



# Lilac Newsletter

Vol. X, No. 7, July, 1984

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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#### *MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION*

Single annual . . . . .	\$ 10.00 (as of January, 1984)
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\*Mail membership dues to I.L.S. Secretary

A PRE- AND POST-CONVENTION TOUR 1984

by Robert B. Clark, Meredith, NH

Visiting lilac gardens in the rain is no fun, except that in subdued light the colours glow. Such did Bill Utley and I find in Walter Oakes's garden at Dixfield, ME in the pouring rain on Tuesday, May 29th. Walter has a large urban lot and a lot of lilacs crowded into it plus other plant rarities, e.g. a floriferous 'Van Eseltine' crab apple which is of arresting beauty with its tall wands of sweet-scented flowers all up and down the vase-shaped branches. Besides lilacs I like crabs.

The outstanding lilac at Walter's was a pink the day we arrived. It is labelled 'Melissa' for their daughter, and that is why we could not find it listed anywhere. 'Catinat', a Lemoine early hybrid pink, was also in bloom. His outstanding blue was Lemoine's 'Firmament'. Because Walter also loves lilacs, he has collected too many for the space available and there is nowhere for them to grow but upward. His mother, who served us hot cups of tea, prefers lilacs at eye-height for viewing and sniffing.

Next day Bill and I headed for Kennebunk, ME to visit Ken Berdeen and to view his collection of seedlings derived mostly from the Lemoine hybrids. Here we again found blue lilacs in good colour, Baltet's 'Bleuatre' was particularly conspicuous. But Ken also has a blue seedling worth naming. Evidently he's looking for the right youngster, for Ken also likes kids and has named many of his originations for them. 'Chris' is a dark purple lilac named for a young friend or relative. A large specimen of the species S. josikaea from Hungary was not then in bloom, but when it does bloom, Ken assures us, it perfumes the whole yard. This lilac does not

sucker. However we dug up rooted "cuttings" underneath which Ken had stuck into the good garden soil a year or two earlier. Ken supplements his sandy soil with copious amounts of decayed seaweed. That's organic and an excellent source of mulch or conditioner once the salt has leached out after a year of composting.

Ruth Sipp joined us the next day enroute to Burlington. We stopped in on Gertrude Hodgdon and Hamesbest Arboretum at Randolph Center, VT. Here we saw Skinner's 'Swarthmore', a floriferous lilac-coloured early hybrid, grown to a single stem. This is a superb cultivar which we had seen at Kennebunk the day before growing as a shrub broader than tall. Gertrude's lilac collection also features another Skinner early hybrid, 'Doctor Chadwick', pale bluish upon expanding and a dwarf or slow-growing lilac well worth growing if space is limited. Professor Meader's 'Miss Kim' from Korea is another slow-growing lilac selected from the species, *S. patula* of the little-leaved lilacs. Its flowers are delicate lilac, but not yet in bloom in this late season. The shrub stood beside a retaining wall and had attained a height of four feet in some forty years. Also in the collection was Owen Roger's 'Jesse Hepler', a late white hybrid not yet in bloom. This arboretum is a tribute to her late husband Phil who assembled a fine collection of hardy plants, including lilacs.

The best day of the year to date was devoted by the Society to a plantsman's tour of the Shelburne Museum at Shelburne, VT. Skies were cloudless while a brisk breeze blew across Lake Champlain. Lilacs were at peak bloom. Forty-year-old lilacs are planted decoratively about the village while a younger collection of greater variety is planted near the mansion house. Skinner's purple early hybrid 'Pocahontas' attracted much admiration among many fine lilacs.

