

Lilacs

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of the International Lilac Society

IN
THIS
ISSUE:

Le Musée des Lilas; and
'Federico García Lorca'



Syringa vulgaris 'Maiskoe Utro'
Photo Credit Colin Chapman



Syringa \times *chinensis* 'Bicolor'
Photo Credit Colin Chapman

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Front Cover: The beautiful, multi-colored double new lilac *Syringa vulgaris*
'Federico Garcia Lorca'
Photo Credit Tatiana Poliakova

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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.

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President's Message

Dear Lilac Aficionados,

The new year and January is here and now is the time to seriously plan your trip to Nancy, France to attend the 2012 ILS Convention. Karen McCauley, ILS Convention Chairman, and the hosts of the convention from the Jardin botanique de Nancy, have furiously exchanged e-mails planning for this milestone event. For the first time in the history of ILS the convention is being held in Europe. It is a giant step for our society making it truly international. We are going to 'Mecca', where Victor Lemoine (1823-1911), extraordinary plantsman, propelled lilacs to the forefront of ornamental shrubs. The city of Nancy, where he lived with his family, was the center of horticulture in the XIX century. How exciting it must have been being in the middle of all this enthusiasm with new and improved plants being offered to the gardeners of France, Europe and the World. I received a marvelous booklet from Jean-Francois Gonot, the French gentleman from the Jardins botanique de Nancy, who came and invited us to hold our convention in that city. *Victor Lemoine, l'homme qui donnait aux Fleurs le visage des fees*, covers the history of the horticulture in the XIX century in Nancy plus has beautiful illustrations/plates of the many plants Victor Lemoine introduced. Lilac pictures are on Pages 50 and 51. 'Madame Lemoine', 1890, 'Louis Henry', 1894 and 'Duplex', 1898.

Nancy is a wonderful city located three hundred three kilometers east of Paris. It is a very historical city full of monuments, and one of the most famous sites is the Place Stanislas with its beautiful iron gate. As a young girl ten years of age ; I traveled to Strasbourg, France via Nancy by myself on a train full of French military personal going to Berlin. One soldier in our compartment, had a suitcase packed with food: pates, breads, a ham, several cheeses and of course a couple bottles of wine. How is that for a picnic on wheels! A true movable feast we had. The train travelled through the beautiful French countryside, little villages clustered around centuries old churches with the ever present Coq Gaulois (rooster) at the very top of their steeples, cows and horses on emerald green pastures, and vineyards after vineyards all neatly trimmed and perfectly free of weeds. This was not the TGV (train grande vitesse) but an old steam power train chugging along meandering east. From our high perch we could see hedgerows and all the little private gardens snuggling next to each house in the villages. From time to time majestic chateaux with their turrets and old stone walls would appear reminding you how long the French land has been inhabited. Can you tell I really want you to come to Nancy, France? Now I don't guarantee someone with a suitcase full of food and wine. But the scenery will be there mostly unchanged, the train is no longer powered by steam, but the trip will still have the charm of long ago... Karen McCauley has everything spelled

out for you in this issue of Lilacs. You also know you can contact her anytime if you have any questions.

Our robin (ILR) has been very active lately. News of a new lilac project in Canada, news of a new lilac of unusual color from Frank Moro and the exciting trip to Spain of Tatiana Poliakova had everyone talking, guessing and wishing to have been there. The most successful lilac projects are those involving local officials. John Bentley of New Hampshire is making alliance with several political figures interested in and loving lilacs. His project, The Katie Bentley Project, has attracted a lot of attention in the State of New Hampshire and other areas in the US. Over 600 lilacs have been planted coast to coast in schools, colleges, libraries, cemeteries, etc. To have alliance with town officials assures the permanence and acceptance of lilac projects.

We have a very special new member from Georgia. Michael Dirr, is the author of a number of books on horticulture. He is working on developing lilacs for the hot climates. He said that so many gardeners, transplants from the North, are asking for lilacs that grow in the South. He is looking for seeds. This is an important development to have a hybridizer working specifically on heat tolerant lilacs. Exciting! We wish him great success. I know that many gardeners would be delighted to be able to grow lilacs in their Southern gardens just like they had grown them in the North. "A Lilac in Every Garden the World Over" may become a reality!

