

PROCEEDINGS

VOL. 2, NO. 4 INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY, INC. MAY 1974

LILACS

S. 'Ogni Moskvy' (L.Kolesnikov)



VOL. 2, NO. 4

LILACS

PROCEEDINGS - MAY 1974

A PUBLICATION OF

THE INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY, INC.

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	DR. ROBERT CLARK
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT	WILLIAM UTLEY
TREASURER	NANCY EMERSON
SECRETARY	WALTER OAKES
EDITOR/PUBLICATIONS	JOHN L. FIALA
RECORDING SECRETARY	LOIS UTLEY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Three year Term:	ROBERT B. CLARK JOHN L. FIALA CHARLES HOLETICH WALTER OAKES OWEN ROGERS WILLIAM UTLEY JOHN WISTER ISABEL ZUCKER
------------------	--

Two year Term:	WILLIAM CUMMING DONALD EGOLF ALFRED FORDHAM ALBERT LUMLEY ANN ROBINSON CLARE SHORT LOIS UTLEY LOURENE WISHART
----------------	--

One year Term:	DENNIS BROWN MABEL HARKNESS R. J. HILTON JOEL MARGARETTEN FRANKLIN NIEDZ ORVILLE STEWARD FREEK VRUGTMAN TERESA WYNCOOP
----------------	---

Continuing Directors:	W. BUGALA (POLAND) PETER GREEN (ENGLAND) A. GROMOV (U.S.S.R.) ZELIMIR SAHIN (THE NETHERLANDS) CLAUDE WEBER (SWITZERLAND)
-----------------------	--

Honorary Lifetime Directors:	BERNARD HARKNESS FRED VAN ORDEN LOUISE WILDER
------------------------------	---

LILACS is the official publication of the International Lilac Society, Inc. published quarterly with the *PROCEEDINGS* of the Society's Annual Convention. Both *LILACS* and *THE PROCEEDINGS* are benefits of membership:

Individual dues \$5; Sustaining Member \$10; Life Membership \$100. Extra copies of publication \$1 from Editor, John L. Fiala, 7359 Branch Rd., Medina, Ohio 44256.
Refer memberships to: Walter Oakes, Sec., I.L.S., Box 315, Rumford, Maine 04276.

1973 AWARDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY
PRESENTED AT BOSTON, MASS., MAY 1973

*HONOR AND
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD*

(not presented this year)

THE DIRECTORS' AWARD

The Society's Scientific-Horticultural Award was presented to *L. A. KOLESNIKOV* (Moscow, U.S.S.R.) for a lifetime of dedicated work in hybridizing the Lilac and introducing newer forms and types, for authoring a work on Lilacs to promote their planting and appreciation in his native country and abroad.

THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The Society's Arboretum, Public/Private Gardens Award was presented to *THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM of Harvard University* for its pioneering work in collecting, introducing and preserving lilacs in the first outstanding public collection.

For outstanding work in planting, public education and park landscaping promoting the lilac and encouraging its planting.

For outstanding work in researching the Lilac and promoting its scientific study and hybridizing.

AWARDS OF MERIT

The Society's Award for outstanding work or Special Service.

J. HERBERT ALEXANDER

For a lifetime of dedication in hybridizing, growing and introducing newer and better forms of lilacs.

KEN BERDEEN

For outstanding work in hybridizing and introducing better varieties of lilacs.

ALFRED J. FORDHAM

For promoting, propagating and publicizing the lilac to an outstanding degree and promoting its use in landscaping and public display.

MABEL L. FRANKLIN

For a lifetime of dedication in introducing newer and better forms of lilacs; growing and promoting lilacs.

PROFESSOR E. M. MEADER

For outstanding work in hybridizing and introducing newer forms, especially of the late blooming lilac hybrids.

R. RADCLIFFE PIKE

For interest in promoting the lilac in landscaping, public plantings and lilac research.

LEONARD SLATER

For outstanding work in producing the "Agincourt Lilacs" and introducing finer varieties.

ORVILLE M. STEWARD

For outstanding dedication to the Society as its 'Founding President' and for your guidance in its organization.

SECOND CONVENTION IN RETROSPECT

by Robert Clark

Boston bloomed its lilacs full for the second I.L.S. convention, May 25-26th. The Arnold Arboretum, already in its second century, was a most gracious host through its director, Dr. Richard A. Howard, and his staff, especially Dr. Gordon P. DeWolf, Jr., Alfred J. Fordham, Dr. Donald Wyman (emeritus) and volunteer guides. The celebrated lilac collection on the northern slope of Bussey Hill favored the delegates with gorgeous bloom. To Dr. Owen M. Rogers, I.L.S. vice-president of the New England region, we owe thanks for a memorable convention.

Bus tours of the 265-acre Jamaica Plain arboretum were provided to acquaint us with the living collections. Along Meadow Road under maples and oaks torch azaleas heightened our expectations. At the junction of Forest Hills Road the bus waited for us while we inspected the Shrub Collection. We found shrubby cinquefoils, early shrub roses, deutzias and spireas in bloom. Proceeding up Bussey Hill past lilacs on the left the bus paused again for us to admire the remarkable collection of tree peonies grouped behind the viburnums near the Center Street Gate.

Boarding the bus to climb Bussey Hill, we stopped at the Chinese collection featuring along the path European brooms, the celebrated dove-tree whose flowers, according to our guide's sensibilities, smell "worse than 1000 catboxes", *Dipelta floribunda*, a smooth-barked "beauty-bush", *Chionanthus retusa*, the Chinese fringe-tree, near relative of the lilac, and other garden niceties.

Descending Bussey Hill we meet Valley Road at the Center Street Gate. Here microclimatically is one of the most protected spots of the arboretum. We admired the laburnums and other "borderline" woody plants which sometimes are injured by cold in Boston's unpredictable freezes. I was particularly pleased to see once more and thriving the woolly buckthorn, *Bumelia lanuginosa*, of the Ozarks. This is a summer-blooming member of the subtropical sapodilla family with which I became acquainted while training at St. Louis many years ago. The Rochester growing season is just too short, preventing this hardy small tree from setting fruit.

Aboard the bus again we glimpsed the ironclad rhododendrons along Bussey Brook at the foot of Hemlock Hill. Effects of the 1938 hurricane are gradually becoming erased by the replanted hemlocks and the regeneration of native vegetation. Opposite the rhododendrons at the southern base of Bussey Hill were magnificent European beeches in variety. A stand of the native beech occupies a knoll above Bussey Brook. Here begins the imposing collection of conifers: spruces, pines, firs and larches. Since the crab-apples had peaked a few days earlier, we did not venture onto Peters Hill but retraced our route and spent an hour or so afoot among the lilacs.

The steep hillside above Bussey Hill Road was a tapestry of "false blue, color of lilac" and white. A turf walk along the crest provided easy walking among the lilacs which were themselves amply spaced for optimum development. Owing to the lateness of the season French hybrids were still in good condition. Midseason species lilacs were in full bloom, while the late hybrids (the Preston or Ottawa hybrids) were just beginning to make a show. The delicate low-growing *Syringa Palibiniana* of Korea, covered in the palest soft lilac, was arrestingly beautiful. Noteworthy also were the white forms of the common lilac, especially 'Professor E. H. Wilson', a Lemoine seedling commemorating the renowned Keeper who introduced so many Chinese plants into cultivation.

