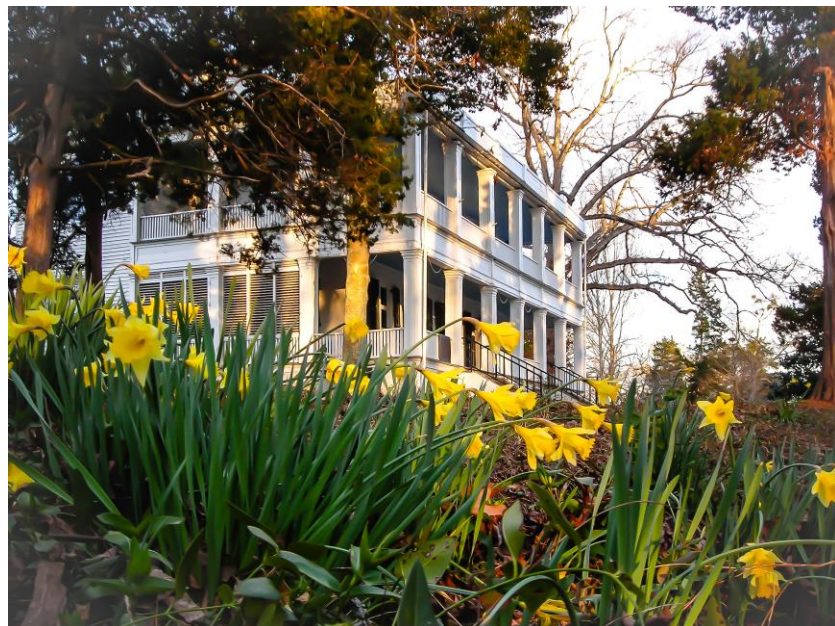
Greg Freeman

The Daffodils of Woodburn Plantation

Around 2005 or 2006, I first volunteered at the historic Woodburn Plantation, a tucked away, easily overlooked estate just across a busy four-lane thoroughfare from Tri-County Technical College near Pendleton, South Carolina, USA. The circa 1830 house was built by Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (1746-1825), a United States Founding Father, former South Carolina Lieutenant Governor and prominent Charlestonian, to serve as a summer residence, with the theoretical assumption that summers in the “mountains,” or more accurately the Upcountry foothills, might be more tolerable than those along the Carolina coast. Throughout its two centuries of existence, the plantation has changed hands multiple times, finally becoming the property of its present-day owner, the [Pendleton Historic Foundation](#). During an early 2000s open house tour, I fell in love with the property, and would later revisit, meeting with PHF’s Ellen Harrison to discuss the house museum and its environs and how the addition of historic daffodils could complement its landscape.



Upon visiting one spring, I was not surprised to observe the ubiquitous species daffodil, *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*. Lauded in verse by poet William Wordsworth (1770-1850), *N. pseudonarcissus* has very much found the grounds of Woodburn to its liking. Portions of the yard and the nearby deciduous woods brim with the daffodil, displaying more flowers than one could ever imagine, much less dare to count. There are literally thousands of blooming bulbs. As one might expect, occasional malformations (namely, strangely-shaped coronas) and the rare oddball among the species exist,



Greg Freeman

Narcissus pseudonarcissus are in abundance at Woodburn Plantation near Pendleton, South Carolina

but no other daffodil species or cultivars are found among these bulbs. While their original date of planting is undocumented, the bulbs were undoubtedly planted at least a century ago and quite plausibly as early as the Pinckney era. The fact that *N. pseudonarcissus* persists after all this time is a testament to the species' endurance and prolific vegetative reproduction.

