

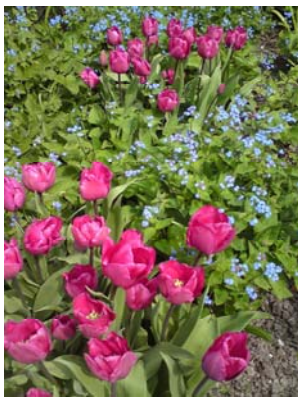
## SPRING NEWSLETTER

The hardest winter in 30 years damaged many plants, particularly in the Chalk Pit area. The Cistus and Helianthemum from the Mediterranean region were badly damaged. Our worst casualty was the Choisy ternata, the Mexican Mock Orange, on the bank in the Chalk Pit. The heavy fall of snow and hard frost killed many of the older plants.

This has led to a re-planting programme this Spring. Large plants of the Choisy have been planted to fill in the damaged areas. We hope they will soon cover the large gaps.



The late spring delayed flowering of the Spring bulbs, so April and May saw a great show of Spring flowers, with the early bulbs flowering together with the later ones. We have seen a great show of tulips this year.



Many new bulbs have also been planted to enhance the display.



Fortunately, the dry Spring weather and lack of gales, has given us a great show from the flowering Cherries and Crab Apples.



Many of the Tree Paeonies are now in full bud in early May, and if we don't get a late frost, the magnificent blooms should be out by mid- May.

Many of the flowering trees and shrubs are now in full bloom, the Handkerchief trees are full of flowers. The Lilacs are also showing great promise with many flowers forming. They will be at their best by the end of May.

Davidia involucrata (right) the Handkerchief tree.



A wide variety of seeds have been raised in the Glasshouse, and they will soon be ready for planting out.

No slacking for the staff at this time of year!



In early April, we were visited by the great plantsman, **Roy Lancaster**, who came to Highdown to do research for an article about the Gardens due to be published in the June issue of the RHS publication, the "Garden".

We felt very honoured to welcome Roy back, who remembered the Gardens from some thirty years ago, on his first visit to Highdown.

**Roy Lancaster** (left) with Highdown Manager, **Chris Beardsley**.

Our "Friends" group still meet on the last Friday of each month, although they were not able to come during the worst of the winter weather. This month's date, however, will be the 21st May, due to the Bank Holiday at the end of the month.

The Friends' help this spring has been invaluable in helping us catch up with so many tasks.

A big THANK YOU to all of our Friends, and to all our supporters and visitors.