In late afternoon before the commuter traffic began we moved by motorcade to the Case Estates at Weston for a tour of the grounds. Here we found lilacs and other woody plants being raised in the nursery. Also in a demonstration plot across the busy street we studied the effects of pruning lilacs. The care of outsized lilacs is a major problem for which I.L.S. needs to find answers and to provide recommendations. Therefore I looked carefully at this experiment. I took only mental notes

however. As I recollect there were three lilacs: single white common, double French hybrid, and late-blooming hybrid. These were subjected to three treatments plus a check (untreated) all grown in turf: 1) regeneration to ground every few years, 2) heading back to breast height when canes become too high, and 3) basal thinning or removal of suckers. The unpruned lilacs soon become displeasing because the flower clusters become progressively smaller and are borne high overhead. Removing suckers merely reduces the number of flower-bearing shoots. While the attempt to bring blooms down to eye level by chopping off canes to breast height produces arrowlike shoots that reach high above the eyes the first year or two. It seems that a satisfactory solution is to remove all shoots to ground level allowing the shrub to regenerate itself with vigorous flower-bearing wood. This process necessarily sacrifices bloom for a couple of years. However the quality of bloom is immeasurably improved and the flower clusters are borne at a convenient height to be admired for several seasons thereafter.

The barbecue, most welcome after all the hiking, created an informal atmosphere for Dr. Howard's greetings to the conferees in behalf of Boston, Harvard University and the Arnold Arboretum. Al Fordham and Owen Rogers contributed several slides to the Show and Tell program. Then Bill Utley turned his talents as auctioneer to the benefit of the Research Fund. Two "Wentworth" lilacs fetched handsome prices, while a xerox copy of Dr. Wister's "Lilac Culture", autographed, also went for a pretty figure. All items were contributed by members willing to part with them for this worthy (tax deductible) cause, namely lilac research.

Saturday morning conferees again gathered at the Arnold Arboretum administration building for Al Fordham's propagation workshop. Using Kodachrome slides, Al showed how lilacs are rooted and nurtured. He discussed principles involved, and told what techniques were developed to solve propagation problems. He then turned to demonstrating some of these techniques on living material, encouraging the daring or earnest novices how to graft desirable cions onto stock plants.

Following a short break Thomas E. Wirth of Sasaki Associates, landscape architects of Boston, told how lilacs are important in the landscape, suggesting ways to use them. Potted specimens of *Syringa Palibiniana* and *S. microphylla 'Superba'* were distributed as bonus by the Arnold Arboretum.

The Lilac Banquet at the Marriott featured salmon steak and a lemon sherbet dessert topped with candied lilac blossoms. Fr. Fiala presented awards (see list of recipients elsewhere) and Dr. Radcliffe Pike of University of New Hampshire, and a world traveler, recounted in his absorbing manner experiences searching for lilacs in Bulgaria last year.

Post-convention tours took conferees to Plimouth Plantation, to Alexander's Dahliatown Nurseries at Middleboro, to Al Lumley's Lilac Land at Amherst, to Old Deerfield village all of Massachusetts, and to Strawbery Bank at Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

LOCAL CHAPTER MEETINGS.....

Delhi, New York, I.L.S. Local Chapter #3...Spring Meeting and planning for Hamilton Convention. (Anne Robinson or Nancy Emerson, Delhi, N.Y.)

Ohio I.L.S. Chapter #2..Spring Meeting on May 12 at Falconskeap, Medina. Tour of early lilacs and plans for Convention participation. (Pres. Clare Short, Elyria, O., Sec. Lois Pfeiffer, Medina,O. Treas. Paul Young, North Olmstead,O.)

Registrants to Second Annual ILS Convention, Boston, 1973

Alexander, John H., III, and Mrs., E. Bridgewater, MA
Baschnagel, Mrs. Robert, Rochester, NY
Bogdan, Elsie L., Columbia Station, OH
Chaney, Earl and Mrs., Freeport, ME
Chaykowski, Ben and Marie, Mantua, OH
Clark, Robert B., Rochester, NY
Davis, Clair and Doris, Maryland, NY
DeWolf, Dr. Gordon P., Jr., Arnold Arboretum
Eaton, Mark, Cocoa Beach, FL
Elliott, Richard and Ruth, Monson, MA
Emerson, Nancy, Delhi, NY
Ferguson, Mrs. Floris, Rochester, NY
Fiala, Rev. John L., Medina, OH
Fiala, Louis and Pauline, Spencer, OH
Fordham, Alfred J., Arnold Arboretum
Franklin, Mabel L., Minneapolis, MN
Hodgdon, Philip and Mrs., Randolph Center, VT
Holetich, Charles, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario
Howard, Dr. Richard A., Arnold Arboretum
Littlefield, Lyle R., Orono, ME
Luce, Roger F., S. Norwalk, CT
Lumley, Albert E., Amherst, MA
McKean, Arch, Elmhurst, IL
Niedz, Franklin and Miriam, Ambler, PA
Oakes, Walter W., Rumford, ME
Oppe, Joseph, Swarthmore, PA
Pfeiffer, Lois (Kozak), Medina, OH
Pike, Radcliffe B., Durham, NH
Robinson, Mrs. Stewart, Delhi, NY
Rogers, Dr. Owen M., Durham, NH
Short, Clare E., Elyria, OH
Sipp, Mrs. John Herbert, Rochester, NY
Steward, Orville and Ellen, Briarcliff Manor, NY
Utley, William and Lois, Clyde, NY
Wadekamper, Julius, Maple Lake, MN
Wirth, Thomas E., Sherborn, MA
Wishart, Lourene, Lincoln, NE
Wister, John and Gertrude, Swarthmore, PA
Wyman, Donald, Arnold Arboretum
Wynkoop, Mrs. George, Rochester, NY
Zucker, Isabel, Bloomfield Hills, MI

A SYMPHONY OF LILACS

by Clare Short
Midwest Vice-President

Part I — HALLELUJAH —

(Havemeyer-Eaton 1953)

(Comment from Lilacland Catalog:) Earliest-blooming deep purple-red, and one of the darkest as well. Florets extra large with rounded petals and yellow centers borne in magnificent rounded clusters. Single. A strong tall grower, and in every way one of the best of all very dark lilacs, in addition to its extra-early blooming habit. We predict it will become one of the most wanted of all lilacs.)

In May of 1972 at the first Convention of the International Lilac Society the weather had produced a spring too cool for all the lilacs to be ready for exhibition. Of course Fenelon, Louvois, Esther Staley, Vaubon and the other more common early giraldi hybrids made their appearance. But to behold at Highland Park the two nice-sized bushes of Havemeyer's *Hallelujah*, 1953 introduction, with their striking lighter purple border around each of the deep purple florets, was a revelation. *Hallelujah* contains individual florets as large as any to be seen later in the season and in a dark purple, comparable to *Ludwig Spaeth* or *Danton* or the new *Agincourt Beauty*. Hence, coupled with its earliness, I should say, it should usher in any one's ideal symphony of lilacs.

Part II — LUCIE BALLET —

(Baltet Before 1888)

(Comment in H. J. Homan's Kingsville Nurseries Catalog: Rhodonite-pink opening to coppery old-rose.)

Comment in Upton Nursery Catalog: Single; big, billowy clusters of sweet-scented, shell-pink blossoms which hold their freshness exceptionally well after cutting. Unquestionably one of the finest pink lilacs.)

Comment from Cherry Hill Nursery Catalog: Produces medium-sized flowers of fresh-pink. The nearest to true pink which we have seen.)

For a breathless second movement, I would proclaim the particularly large bush of *Lucie Baltet* which the Fialas and I encountered at a roadside outside Clyde, New York, thanks to the discernment of our host Bill Utley, who was on route to his home where he and Lois are developing a fine collection of lilacs on a hill across from their large farmhouse. It was approaching dusk as we stopped by the bush, which seemed to be fully ten feet tall, containing at the right moment that exquisite combination of perfect smallish blush-pink flowers with that yellowish-to-orange cast that no one believes possible in a lilac until the actual morning that *Lucie Baltet* opens in your own yard. (I accuse many of my friends who own one of these cultivars to fail to arise early enough to see *Lucie* in all her glory.) The owners of the large shrub said it had been in that location about a decade. They showed us another larger *Lucie Baltet*, perhaps thirteen feet high, at the rear of their house. These are a huge size for *Lucie*. She is usually dwarfed by other lilacs. Mrs. Harding said the French lady whose name the plant bears had become by 1933 a Mme. Dumont and was the eldest daughter of Charles Baltet of Troyes, France. Her comment on *Lucie*: This lilac has the unusual colouring of yellowish old-rose, a perfectly thrilling colour. The sprays are of medium size and not very closely filled with florets. The shrub is low-growing and not robust. It took several years to get this lilac well established in my garden, but it is now thoroughly at home and bears abundantly. It is a lovely thing — well worth working with and waiting for.