Tatiana Poliakova went to Spain to plant lilacs with a delegation from Moscow. The trip to Spain was organized by Nadezhda Pronina (also a ILS Member) who heads a children's organization which plants lilacs in parks, schools, the streets of Moscow and in other world cities. In Granada, Spain three lilacs were given to the Federico García Lorca Museum. Tatiana and the group also visited the site in Visnar where Larco and others were executed during the Spanish Civil War. No individual marker identifies the graves. Larco was a young poet and writer; and is buried under an olive tree. He along with over two thousand others died in this ravine. Tatiana and the group of children walked to the very bottom of the ravine where he and the others are buried. The trip to Spain was done in the name of Peace and Remembrance. What better reason than to plant lilacs to immortalize those gone so tragically. The German Nursery, Piccoplant, gave thirty four lilacs to plant at the sites. Elke Haase, the owner/director of the lilac nursery was honored in Moscow for her generous donations. She received two medals for her generosity and involvement with the Spanish project. We must also say thank you to Elke Haase, Pronina Nadezhda and Tatiana Poliakova for making this lilac project a success. I understand the Director of the museum was very surprised and pleased to receive lilacs to plant at the museum in memory of Federico García Lorca. Now we have new lilacs to look forward to. 'Federico García Lorca', the new bicolor lilac from Frank Moro and new lilacs

perhaps from Michael Dirr. Also a novel about Hulda Klager, *Where Lilacs Still Bloom* by Jane Kirkpatrick is coming out in April 2012. Another lilac book is in the making. More information to will be coming soon.

Again I'm asking if someone would collect the stories about our hybridizers and lilac collectors. We really need to keep their histories from disappearing. With all the electronic devices available I don't think it would be too time consuming or complicated to visit a collector or hybridizer and capture their stories. I actually think it would be a fun project. We also need volunteers to join the ILS Preservation Committee. This is another important ILS project and an ongoing one. There is a lot to do such as collecting data, entering data etc. Contact Deb McCown, ILS Preservation Chair, if you want to help.

Mes Amis I look forward to seeing you in Nancy, France for our "European" convention. Wait till you see the beautiful conservatoire et Jardins botaniques de Nancy. Stay a few days in Paris and visit other cities. Strasbourg very close to Nancy is another exciting city to explore...

I'll see you in Nancy on the Lilac Trail.

*Mes amities,
Nicole Jordan, ILS President
Chester, VA
Njordan236@aol.com*

European Newsletter.

OK! So you all caught my deliberate mistake last time which was put there just to make sure you were all awake. The exquisite 'Marie Legraye' is not double as my piece inexplicably said - she is single and I show her portrait to prove it. So where was I? Ah, just about to leave the geographical collection and cross onto the new land and the historical collection. To do this I have to pass from The Ukraine to a zone on the boundary of the two collections. This was the old fence line which I had already started planting with experimental seedlings of my own. One of them I am very fond of and I will probably register it but I can't just yet. The original plant - whose picture I show - cannot be named but a cultivated clone of it can. I do have two more plants but neither has yet flowered. I am fond of it because several years ago the late Bill Utley visited here and he gave me a gift of some scions of a few of Father Fiala's lilacs. I grafted them and stored them in isolation at the roofless rear of a derelict pig farrowing unit for three years. Several of them flowered for the first time including a very sickly plant of S.v. 'FlowBlue'. The lilac duly died but it left behind a dead flower within which was a single seed pod. I extracted a seed and managed to germinate it. Thus, though I no longer have 'Flow Blue' I do have a seedling of it, and this is what I show you. Along that old fence line and in two large island beds I have about 80 other seedlings being studied.

I mentioned an old and derelict pig farrowing house. This was a pig farm before we bought it but most of the pig units were demolished before our time. However, a block of three remained but they were in a sorry state. I tried to restore one of them but every time the wind hit storm force it blew my clear plastic roof off. I eventually took professional advice and in 2009 the third unit was partly dismantled to provide the material to re-build the other two. The third one - roofless and with walls down to half size - is now a courtyard garden for lilacs in large tubs. I have plans for this which I will elaborate at a later date. The first pig unit is where I do all my propagating and raising of first year grafts. The second pig unit takes the second year grafts and is where I do my labelling and store my records and maps. The picture shows the three units during the restorations. Without them I could not have done what I have been able to do. The next picture is an example of what I do and it is a first flowering inside the pig unit of a second year graft of A. F Mel'nik's 'Maiskoje Utro'. The third year grafts are moved outside and stored on a sheltered concrete base of a former pig unit and there they await planting.

Thus we have passed through the old fence line onto the new land. I chose to enter the new land at a special point just where the Chinese lilacs begin. I am on the section of the lilac triangle devoted to hybrids and, in particular, in the midst of a cluster of *xchinensis* hybrids. I adore these lilacs. 'Saugeana' is there and 'Alba' and so is Jack's 'Lilac Sunday'. There is a big, mature plant of 'Met-

ensis' and also two which are special to me. The first is *S. xchinensis* f. *bicolor* which steals my heart whenever I look into its eye. For that reason I include it as my last picture. The other is *Syringa xchinensis* 'Duplex'.

