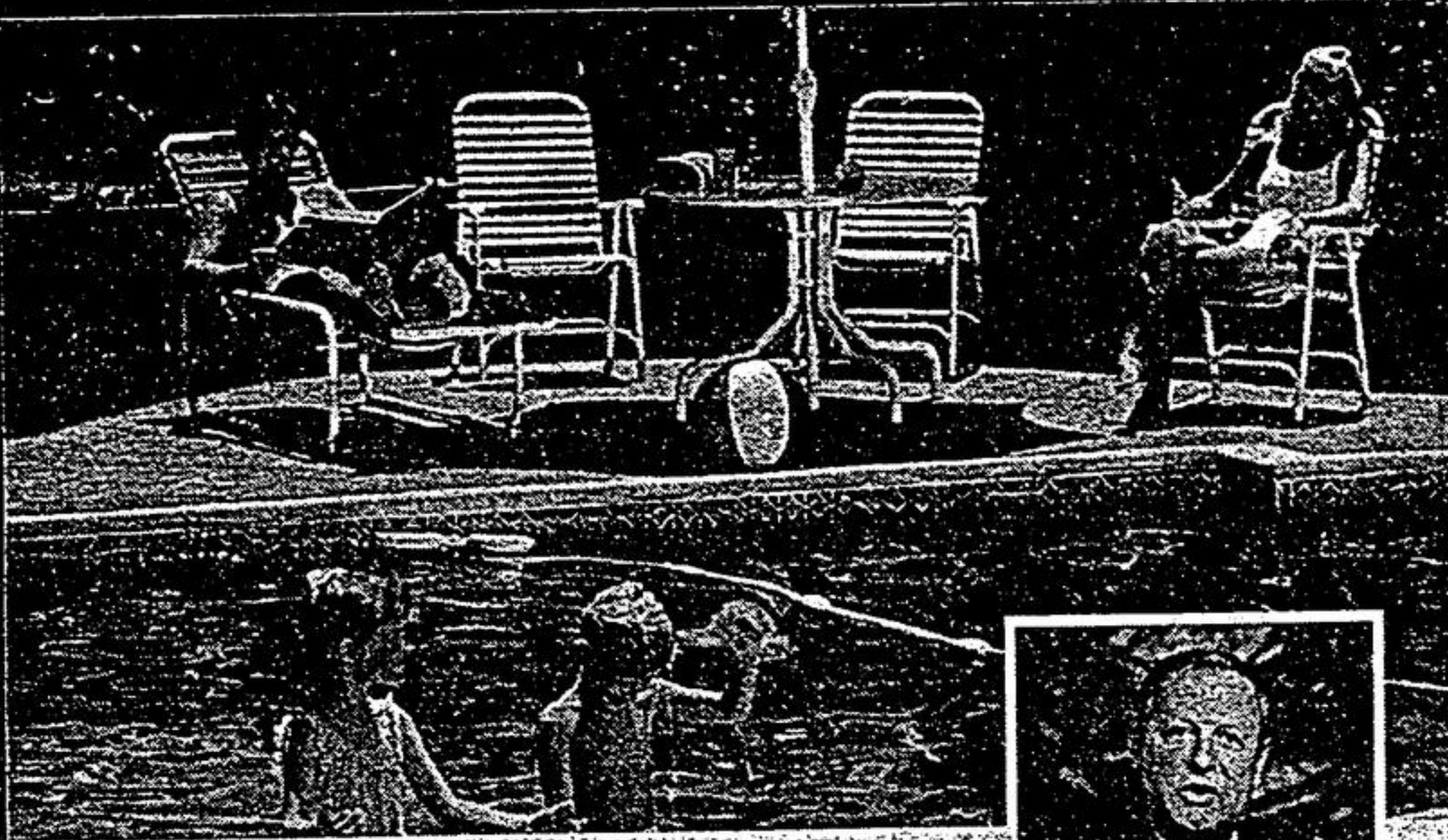




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## Home & Garden

### Plan your spring garden now

Now that nature is preparing for its period of dormancy, it's difficult to imagine that the next gardening season is only a few months away.

Nevertheless, now is the time when so much can be done in preparation for a brilliant spring. It's time to clean up the garden and plant spring-blooming bulbs, as combining flower bulbs with perennials can extend the flowering season by an additional two to three months, which, with Canada's seemingly never ending winters, is a great achievement.

#### Planting is a piece of cake

As a rule of thumb (green or not) bulbs are planted, pointed side up, three times as deep as they are high. For example a bulb that is three inches (7.5 cm) high is planted nine inches (23 cm) deep.

The greatest effect can be achieved by grouping, or clustering, many of the low-flowering kinds such as crocuses or snowdrops.

Tall-flowering types, such as tulips and crown imperials, are more conspicuous due to their height. Sometimes an uneven number of three or five is all you need.

All varieties become vertical accents when placed among other plants, especially perennials, which, when they come into leaf, will serve another purpose in that they will hide the fading foliage of the bulb flowers.

#### The bulb timetable

Snowdrops, winter aconites and Iris reticulata are the first bulb flowers to emerge from the

snow - sometimes, even through the snow.

Next comes the blooming of crocus, glory-of-the-snow and the delicately blue-striped white flowers of striped squill.

As the perennials begin to show signs of life, narcissi and tulips are in full bloom when the chequered fritillaries and the crown imperial begin their advance along with the blossoms of

grape hyacinths, hyacinths, Spanish bluebells followed by late-flowering tulips and the fabulous ornamental onions.

#### Play with colour

You can plan a garden colour scheme to suit your mood. For example, if yellow is your colour of choice for the first blooms in your garden, choose yellow tints of narcissi, tulips and crocuses which fit in so beautifully with the rebirth of the spring season. A lovely combination can be created by yellow-flowering bulbs planted under, or in the vicinity of, shrubs such as Golden bells.

A few weeks later, purple and blue grape hyacinths, Spanish bluebells and pastel-coloured

tulips can provide a totally different colour scheme in the same space.

#### A spring in the life

Bulbs have their place in every garden. From the early-flowering varieties which bloom when the rest of the garden appears to be dormant, to mid-season blossoms which combine with emerging perennials and tree blossoms to late flowering varieties which complement the colours into which your garden will grow for the remainder of the summer.

This article was submitted by Netherland Flowerbulb Information Centre.



Your spring garden needs to be planted now.

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