On Saturday afternoon the Society made a tour to "Vale of Aherlow", mountain home of our new President Tom and Alice Chieppo (we all missed our hostess who had been in the hospital for several months). Two

or three hundred lilacs are planted in a figure-of-eight, twenty feet apart. Unfortunately, owing to protracted cool weather at high altitude, most of the lilacs were still in bud. However, early hybrids were flowering, and Maarse's distinctive 'Sensation' showed a dark mutant branch. Whereas the individual petals are edged in white, the petals of this branch were all dark reddish throughout. The all-white petals are frequently found as a mutation on 'Sensation'. We were treated to a delicious luncheon buffet served under maples at the guest-house lawn. Tom's objective is to establish a memorial lilac park. A bronze plaque embedded in a native boulder honors the memory of Al Lumley.

Post-convention visiting allows me to finish with Birchwood at Meredith Neck where I have set out a "Syringetum" featuring species plus only my favorite French hybrids because of limited space available. I have written elsewhere about this collection, so it might be more interesting to mention some of the companion trees and shrubs which I have collected over the years and which provide pleasant associations for me. I named the place Birchwood for the paper birches which I hope one day will form a high shade when oaks, pines and hemlocks are gone. Long ago I focused on the firs as worthy of culture in this North Country. Accordingly, I've amassed some seventeen species of firs which are more apparent in wintertime. For small trees I like the Japanese maples and their close relatives with such gorgeous autumn foliage colour. Then in summer the garden is populated with tetraploid daylilies. Unusual plants include: a forty-year-old flowering dogwood which has flowered for the first time of the past three years; the white "forsythia" Abeliophyllum and member of the olive family like the lilac; hardy Chinese mahogany Toona sinensis; Linnaeus' twinflower Linnaea borealis and the Korean mountain-ash Sorbus alnifolia, the same as was auctioned off Saturday evening after the awards banquet.

ILS CONVENTION IN VERMONT

as seen by Charles and Theo Holetich

Early Wednesday morning on May 30th, we started our automobile journey. The weather was good; some clouds covering relatively blue sky. As we were approaching New York-Vermont border, the sky became darker, the rain heavier and radio programs intermixed with static electricity.

Our plans were to reach Rumford, Maine and Walter Oakes' lilac collection at about 5 p.m., continue early the next day to Birchwood Gardens, Bob Clark's jewel, and to check in at Ecom Lodge at 3 p.m. for the director's meeting.

It was not the first time that Theo and I miscalculated the needed travelling time, but this time our "shooting" and "the target" were not even close. In fact, the error was mainly mine, since I chose the roads, calculated the distance and applied it to the 55 miles per hour formula to get some idea of the arrival time.

The farther east we went, the rain seemed to get heavier. At places up to 300-ft. section of the road was covered with up to 10 inches of water, hence canoes might have been more appropriate.

At 8 p.m., with an average speed of 40 mph through Vermont, New Hampshire and part of Maine we arrived at Rumford. After supper and meeting with Walter Oakes, we retired to our beds. Next morning there was no sign of any weather change, so with the umbrellas in our hands, Walter guided us through his collection which was just at the peak of bloom, with many trusses a foot long, mainly because of superb soil, mulching and fertilizing plus some other facts which Walter is keeping his own secret. How did Walter manage to plant so many lilacs in the space available and have quality and quantity of bloom on smaller

lilacs growing under a canopy of the larger ones is something that I still do not understand, so Walter, will you tell us?

After an excellent breakfast, complements of Gloria Oakes and Walter's Mom, we continued on our journey toward Birchwood Gardens with Walter in the navigator's seat. The rain was still off and on when we arrived at Birchwood Gardens. A network of paths covered with fresh wood chips, under a canopy of large evergreen and deciduous trees formed the beds of perennials and ornamental shrubs. The fragrance of the forest and the wood chips was prominent. A number of lilacs about 4-5 feet tall and in full bloom were visible but the main lilac collection (syringetum) we missed by being reluctant to walk past the neighboring cottage. Later, we learned that both cottages are part of the Birchwood Gardens. The view from the main cottage was superb. Low clouds prevented us from seeing the topography beyond a mile or so, but still enough for one to realize that this is the place where peace, serenity and beauty are combined into one.

