



## Rural Action

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## Pomeroy Woollen Woods Event – Crafters Newsletter 9 – The Meaning of Flowers

Thank you for your interest and participation in producing artwork for the Woollen Woods event, which has been postponed until later in 2021 (subject to Covid -19 restrictions). We would however encourage crafters to keep producing items, so we have an even better display at the event.

Our theme for the Woollen Woods event is Bees, Butterflies and Blooms. In this newsletter we look at the meaning of some of our Spring flowers

Flower language - or floriography - is the art of flower symbolism, which varies depending on the type, colour and number of flowers given. Within the art of floriography, every flower carries its own special meaning or symbolism, according to its variety and colour. Some flowers even take on a new meaning dependent on the number gifted - for example a single red rose denotes 'love at first sight', whereas a dozen red roses say 'be mine'.



# Floriography The language of flowers



It was during the reign of Queen Victoria that flowers were used to communicate feelings that the strict etiquette of the era would not allow to be openly expressed. The flowers were sent in the form of small bouquets, known as nosegays. They typically consisted of fragrant herbs and a single, meaningful flower wrapped in a lace doily. Suitors presented nosegays to their prospective lovers and watched to see if they were accepted. So, how did you know if a potential lover accepted your advances?

*Held at heart level* - Well done! You were accepted with joy.

*Held downwards* – Unfortunately not this time so you had better move on!

*To answer 'yes'* - Flowers were given in the right hand.

*To answer 'no'* - Flowers were given in the left hand.

## **So with Spring in the air, what do Daffodils and Tulips mean?**

Daffodils are some of the first flowers we see in springtime and are a great indicator that winter is over. Because of this, they are seen to represent rebirth and new beginnings. Daffodils are known as 'lent lilies' because they tend to bloom between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Narcissi flowers are also seen to represent, creativity, inspiration, awareness and inner reflection, forgiveness, and vitality. If you give a bunch of narcissi to a loved one it means 'they're the only one' and is said to ensure happiness.

## Some facts about Daffodils;

- Narcissus is the birth flower for those born in March.
- Daffodils are the National Flower of Wales and are worn each year on St David's Day.
- Narcissi were introduced to the UK in about 300 BC by the Romans.
- Narcissi sap contains calcium oxalate which forms little bundles of crystals in the leaves and roots to stop it being eaten by animals.
- Daffodils are grown commercially in Wales where an alkaloid is extracted for use in Alzheimer's medication.



A well-known myth surrounding the narcissus flower comes from Greek mythology. Narcissus was the son of the River God Cephissus and the nymph Liriope. He was an incredibly handsome young man who belittled those who loved him. In the classic version of this tale by Ovid (a Roman poet), Narcissus was walking in the woods when a mountain nymph called Echo saw him. Attracted by his beauty she decided to follow him. When Narcissus shouted 'who's there?' Echo responded by repeating his words back to him because that's all she could do. Eventually she decided to reveal herself and embrace him. He rejected her advances and told her to leave him alone. Heartbroken, she spent the rest of her life roaming the woods until nothing was left but the sound of her voice (an echo). Learning of this, Nemesis - the Goddess of Revenge - decided to punish Narcissus by drawing him to a stream where he saw his reflection. Unable to look away from such perfection, he fell in love with it. When his love wasn't reciprocated, he couldn't bear to leave his reflection. After staring at it for a few days he grew exhausted, fell into the stream and drowned. It's said that daffodils are called narcissus because they commonly grow on the banks of streams and rivers where Narcissus perished. Some believe that the way daffodils bend their necks towards the ground symbolises Narcissus bending over to admire his image in the water, and this is why daffodils are sometimes said to represent

vanity and unrequited love. The psychological term narcissism also comes from this tale; to describe people who are attention seeking and have a high opinion of themselves.

Some cultures believe that daffodils bring wealth. In Wales it is said that those who see the first daffodil of the season invite wealth for the following 12 months. Similarly, in China, legend states that if a daffodil blooms in your garden on New Year's Day your house will have good fortune for the rest of the year.

Most cultures celebrate the narcissus as a symbol of hope and joy, which is a big leap from Medieval times when Europeans believed that if a narcissus flower drooped as you looked at it, this was an omen of death. Another common belief is that giving a single narcissi can bring misfortune - so make sure you play it safe and always send a bunch! On a lighter note, daffodils are given to celebrate 10 years of marriage because they symbolise joy, cheerfulness and happiness.