I was once asked by Max if I had any information from Europe about the existence of Lemoine's recorded possession of a double form of *xchinensis*. As it happened, I was just completing a European Newsletter so I decided to tag a small "Plant Search" item on the end. I asked if anyone knew of the existence of the double form of this lilac - *Syringa xchinensis* 'Duplex' - on page 20 of LILACS Vol. 24, No. 1, Winter 1995. Near to Christmas, I received a phone call from Danish nurseryman Ole Heide who, rather perplexed, told me he had received some plant material from Dr Vasily Gorb at the Botanical Garden in Kiev in The Ukraine. In the parcel there was a small package addressed to me with a request that it be forwarded. This Ole did and I duly received a few scions of a lilac listed at Kiev as *Syringa polumakhrovaya* (meaning "semi-double"). I grafted the scions and, following an intense three-way correspondence about the plants provenance, duly recorded in LILACS Vol. 28, No. 4, Fall 1999 that 'Duplex' had been accessioned into my collection in 1997. Thus the 'Duplex' saga was initiated by Max, aided and abetted by Ole and Vasily, and brought back to life by me. Quite how the lilac came to appear in the Montreal auction escapes my memory but I do recall that all the lilacs in that auction were introduced and described by myself. I also received from Vasily a copy of his lovely book "Lilacs in The Ukraine" (Naukova Dumka, 1989) and from Ole many wonderful scions and countless phone calls of side-splitting laughter. I have searched my computer files and I do not have a digital picture of 'Duplex' to show you but I did put a slide of its first flowering here on the front cover of LILACS Vol. 29, No. 1, Winter 2000. Looking at the dates, I am amazed that from the initial enquiry by Max, to the purchase at auction by our highly esteemed editor, Kent, - via England, Ukraina, Denmark and Canada- took only 5 years. Testimony to a slick bit of ILS work and co-operation, I think!

If still required, I will complete the tour of the garden next time.

Colin Chapman
Norman's Farm
Suffolk. U.K.
January 3rd 2012.

The International Lilac Society Convention

Thanks to this unique collection, Nancy Botanical Garden proposes to organize for the first time in France and in Europe, the International Lilac Convention in 2012.

Since 1971, this convention is organized in Canada or in the United States and about fifty Lilac professionals take part in this meeting. The city of Nancy will be able to welcome the American and French specialists, along with lilac enthusiasts from other countries such as Poland, Russia, United-Kingdom and Germany where many people are also interested in Lilacs.

After the success of the International Aroid Conference, organized in 2009, Nancy Botanical Garden is ready to welcome a new conference, in collaboration with Nancy University and the Urban Community of Grand Nancy.

TEMPORARY PROGRAM

Wednesday May 2

8:00 pm General public lecture. Presentation in French by Nicole Jordan, President of the International Lilac Society

Thursday May 3

9:00 - 10:00 am Registration

10:00 - 12:00 am Director's meeting

12:00 - 2:00 pm Lunch (on your own)

2:00 - 5:00 pm Walking tours of the Lilacs collection and visit of Nancy Botanical Garden

5:00 pm Welcome drink at Nancy botanical garden

Friday May 4

9:00 - 11:00 am Conferences

11:00 - 12:00 am Annual meeting of ILS

12:00 - 2:00 pm Lunch (on your own)

2:00 - 5:00 pm Conferences

7:00 pm Banquet at the City Hall of Nancy

Saturday May 5

9:00 - 10:00 am Director's meeting

10:00 - 12:00 am Conferences

12:00 - 2:00 pm Lunch (on your own)

2:00 - 5:00 pm Visit of Nancy City, thematic walk Lemoine/Art nouveau (Sainte-Marie Parc, Lemoine Street, Lemoine house, Museum of Ecole de Nancy ...)

7:00 pm Dinner in a French restaurant in Nancy

GENERAL PUBLIC ACTIVITIES

During the Convention, Nancy Botanical Garden will present a program of activities to enable to the visitors to discover the Lilac Collection of Nancy Botanical Garden: exhibition, general public lecture, week-end of identification of Lilacs of their own garden, visits of the collection...

ACCOMMODATION

The main hotel for the Convention will be Hotel Mercure, a 3 star hotel in downtown.

<http://www.mercure.com/fr/hotel-1068-mercure-nancy-centre-stanislas/index.shtml>

Most of the delegates will stay in this hotel.

The hotel has offered a special convention rate that it will guarantee until March 1, 2012:

See Registration form for accommodation details.

ORGANIZATION

This convention will be organized by: ILS (International Lilac Society), Nancy Botanical Garden, Nancy University (Universite de Lorraine), and the Urban Community of Nancy.

If you have any questions regarding the convention, please contact Karen McCauley. Once you have registered for the convention you will be sent an email. Please check the ILS website www.internationallilacsociety.org for updated information. There will not be a traditional plant auction at this convention due to the difficulties of transporting plant material across borders. Hope to see many of you in Nancy.