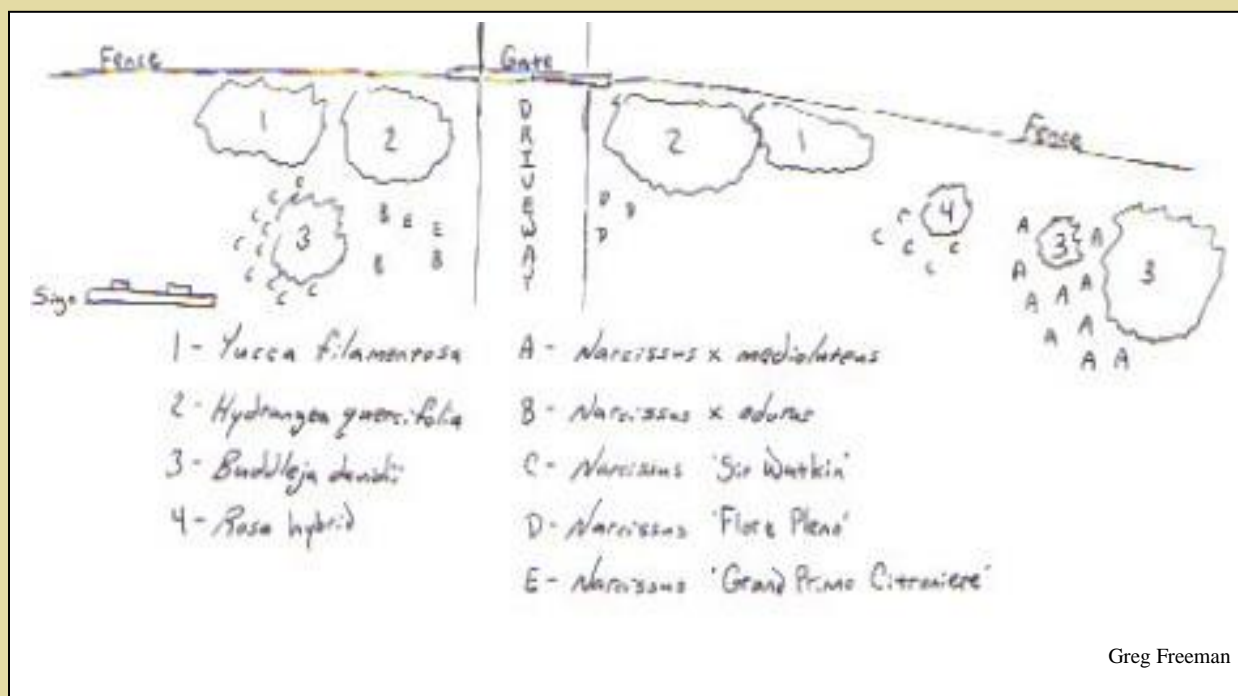
Commonly known as "Lent Lily," *N. pseudonarcissus* is one of many daffodil species or wild hybrids that likely found their way to the New World from the British Isles more than a century prior to Woodburn's main house construction. Sara Van Beck, author of the authoritative [*Daffodils in American Gardens, 1733-1940*](#) and coauthor of *Daffodils in Florida: A Field Guide to the Coastal South* explains thusly:

*So although John Bartram remarked on the first colonists bringing the white double daffodil "Albus Plenus Odoratus" with them (presumably to Pennsylvania), suggesting back in the 1680s, this time frame is unfortunately conjecture. That "Albus Plenus Odoratus" was the flower brought across the sea is interesting, as other daffodils were reported to be more common in England, such as the two-floret "Primrose Peerless" (*N. x medioluteus*) or the wild/common English yellow trumpet daffodil (*N. pseudonarcissus*). It is very tempting to speculate these others were brought along but were deemed too common to warrant comment by Bartram, or anyone else (Dutch or British) for that matter. Alas, for now, the daffodils' place in American garden history begins in the 1700s, simply because this is when the earliest documentation in literature appears (2015, 45).*

Though I was not particularly surprised to observe *N. pseudonarcissus* at Woodburn during my first springtime visit, I was surprised to find no other daffodil species or hybrids present. Woodburn's previous owners have included Charleston aristocracy, wealthy planters and a successful animal husbandman noted for his Standardbred trotters, Percheron draft horses and other livestock. If any of them used their abundant resources to buy the groundbreaking hybrid daffodils of their day, the bulbs have faded into oblivion. Therefore, with Ms. Harrison's go-ahead, I set out to do some planting at the entrance. My bulb selections, for the most part, would be consistent with those found on other historic properties in the region, and would be planted outside the fence enclosure, away from the main house as not to compromise the estate's working plantation character.

In November 2006 and January 2007, the intersectional hybrids, *Narcissus x medioluteus* and *Narcissus x odoratus*, as well as the venerable cultivar, 'Sir Watkin', were planted. Two more historic cultivars, 'Flore Pleno' and 'Grand Primo Citroniere', or perhaps one of its offspring, were introduced in late 2009.

Given the increasing popularity of heirloom and historic daffodils, a review of Woodburn's daffodil collection might be in order, as well as an accounting of how well the daffodils have performed since I introduced them to the plantation. I introduce multiple daffodil cultivars to my own garden every year and always seem to manage to lose some, including some expensive ones. It is most assuring that all of the daffodil cultivars I planted at Woodburn remain after all of these years except possibly one, but I must not take credit for any success. The selection of daffodils I introduced to Woodburn had already stood the test of time both in gardens of the American South, as well as those across the pond. Further contributing to their success is the fact that *Vinca minor* grows practically everywhere at Woodburn. The daffodils grow among this groundcover, which keeps them from competing with weeds, spares them from damage or destruction by those operating lawn care equipment and helps them avoid extermination should anyone ever opt to employ an herbicide near the driveway or garden parameters.