The clouds started to break as we were on route 89 driving north to Burlington.

Two hours late, (not the first time), I joined the directors meeting in progress. It was nice to meet a number of "regular faithfuls", however, to see Fr. John Fiala in good looks, shape and spirit after we missed him in Ottawa and Madison was a special treat.

On Thursday, Tom Chieppo arranged for a superb sunny day, either via spiritual or political contacts. Equally superb were the lilacs at the Shelburne Museum grounds, some of which were 18' tall and 20' wide, covered to ground level with bloom so profuse that hardly any foliage was visible. Contents of the buildings offered very extensive exhibitions of early Americana in glass, pottery, leather goods, shops, apothecary, etc., etc. Without exaggeration,

one would need two full days to see all of the exhibits leisurely.

The bus trip to Chieppo's mountain resort and lilac collection was both pleasant and amusing. Pleasant, in that we met our first ILS President, Orville Steward and his wife Ellaine, whom we missed at a number of previous conventions. Amusing, in that band-aids and other "goodies" from the "first aid" box on the bus were used on three occasions to fix a mechanical problem on the bus (don't know which one) to keep us moving on the road.

As we entered the gates of the Chieppo's 120 acres of gently rolling hillsides, with views found only half way between heaven and the earth, a short silence followed by unanimous cheer was the response from the delegates on the bus.

Lilacs were just at their best, with some specimens at their flowering peak, while others in bud stage with just a few florets open. The grounds were immaculate, the resort house with the interior set-up, decorations and design found only in dream books. The meal in solids and liquids was reich, selective in top quality assortments and plentiful. In short, Tom and his people have put forth a reception which will be difficult to match or even get close to.

Tom was a bit surprised when I found seven lilac cultivars nonexistent in Hamilton's R.B.G. collection. They were among 200 or so newly acquired plants still in the pots and waiting to be planted. He was kind enough not only to give them but to organize their inspection necessary for the border crossing.

The hotel food was very good; the accomodation excellent; meeting all of the delegates a treat; so Tom, 6 - 8 years down the road, let's have another ILS convention at East Burke and Burlington, Vermont!



FROM THE EDITOR'S JOURNAL - JUNE 1984

This 1984 Lilac Time I felt that I had really joined in the fun of growing my own lilacs. Several of our young bushes planted in 1979-80 bloomed this year. Biggest problem is that they are so far from the house that I could not enjoy the fragrance without walking down the hill to sniff. I took the advice of an area nursery person and located the planting on the high edge of the ravine where it could serve as a screen from a neighbor's house. Now I suspect the neighbors get more advantage from the lilacs than we do.

'Annabel' was the first to bloom and it was covered from tip to toe in the light airiness of its delicate double pinkish blooms. When I had first seen this plant at Heard Gardens in Des Moines I knew I wanted one.

'Silver King' and the common lilac followed shortly after. The last in the grouping was 'Montaigne' which glows with pink lavender flowers. There is supposed to be a white lilac blooming there with the pinks as well as a 'Ludwig Spaeth'. 'Ludwig Spaeth' proved to be a common lilac and my lawn mower (guess who) clipped the white to the ground. So now I am waiting on the new shoots from this 'own root' 'Edith Cavel'. Joining the borderline planting is 'Congo', an acquisition from the auction in Madison.

Later, near a dining room window, the Korean lilac takes over. The person who gave me the shoot of this plant bought it as Korean lilac but I have never been secure as to what it really is. Planted in 1979 it has grown no larger than 30 to 36 inches, is softly fragrant and has tiny florets. It also throws a lot of side shoots for additional plants.

'Donald Wyman' and 'A.M. Brand', tiny plants from Madison in 1983, are both growing like weeds in the struggling perennial border where I set them to give them a good start.

Next year, hopefully, we will see the first flower buds of 'Krasavitsa Moskvyy' and 'Glory' which were planted in 1981. Other large plants from Madison auction are also doing well - in case you wondered, Ken Wood.