Part III – PRIMROSE

(G. Maarse in 1949.)

(Comment from Wayside Gardens' Catalog: This is the famous Yellow Lilac which has recently been developed in Holland. The plants are bushy and dense and produce an exceptional number of flowers. There isn't anything like it.)

For a stunning third movement I choose the Maarse 1949 introduction *Primrose* bush belonging to Mr. Lumley's Amherst, Massachusetts garden of his hundred favorites ranked in order. I had seen a few bushes of *Primrose*, most of which had looked unhappy, as though they were not flourishing or had been hurt by frost — unwilling to bloom all their florets at the same time. But to find this perfect bush as high as a man, perfectly filled with yellow thyrses uniformly placed — it seemed that a lilac had tried to imitate the golden sunshine. I think those who passed through the Lumley garden on that day in June, '73 could not believe their eyes.

Part IV – SWEETHEART

(Clarke in 1953)

(Comment: None, not even in three Clarke Catalogs.)

For the fourth movement of this lilac symphony I select the so-called double magenta *Sweetheart*, a Clarke 1953 introduction. To call this plant magenta does it a real injustice. The blooms do start as magenta but turn varying shades of pink while the tips of the thyrses remain deep rose. I had pondered about the name of this plant for some time. But in my mind's eye I recall a nursery catalog sketch that had often appeared two or three decades ago in garden magazines showing a rather prosaic drawing of a bush with Valentine hearts placed symmetrically upon it. Until this very year I had never seen this happen on a *Sweetheart* lilac. Usually the plant, like many double-type lilacs (visually Pres. Grevy) has double thyrses. But this year a real valentine heart appeared on the *Sweetheart* shrub in my own garden. A third thyrsus made an appearance between the other two in such a way as to resemble a true valentine heart. What with the magenta buds at the tips of each pink thyrsus, appearing like droplets of blood, I found it fascinating.

Part V – SIEBOLD

(Lemoine in 1906)

(Comment from Lemoine Catalog: Thyrses symmetrically well placed, flowers of good size, perfect in form, round overlappings, rounding lobes, white, cream, and a little flesh, like cream amber knobs, a decidedly new shade from what one has seen.)

As a fifth movement in this lengthy lilac symphony I choose the two *Siebold*, Lemoine 1906 introduction, lilac plants which Dr. Robert Clark led Father Fiala and me to at Highland Park, when we stopped at Rochester this spring while on the way to the 1973 Convention at Arnold Arboretum. The 1953 Lilac Survey uses the designation "double white" to identify its type of bloom. Imagine our surprise to see two four-foot plants of rosy-dawn hue that met our eyes. I really never have seen anything like these two lilacs at that moment. The flowers glistened in their perfection — each thyrsus a miniature sea of pink pearls. It is true, however, that on our return to these same plants a week later, they appeared to be rather ordinary white lilacs. The great beauty of the lilac is such a temporary thing! Certainly the *Siebold* cultivar has this unique perfection for only one morning of the entire year.

Part VI – ZULU

(Havemeyer before 1942)

(Comment: from Lilacland Nursery Catalog: Ranks with the darkest and unique for the perfection of every floret and spike it produces. Florets the size of a quarter; spikes nearly a foot long, slender and upright, well-filled but not crowded and

abundant every year. Flowers are long lasting and remain beautiful until completely faded. The plant is a dwarf — the original shrub at least 30 years old, is about six feet high, although it has spread to a width of about fifteen feet. It is doubtful if plants ever will be plentiful. Reddish dark purple, double.)

To offer a finale to my lilac symphony I select the bush of Zulu, Havemeyer (1940's ?) introduction. The late Dr. Rankin had always said he found Zulu the most difficult lilac to grow along with *Christophe Columb* and *Vesuve*. It was the first lilac I transplanted to my garden. I selected a spot at the top of the incline to the river over tiled sandy loam for the small plant which must have been several years old at the time. The plant has been there six years and is now about six feet tall. But each of those six years it has increased in blooms of the very darkest purple, single giant florets that last the longest. Only *Princess Clementine* appears to outlast Zulu.

Our travels in quest of lilacs took us with the lilac season north to Portsmouth, New Hampshire to the Governor Winthrop lilacs and up into Maine as far as Kennebunk where Ken Berdeen is developing new promising cultivars while last year we went to Agincourt, Ontario to visit another originator, Mr. Slater. Next year with the Convention of the International Lilac Society meeting at Hamilton Royal Botanical Gardens, many more of us will have opportunity to see how well the lilac does in the northern climes and how the people up there love the lilac.

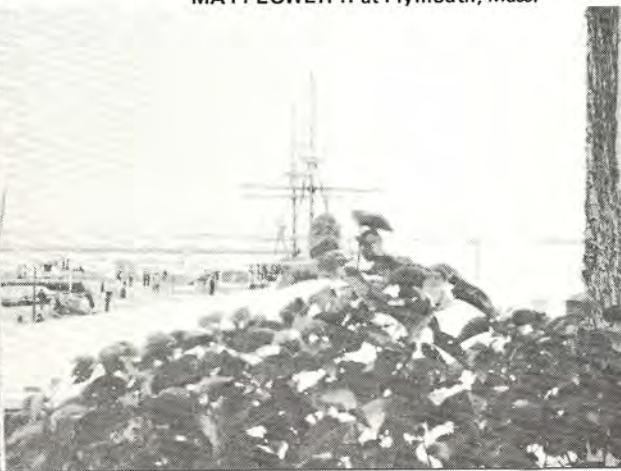
PLYMOUTH LILAC SIDE TRIP

Right: Lilacs blooming at the Old Pilgrim Fathers Cemetery, Plymouth, Mass., on graves of early colonists.

Left Below: Lilac Society members, Clare Short, Director from Elyria, Ohio, and Pauline and Louis J. Fiala of Spencer, Ohio, inspect old pilgrim cottage and lilac plantings.



Below: Lilacs blooming at very dockside of MAYFLOWER II at Plymouth, Mass.

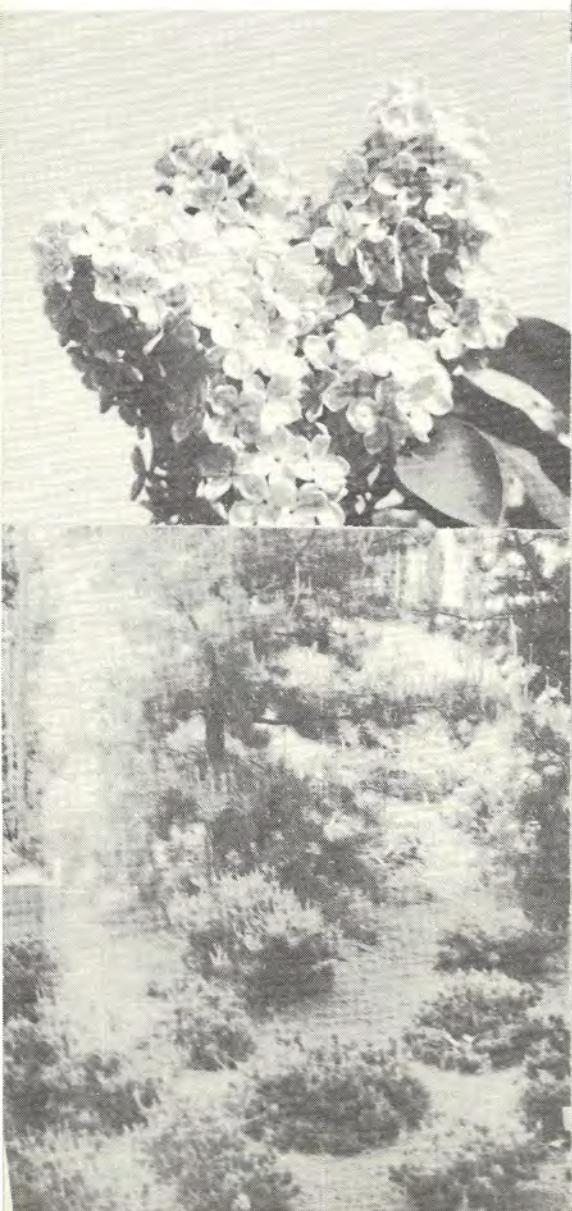


ALFRED J. FORDHAM

OF THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM STAFF CONDUCTED A SHOW-HOW AND KNOW-HOW PROGRAM ON LILAC PROPAGATION AND A TOUR OF THE GREENHOUSE PROPAGATING-RESEARCH AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AREA.



