



Lilac Newsletter

Vol. VI, No. 10, October, 1980.

INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY

INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY is a non-profit corporation comprised of individuals who share a particular interest, appreciation and fondness for lilacs. Through exchange of knowledge, experience and facts gained by members it is helping to promote, educate and broaden public understanding and awareness.

Articles printed in this publication are the views and opinions of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the *International Lilac Society*.

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	<u>1980 (\$ US)</u>
Single annual	7.50
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*Mail membership dues to I.L.S. Secretary.

Noteworthy Lilacs At BIRCHWOOD

After seven years' residence at BIRCHWOOD I should like to give a progress report on the status of the lilac collection which dates from that arrival. To be sure, I had brought in one or two common lilacs of sentimental value, but the first collection of fancy-named varieties came from John C. Wister's garden at Swarthmore College. One of the dozen or so lilacs was an early Korean Lilac, Syringa oblata var. dilatata.

I planted this extraordinary Korean Lilac atop a bank overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee whose rocky shore forms the south boundary of BIRCHWOOD. Here in mid-May with a background of sparkling water its pale lilac flowers are borne at the tips of twigs soon followed by unfolding reddish leaves. The shrub has reached eye-height and is well-branched so that several clusters of bloom are produced each year. I do not know the full history of the early Korean Lilac in America, but Dr. A.C. Hildreth of the Agriculture Experiment Station at Laramie, Wyoming, grew six seedlings distributed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. John Wister had them all at Swarthmore, and I chose No. 4 because of its gorgeous autumn foliage color. At BIRCHWOOD it is perfectly hardy, being fully exposed to New England's nor'easters.

Dr. F.L. Skinner of Dropmore, Manitoba having received the early Korean Lilac from the Arnold Arboretum, crossed it with the common lilac as Victor Lemoine had previously done with the early Chinese Lilac, var. Giraldii, to produce the early hybrid lilacs. The Skinner hybrids are not as robust, vigorous, or tall as the early Lemoine hybrids. The plant which I like is quite dwarf and nestles among the rocks beside the Lilac Walk. It too blooms in mid-May and is a charming addition to the spring flora.

Alas, I do not know its name. It came as 'Dr. Chadwick', but my plant is not over 18 inches high and its bloom is white!

The Lilac Walk, just mentioned, leads to Lilac Cover where in a small amphitheater BIRCHWOOD'S syringetum is situated. Here growing in three rows of five plants each, are what I consider the choicest contemporary "French hybrid" lilacs:

- 'Dwight D. Eisenhower' - Fenicchia (1972)
- 'Violet Glory' - Castle (1969)
- 'Agincourt Beauty' - Slater (1968)
- 'Frank Paterson' - Paterson (1961)
- 'Diane' - Nelson (pre 1953)
- 'Silver King' - Lemke (Pre 1953)
- 'Mme. Charles Souchet' - Lemoine (1949)
- 'Annabel' - Hawkins (1948)
- 'Souvenir d'Alice Harding' - Lemoine (1938)
- 'Ruhm von Horstenstein' - Wilke (1921)
- 'General Sherman' - Dunbar (1917)
- 'Paul Thirion' - Lemoine (1915)
- 'Vestale' - Lemoine (1910)
- 'Leon Gambetta' - Lemoine (1907)

Having listed these fourteen superb lilacs I must confess that certain of my favorites still are not present; nor do I consider those which are planted to be the supreme choice. Elsewhere on the property you will find specimens of 'Maud Notcutt', 'Maiden Blush', and 'Sarah Sands', while I'm still looking for such favorites as 'Mrs. W.E. Marshall', 'Professor E.H. Wilson', 'Edward J. Gardner' and 'Marchal Foch'. With limited space one is obliged to become discriminating.

Also at the height of the lilac season the Korean Lilac, S. patula blooms. My plant, on the Lilac Walk represents the species. It grows loose and airy with delicate lilac flowers. I do not have 'Miss Kim' which is more compact. 'Palibin' (otherwise known as "Ingwersen's Dwarf") grows in several places. Besides

being low in stature its flowers are exceedingly fragrant.

S. julianae, a Chinese species named by Dr. C.K. Schneider for his wife Julia, is represented at BIRCHWOOD by 'George Eastman'. It is a graceful plant with slender branches, deeper lilac (almost purple) flowers, and more compact than the type species.