For now, it is the time of roses, and delphiniums, and filipendula and other good things. I think I hold my breath for a month or so that a strong wind doesn't destroy the delphiniums. Friends tell me they don't think they are worth the trouble -- I disagree. My delphinium seeds, from England, grow into fine tall plants and while they must be staked the plants are long-lived, so far.

\* \* \* \* \*

BITS OF WIT

A tortoise on the right path will beat a racer on the wrong path.

No person ever lost their shirt when their shirt sleeves were rolled up.

Folks can only talk behind your back if you're ahead of them.

REPORT OF 1984 ILS AUCTION COMMITTEE

A total of 144 lilacs and 33 lilac related items were donated by Agriculture Canada Research Station - Ornamentals at Ottawa, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, William Horman, Holden Arboretum, Sally Schenker, Mrs. Philip Hodgdon, William Utley, Father Fiala, William Heard and Dr. Owen Rogers.

Our Society's Treasury was enriched by \$1,214.50!

The committee wishes to thank all who contributed their time, talents and plants to the success of our auction. Walter Eickhorst and John Carvill were most helpful in organizing plants, delivering plants to buyers and helping to spot bidders. Our treasurer, Marie Chaykowski, assisted by Pauline Fiala and Elsie Kara did their usual superb job in handling the money. Charles Holetich's colored slides of the cultivars being auctioned were worth a thousand words. Sally Schenker's complete notes made reporting much easier. Those spirited bidders and buyers of our plants contributed to 1984 being another successful auction.

Plan now to attend our 1985 meeting at Brooklyn, New York. Plan now preparing plants for next year. Your attendance will benefit the Society and yourself.

Hanssen Schenker  
Chairman

\*\* Please don't forget to let me or Charles Holetich know by May 1, 1985 which lilac cultivars or species you plan to bring for the auction so that we may have the right slides at the auction. Remember what I have said - "One slide of a lilac is worth a thousand words".

1984 ILS AUCTION

Lilacs from Agriculture Canada (Ottawa)

'Elinor'	1@\$30.00	\$30.00
'Annabel'	3@\$10.00	\$30.00
'Etoile de Mai'	3@\$9.00	\$27.00
'Lynette'	2@\$8.50	\$17.00
'Guinevere'	5@\$8.00	\$40.00
'J. Herbert Alexander'	3@\$8.00	\$24.00
'Comte de Kerchove'	2@\$7.50	\$15.00
emodi	3@\$7.50	\$22.50
'Evangeline'	5@\$7.50	\$37.50
'De Saussure'	5@\$7.50	\$37.50
'Congo'	3@\$7.00	\$21.00
'Alice'	2@\$7.00	\$14.00
'Patricia'	1@\$6.50	\$6.50
'Hecla'	3@\$6.00	\$18.00
'Buffon'	1@\$6.00	\$6.00
'Mme. Georges Belair'	1@\$6.00	\$6.00
'Mme. Casimir Perier'	1@\$6.00	\$6.00
'Donald Wyman'	3@\$5.50	\$16.50
'Elinor'	1@\$5.50	\$5.50
'Princess Marie'	2@\$5.00	\$10.00
'Maureen'	1@\$5.00	\$5.00
'William Robinson'	3@\$4.50	\$13.50
'Ester Staley'	1@\$4.50	\$4.50
'Marengo'	2@\$4.00	\$8.00
'G.J. Baardse'	1@\$3.50	\$3.50
'Audrey'	1@\$3.50	\$3.50
'Buffon'	3@\$1.50	\$4.50
	<u>62</u>	<u>\$432.50</u>

