

# LILACS

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*FALCONSKEAPE*

## **QUARTERLY JOURNAL**

of the International Lilac Society

**In This Issue**

*Membership Directory*

A Publication of  
**THE INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY**

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LILACS, the Quarterly Journal, is the publication of the *International Lilac Society*.

*Copies of this publication are available by writing to the International Lilac Society, c/o Fr. John L. Fiala, 7359 Branch Road, Medina, Ohio 44256.*

**International Lilac Society**

President .....	<i>Orville M. Steward</i> Box 33, Plymouth VT 05056
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Editor .....	<i>Robert B. Clark</i> Cattle Landing Road, Meredith, NH 03253

**Membership Classification (U.S. Funds)**

Single Annual .....	\$ 10.00
Family .....	12.50
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*\*Mail membership dues to I.L.S. Secretary*

*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.

**Published January, 1989**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

**U**NDER "EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS" in CSL, the bulletin of the New York C. L. Lewis Society (Vol. 19, No. 8, June 1988), George Gorniak of Surrey, England, writes in part, "On the actual format of the *Bulletin* itself, I personally feel that a changeover to a C.S. Lewis journal, perhaps four times a year, would create a better image and probably attract a wider readership. The reason that I say this is that I belong in addition to the following literary societies: G.K. Chesterton, John Buchan, and Elizabeth Gaskell. Each of these societies produces very handsome and attractive journals two to four times a year, and these have a more permanent and solid feel to them than does a newsletter. The format in addition lends itself to greater scope in content and illustration (e.g. photographs, etc.).

There you have it. ILS is acting a year and eight months ahead of a society one of whose readers is only proposing a change. Your Board hopes that in expanding *Lilacs* to a quarterly journal it will produce both an attractive bulletin and one with articles appealing to our readers. Your comments are eagerly solicited.

Overall themes of the four yearly numbers will be: membership directory (winter), convention program and reservations information (spring), convention highlights and impressions (summer), and convention proceedings and scientific reports (autumn). Articles germane to lilacs, of course, will be accepted at all times, especially if written for ILS members and lilac lovers generally. Reprints from other horticultural journals shall only be admitted if of overwhelming importance and interest to our readers. Departments will include features, lilac news, illustrations, and letters to the editor. Deadlines for submission of articles and notices are the 15th of December, March, June and September, and publication dates will be on or about the 1st of January, April, July and October.

Editor's Offices:

**Winter** (Nov.-March)

Robert Clark

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Ocala, FL 32675

**Summer** (April-October)

Robert Clark

R.D. 1, Box 1344

Cattle Landing Rd.

Meredith, NH 03253

# PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE SOCIETY MESSAGE

By Orville M. Steward, Plymouth, VT

**A** POET WROTE about going from reality to a higher reality. In eighteen years our Society came from *nothing* to what it is today. Our members did this through these objectives:

- 1) Made Lilacs more visible to the public.
- 2) Promoted the various new cultivars.
- 3) Distributed Lilacs to our members.
- 4) Recognized outstanding Lilac collections.
- 5) Honored the various Lilac growers and breeders.
- 6) Supported and sponsored research.
- 7) Held seventeen annual meetings nationwide.
- 8) Published several publications, newsletters, bulletins, etc.
- 9) Stimulated and promoted fellowship among Lilac lovers.

A popular song had its lyrics saying — “Eliminate the negative — Accentuate the positive.” This we will do. The reviving of the *Lilac*, slimming down of our Board of Directors, electing a Historian and exploring creative ideas for our archives future use are our “Glasnost.” Just imagine, with your ideas and help, what *together* we can accomplish over the next eighteen years!

## New Cultivars To Be Released

**A**MERI-HORT RESEARCH, INC., which is introducing many of Father John Fiala's hybrids, has announced the patenting of two new *S. vulgaris*, 'Albert F. Holden,' a single deep purple, 'Wedgwood Blue' a single blue and an *S. x hyacinthiflora* 'Blanche Sweet' a single of palest, almost white-blue. 'Blanche Sweet' is being introduced through the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and has been named after one of America's favorite silent movie stars. All will be available by this spring and from January through April to nurseries through tissue cultured plants.