*Upper right: Alfred Fordham discusses plant materials in propagation plot.
Left: Russian lilac "Mechta" in propagation nursery.
Lower left: Dwarf pines from 'witch's broom' seed.
Below: Espalier trained material.*



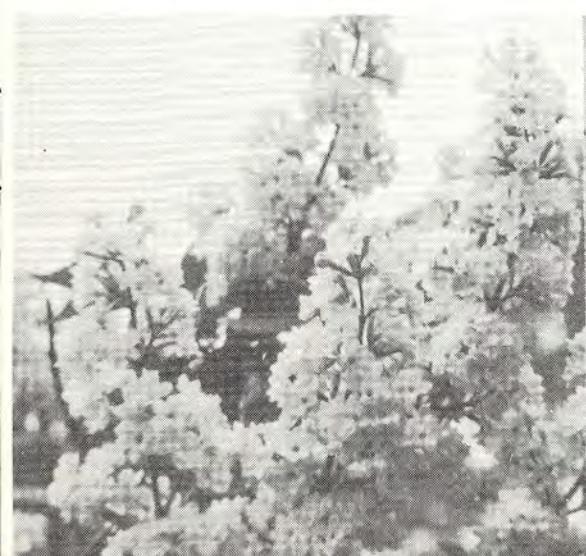
THOMAS E. WIRTH

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, PRESENTED AN INFORMATIVE AND INTERESTING PAPER ON HOW TO USE LILACS IN LANDSCAPING DIFFERENT AREAS.



Left: I.L.S. President Dr. Robert B. Clark discusses lilacs with Convention Chairman, Dr. Owen M. Rogers.

Below: Lilac "Rochester"



Below: Julius Wadekamper, Maple Lake, Minn., examines the species collection.





"Governor Wentworth Lilac" visited by I.L.S. at Newcastle, New Hampshire (just outside Portsmouth, N.H.) April 25, 1973. Left to right: Dr. Owen Rogers (I.L.S. Convention Chairman 1973), Mrs. Vera Pennell, Mansion Staff, Malcom Thomas, N. H. Parks Dept., Mrs. Alberto Casas, Seacoast Director, N. H. Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc., Dr. Radcliffe Pike, I.L.S. (Both Dr. Rogers and Dr. Pike are Directors of I.L.S.)

THE "GOVERNOR WENTWORTH" Lilac . . . Newcastle, New Hampshire

Where is the oldest lilac in America? George Washington mentions planting lilacs at Mt. Vernon while other early writers record plantings as early as 1775—already growing. There is no doubt that lilacs were among the first flowering shrubs introduced to America. Indeed, the lilac has as staunch a claim as the Pilgrims as a pioneer. Whether it is the oldest or not (New Englanders claim it is the oldest) the lilacs growing at the Governor Wentworth Estate at Newcastle, New Hampshire, are indeed among the very oldest. Their great twisted trunks with shredding bark and magnificent bloom are an attraction each spring. The many "old lilac trees" and beautiful tall hedges of lilacs on the Gov. Wentworth Estate appear to be all of the same clone of *Syringa vulgaris*, a beautiful pinkish-lavender in bloom and a deeper pink in bud. The landscaping is nearly all "lilacs" and well worth a special trip to see when in bloom. How lilacs can be used effectively to recapture the early American scene is most beautifully seen with lilacs planted by the old mansion . . . lilacs, ancient, twisting trunks capping a massive stone wall — lilacs towering over the 'summer kitchen' wing of the great house — lilacs along the walks — lilacs tossing their perfumed heads against the background of the blue waters of the bay . . . indeed the "Governor Wentworth Lilacs" are an impressive sight! (Dr. Owen Rogers auctioned two roots of the Wentworth lilac — one went to Ohio and the other to New York).

LEONID ALEKSEEVITCH KOLESNIKOV

CREATOR OF RUSSIAN LILACS

By: A. Gromov, U.S.S.R.

(*A paper prepared for the International Lilac Convention, Boston, May 1973*)

The lilac is one of the most beloved blooming shrubs in our country. It is widely spread everywhere — from Central Asia to the Baltic Sea Shore, and from Crimea and the Carpathians to Siberia.

In the past the lilac was only of lilac and violet colours, receiving its name for its colour. Sometimes, in old Russia the people called the lilac "seanel" which derives from "sinyi", i.e., "blue" in Russian.

Floriculturists of different European countries and later of America worked to create a great diversity of cultural forms of the lilac which differ in structure and shape of flowers and have white, rose, blue, purple and even light yellow colours. In the Soviet Union Leonid Alekseevitch Kolesnikov made a valuable contribution to the creation of the domestic varieties of the lilac. Leonid A. Kolesnikov began as an amateur. Later he became the leading specialist in the culture of the lilac, the head of the Experimental and Model Selection Nursery. He was a pioneer in the creation of home varieties of lilacs and in the innovation of numerous agrotechnical methods of its cultivation. He was awarded the title of the State Prize Laureate for the great achievements in his work.

Leonid Kolesnikov had interest in spring beauty from his childhood. When he studied in the classical school he started admiring these fragrant spring flowers. He



For his lifetime work with Lilacs the International Lilac Society awarded THE DIRECTORS' AWARD (the Society's Horticultural-Scientific Award) to Leonid Alekseevitch Kolesnikov at its Annual Convention at Boston in May 1973. Before the news of the award reached Moscow Leonid Kolesnikov died. All who love lilacs and their beauty salute him for his dedication and work.

was especially fascinated by the sight of the blooming lilac planted in pots, in winter time. For the first time L. A. Kolesnikov planted the lilac in his own garden in the spring of 1916. Three years later he sowed seeds of cultured varieties with the aim of originating forms. Since that time the young man spared no efforts to extend his collection of lilacs and never lost any opportunity to obtain new varieties.

Leonid Kolesnikov travelled a lot across the country and acquainted himself with the methods of cultivating the lilac in the largest private nurseries of that time, which belonged to Feldman, Koratchovsky, Focht and others. He spent all his free time studying special literature on biology. He studied methods of cultivation of lilac seedlings, and stocks for grafting.

Leonid Kolesnikov understood that in order to achieve desirable results he must study and work a lot. By 1923 the collection of lilacs of L. Kolesnikov consisted of more than 100 varieties. The specialists and scientific workers of different botanical gardens and research institutions of our country became interested in his garden. M. P. Nagibina — a researcher from the Botanical Garden of the Moscow University — helped Kolesnikov very much at that time. She told him a lot of interesting things about the life and development of plants, recommended special literature for reading and gave useful practical advice. Kolesnikov spent many hours of sleepless nights in reading books by K. Timiryazev, Prof. N. I. Kitchunov and D. D. Artzibashev, and works of outstanding originators of that time Ivan Mitchurin and Luther Burbank.