**Karen McCauley
ILS Treasurer & Convention Chair
mccauleytk@aol.com
952.443.3703**

Gardens of Nancy, France

Nancy presents an exceptional collection of Lemoine's Lilacs, famous horticulture nursery of Nancy. The Lemoine nursery, founded in 1849, became very famous all over the world. Victor Lemoine and then his son Emile, created hundreds of new horticultural varieties (*Pelargonium*, *Fuchsia*, *Paeonia*, *Clematis*...) 214 cultivars of Lilacs were created between 1876 and 1953.

The Lemoine nursery closed its doors in 1968 and unfortunately, this outstanding heritage hasn't been conserved locally in Nancy. An important work of bibliography research and many contacts with professional in France and all over the world allowed Nancy Botanical Garden to gather last year the 214 cultivars of Lemoine's Lilacs.

In 2005, Nancy was awarded the *Grand Prix du Fleurissement*. A walk through its parks and gardens will give you an excellent idea of the major periods that have marked its history, and that gave it an incredible diversity and such a wide variety of plants and trees.

You can thus travel from the medieval period (Citadelle Gardens) to Stanislas' reign (Pépinière Park and Godron Gardens) by going through the city's 19thC urban development (Sainte-Marie, Blondlot and Olry Parks), ending in the *Art Nouveau* period (the *Ecole de Nancy* Museum Gardens). Finally you should visit some of its highly contemporary gardens with their powerful designs and unusual plants, the best known being the Water Gardens in the city centre.

Nancy's streets and public gardens are home to 22,000 trees and 125 flowerbeds covering an area of 12,000m², and that does not include the 1525 basins and jardinières that make this such a delightful city.

The municipal gardens produce 330,000 flowering plants every summer, with a further 185,000 in spring and autumn, not counting its 40,000 bulbs. All these plants, clearly labelled, can be seen in the Dominique Alexandre Godron Gardens, Rue Ste Catherine a few yards from Place Stanislas.

Gardens you must visit!

- The Pépinière Park
- The Godron Gardens
- Sainte-Marie Park and the Nature and Environment.
- The Plant Conservatory and Montet Botanical Gardens.

Information about Nancy, France

Population of Greater Nancy (20 municipalities): 330,000

Higher Education

- 3 universities forming part of the European University Cluster
- 14 high schools
- 45,000 students
- 3,600 lecturers and researchers
- 300 laboratories
- 650 courses on offer
- ARTEM, a unique project in France: the Ecole des Mines, the School of Fine Art and the Nancy Commercial Institute offer joint courses
- Nancy- Brabois, high technology cluster

Business and Industry

- 23,600 companies
- 170,000 employees
- 2100 new companies set up annually
- The companies are mostly young: half are less than ten years old
- In dynamic sectors: IT, Information technology, finance, logistics and health, social action (share), services to companies, trade
- More women at work than on average in France
- Near the Belgian, German and Luxemburg markets

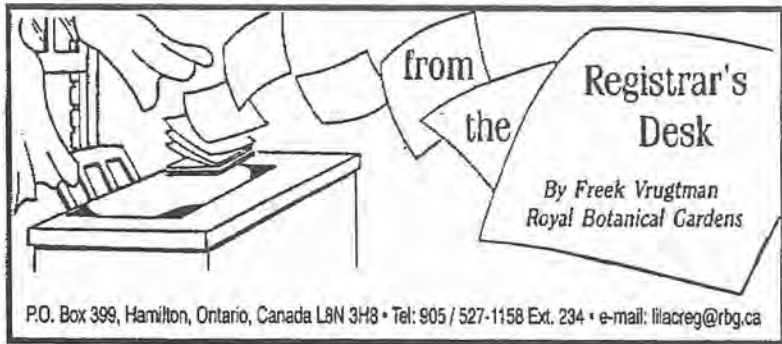
Leisure and cultural activities

- 6 museums - Fine Arts Museum, *Ecole de Nancy* Museum (Nancy is the capital of French *Art Nouveau*) Lorraine Museum, Aquarium-Museum, History of Iron Museum, Montet Botanical Garden,
- Zenith Concert Hall seating 24,000
- National Opera Company
- National Centre for the Dramatic Arts
- National Choreographic Centre (Lorraine Ballet Company)
- Major cultural and other events: International Fair, Book Fair, (*Le Livre sur la Place*), Nancy Jazz Pulsations, St Nicolas Day Celebrations, Christmas Market...
- 223 clubs sports offering 68 sports

Gastronomy

- Bergamots, macarons, Stanislas babas, quiche Lorraine, Mirabelle plums (liqueur, eau-de-vie and tarts)

Hélène Tarantola
Conservatoire et Jardins Botaniques de Nancy
the 'office du tourisme de Nancy'



Syringa vulgaris 'Federico García Lorca' - A new cultivar from Russia by Freek Vrugtman and Tatiana Poliakova

In 2008 the world celebrated the 110th anniversary of Federico del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús García Lorca, 1898-1936, Spanish dramatist, poet and theatre director. At that occasion, a group of translators of Spanish literature and poetry asked Sergei Aladin to name a lilac cultivar for their poet. Sergei Aladin had studied Spanish, read Lorca in Spanish, and writes poetry himself. That is when the search for a suitable cultivar began.