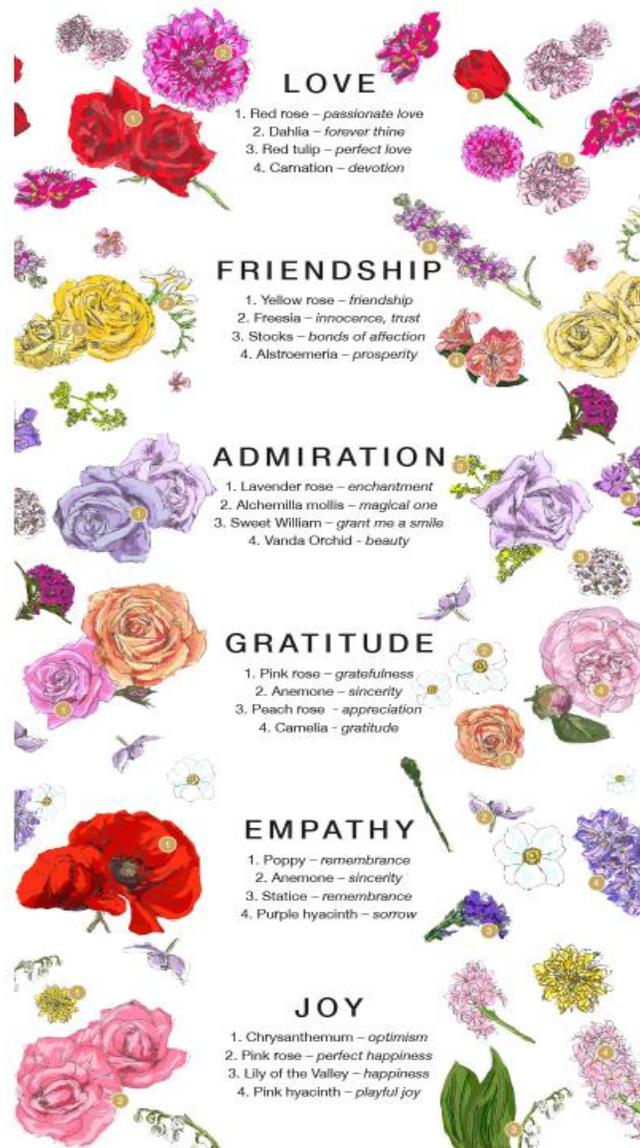
We know spring is finally underway when tulips start to spring up from the ground, Tulips have stood the test of time since they were first grown way back in the 10th century and once were so popular in the 17th century, they were worth more than gold!

Each coloured tulip means something a little different when given to someone close to you.

- Yellow tulips are thought to symbolise happiness – perfect for featuring in a vase at home to chase away those winter blues.
- Red tulips are associated with love – another seasonal alternative to your classic rose.
- Pink tulips are thought to represent caring and good wishes – ideal for a family member.



- Purple tulips are thought to symbolise royalty – perhaps the perfect colour flower for the diva in your life?
- White tulips are used to show worthiness and to seek forgiveness, making them a great flower for when you're trying to apologise – a bunch of these is a simple way of saying sorry.



So now you know the meaning of some of our flowers, when you receive a bouquet of flowers you will view them in a whole new light!

As a continuation of our 'Connecting Pomeroy' project we are finalising details for a set of new online craft workshops to create some of the bee, butterfly and blooms decorations using wool and a range of other materials for the Woollen Woods event being planned. If you or someone you know would like to get involved please register at [Woollen Woods Crafter Re-gristration](#) The first workshop will be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May @ 7.30pm – 9pm hosted by Kelli Johnston from Lets Craft NI, all materials will be provided.

I have also included a few patterns relating to Spring as part of this Newsletter.

As always, continued thanks to Phyllis at Pomeroy Resource Centre and Caroline at The Rowan Tree Centre as they continue to support the collection of your items for use at the future Woollen Woods event.

Thanks to the crafters associated with the Pomeroy Resource Centre who have forwarded me a range of display material, Well done to all involved! Please send me your photos of the wonderful items that you all have been crafting so I can feature them in our future Crafters Newsletter. Also, please feel free to contact me if you require any additional materials – wool, felt etc. or indeed require any further help or support.

Happy Crafting

Kind Regards

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