It is quite natural that during the first period of his work as hybridizer Leonid Kolesnikov came across "surprises" and failures. Everything seemed simple and easy when pollination was effected on varieties with single flowers for they have normally developed organs of reproduction, and most of them gave seeds. But when he started to pollinate the varieties with double flowers he could not achieve any results for several years, as the majority of the pollinated flowers did not produce seeds. The varieties with thick double flowers have deformed pistils and stamens. In the process of the doubling of the flower these organs are transformed into additional petals of the corolla.

Nature put a lot of handicaps in L. A. Kolesnikov's first period of work. The stone-room of its mysteries opened itself very slowly. How to save the variety which was perishing during the florescence? How to form seed on the varieties with double flowers? Which varieties have fertile and sterile pollen? At what time and with which device to apply pollen on the stigma without hurting it? Which stocks are to be used for lilac propagation on commercial scale? etc. etc. He had to solve all these problems working in his garden in the evenings and on his days-off.

Did everything come easy to Kolesnikov in his experiments with lilacs? This question seems to be a commonplace and clear one. It seemed to everybody, who saw how L. A. Kolesnikov worked with lilacs, that he did everything easily, playfully, even a little bit carelessly. But the close scrutiny of his methods elaborated in the long process of work made it clear that his technology at all stages of work (even the movements of hands and the position of the body) had been thoroughly thought over and mastered up to the smallest details, whether it would be transplanting big bushes, grafting, or hybridizing. All this looked like a modern computer, which chooses the optimum version out of very many others.

After 20 years of tedious work Leonid Kolesnikov came to a conclusion that it was better to use for pollination elite varieties developed on their own roots i.e., plants which had been raised by means of soil layering or cutting, or grafted plants which took roots on their second year above the place of grafting. Also the usage of his own hybrid seedlings as maternal parent form proved to be a great success. Sometimes hybrid seedlings produced no visible characteristics even on the named varieties — they were quite ordinary by appearance. The hybrid seedlings N 105 and N 110 of violet-purple colour may serve as examples of that. Using these F_1 seedlings, L. Kolesnikov received such wonderful F_2 varieties as "Zarya Kommunisma", "Leonid

Leonov", "K. A. Timiryazev", "Sumerki". He used the following foreign varieties as one of the parents: "Congo", "Alphonse Lavellee", "Katherine Herling", "Louis Pasteur", "Reaumur", "Monge", "Buffon", "Ludvig Spaeth" "Decasaine" with single flowers, and "Pres. Poincare", "Berie", "Mme Lemoine", "Belle de Nancy", "Michel Buchner", "Emile Lemoine", "Jules Simone" with double flowers.

L. Kolesnikov especially preferred the home varieties and seedlings: N 110, N 105, N 208, N 50, "I. V. Mitchurin", "M. I. Kalinin", "Zarya Kommunisma". Even if it happened that Kolesnikov's only contribution was the idea of using plants raised on their own roots as one of the parental forms for hybridization and even if he left only two of his best varieties — "Krasavitsa Moskva" and "Pamyatso S. M. Korove" obtained with that method, his name could be written with gold letters in the history of world lilacs growers.

In his selection work the scientist used a method of creation of the so-called "combined bushes". They were made in a following way: a strong, own-rooted stock of a cultural variety or a good seedling was chosen. It was grafted with wilted branches of several varieties which were chosen as desirable to be pollinated among themselves. As a rule, such "combined bush" was planted into a tight pot and therefore had a limited root system. It was highly depressed for it received a scant quantity of moisture and nourishment. Under such conditions the plant strived to produce seeds. And in fact, there were much more seeds on it whereas under normal conditions these varieties produced a very limited number of seeds of low germinating qualities.

Such experiments finally made L. Kolesnikov sure that it was necessary to create an artificial depression for the maternal plant when pollination of the varieties with double flowers was carried out. Such depression was effected by several methods. One of them implied the following: 14-20 days after the termination of the florescence the roots of bushes were cut by special spades. The root system of the bush was not destroyed only in a limited clod of the soil. This clod was a little bit lifted with the help of big spades or logs in order to separate the clod from the lower layers of the soil. Then the spades were carefully taken away, and the clod with the plant occupied its former position. This plant was not watered for two weeks even in the hot weather, and only in extraordinary cases were its leaves sprayed with water. If the rainy spell began the soil under the plant was covered by a sheet of tarred felt. The clod with the plant was later lifted twice within the intervals of 12-14 days in order to prevent the penetration of the roots into the lower layers of soil.

Another method envisaged the planting of maternal and paternal bushes into special pots. In such cases roots of the plants were also essentially curtailed. After replanting, the bushes were lavishly watered two times, with 2-3 days interval and put under a shed. After that the plants were watered very rarely and were only sprayed when necessary. In autumn, during the rain period the plants were also kept under a shed to prevent buds from sprouting. When it started freezing the plants in pots were planted into the soil or covered with leaves or sawdust. When it was impossible for some reason to plant the parent bush into a pot or to separate its roots from the lower layers of the soil, the method of peripheral limitation of root system was used. It implied the removal of the upper layers of soil into exposure of the roots. They were covered then with dry sand or dry soil and topped with tarred felt. Such plants were not watered and only sometimes their leaves were sprayed with water. In autumn some additional soil was poured on the tarred felt.

The limitation of moisture and nourishment resulted in some changes of formation and development of the reproduction organs during the forming of the flower buds. The immense transforming of anthers into the corolla petals did not take place, and all parts of the feminine reproduction organs developed evenly. Flowers were smaller in size. It made it possible to receive good seeds from the varieties with heavy double flowers and to use them as maternal plants. The normal development of anthers with viable pollen solved the problem of the paternal side.

Probably some specialists would try to find similarity between plants prepared by the Kolesnikov's method and those which grow wildly in New England on neglected

farms. But this would not be right. It is enough to watch with the help of microscope the particular stages of morphogenesis in the year of forming of flower buds, and later the development of flowers and floscules of each of these plants, in order to be sure that the plant prepared by L. Kolesnikov's method has some changes and displacements in different stages of morphogenesis, while the stages of morphogenesis of the lilac bushes grown on neglected farms are similar to those of plants which were carefully looked after.

It is well known that the plant being placed under unusually unfavorable conditions is forced by nature to "look prudently after" the formation of flower and leaf buds bringing all this into equilibrium with the development of root system. Sharp changes in this relationship give rise to disturbances in blossoming.

By all means the florescence of lilac bushes on neglected farms is less abundant, but the shape of flowers and floscules, the quantity of petals, the size of flowers are always equal to the average specifications of flowers on the bush of the same variety which is grown under normal conditions in a well cultivated garden.

L. Kolesnikov had to wait a long time for results. In the climate of the middle zone of the U.S.S.R. seedlings of the lilac blossom usually on the 5th to 7th year. Watching the growth and development of lilac seedlings L. Kolesnikov noticed that the hybrids, which have at the foot a little stump but not skeleton branches start to blossom earlier. And blossoming starts the earlier, the higher the side branches of one-year increment are located. After that the originator did not let the one-year seedlings develop the lower buds. He took away very carefully the dormant and growing buds located very closely to the root neck. He pinched back the basic shoots of the two- and three-year old seedlings when they became 12-15 cm long, thus increasing the quantity of branches. The results were soon to come. Some seedlings started blossoming at the age of 3-4 years, and as a rule all seedlings blossomed at the age of 5 years.

Using such methods of forming and growing the seedlings L. Kolesnikov started to doubt that the lilac develops "suckers". But all classical literature on Botany, including books of Academician P. M. Zhukovsky, gave the lilac as an example of plants which form suckers. (Academician P. M. Zhukovsky is a world-known scientist, he lectured on general Botany in the Academy where I studied. A.G.) After having performed numerous experiments with different methods of planting and growing lilac seedlings, L. Kolesnikov came to a firm conclusion that the roots of the lilac could not create vegetative buds. The suckers appear as a result of implanting of one-year sprouts developed from dormant buds which are located higher above the neck or on the edge of it. The microscopic sections of suckers and one-year sprouts showed that they all have identical anatomical structure.