Seed collected by Tatiana Poliakova in her garden, of open pollinated *Syringa vulgaris* 'Olympiada Kolesnikova', were passed on to Sergei Aladin and his wife Ol'ga Aladina, who grew some 1500 seedlings in their testing plots. Now the search was on for the seedling which would best represent the multicolored poetry of Lorca. Lorca's poem "La Monja Gitana" (the gypsy nun), in which the poet expresses his concern for the plight of women in contemporary Spain, helped to make the final choice.

Syringa vulgaris 'Federico García Lorca' is a mid to late flowering cultivar. The buds are pinkish-brown with the presence of green. Thyrses appear in pairs and are of pyramid shape and of average density, 25 to 30 cm in length and 22 to 26 cm in width, each thyrses numbering 740 to 890 florets. The florets are double, with curved petals, measuring up to 2.5 cm in diameter and with 2.5 to 3 corolla whorls, multicoloured and strongly fragrant. The colour of the flowers is unique and difficult to describe. It is bright and covers the wide range of colours found in lilacs, namely white, bluish, lilac, pink and purple. The inner corolla displays an extraordinary golden yellow 27D (Royal Horticultural Society Mini Colour Chart, 2005); the outer corolla, inner side 85B, outer side 80D. However, it is hard to find two identical florets in any thyrses.

This seedling first flowered in 2009; it was selected and first propagated in 2010. An application for registration of the new cultivar 'Federico García Lorca' has been filed with the State Commission of the Russian Federation for Selection Achievements Test and Protection (No. 8853109; 25 November 2011). Statutory registration is recognized under the provisions of the ICNCP Art. 27.5. Large scale propagation and commercial distribution will commence once patent protection has been obtained.

[footnote]

Contribution No. 201, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.



Syringa vulgaris 'Federico García Lorca' , Photo Credit Tatiana Poliakova

Lilacs Unite Cities Across the Sea

Bertrand Forget, a teacher and member of the council of Lombard in the Jura in France, started an email exchange in 2008 with Carol Bauer, Executive Coordinator for the Manager's Office of the Village of Lombard, Illinois, USA. In March, 2011, Forget, who teaches elementary-age children in the French hamlet of 180 inhabitants, wrote, "... to realize the relationship between our 2 Commons, we want (to) plant a small piece of America in our territory. We thus thought to plant a few lilac ... which could represent the links in amitié and sharing that unite us and discuss your park liliace." After months of research, planning and a Lombard Garden Club fundraiser needed to underwrite the cost, the teacher's request was fulfilled in November.

The planting of the first lilac, *Syringa vulgaris* 'Dwight D. Eisenhower' took place November 26 on the children's playground located in the village center near the City Council. Sylvie Faudot, mayor of Lombard, France, a town located approximately 3-1/2 hours from Paris, and Robert Tournier, Vice-President of the General Council of the Jura gathered with residents and the school children to plant the lilac at the playground entrance. Ms. Forget explains that the playground, designed for children from age two to thirteen, includes a volleyball court, a bowling alley and fishing pond, and that their school is unique in that there is only one class with children ages seven to eight.

Upon welcoming attendees, Ms. Forget thanked the town and Mayor of Lombard, Illinois, Carol Bauer, and Marymae Meyer for their actions and stated that the lilac was "decorated with the American flag, the French and European ... a bit of American soil, many French soil were thrown on the tree, symbol of the friendship between the two municipalities."

All of the lilacs were selected because they had been originated by North American hybridizers who named them for well-known Americans: *Syringa* 'Betsy Ross' originated by Donald Egolf 2000 and named for the maker who sewed the first American flag; *Syringa vulgaris* 'Dwight D. Eisenhower' originated by Richard Americo Fenicchia 1969 and named for the 34th president of the USA; *Syringa vulgaris* 'Charles Lindbergh' originated by Richard Americo Fenicchia 1988 and named for the famous American aviator; *Syringa xhyacinthiflora* 'Pocahontas' originated by Frank Skinner 1935 and named for the Indian princess, daughter of Powhatan, chief of the Algonquian Indians; *Syringa vulgaris* 'President Lincoln' originated by John Dunbar 1916 and named for the 16th president of the USA.

Preparation of the lilacs, which were propagated and grown by Evie King, co-owner of Syringa Plus, West Newbury, Massachusetts, included mandatory weekly inspections over months during the summer. Once certified to have met

all international regulations governing shipment of Syringa plants between the United States and the European Union, they were shipped as bare root plants.