Also planned for spring tissue culture is the new, miniature lilac, growing no more than 4-4½ feet named 'Little Boy Blue.' It is patent applied for and one of the clearest sky-blue lilacs to come from the Falconskeape 'Rochester' advanced breeding. This entirely new race of low growing yet large flowering lilacs is ideal for small gardens and lower architectural designed homes. Planned in conjunction to the release of 'Little Boy Blue' will be the outstanding double pink named 'Lourene Wishart' which honors one of the founders of ILS. Already in tissue culture for spring release is the deep red-purple single, with massive florets named 'Arch McKean.'

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## Better Cultivars Recommended for Propagation

By Fr. John L. Fiala, Ocala, Florida

**F**REQUENTLY one sees nursery ads that offer lilacs from tissue culture that are mediocre cultivars or so old that they have long since BEEN overshadowed by far superior selections. Of course I am prejudiced to the originations we have developed at Falconskeape but there are other extremely fine cultivars that are of equal merit or, perhaps in some cases, among the best lilacs ever introduced and yet after many years have never been promoted in commerce.

I would like to suggest to nurserymen consideration of some of the following truly outstanding lilacs for propagation.

Among the white lilacs are 3 or 4 of outstanding merit — the singles 'Souvenir de Mme. Louis Giellis' and 'Avalanche' with the doubles of exceptional quality like 'St. Joan,' 'St. Margaret,' Professor E.H. Wilson' with its unique rosette form and the magnificent 'Monique Lemoine' one of Lemoine's finest whites. In class II, Violet there are the outstanding trio of the singles 'Flower City' and Minerva Castle's outstanding 'Violet Glory.' Add to these the new double 'Lullaby.' An old but lovely blue is 'Ami Schott' or 'True Blue' while among the lavenders, Class IV are 'Mechta,' 'Pamyat O.M. Kirove (a double) and the lovely 'Sonnet.' In best pinks I would have to name 'Lourene Wishart' a magnificent double and the singles 'Lee Jewett Walker' (Berdeen) and the tall older 'Marechal Foch.' In the magenta reds-pinks what could be more beautiful than Kolesnikov's 'Znamya Lenina,' 'Elsie Lenore' or the much overlooked 'Souvenir de Louis Chasset' the last of the Lemoine introductions. 'Ostrander' (also known as 'Ostrander Cooley') is a much overlooked double of Hulda Klager. Another, available but not everywhere is one of Lemoine's finest named for his son 'Emile Lemoine' and of course the available but outstanding 'Monge.' Among the newest are 'Krasavitsa Moskvya' a double and 'Professor Robert Clark' a single — both unique and magnificent.

Two *S. x hyacinthiflora* cultivars of outstanding merit are 'Bountiful' a lavender and 'Mary Short' a pink double. If nurserymen were to tissue culture any or all of the above they would make great improvements at what is being mostly offered today.



*S. Lourene Wishart at Falconskeape*

## The Lilac and the Caterpillar

*By Roger Vick, Edmonton, Alberta*

**S**INCE the first major influx of European settlers into northwestern Canada lilacs have been appreciated for their hardiness in the face of long cold winters. They are also tough in another sense that was not fully appreciated by this writer until this past season.

It was June, and stands of aspen stood bare-twigged against a clear sky, and a patter like slow drops of heavy rain tapped against the dry leaves of the woodland floor. Following a mild winter in prairie Canada, the spring of 1988 had arrived by early April, and the aspen buds burgeoned before their time. But as the fresh green leaves appeared, so did small dark clusters of tiny "worms." These were hatching from silver-grey bands that had been deposited around twigs the previous summer by moths of the forest tent caterpillar.