When Prof. P. M. Zhukovsky was informed about these experimental observations he said that the example with the lilac which he in his turn had taken from classical literature on Botany was wrong. Later Prof. N. K. Vekhov carried out large anatomical experiments, based on L. A. Kolesnikov's observations. He also came to the conclusion that the lilac does not produce any suckers. This question, as simple as it may seem, has a great importance for the lilac cultivation. Using the right technology of bringing out stocks, and performing in a right way the planting of lilac bushes it is possible to avoid substantial loses of labour power which is usually spent for pruning of shoots grown around bushes, and makes possible to cut expenses and produce good and strong plants.

L. A. Kolesnikov also made a valuable contribution to the problem of the vegetative propagation of the lilac. He was the first to offer the early plate budding of the lilac under the climatic conditions of the Middle Zone of the U.S.S.R. In our climate, buds on one-year old sprouts of the cultural lilacs are not well-formed yet in early spring. Therefore, L. A. Kolesnikov offered to leave one third of a leaf with simultaneous increasing of the size of a shield.

He worked out and brought to perfection the method of grafting with the oppressed (wilted) branch. He also determined the deadline of such graftings in the open ground — the 18-20th of June. In the conditions of the Middle Zone the re-grafting of big bushes with oppressed — branches in later terms (end of June —

beginning of July) leads to sad results: the bushes perish in winter completely. Using his own methods of storing the oppressed branches L. A. Kolesnikov could preserve unexpectedly dying hybrid seedlings and mother plants. Using the hothouse he made graftings through the year. Thus he managed to regraft all rejected hybrid seedlings which minimized the losses.

L. A. Kolesnikov had been looking for good stocks for lilac grafting for a long time. He tried to find such a stock which differed greatly from grafts by the outer signs. He used Ligustrum, but in our conditions the plants, grafted on it, developed very poorly and perished in 4-5 years. He made experiments with S. amurensis, and even with the ash-tree. S. Josikaea gave great hopes to L. A. Kolesnikov (and not only to him). This lilac differs greatly from cultural varieties by the outer signs of sprouts and leaves. The grafts developed on it extremely well, but compatibility and inoculating of tissues were not full and in some years the plants broke and perished.

L. A. Kolesnikov also made experiments aimed at defining the influence of PH content on the growth, development and florescence of the lilac. For the varieties of light-rose, lilac-violet and blue shades, he recommended to adjust PH content close to neutral otherwise their colours would become less attractive and sometimes even dirty.

These experiments were basically of agrotechnical importance. They were made on different types of soils, with different doses of lime and organic fertilizers. The content of PH was strictly controlled at different depths of roots of the lilac bushes. But biochemical research in connection with pigments was not carried out.

L. A. Kolesnikov was interested in agrotechnics of feeding. The shortage of the organic fertilizers forced him to make experiments with green water extraction. This extraction was prepared by putting weeds and green sprouts into water in special reservoirs, then this water was used for fertilizing. He also used fermented faecals together with large quantities of slaked lime. Using these feedings L. A. Kolesnikov managed to receive 5-6 pairs of flower buds on a one-year sprout, instead of 2-3 pairs. Next year these buds would develop into large beautiful floscules.

L. A. Kolesnikov paid great attention to the terms and methods of transplanting of lilac bushes. When is the right time to transplant the chosen hybrid seedlings in order to receive good florescence next spring? At first he tried to replant the seedlings during the florescence and on 25th-30th days after it. He did the job very carefully and after that watered the plants daily. The plants took root, but developed very poorly during the first half of the vegetation period, and did not give normal florescence next year. He made a lot of experiments. As a result a recommendation appeared: it is necessary to transplant lilacs in 14-18 days after the florescence when the hot weather comes. It is necessary to water the plants only 2 times even if the weather is hot, but watering must be abundant. Later only spray of leaves was needed. Under such conditions roots of the plant started to grow, and normal development of the seedling was secured. Such plants had very rich florescence next spring.

There is a lot of work in the garden, and the labour of a gardener is very hard. How to make it easier? L. A. Kolesnikov worked a lot on the subject. He made drafts of special spades of different types and sizes and of some other necessary devices. He invented a special appliance for budding, an original type of pruning shears, a system of water-sprayers, etc.

The peaceful work of the selectionist was interrupted by wars. In 1939 he participated in the Finnish campaign. He used every spare minute to write letters home, to his wife — Olympiada Nikolaevna, and to ask her about his plants, to give her advice how to look after them. When L. A. Kolesnikov was away, his wife looked after his hybrids. In 1940 she showed some of his varieties at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition. The selectionist was awarded a Diploma of Honor. The period of peaceful work was not long, the Second World War began. L. A. Kolesnikov was again on the battlefield. In the end of 1942 he had severe concussion and spent five months on the hospital bed. After recuperating he was transferred to the civil service in Moscow. Only from time to time he came to his garden. After the war Leonid Kolesnikov was completely absorbed in his work with lilac. In those hard years he was

very human and optimistic by nature, did not stop thinking of a bright future and did not spare his efforts to make the coming days as beautiful as possible.

In 1943 Kolesnikov succeeded in making crosses with the use of such varieties as I. V. Mitchurin and Belle de Nancy. Five years passed and his two best double-flowered varieties — Krasavitsa Moskvy and Pamyats o Kirove burst into bloom. That was only a small tribute of the selectionist from nature whose hardworking servant he always was. In spite of his rich experience he faced many complicated problems. In order to have the answer to all vague questions he had to study again.

The lilac meant everything in his life! It was his work, his leisure and his passion!

All people who came to see his garden were fascinated by the originator, himself. His insatiable desire to work with plants and strong belief in his own abilities made everybody believe in it too. His lilac garden became a kind of a sanctuary. Leaving his garden, people of all trades — teachers, engineers, pilots, writers, schoolchildren — were eager to try their own hand and to work with lilacs — to make grafts, to transplant big bushes in the middle of summer, to save dying plants with the help of boiling water, etc. Even the people for whom the experiments with the lilac were only a hobby wished to create new varieties of this wonderful plant. Of course, not many of them were lucky to achieve any results, but some of these people, influenced by L. A. Kolesnikov, became creators of their own lilac varieties. For example, N. S. Stashkevitch, became known as the originator of such splendid varieties as "Komsomoletz Dvadtsatikh godov", "Tankist", "Russkaya krasavitsa". The latter 2 varieties are found now in some American arboreta.ns.

Leonid Alekseevitch treated nature very carefully trying to understand its laws and mysteries. At the same time he was ready to share all his knowledge with people, with his colleagues, amateur floriculturists and visitors to his lilac garden.

Having already become a famous scientist, he, however, continued to study. He attended various lectures on Botany and plant growing. He read a lot on these subjects. He understood plants perfectly well with all his soul, with a kind of "sixth sense" but at the same time he relied only on deep knowledge and experience. And it was this rare combination of his personality that made it possible for him to achieve such great success in his work. The major result of L. A. Kolesnikov's work is an unsurpassed collection of his famous lilac varieties. I shall proceed further with a short description of some of his varieties which deserve very close attention. I would like to warn my colleagues that the delineation which is given below was drawn on the basis of varieties grafted on *S. Vulgaris*. It is understood that when budded on another stock they could produce some deviation from the reference.

THE VARIETIES WITH SINGLE FLOWERS

"Galina Ulanova" N 501

Pure white. Raceme of wide pyramidal shape, rather large, but looks light and tracery. Variety is good for landscape planting and for late forcing.

"Nevesta" N 14 *Buffon* x (Seedling N 411 x *Mm Antoine Buchner*)

White-rose colour, very delicate. Floscules are tracery, blossoms very early.

"Golubaya" N 241 derives from (Seedling N 11 x *Mechta*) x *Deken*.

Flowers of lilac-blue shades with small light lilac repletion. It becomes bluer in cloudy weather.