While the lilacs were being prepared, Joey Preins of Lombard Garden Club initiated sales of garden art items to raise the money needed to fund the project. In October Marymae Meyer, who researched and selected the lilacs and provider nursery, and Rose Roth visited Syringa Plus, while attending a gathering of New England Region members of International Lilac Society. That presented an opportunity to also include in the shipment a number of official "Village of Lombard" Illinois lapel pins and an autographed copy of the booklet, *Lilacs - Plants of History-Plants for Tomorrow* by John H. Alexander III, which bears the message, "In 1911 Colonel William R. Plum brought two French lilacs to Lombard, IL, USA, the beginning of Lilacia Park. We wish our young friends in Lombard, France, bonne chance avec votre nouveau jardin lilas (good luck with your new lilac garden)."

John H. Alexander III, Chief Propagator of the Arnold Arboretum pens a message for the children of Lombard, France. After the planting ceremony, Ms. Forget forwarded the following proclamation certificate which translates: "A Lilac for Secularism among People ... On November 26, 2011, the town of Lombard, with the children of his school, planted the tree of secularism, offered by the town of Lombard United States. Its roots feed on the friendship between peoples.

Marymae Meyer

Have Your Renewed Your Membership?

If the expiration date on your mailing label reads Dec 11
then your membership has lapsed.
Please renew to continue receiving the *Lilacs* quarterly.

All membership dues should be mailed to:

International Lilac Society
William Tschumi
Assistant Treasurer
3 Paradise Court
Cohoes, NY 12047-1422
USA

Syringa (Villosae Group) 'Sun and Moon'

Although, in name only recently registered, this new cultivar has been in the making for thirteen years. The epithet alludes to the golden foliage and white flowers, standing out especially in twilight and moonlight and having an almost luminescent quality.

From a 1998 sowing of seeds collected from an open pollinated *Syringa wolfii*, it only became evident in the second year of growth that one of the seedlings appeared to have a much paler leaf colouring. As there were other lilac species, notably *S. villosa*, in close proximity to the seed parent it was on the advice of the International Lilac Registrar, Freek Vrugtman, that we list it as a hybrid.

Syringa 'Sun and Moon' shows all the characteristics of the seed parent with the exception of leaf and flower colour; the pale lilac rose flower buds opening to clear white florets 2cm long and 1cm wide and with a pleasant if faint fragrance – the mother plant and the other seedlings from the batch open to pale purple in their late spring flowering. The golden foliage lasts well into late summer showing up to better effect in a sunny situation but still evident in shade.

Our nursery was situated within the grounds of Ingatestone Hall, a Tudor Manor house in Essex, thirty miles from London, and in the same family for 18 generations. Thanks to the present incumbent Lord John Petre we were permitted to convert an Elizabethan red brick barn into a potting shed and shared the site with a similarly aged tithe barn once used as a chapel and last resting place for plague victims. Ghostly inspiration came in the form of the 8th Lord Petre, Robert, who inherited the estate as a fifteen year old in 1728. We were oblivious at the time of Ingatestone Hall's horticultural history; it was only much later that the story of Robert came to light – a plantsman, garden designer and outstanding collector funding worldwide plant hunting expeditions that introduced thousands of new species to cultivation. When he died, aged only twenty nine, his collection of over 200,000 plants were sold from his estates at Thorndon and Ingatestone. Persian Lilacs may well have been included as they feature amongst his planting plans. His legacy was to have named in his honour the climbing *Petrea volubilis*, a plant originating from Mexico.

Apart from a few notable exceptions, I am not particularly keen on variegated and coloured leaf forms in the plantworld. Rightly or wrongly there is always a suspicion for me, that they may revert, be fickle or just a little feeble in constitution – that is, until you raise one of your own. 'Sun and Moon' shows excellent vigour, is easy from cuttings and is the best looking kid in its class: *Syringa emodi* 'Aurea' is no match! Freek tells me that there did exist a *S. wolfii* 'Variegata' somewhere, sometime. It was mentioned by the late John C. Wister but he has not encountered it himself anywhere in cultivation nor in any literary reference.

It is the intention to donate a mature specimen this spring to Marks Hall Arboretum in Essex and in time to establish the ultimate size of the plant and its general hardiness; the stock plants have been far too cosseted to make a valued judgement although with *S. wolfii* and possibly *S. villosa* in its makeup I should see no reason for concern. Both species come from the provinces of North East China at altitude, more widespread into Eastern Russian and Korea in the case of *S. wolfii*. Seed was collected from the Korean expedition of Vladimir Komarov in 1893-1895 and then 'Chinese' Wilson on his trip in 1917, thus making this fine species available to hybridizers over the years.

At present, I have several rooted cuttings and am in the process of arranging for tissue culture to bulk up available stock. There are no associated plant breeders rights with *Syringa* 'Sun and Moon'.