At the University of Alberta Devonian Botanic Garden (just southwest of Edmonton) it was the worst infestation of this pest in the twenty-eight seasons that the garden had been in existence. Soon the fattened caterpillars were falling from their first feeding stations, migrating over the paths and lawns, clustering on the buildings and colonizing new trees and shrubs.

Large scale chemical warfare against the pest was not considered appropriate (being financially prohibitive, as well as ecologically suspect) but selected tree species were spot treated with malathion. It was very tempting to spray as revenge for spoiling the springtime aesthetics of the garden, but a more measured response was to paint a sticky repellent on the trunks of trees that were as yet free of caterpillars in the canopy — the sort of formulation used to deter rabbits and deer from chewing bark. One caller reported similar success by tying plastic garbage bags around the trunks of trees, but admitted that this solution was almost as offending to the eye as the caterpillar hoard.

Once the decision had been made at the botanic garden to (more or less) allow nature to take its course in 1988, a philosophical attitude was adopted. It was some consolation to know that healthy trees that had been seriously defoliated would produce leaves again before the end of summer, and that a loss of leaves was not synonymous with the loss of the tree.

For those who plan a landscape in prairie Canada or the Northern Great Plains (at least those in rural areas surrounded by aspen and willow woodland) a reasonable precaution would be to grow woody plants less enticing to the forest tent caterpillar. This eating machine obviously has a preference for certain kinds of trees and shrubs. While an oak tree, for example, was quickly stripped to the leaf veins, adjacent lilacs remained unscathed.

Leaf texture certainly had some bearing on the damage sustained. While nearly all the willows were severely defoliated, the tough glossy leaves of the laurel-leaf willow, and the hairy leaves of the silver-leaf willow were virtually untouched. As the feeding continued over a period of five or six weeks, the favored species were defoliated, and only in the last week or so did the caterpillars resort to common lilac. Indeed, the lilac had a special role to play, as it was one of the few broadleaf shrubs with retained leaves, available to serve as a home to the pupating caterpillars.

Although lilac flowering was reduced in 1988, this reliable old shrub had once again demonstrated its resilience. If you'll permit me a paraphrase, "When the growing gets tough, the lilac keeps going."

The lists that follow indicate the amount of feeding damage by caterpillars on the various trees and shrubs at the University of Alberta Devonian Botanic Garden in early June 1988.

#### TREES AND SHRUBS

##### COMPLETELY DEFOLIATED

*Alnus* (alder)  
*Amelanchier* (saskatoon)  
*Betula* (birch) *Corylus* (hazelnut)  
*Cotoneaster* (cotoneaster)  
*Crataegus* (some hawthorns)  
*Fraxinus mandshurica* (Manchurian ash)  
*Populus* (aspen and poplar)  
*Quercus* (oak)  
*Rosa* (some roses)  
*Salix* (most willows)  
*Sorbus* (mountain ash)  
*Ulmus pumila* (Manchurian elm)

##### TREES AND SHRUBS UNDAMAGED

*Abies* (fir)  
*Acanthopanax sessiliflorus* (five leaved aralia)  
*Acer* (maples)  
*Caragana* (caragana)  
*Celastrus scandens* (Amer. bittersweet)  
*Clematis* (clematis)  
*Cytisus* (broom)  
*Euonymus* (burningbush)  
*Forsythia* (forsythia)  
*Humulus lupulus* (hops)  
*Juglans cinerea* (butternut)  
*Juniperus* (juniper)  
*Lonicera* (honeysuckle)  
*Parthenocissus quinquefolia* (Va. creeper)  
*Picea* (spruce)  
*Pinus* (pine)  
*Prunus fruticosa* (Mongolian cherry)  
*Philadelphus* (mock orange)  
*Rhus glabra* (sumac)  
*Ribes* (currant and gooseberry)  
*Spiraea* (spirea)  
*Sambucus* (elder)  
*Taxus* (yew)  
*Thuja* (white-cedar)  
*Viburnum trilobum* (highbush cranberry)  
*Vitis* (grape)  
*Weigela* (weigela)