"Scholokhov" N 61 *Alphonse Lavellee* x Seedling N 504

Lilac-violet colour. The bush is very high and produces very large panicles up to 40 cm.

"Mechta" N 230

Heavy lilac with blue and violet repletion; forms very large panicles; very good for solitaire planting.

"Gortensia"

In outburst of blossoming flowers are of warm violet tones, later the center of the corolla loses the intensiveness of colour. This variety is good for planting of greenery and for early forcing.

"K. A. Timiryazev" N 119

When it starts blooming the flowers have light purple shade. Later they become heavy lilac with deep blue shade.

"Alexei Maresyev" N 443. *Kapitan Gastello* x (*Fuerst Buelow* x Seedling N 105)

Light violet-purple. Its flowers with propeller shaped petals and upright cone-shaped floscules are very interesting.

"Leonid Leonov" N 201/103. (Seedling N 110 x *Ludwig Spaeth*)

Lilac-violet, close to heliotrope. The outer side of petals is faded-violet, thus giving an impression of double colour of the corolla. The variety is good for planting of greenery and for forcing.

"40 Let VLKSM" N 176 (Seedling N 105 x *Congo*) x *Alphonse Lavallee*

Lilac-carmine with red-velvet shade. Later becomes lighter. In some years the colour is lilac with purple repletion. The bush is high with numerous large panicles.

"Pioner" N 321 (Seedling N 105 x *Zarya Kommunizma*)

Purple-carmine-violet with violet-blue shades in the middle. Later becomes lighter with rose-purple tones. The bush is very high, with large panicles of wide pyramidal shape.

"D. Nehru" N 724. (*Ludwig Spaeth* x Seedling N 110) x Seedling N 105

One of the earliest among the dark-coloured. It blooms very abundantly. Good for planting of greenery and for forcing.

"M. I. Kalinin" N 210 (Seedling N 105 x *Reaumur*)

Purple-lilac with violet repletion. Later the edges of petals become lighter. The variety forms large panicles. It is very good for planting of greenery.

"India" N 124 (*Zarya Kommunizma* x Seedling N 105)

Purple-violet with red-copper shade, very showy as if it shines on the sun.

"Mirza Galib"

Large bushes with panicles up to 45 cm long. Colour — purple-violet-lilac, shining on the sun. Blooms within medium schedule. Good for individual planting to be observed from close distance

"Raj Kapur" ("*Brodyaga*") N 745. (*India* x *Pioneer*)

Purple-carmine-lilac in the beginning, later becomes lighter. The petals are twisted in a very effective manner. The floscules are very large, hanging under their weight. The variety is very good for planting of greenery.

"Znamya Lenina" N 039. (*Congo* x Seedling N 110) x (*Congo* x Seedling N 105)

When semi-opened the flowers are of purple-red, velvet colour with cherry shade. The outer sides of petals are purple-lilac.

"Marschal Zhukov" N 520. (*M. I. Kalinin* x Seedling N 105)

The buds are roundish, rather small of dark cherry-violet colour. Flowers are red-purple-violet.

"Zarya Kommunizma" N 153. (Seedling N 110 x *Ludwig Spaeth* + Seedling N 105)

The colour of buds and of semi-opened flowers is very effective purple-red. It often has intensive velvet-red shade. The blue-violet tones are very intensive in the center of the corolla. The variety is good for planting of greenery.

"Ogni Moskvi" N 525. (Seedling N 105 x *Pasteur*) + (Seedling N 110 x *Zarya Kommunizma*)

In the beginning flowers are purple-velvet, later come lighter and lilac shades appear. The bush is large with large wilting panicles. It is very good for planting of greenery.

"Kremlevskie Kuranty" N 739. [*Congo* x (*Monge* x Seedling N 105)]

In the beginning the colour is purple-carmine. Later it becomes lighter, producing an interesting contrast with above located flowers.

"Sumerki" N 104. (*Pasteur* x Seedling N 401)

The colour is purple-violet with intensive repletion of blue. It is very interesting for planting in the semi-darkness and as an initial paternal form.

"Krasnaya Moskva" N 335. [(*Pasteur* x *Congo*) x Seedling N 110]

Dark purple and velvet. This is one of the best commercial varieties with dark coloured flowers. It is good for medium and late forcing.

THE VARIETIES WITH DOUBLE FLOWERS:

"*Sovetskaya Arktika*" N 300. [*Mm Lemoine x (Snezhinka x Mm Casimir Perier)*]

Pure white, with curved petals. The floscules are cone-shaped. It is very good for planting of greenery.

"*Krasavitsa Moskvy*" N 237. (*Belle de Nancy x Mitchurin*)

The colour is very refined: rose-white-pearl with light lilac touch. The variety is good for solitaire planting, and very perspective as a paternal form. This variety is considered prime in the world assortment of lilacs. In spite of double flowers it does not loose grace and elegance.

"*I. V. Mitchurin*" N 212.

Delicate lilac-rose, very interesting as paternal form for hybridization.

"*Nebo Moskvy*" N 508.

Lilac-blue with light violet repletion. The bushes are noted for heavy foliage and abundantly florescence.

"*Nadezhda*" N 728.

One of the best varieties of blue shades. Floscules of piramidal-cone shape, large, some flowers reaches 4 cm in size. Blooms in medium period.

"*P.P.Kontchalovski*" N 388. [*(Victor Lemoine + Jules Simon) x President Poincare.*]

Blue in the bright light. In evenings and cloudy days the colour is blue-lilac.

Some of the flowers are immensely large.

"*Izobilie*" N 394. [*Seedling N 50 + (Ekatherina Herling + Reaumur)*]

In the beginning the flowers are of purple-lilac colour with violet shade. Later more lilac-rosy tones appear. The variety blooms abundantly.

"*Olimpiada Kolesnikova*" N 86. (*Berie x Tamara Kolesnikova*)

The colour of buds is violet-purple, it contrasts to colour of opened flowers which are dark rose. Therefore this variety is very good for solidaire planting.

"*Pamyats o S.M.Kirove*" N 384. (*Belle de Nancy x I.V.Mitchurin*)

In the beginning the colour becomes lilac-violet. The variety blooms during a long period. It is valuable for the original shape and colour of flowers, as well as for big size of floscules and the late florescence.

* * * * *

The lilac is a real queen of May. The "fosterchildren" of L. A. Kolesnikov bloom abundantly, bringing joy to the people in various countries: in the U.S.S.R. and Canada, in the U.S.A. and Poland, in Bulgaria and England, in Holland and other countries.

Leonid Alexeevitch Kolesnikov was born in May. On the 18th of May 1973 he would be 80.

IN MEMORIAM

The Society extends its condolences to the family of Regina Richter of Strongsville, Ohio who was a charter member of I.L.S. Her passing in February was a loss to all who knew her. Mrs. Richter was outstanding in her knowledge and cultivation of rare plants. Her Merry Todd Gardens were a joy to all.

AN AMATEUR LILAC GROWER REPORTS

Prof. Albert E. Lumley
Amherst, Mass.

In 1955, after getting re-settled in my job as Professor of Health and Physical Education at Amherst College, following a stint in the World War II Army, I began to give thought as to how best to develop my thirty acres of home land — half open meadow and half woodland. At a luncheon with certain members of the Horticultural Department at the University of Massachusetts, I was advised that, taking into consideration soil tests of my land, the exposure, etc., I would no doubt have good results with shrubs in the lilac family.

At this meeting I offered my home lot to the graduate students of Professor Lyle Blundell for their planning theses in horticultural landscaping. Many of the better plans which came out of this, used lilacs — so I took a good look at my handsome 15 year old "Charles Joly", and began to study lilac culture in preparation to planting a double sided lilac walk. Library service in Amherst is excellent and my correspondence, especially with Dr. John Wister of Swarthmore, and A. D. Rothman of Rhinebeck, N. Y., was heavy and helpful.