As the lilac season winds down the Ottawa hybrids become attractive with their spicy-scented flowers. These are altogether larger shrubs with more coarse-textured foliage than the common lilac, and should be judged, as Jack Alexander urges, for their effectiveness as summer flowering shrubs akin to privet. At BIRCHWOOD I grow Skinner's 'Hiawatha' for its dark purple flowers.

In late June the lilac season closes gloriously with the spectacular, cream-colored feathery masses of flowers of the Japanese Tree-lilac. This lilac is a small tree reaching a height of 25 to 30 feet. Through 'Bill' Collins of Circleville, Ohio I grow 'Cole's Selection', a precocious form which blooms while the plant is only five or six feet tall.

In summary, BIRCHWOOD lilacs comprise eight species, five hybrids, and 41 cultivars. Most of the lilacs are already outplanted, and many of these have yet to bloom for the first time.

Robert B. Clark

Meredith, New Hampshire

BITS OF WIT

It's more important not to be misunderstood than to be understood.

Television is called a medium because so little of it is either rare or well-done.

LILAC NEWS FROM AFAR

The following information is taken from a letter received from the ARBORETUM KALMTHOUT, B-2180, Kalmthout, Belgium -July 7, 1980.

"We collected dwarf Lilac species in autumn in Sorak San National Park in South Korea, against the North Korean border on the height of 900m. One plant flowered this spring and I suppose it must belong to the Syringa patula (Palib x Nakai). The autumn colour of shoots and fruit was often beautiful purple."

"Syringa 'Jose', which Meunier, nurseryman from Angers, France, put on the market seems to be very similar to Syringa patula, approximately 1 m. high and wide that flowers in spring."

"We got from Korea a lovely white Syringa without any tints of purple with clear green calyx which we admired greatly in the gardens of Seoul. The habitus is much nicer than Syringa vulgaris. Maybe Syringa oblata 'Alba'. If you are interested in latter cultivar or 'Jose' we would be glad to send you some propagating material of rooted-cuttings if you send us the "green and yellow tag". The seedling of patula we would like to select first.

Jelena de Belder
Arboretum Kalmthout vzw.

Editor

SORRY ABOUT THE OMISSION

On page 5 of May 1980 issue of the Lilac Newsletter the author credit to "When Lilacs Last in the Barnyard Bloom'd", was omitted and should have been given to Walt Whitman.

LILACS

"Lilacs by the kitchen door", you said, and memories stirred;
Their fragrance drifted down the years and Mother's voice
I heard,
As she called us in to super at the closing of the day
And we spent a happy evening in a slow, old-fashioned way;
At dominoes or checkers Dad and I would match our wit,
While Mother in her favorite chair would read or sew or
knit;
That simple home, that pleasant life, that peaceful world
of yore,
You brought back when you mentioned "Lilacs by the kitchen
door".

Katherine W. Stewart

NOTICE TO MEMBERSHIP

While we are attempting to keep the NEWSLETTER both meaningful and interesting it sometimes becomes a bit distressing to rely too heavily on reprints. In our opinion it is extremely important that we bring as much of this worthwhile older print as possible under our format, but we'd like to provide you with a better mix of the earlier efforts along with a more generous number of fresh material. Please let us know what happens in your lilac collection - you're out there and we'd simply like to know something of your favorites, how you do what etc.. We'll keep the stories coming your way if you'll just communicate and send something our way.

Editor

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IN MEMORIAM

On September 12, 1980, I.L.S. lost a good friend, and our Editor, Walter E. Eickhorst, lost his dear wife Dorothy.

Dorothy Eickhorst, as many of us may remember from some of the previous I.L.S. Conventions that she attended, was a quiet, perhaps a bit shy person. She had a great love for children, especially those that were in need of help the most - the crippled children. As a volunteer she offered her time and love at the Shiners Hospital for Crippled Children, Chicago unit, where, especially around Christmas time, she was active in collecting funds for the purchase of children's most adored companions - the "Teddy Bears". Over one hundred "Teddy Bears" are purchased each year from the donations to the "Memorial Fund".

Those who wish to express their sympathy in a most meaningful way may do so by sending a contribution to: Tome Crise Memorial Fund, 1240 Lake Shore Dr. (28a), Chicago, IL 60610, and indicate in a separate note, "In memory of Dorothy Eickhorst."

Charles Holetich