Lilacs from Royal Botanical Gardens

'Krasavitsa Moskv'y'	3@	\$18.00	\$54.00
'Silver King'	1@	\$12.00	\$12.00
'Ester Staley'	2@	\$11.50	\$23.00
'Sensation'	3@	\$11.50	\$34.50
'Agincourt Beauty'	2@	\$11.00	\$22.00
'Maidens Blush'	2@	\$11.00	\$22.00
'Kremlevsky Kuranty'	1@	\$11.00	\$11.00
'Dr. Brethour'	1@	\$9.00	\$9.00
'President Poincare'	3@	\$8.00	\$24.00
'Dwight D. Eisenhower'	2@	\$7.50	\$15.00
'Dr. Chadwick'	2@	\$6.50	\$13.00
'Mildred Luetta'	2@	\$6.50	\$13.00
'Nike'	1@	\$6.00	\$6.00
'Olivier de Serres'	3@	\$4.00	\$12.00
meyeri 'Palibin'	2@	\$3.00	\$6.00
	30		\$276.00

Lilacs from William Horman

'Miss Kim'	1@	\$13.50	\$13.50
laciniata x pinnatifolia	1@	\$12.50	\$12.50
'Basia'	1@	\$10.00	\$10.00
'Agnes Smith'	1@	\$10.00	\$10.00
yunnanensis	1@	\$10.00	\$10.00
'Royalty'	1@	\$9.50	\$9.50
'Miss Canada'	1@	\$9.00	\$9.00
'Ivory Silk'	1@	\$9.00	\$9.00
'Mieczta'	1@	\$9.00	\$9.00
'Firmament'	1@	\$9.00	\$9.00
'Isabella'	1@	\$8.50	\$8.50
'Paul Thirion'	1@	\$6.50	\$6.50
'Nike'	1@	\$6.00	\$6.00
'Olive May Cummins'	1@	\$6.00	\$6.00
reflexa	1@	\$5.50	\$5.50
'Glory'	1@	\$5.50	\$5.50
'Rutilant'	1@	\$5.00	\$5.00

Lilacs from William Horman cont'

'James Macfarlane'	2@\$5.00	\$10.00
wolfii	1@\$5.00	\$5.00
'Congo'	1@\$4.50	\$4.50
josikaea	1@\$4.00	\$4.00
'Nocturne'	1@\$3.00	\$3.00
'General Pershing'	1@\$3.00	<u>\$3.00</u>
	24	\$174.00

Lilacs from The Holden Arboretum

reticulata	3@\$9.00	\$27.00
'Primrose'	1@\$7.00	\$7.00
'Miss Kim'	2@\$6.00	\$12.00
'Dawn'	1@\$5.00	\$5.00
oblata var. dilatata	3@\$4.50	<u>\$13.50</u>
	10	\$64.50

Other than Lilacs

Acer sieboldii	1@\$12.50	\$12.50
Sorbus alnifolia	2@\$12.00	\$24.00
Abies lasiocarpa var. arizonica	2@\$8.00	\$16.00
Itea japonica	1@\$5.00	<u>\$5.00</u>
	6	\$57.50

Lilacs from Sarah Schenker

'James Macfarlane'	3@\$14.00	\$42.00
patula cross (velutina)	3@\$7.00	\$21.00
'Anna Amhoff'	3@\$8.00	\$24.00
'James Macfarlane'	1@\$5.00	<u>\$5.00</u>
	10	\$92.00

Lilacs from Mrs. Philip Hodgdon		
'Royalty'	2@\$18.50	\$37.00
Lilacs from Mr. William Utley		
'General Sherman'	5@\$6.50	\$32.50
From Father Fiala		
Plant tags	24@\$1.00	\$24.00
From William Heard		
Bald Cypress	1@\$10.00	\$10.00
Sedum 'Chubby Fingers'	2@\$2.50	\$5.00
	<u>3</u>	<u>\$15.00</u>
Lilacs from Dr. Owen Rogers		
'Jules Simon'	1@\$9.00	\$9.00

Total Lilacs sold 144.

ILS Treasury Enriched by \$1214.50

Hanssen Schenker  
Auction Chairman