Early in my endeavors I had decided to plant only that stock which was grown on its own roots. In my ignorance, that meant that I eventually gave away 45 of the first 50 plants that I purchased! But I kept on learning — from Susan Delano McKelvey's book published in 1928 (which I regard as the lilac "bible"), the Wister surveys of 1941 and 1953, and visits to A. D. Rothman's planting, Longwood gardens and the Lemoine beds in Nancy, France. I'm still learning — and what started out as a simple landscaping effort has turned into a very absorbing and rewarding hobby in my retirement.

My 1,000 foot lilac walk was selected and based on my own ranking list, which in turn came about because I did a little "Math" on the Wister surveys of '41 and '53. For example, 'Miss Ellen Willmot' had a plus vote of 82 in those surveys and a minus vote of zero, so I call it No. 1! The plants are placed 20 feet apart on triangulation, and occasionally interspersed with other flowering shrubs. Of course much experimentation has gone on since the start of my walk which has resulted in the production of some really good new plants, but I have over 150 varieties, many of them rather hard to obtain.

I do very little fertilizing, but I am convinced that, when planting, household garbage placed at about the two foot depth, is an answer to excellent foliage, a profusion of blossoms of good color, and relative freedom from oyster-shell scale. Possibly the depth of color comes from certain trace elements which the plant can reach. Messrs. Wister, Clark, Fiala, Miss Franklin and others remarked on the depth of color when they visited the planting at the time of the 1973 Spring Convention. My own feeling about blossoms of poor color which I see elsewhere is that they *need* something, but I'm not competent to say exactly *what*. I do apply lime at least annually, as well as one dormant spray for oyster-shell scale.

The 1973 annual meeting at the Arnold Arboretum was a fascinating experience for me, and the visitation of some 25 of the members of the Society to my planting was the first time that professional lilac growers had ever viewed these plants. The suggestions which were made were most gratefully received and I'm sure will prove valuable.

I have no grafted plants that I know of, having adhered to my original thoughts on this, and potting the young plants as they come up from the roots is my only method of propagation since I have no greenhouse. These potted plants I do sell, but do no shipping. My wife and I encourage visitors during the approximately seven week period of bloom, from mid-May to July 1.

This Spring on a trip to Yugoslavia, I brought back several plants from Lake Bled, similar to our *Syringa vulgaris*, but which I suspect are of a variety Mrs. McKelvey called 'Marly'. I have passed these out to some of my new friends in the Society and hope that something new and different may result from hybridizing with this strain.

I'm looking forward to the annual meeting of the Society scheduled in 1974, where I'm looking forward to learning a lot more. Meanwhile, I'm having a lot of fun.

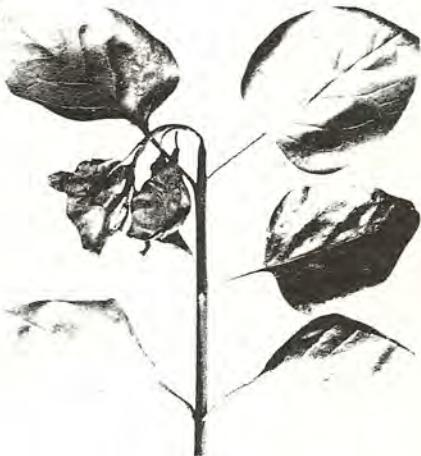
LILAC BLIGHT

Bacterial blight is the only serious disease of lilacs known to occur in Washington and is especially severe in the cool, moist sections of western Washington. Tip dieback and blighting of the flower clusters are the most common symptoms of lilac blight.

The disease may first be seen as brown spots on stems and leaves of young shoots as they develop in early spring. These spots become black and increase rapidly in size, especially during rainy periods. Further development of the infections depends on the age of the part attacked. On young stems the infection spreads around the stem and girdles it so that the shoot bends over at the lesion and the parts above it wither and die (Figure 1). On mature stems the spots usually enlarge along the length of the stem causing death of the leaves only within the infected area.

Young infected leaves blacken rapidly and completely. On older leaves the spots enlarge slowly, sometimes several spots will run together, and the leaf may be crinkled at the edge or along the midvein. Flower clusters may also be infected and rapidly blighted and blackened.

Fig. 1--Characteristic blighting and bending of young lilac shoot.



Lilac blight is caused by the bacterium, Pseudomonas syringae, which overwinters in diseased twigs. This bacterium or closely related strains have been reported to attack a large number of plants. On some hosts such as pear, the disease resembles fire blight and is frequently called "false fire blight."

As with most bacterial diseases mild, moist weather favors the spread and development of lilac blight.

There is no completely effective chemical control for lilac blight but a copper spray of 2-2-50 Bordeaux mixture as soon as the disease appears has been suggested in some areas. However, chemicals tested in western Washington have not given adequate control of lilac blight to warrant their use.

White flowered varieties of lilac are usually more seriously affected than are the colored varieties. Every effort should be made to plant the more resistant varieties where the disease is known to be a serious problem.

Prune shrubs to prevent dense growth and permit good air circulation through the bushes will make conditions less favorable for the disease to develop. Plant lilacs in locations with good air circulation. Blighted shoots should be cut out and burned as soon as they are seen. Care should be taken to disinfect the pruning shears in alcohol or other disinfectant after cutting out infected twigs.

PLAN TO ATTEND....MAY 25- 26
THIRD ANNUAL I.L.S. CONVENTION

CONVENTION PROGRAM
Hamilton, Ontario
May 25 and 26, 1974

SATURDAY, May 25, 1974

- 8:30 - 8:45 — Buses leave Holiday Inn for R.B.G. Headquarters
- 8:45 - 9:45 — Registration at the Royal Botanical Gardens' Headquarters
(coffee will be available)
- 9:45 - 10:00 — Official opening of I.L.S. Convention
- 10:00 - 10:45 — Speaker — Dr. J. Pringle. "Interspecific Hybridization
Experiments in Syringa series Villosae at R.B.G."
- 10:45 - 11:30 — Dr. David G. Nielsen — "New approach in lilac borer control".
- 11:30 - 11:50 — Coffee break
- 11:50 - 12:30 — Dr. W.A. Cumming — "Canadian lilac introductions and
their history"
- 12:30 - 2:00 — Box luncheon at Royal Botanical Gardens
- 2:00 - 2:45 — Afternoon speaker. Prof. Louis M. Lenz.
"The application of Chemosystematics to Lilacs".
- 2:45 - 3:30 — Buses leave R.B.G. Headquarters for tour of Rock Garden
- 3:30 - — Buses leave for Lilac Collection
- 3:45 - 6:00 — Observing lilacs
- 6:00 - — Buses leave for R.B.G. Headquarters
- 6:00 - 7:00 — Barbecue
- 7:00 - 7:40 — R. E. Halward —
"Lilac propagation at Royal Botanical Gardens—Hamilton".
- 7:40 - 8:30 — "Lilac Kaleidoscope" — short slide presentation by I.L.S.
members.
- 8:30 - — Buses leave for Holiday Inn

SUNDAY, May 26, 1974

- 8:00 - — Buses leave Holiday Inn for Niagara Parks Commission
Lilac Collection
- 9:00 - 11:45 — Tour through Niagara Parks Commission grounds
- 11:45 - 12:30 — Luncheon at N.P.C.
- 12:30 - — Buses leave for R.B.G. Headquarters
- 1:30 - 3:00 — President, Secretary and Treasurer's Reports —
Election of Officers
- 3:00 - — Buses leave for Arboretum
- 3:00 - — Lilac survey (organized by F. Nietz)
- 5:45 - — First bus leaves for Holiday Inn
- 6:00 - — Second bus leaves for Holiday Inn
- 6:00 - 7:00 — Free time
- 7:00 - 7:30 — Pay bar
- 7:30 - — Banquet at Holiday Inn, followed by speaker, Dr. L. Laking
— Meet your new I.L.S. Officers
— Award presentation.



INTERNATIONAL LILAC CONVENTION

MAY 25 AND 26, 1974

HAMILTON, ONTARIO

CANADA