

Ah ha! you say, the sun has come out, it feels warm, the tee-shirt's out, the cutaway trousers are beckoning (put them away please!) and planting fever has started. Okay in the city, where it's warmer at night, but keep these plants/trees/tubs cosy at night. Here it can be -5 degrees C or lower and these lovely plants have come a long way from a warm nursery in the UK, Holland or Denmark. So get some horticultural fleece and wrap the wee guys and dolls up and keep them inside at nights. Wrap them up in a cold greenhouse too.

Spring brings Mothering Sunday (30 March) and Easter (Saturday 19 April) and yes, as sure as night follows day, snow will come – it always does before these two big flower events are over. But will it be a flower as a gift for your mum on Mothers' Day - or will it be some other treat? The flower industry waits with baited breath, as we do in the shop. Do come in. We will have a lovely display to tempt you and we'll be open all weekend (Saturday and Sunday) to suit you. Our intrepid delivery driver has been booked and he'll be delivering all weekend. He's local and extremely careful with all deliveries.

A word at this point about our great 'Valentine's team' of Archie and Sandra who took to the roads on 14 February in heavy snow, sleet, winds, rain, hailstones and more sleet – what a team! They were soaked, dried out and soaked again as they carried out their mission. After their final run, Archie and Sandra both said 'Whew, thank goodness that's it! Had a good time, but we're off for a dram' (Archie) 'and a large glass of wine' (Sandra). The last delivery was at 5.15pm (me - Rosie) and that was that, they were in – the last lot of red roses had gone to a happy home.

Just a few notes about spring flowers:

- Look out for different kinds of 'daffs' - double flowering daffs, two-tone daffs, tall daffs, wee daffs...
- Anemones - very popular years ago and making a comeback. They don't last all that long but they're stunning while they last.
- Ranunculus – been around for ages too but at last it's coming into its own (maybe because it's available in supermarkets). It's a multi-layered flower that just keeps opening up but do cut the edges regularly as they get 'bunged up' and die quickly.
- Tulips – we've talked about them before: tons of colours and varieties available. Look out for double-flowering or parrot varieties. If they make a nice squeaking noise when you touch them, then they're fresh (honest!).
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Again with all bulb flowers (lilies are included here) if you want them to open up quickly, use the flower food; if not, plain, old, clean water (and do keep it nice and clean, please!)

We're not in ranting mode at the moment, so have no thoughts to share with you – maybe we've just run out of steam! Who knows? But due to popular demand, we bring you more stories of visitors to the shop and the way they catch you off guard with their thoughtful insights or funny stories. Here are just a few more...

On the thoughtful side:

We told you last month about Archie our delivery 'boy' and his thoughts about the Christmas tree but I don't think I told you what he was actually thinking about. Archie's heading into his 80s, much to the amazement of many – 'Eh! What? He looks great,' they say. Archie's idea of a peaceful, easy Christmas is to take the Christmas tree, with lights, baubles and tinsel

attached, down from the loft, pull the branches into a shape and stick it in the living room window. Baubles, lights, tinsel all stay in place, just as they were in previous years. We asked him if he rearranged them – ‘No way!’ he said, ‘It’s fine.’ So the secret of a long and happy life is chill out with the Christmas tree. Never change it. Don’t dismantle it, just shove the branches up and shove the lot into the loft till next year!

Another visitor to the shop is a customer in his 90s. He’s a very keen walker around Biggar and takes public transport to all the new places he wants to explore. He caught us out by saying, ‘Money isn’t a bother to me at my age. It’s hassle. I just don’t want hassle.’ We’ll leave you with that thought.

On the fun side...

Have we ever told you about getting a delivery of false teeth? The dentist was closed for holiday Monday and we were a bit late in the next day. The patient was already in the chair waiting for his teeth when we popped over. Relief!

Every year the Volkswagen Society hold a big meeting in the showfield in Biggar. This brings hundreds of Volkswagen enthusiasts to Biggar and they’re a cheery mob. They also shop locally, which is nice. They have a good time and it’s great fun to see all these shiny motors heading up the road. Last year we thought we would take the old, navy, shop VW Golf up the road to join in. It was getting some pretty admiring glances parked at the shop but perhaps because it was covered in muck inside and out, or maybe because it’s home to a yappy wee collie, folk steered away.

However, much to our delight, a camper van dressed up as The Scooby Doo Mystery Mobile headed up the road. Being big fans of Scooby Doo, we waved. They waved. The whole team were in the wagon – wow! (Please note as proof of my devotion I was probably the only person still laughing at the Scooby Doo film fifth time around on a flight to somewhere warm). Sad - or what?

Anyway back to the story... Much to my delight the Scooby Doo van stopped and out came the driver to buy some plants for the raffle. After he’d been shown all the Scooby Doo memorabilia collected over the years, the guy said, ‘Here’s a good one...’ and proceeded to relate the tale of the whole team (him and his pals) fully dressed as the Scooby Doo team heading to a fancy dress party in the Scooby Doo mobile. They stopped at the local petrol station to fill up the tank (remember they’re all in full outfit) and the driver (dressed as the one and only Scooby) goes to the till to pay. The guy behind the counter looks up, looks at Scooby, looks at the van and with a totally straight face asks him, ‘Have you got a Nectar card, pal?’

Let’s hope the van returns this year.

In the meantime, look forward to seeing YOU in the shop sometime soon...