#### TREES AND SHRUBS

##### LESS SEVERELY DEFOLIATED

*Crataegus* (some hawthorns)  
*Cornus* (dogwood)  
*Larix* (larch)  
*Malus* (some apples)  
*Populus* (some poplars)  
*Potentilla* (shrubby cinquefoil)  
*Prunus pensylvanica* (pin-cherry)  
*Prunus virginiana* (chokecherry,  
 including 'Shubert')  
*Pyrus ussuriensis* (Ussurian pear)  
*Rosa* (some roses)  
*Tilia* (linden or basswood)  
*Ulmus japonica* (Japanese elm)

#### TREES AND SHRUBS

##### WITH MINIMAL DEFOLIATION

*Berberis* (barberry)  
*Elaeagnus commutata*  
 (wolf willow)  
*Fraxinus* (some ash)  
*Hippophae rhamnoides*  
 (common sea buckthorn)  
*Malus* (some apples)  
*Rubus* (raspberry)  
*Salix lucida* (shining willow)  
*Salix pentandra*  
 (laurel-leaf willow)  
*Syringa* (lilac)  
*Viburnum lantana*  
 (wayfaring tree)  
*Viburnum opulus*  
 (European cranberry)



## Arch McKean Donates

**I**N THREE YEARS, in 1991, ILS will be observing its 20th anniversary. Since 1970 when fifteen lilac enthusiasts gathered at the Bayard-Cutting Arboretum on Long Island to look into such a possibility, ILS has come a long way toward achieving its goals of educating the gardening public, investigating cultural requirements of lilacs, distributing lilacs among members as well as to the general public. Specifically ILS has made available to members and lilac lovers superior type lilacs through auctions, sales and seed exchanges, published information on culture, accessibility, newer cultivars, etc.

Arch McKean recently donated his lilac papers to ILS Archives. These include correspondence with Emile Lemoine, Dr. John P. Rankin, Walter B. Clarke, Joseph Dvorak Jr., et al.

Such documents are valuable records of lilacdom's activities because they enlighten us about the progress of lilac development even before ILS was founded in 1971. Moreover, Arch kept dated records, a device most helpful to the historian. When you come across old letters, pictures, books and clippings that contain items of interest on lilacs you will help both the ILS historian and the Society if you send them to the historian, Robert Clark, for the ILS files.

## Spokane Lilac Society Formed

**A**CCORDING to a newspaper report in the Spokesman-Review, of Spokane, Washington, by Michael Guilfoil, a Spokane Lilac Society was recently organized by Marvalee Peterschick, a "rural Spokaneite" who lives on a farm 25 miles south of the city and who is a "master gardener on the Washington State University Co-op Extension program."

During the 1988 Lilac Show, sponsored by the Associated Garden Clubs of Spokane, lilac lovers were encouraged to sign up. Although other plant name groups belong to the A.G.C., there has never been a lilac society even though the lilac was proclaimed Spokane's official flower in 1958 and the first Lilac Festival was held in 1938.

Spokane's flirtation with the lilac goes back 105 years when Clara Denman brought a "Persian lilac" aboard the North Pacific, the first passenger train to Spokane Falls. In 1912 John Duncan, a local nurseryman, visited John Dunbar at Highland Park, Rochester, New York.

## Renewal Pruning

**T**O KEEP LILACS within bounds and in quality bloom you are well advised to practice renewal pruning, that is, removal of large canes every few years. This practice stimulates the lilac to renew its structural branches, thus producing vigorous flower bearing shoots and ensuring large clusters.

If you wish to enjoy one more blooming season, then you may prune the canes in June after bloom. Otherwise I like to do my pruning in late winter while the canes are bare and I can see what I'm doing more easily. In either event it will be a couple of years before the new canes bloom.

## Leaf Necrosis

**S**OON AFTER bloom, I noticed a partial shriveling of leaves on 'Vest-vale.' Although enough green area was left for photosynthesis, nevertheless, the plant looked unsightly and made me wonder what could be the cause of such abnormal appearance — especially since other lilacs throughout the garden were normal.