Narcissus x medioluteus

Narcissus x medioluteus, commonly known as “Twin Sisters” or “Cemetery Ladies,” abounds throughout the upstate of South Carolina. Native to Southern France and naturalized elsewhere, it is a cross between the species, *Narcissus poeticus* and *Narcissus tazetta*. Stems generally bear two fragrant flowers with white petals and yellow cups. The common name, “Cemetery Ladies,” is an interesting one, given that, in historic South Carolina graveyards, I rarely encounter the daffodil. It is frequently seen along roadsides and on old homesteads where all that remains are the stone or brick chimney of a farmhouse or sharecropper shack and a grove of ancient oak trees. Notably very late, this daffodil, known to early colonists as “Primrose Peerless,” might be thriving at Woodburn for all I know, but I never seem to pay the plantation a visit late in the season anymore to ascertain whether the nine bulbs I originally planted have survived, much less colonized. My educated guess is that they did not survive for the long term. On my visits to Woodburn, I am always able to recognize the existing cultivars from my previous planting scheme or account for locations of clumps that are not in flower.

Narcissus x odorus

Of garden origin and well-established in Europe and the American South, *Narcissus x odorus* is a cross between *Narcissus jonquilla* (a species native to Spain and Portugal and naturalized elsewhere) and the aforementioned *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*. Stems often bear two or more sweetly scented flowers. I have several well-established clumps of this intersectional hybrid growing in my own garden. A friend had “collected” some near the old Blue Ridge Railroad spur in West Union, South Carolina, minutes from my house. The bulbs planted at Woodburn, however,

came from Old House Gardens, and they seem quite content. I have frequently found them in flower at Woodburn, and they appear healthy and established.



Greg Freeman

Daffodil hybrids of both wild and garden origin have been planted at the main entrance to Woodburn Plantation, including ‘Sir Watkin’ in the foreground, as well as the less obvious all-yellow *Narcissus x odorus* (to the far right), and either ‘Grand Primo Citroniere’ or its offspring (colloquially known as “Grannie’s Grandiflora”), the latter which originated in Louisiana in the garden of Mrs. Annie Lou Holstun Jones.

‘Sir Watkin’

Hybridized by W. Pickstone in England, the all-yellow (although it appears bi-colored due to its lighter yellow perianths or petals) ‘Sir Watkin’ dates back to the late 1860s. The ‘Sir Watkin’ bulbs at Woodburn were rescued years ago from vacant Atlanta lots by Sara Van Beck. These bulbs are performing exceedingly well at Woodburn, blooming prolifically, and spreading nicely through bulb offsets.

‘Flore Pleno’

Prior to their relocation to Woodburn, the ‘Flore Pleno’ bulbs had resided in my own garden since 1997. Originally purchased from George W. Park Seed Company, which had marketed them by the synonym, ‘Queen Anne’s Double Jonquil’, this cultivar is particularly scarce, fragrant and diminutive. ‘Flore Pleno’ is a pre-1611 double sport of *Narcissus jonquilla*. In March 2020, I

found clumps of reed-like foliage where I had planted ‘Flore Pleno’, letting me know that the cultivar still remains. At the time, it had neither buds nor spent blooms. It was either an off year or ‘Flore Pleno’ could benefit from a good dividing or relocation.

‘Grand Primo Citroniere’ or “Grannie’s Grandiflora”

A pre-1780 Dutch hybrid, ‘Grand Primo Citroniere’ is jasmine-scented with multiple bi-colored florets per stem. The Woodburn bulbs are purported to be the “Grannie’s Grandiflora” variant of ‘Grand Primo’. Described as a “strain” grown in the early 1900s by Louisiana’s Annie Lou Holstun Jones (whose granddaughters’ bulb farm was the subject of a March 1997 *Southern Living* article), the bulbs would technically be a different clone than ‘Grand Primo’ if they resulted from seed borne from ‘Grand Primo’. Whether these are ‘Grand Primo’ or a look-alike offspring is beside the point. They are performing beautifully at Woodburn, having adjusted quite well, although their vegetative reproduction is not quite as rapid as one might expect of similar type tazetta daffodils. Celia Jones, one of the granddaughters of Mrs. Annie Holstun Jones, is well-known within the American Daffodil Society as a proponent of historic and pass-along daffodil preservation. The persistence of this varietal attests to Mrs. Jones’ eye for enduring daffodils and this cultivar’s adaptability, all of which make it suitable for a property such as Woodburn.

Visiting Woodburn Plantation

Historians and amateur history buffs alike are drawn to Woodburn Plantation for different reasons, with the Pinckney connection being among the foremost reasons to pay the property a visit. The farm also boasts of African American history, but many visitors, regardless of race, find tours of the plantation both insightful and naturally conflicting. While Woodburn, particularly its beautiful Charleston-style house and functional outbuildings, display the skillful construction employed by talented black laborers, one is reminded that the black laborers would have been slaves.