Stephen Nelson
Darasina Nursery, UK
Email: stephen@darasina.co.uk
December 2011



Syringa 'Sun and Moon'
Photo Credit Stephen Nelson

Update on Berdeen Lilacs, Fall 2011

As many of you know, Ken Berdeen was a lilac hybridizer from Kennebunk, Maine who introduced many new plants. For as far back as I can remember, I “worked” alongside my grandfather on his lilacs. One day, when we were both much older, he shared with me his worry about what would happen to his lilacs when he was gone, and that day, I promised that I would carry on his work.

Thankfully, I met Evie King and Roger Coggeshall of Syringa Plus in 1994 and we came up with a plan. Our goals have always been simple: *Number 1 - save as many of the Berdeen hybrids from extinction as possible, Number 2 - ensure that those who have plants named for them have their own plant, and Number 3 - place plants in collections and arboretums where they will be best cared for, for years to come.*

The original plants were in poor shape when I began to restore the collection in Kennebunk; it was difficult to achieve successful propagation in spite of my best amateur attempts. When we started our collective efforts, all cuttings were taken from the original plants in Maine and propagated and grown at Syringa Plus in West Newbury, Massachusetts. As the plants got healthier, our success rates improved and we worked this plan for many years. After the Berdeen property was sold a few years ago, we have continued our work from the Syringa Plus location and occasionally visit original plants (and old friends) in Maine for cuttings.

Since beginning this project 17 years ago, we have been able to save approximately 30 Berdeen hybrids from extinction and we currently have about 70 Berdeen plants in stock. The named Berdeen hybrid plants that we have propagated include:

- Syringa vulgaris* ‘Amanda Bergen’
- S.v. ‘Betsy Bowman’
- S.v. ‘Brent Sirois’
- S.v. ‘Carolyn Bergen’
- S.v. ‘Carolyn Howland’
- S.v. ‘Chris’
- S.v. ‘Claudia Berdeen’
- S.v. ‘Cynthia’
- S.v. ‘Dana Horton’
- S.v. ‘Dianah Abbott’ (Diana Abbott)
- S.v. ‘Eleanor Berdeen’
- S.v. ‘Grace Wyman’
- S.v. ‘Irene’
- S.v. ‘James Berdeen’
- S.v. ‘Jefferson Berdeen’
- S.v. ‘John Kennedy’

S.v. 'Julie Ann Berdeen'
S.v. 'Kate Bergen'
S.v. 'Kenneth W. Berdeen II'
S.v. 'Lee Jewett Walker'
S.v. 'Lucy Bergen'
S.v. 'Lynette Sirois'
S.v. 'Maurice Lockwood'
S.v. 'Max Peterson'
S.v. 'Mrs. Nadeau'
S.v. 'Olive May Cummings' (Olive Mae Cummings)
S.v. 'Walter's Pink'
S.v. 'Ken Berdeen' (A Cora Lyden hybrid that she named for Ken.)
Goal #1 - Save Berdeen lilacs from extinction.

Additionally, the following people have their own plants (a lilac Ken named in their honor).

- Amanda Bergen
- Betsy Bowman
- Carolyn Bergen
- Cynthia
- Diana Abbott
- James Berdeen
- Jefferson Berdeen
- Lee Jewett Walker
- Lucy Bergen

This year we were able to get 6 additional Berdeen lilacs to their namesakes or to Ken's friends and family.

Goal #2 - Ensure that those who have plants named for them, have their own plant.

There have been Berdeen plantings placed in a few private collections and arboretums in the United States, Canada, and Europe. We are now reaching our third goal of placing additional Berdeen lilacs in arboretums and private collections where they will be best cared for in years to come.

Goal #3 - Continue to preserve Berdeen lilacs in private collections and arboreta..

So, as you have read, we have made significant progress and are achieving our milestones. Our success has truly been due to a collaboration of efforts from many people and we appreciate all the help, advice, and support. This has been an amazing journey and we do it to honor the spirit of the man we loved and continue to talk about fondly.

Lynette (Sirois) Mascioli
Evie King and Roger Coggeshall, Syringa Plus



Syringa vulgaris 'Cynthia'
Photo credit Syringa Plus



Syringa vulgaris 'John Kennedy'
Photo Credit Syringa Plus

The Birth of The Lilac Museum (Le Musée des Lilas), St-Georges, Quebec, Canada.

In 1998, a group of citizens founded the non-profit « Rendez vous à la Rivière » (Meet at the River). Those individuals had succeeded in life and wanted to give back to the community. Their goal was to give back the river and its banks to the citizens of St-Georges and create a body of water that would be usable in the summer time by building a retractable dam, pedestrian bridges and landscaping a small island that nobody had paid attention to before. They faced many battles but never gave up and pursued their dream relentlessly. The total cost of the project is now 11 million Canadian dollars. Today, the citizens can enjoy three pedestrian bridges to access the island and reach the other side of the river, which also gives access to other city parks. The Pozer island has been landscaped and has been maintained by a group of volunteers, Les Jardiniers de l'Île, since 2003. Those infrastructures were essential and the starting point of our project, without which The Lilac Museum could have never been born.