There was no leaf miner damage. The shriveled portions turned black. The only explanation I could think of is that the lilac is planted outside a glassed-in porch. The strong sunshine reflecting off the glass built up such heat as literally to cook the foliage.



*GATHERING AT GRAPE HILL DEDICATION*

## **Report of the By-Laws Committee**

**Bill Utley, Chairman**

**A**T A SPECIAL MEETING of the I.L.S. Board of Directors at Falconskeape, Medina, Ohio in October, the Directors voted to amend the by-laws concerning the membership of the Board. Since the International Lilac Society was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, requirements for not-for-profit corporations have been changed to read, "The Board of Directors shall consist of not less than five, nor more than fifteen members." In order to bring our Board into conformity, our by-laws have to be changed. Consequently the members will elect five (instead of eight) members each year, thus bringing us in three years into accord with the law.

The State of New York laws were amended because certain not-for-profit Corporations were loading their boards with highly paid members.

In 1983 at Madison, the Board passed a resolution that no board member should serve more than two consecutive terms. This resolution was repealed by the Board.

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Charles Tenth, S-VI, 5-8 inch . . . . . \$2.50  
Ludwig Spaeth, S-VII, 6-10 inch . . . . . \$2.80  
Belle De Nancy, D-V, 4-6 inch . . . . . \$2.40  
Miss Ellen Willmott, D-I, 4-6 inch . . . . . \$2.40  
Paul Thirion, D-VI, 4-6 inch . . . . . \$2.40

**Please send a check with your order. A reasonable estimate for shipping cost is 10% of the order value, adjustment to that estimate will be made when the order is shipped.**

## 1989 Ohio Lilac Convention Dates Set

**L**.S.' eighteenth annual meeting is scheduled for May 19th-21st according to Dr. Karen Murray, local co-chairperson with her husband Peter Murray, Superintendent of Falconskeape Gardens at Medina, Ohio.

Details of the program will be given in the Spring number of LILACS, to be published April 1. Accommodation hotel registration cards are being enclosed with this issue. Preparations are underway for another memorable Ohio meeting, weather permitting. Owing to its continental climate and concatenation of weather patterns, the Ohio springtime is exceedingly capricious. However Karen and Peter are doing their utmost to assure you a pleasant visit to both the Holden Arboretum and Falconskeape Gardens. So circle the dates of May 19-21st and plan to come to Ohio to see Falconskeape's magnificent 21st Century lilacs and the expanded, beautifully landscaped lilacs at The Holden Arboretum.

## New Lilac Book Acclaimed

**K**UDOS are pouring in over Fr. Fiala's new book entitled "LILACS — The Genus *Syringa*," published by Timber Press of Portland, Oregon. Ten years in the making, this encyclopedic book will undoubtedly become the standard reference on lilacs. It is copiously illustrated mostly in living color and principally by the author.

The horticultural world is abuzz over Fr. Fiala's *opus major*. He breaks ground not only in describing new lilac taxa but also in recognizing new categories of hybrids according to their degree of introgression. For instance, if a lilac contains bloodlines from three species, it is designated as "tribrid," if four species it is a quatrobrid, etc.

The history of lilac cultivars is recorded from the pioneer work of the Lemoines to contemporary works at Rochester, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton and Medina. The heart of this monograph is its emphasis on genetics; the McKelvy monograph, it will be remembered, presented the taxonomy of lilacs.

Fr. Fiala has brought together an encyclopedic knowledge of lilac lore and useful information. The book contains chapters on lilac colors, lilacs in the landscape, companion plants, lilac propagation and diseases and pests. He presents information on lilac plant explorers, on the world's outstanding lilac collections and the people who have worked in lilacdom. In short he records his love affair with the lilac for the past 40 years. The bibliography on lilacs is perhaps the most complete published on a single taxa. Every lilac devotee will want to read this book and cherish it. [Editor]

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