Fast forward to the late nineteenth century, and one finds that Jane Edna Hunter (1882-1971) was born at Woodburn to sharecropper parents. She would become a social worker, establish the Phillis Wheatley Association and serve on the board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) against all odds. Sharecropping was a means through which both blacks and whites of limited financial resources and education often found employment in agriculture. As American history has arguably demonstrated, it was also a tool particularly employed by some whites of affluence and the upper social strata to keep hardworking, impoverished African Americans firmly planted in a place of submission and social inferiority during Reconstruction. Jane Hunter rose above such circumstances.

Like many historic properties, Woodburn Plantation has become a venue for weddings and other special events. Though open houses were held pre-pandemic (and quite possibly persist), they were generally held after the original daffodils had bloomed. More often than not, one is bound to find the main gate locked and access to the house or grounds prohibited, particularly during daffodil blooming season.

One can reach out to Pendleton Historic Foundation to inquire about guided tours, Sunday “walk-up” tours and special events, but daffodil lovers need not go through great trouble to see the aforementioned intersectional hybrids and cultivars since all of the bulbs planted since 2006 are

on the outside of the fence near the main gate. A drive-by is all that is required to enjoy these beauties, which can typically be found at their best during early to mid-March in most years.

Just minutes from Interstate 85 and Clemson University, and not more than a few miles off the well-traversed Savannah River Scenic Byway, Woodburn Plantation is a convenient stop, whether one is attending a Clemson sporting event, exploring Pendleton's historic treasures or heading to higher ground in search of more salubrious surroundings as Mr. Pinckney, himself, sought to do some two centuries ago.

Van Beck, Sara. *Daffodils in American Gardens, 1733-1940*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2015.

Heirloom Tazettas

From Daffodil Authority Sara Van Beck, author of *Daffodils in American Gardens, 1733-1940*
and co-author of *Daffodils in Florida: A Field Guide to the Coastal South*



Recaptured Garden Legacies

From Southern American Gardens of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries

www.HeirloomTazettas.com

Photograph: *Enviably Green*



Greg Freeman (b. 1974), *Enviably Green*, 2023, Digital Photograph.

No stranger to the readers of *Greg Freeman's Garden Chronicle*, this daffodil is one of my own hybrid creations, and has appeared in previous issues, particularly after winning various awards. A cross between Captain John Pearson's stunning 'Katrina Rea' and an open pollinated 'Emerald Sea' seedling from Dr. Harold Koopowitz in Santa Ana, California, USA, this seedling opens entirely green before transitioning to white perianths (petals) and a green corona (cup) by the second day. By the third or fourth day of flowering, the corona becomes a lovely apricot orange. Until then, the corona is an enviable green, hence the title of this photograph!

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In addition to being an avid gardener and daffodil hybridist, judge and exhibitor, Greg Freeman is an author, editor, recording artist, songwriter, amateur visual artist and life-long horse lover. Freeman's nonfiction writing on a number of subjects has appeared in magazines, encyclopedias and books of academic and scholarly interest, as well as his various websites, including [Southern Edition](#), his digital publication devoted to the American South. Published academic/encyclopedic contributions by Freeman include a chapter in Nadine Farghaly's edited volume, *Gender and the Modern Sherlock Holmes: Essays on Film and Television Adaptations Since 2009* (2015), as well as multiple entries in: *Race in American Film: Voices and Visions That Shaped a Nation* (2017), edited by Dr. Daniel Bernardi and Michael Green; *The British Empire: A Historical Encyclopedia* (2018), edited by Dr. Mark Doyle; and *Music around the World: A Global Encyclopedia* (2020), edited by Drs. Andrew R. Martin and Matthew Mihalka. In 2015, Freeman released a country music radio single, "Sunlight and Shadows," garnering international airplay, and his gospel music has received national exposure through television broadcasts, radio airplay and commercial recordings, including the Collingsworth Family's GMA Dove Award-nominated album, *Just Sing!* (2021), on which his song, "I Owe You Everything," appears. His gospel EP, *Blessing and Blessing* (2018), features guest vocalists Babbie Mason, a Grammy-nominated artist, and Gospel Music Hall of Famer Calvin Newton. An owner of Belgian draft horses since 1987, Freeman's horse interests expanded into the world of Thoroughbred racing and breeding with the purchase of shares in Authentic in 2020. Authentic soon after won the Haskell Stakes, the Kentucky Derby and Breeders' Cup Classic before retiring to stud at Spendthrift Farm, Lexington, Kentucky, USA.

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