In the fall of 2010 and spring of 2011 the book "Les Lilas" (Édition de l'Homme, 2005) by Rock Giguère and Frank Moro was planted on the Pozer island and adjacent Veilleux park. One can walk in the park and literally walk through the book as all the lilac bushes were planted in the same order as in the book and a reproduction of the book page is presented in front of each lilac plant. This was made possible through major financial contributions of "Rendez vous à la Rivière" supported by a local bank (Caisse Populaire Desjardins) and the city of Ville de Saint-Georges. The same volunteers that maintained the island helped with the plantings along with volunteers of the local horticultural society "La Société d'Horticulture la Chaudière Fleurie".

In 2011, M. Frank Moro offered us to buy his lilac collection as he fell in love with St-Georges, the determination of its citizens, the implication of the city and the visions that all had for the downtown area. A well-documented project was submitted to the city in October 2011 and from then on, things moved quickly.

When completed (2015), Saint-Georges will have one of largest lilac collection in the world located in an urban setting, on flat ground, easily accessible with free access for the visitors who will come to admire this collection. Eight hundred lilac cultivars will be added to the two hundred already planted, creating a unique, major and world famous touristic attraction. The registration of a lilac cultivar in the city's name, *S. vulgaris* 'Ville de Saint-Georges', will enhance the city's prestige. The project's notoriety will contribute to the citizens' pride in their city and will entice them to share their pleasure for lilacs blooms and smells with their families, friends and neighbors, weaving tighter social links. Volunteers from all walks of life will be included in the realization of the project thereby promoting volunteering, increasing one's sense of belonging, self esteem,

and fulfilling the need to feel useful. The landscaping and the breath of the lilac collection on the “Chaudière” river shores will improve urban quality of life and the idyllic setting will promote physical activity. People with reduced mobility will be able to enjoy the lilacs views even when having to use a wheel chair or a car.

The Lilac Museum will drive the revival of the downtown area and will address the citizens' and business people's concerns to make this area greener and more attractive. It will have an impact on the city's economy by increasing tourism revenues and drawing new business into the neighborhood will increase the city's tax base.

In addition to attracting tourists from all over the world, our museum, with its 1000 rare and unique lilac cultivars, will also increase the visibility of existing touristic attractions. The unique appeal and the collection's exceptional quality will also draw business people to hold conferences, meetings and other events in Saint-Georges. Visitors will very likely come back at bloom time if their visit did not coincide with it. The scope of the lilac collection will have an invaluable educational value. Each plant will be identified with a plate containing information on the cultivar. General information panels will further the knowledge on lilacs. Ecology concepts and respect for the environment will be conveyed. A detailed database will be created. Its conservation and transmission will benefit current and future generations as well as the scientific community. This project will preserve biodiversity by safeguarding a collection of unique and rare lilacs that could otherwise be lost.

A lilac festival, “La Fête des Parfums”, will take place in June and have horticultural as well as a wide range of activities for everyone. People will be able to buy the lilac named for the city, *S. vulgaris* 'Ville de Saint-Georges', and citizens will be invited to plant one on their property and make Saint-Georges the Lilac City. We also plan to motivate business and industries to beautify their land with lilacs.

Planting the lilacs along existing paths, or projected ones, volunteer work for planting and maintenance and the fact that no paths or landscape will have to be maintained solely due to the lilacs allow us to keep costs low. Financial partners will share the signage costs. A local marketing business, “Image de Mark”, that does business across Canada and USA, is already contributing by donating the development of the logo and marketing strategy. Tourism specialists will also be called upon to help us publicize the museum. This plan of action will not burden future generations with prohibitive creation and maintenance costs.

We believe that setting the project within the sustainable development principles (health and quality of life, social equity and solidarity, environment protection, economic efficacy, participation and commitment, access to knowledge, partnership, biodiversity preservation, respect for the ecosystems' capacity, responsible production and use, costs internalization) and coordinating the planting of the

Lilac Museum with other downtown improvements were key in getting our project approved and get financial support from the city.

By backing and taking a major role in this project of international scope, along with “Société d’Horticulture la Chaudière Fleurie”, Ville de Saint-Georges enters the world scene of touristic attractions and will provide to its citizens a unique living environment that will have major impacts on their lives and pursue its growth towards a better future. Saint-Georges will be a creative, a dynamic and a pioneer city focused on quality of life, sustainable development and prosperity in all sectors of activity, pursuing the vision that Rendez vous à la Rivière had in 1998.

*Claire Fouquet,
Contact person for Le Musée des Lilas,
lemuseedeslilas.com*



Laying out the plan at Le Musée des Lilas

Photo Credit Claire Fouquet

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