

# The Pipeline



Editor: Mrs. Isabel Zucker, 708 West Long Lake Rd., Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, 48013

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## THE 1974 HAMILTON LILAC SURVEY

F.J. Niedz

The Katie Osborne Lilac Collection at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, Ontario was the subject of a preference survey by the attending members of the 1974 convention of the International Lilac Society held on May 25 through the 27th. The survey was conducted on 516 different kinds of lilacs, the majority of which were at the peak of bloom.

The survey was comprised of two parts; the ten most preferred varieties of any color, single or double and the most preferred varieties in the seven categories of white, violet, blue, lilac, pink, magenta, and deep purple.

### THE TOP TEN

Twenty-seven convention attendees participated in this portion of the survey. In all, 93 of the 516 varieties of the collection were voted on. Those receiving the highest number of votes were:

1.	FRANK PATTERSON (deep purple)	17	(63% of voters)
2.	LUCIE BALTET (pink)	14	(52%)
3.	ESTHER STALEY (lilac or pink)	12	(44%)
4.	VESTALE (white)	12	(44%)
5.	PRIMROSE (yellow)	11	(41%)
6.	SENSATION (deep purple, edged white)	11	(41%)
7.	MAIDEN'S BLUSH (dwarf pink)	9	(33%)
8.	CONGO (magenta or deep purple)	8	(30%)
9.	LUDWIG SPAETH (magenta)	7	(26%)
10.	MRS. HARRY BICKLE (pink)	7	(26%)

Five of these top ten are newcomers compared to the 1968 Lilac Survey which identified 40 top varieties. The new ones are FRANK PATTERSON, PRIMROSE, SENSATION, MAIDEN'S BLUSH, and MRS. HARRY BICKLE.

For those who possess an insatiable desire to know the eleventh and twelfth voting results, COLMARIENSIS (blue) was 11th and ANABEL (violet) was 12th.

### BEST WHITE

Twenty-one individuals participated in the white category voting. The overwhelming choice was VESTALE receiving 15 votes representing 86% of the participants. The second and third favorites were WHITE SURPRISE and PRIMROSE (actually yellow) receiving 4 votes or 19% of the participants.

### BEST VIOLET (Light Purple)

ANABEL was the top choice receiving 6 votes or 35% of the 17 voters participating in this color category. The second favorite was JULES SIMON which received 3 votes representing 18% of the participants.



## BEST BLUE

FIRMAMENT was the favorite receiving 12 votes or 60% of the 20 voters in this category. Coming in a close second was COLMARIENSIS receiving 11 votes. An interesting observation in this category is that the Katie Osborne collection did not contain PRESIDENT LINCOLN which has traditionally been considered one of the best. A side trip that was made during the convention to the Niagara Parks Commission lilac planting which contained several magnificent specimens of PRESIDENT LINCOLN prompted many of the participants to want to vote for it anyway, but this was not permitted. There is little doubt in the writer's mind that if PRESIDENT LINCOLN were in the collection it would have been the overwhelming favorite.

## BEST LILAC (Pink Purple)

Eighteen voters participated in this category and selected ESTHER STALEY with 5 votes or 28% of the participants. There was no clear second choice; a total of 9 varieties receiving 2 votes or 11% of the participants. Of the 29 varieties voted on in the Lilac category, 16 were also listed in other categories which indicates the difficulty of classifying certain varieties. In fact, ESTHER STALEY was the second best vote-getter in the pink category as well.

## BEST PINK

Always a top favorite in any survey is this year's best pink; LUCIE BALTET, which received 12 votes or 60% of the twenty votes in this category. ESTHER STALEY was the second choice with 9 votes or 45% of the vote. Third place belongs to MAIDEN'S BLUSH, a dwarf variety which received 30% of the vote. Fourth position belonged to DR. CHADWICK which received 4 votes of a possible 20.

## BEST MAGENTA (Reddish Purple)

MONGE was the first choice in the magenta category, receiving 7 votes or 35% out of a possible 20. Second choice was CONGO which received 30% of the vote. It is common to find the same varieties listed in both the magenta and deep purple categories and this voting is no exception. Of the 23 varieties listed by the voters in this category, 10 were also listed in the deep purple category by other voters.

## DEEP PURPLE

The overwhelming deep purple choice was FRANK PATTERSON which received 10 votes or 53% of the 19 participants in this category. Second choice was CONGO which received 26% of the vote. MRS. W. E. MARSHALL, NIGH, MONGE, and HELEN SCHLOEN were tied for third, each receiving 21% of the vote.

## PERSONALS

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Dr. W.A. Cumming, ILS's Western Canada vice-president, suffered a heart attack which put him out-of-commission for 3 months this past summer. He is now back to work, part-time, and all who know him wish him a full and speedy recovery.

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Walter Oakes, hard-working secretary of ILS has been having back trouble so severe that surgery was a possibility. However, his back has responded to medication and "is better but improving very slowly".



## LILACS AND CITY AIR POLLUTION

In the Nov, 1974 issue of the Journal of the American Society for Horticultural Science Craig R. Hibben and Margery Poole Taylor, both of the Kitchawan Research Lab of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in Ossining NY, report on a leaf roll-necrosis which has been identified in lilac collections in or near NYC, Philadelphia and Boston.

While there were more pollutants in some places than others, the substances polluting proved to be the same in all places studied. The application of activated charcoal and chemical filter chambers to lilac branches not only reduced the injury but also bore out the fact that air pollutants were the cause.

As pollutants decreased, so did the leaf roll-necrosis. In trying to discover the precise pollutant causing the trouble, fluoride was ruled out because investigation showed little in the lilac leaves. While various substances were used experimentally as fumigants, and both ozone and sulphur dioxide induced some signs of the trouble, there apparently are also other, as yet unidentified, pollutants that affect the plants.

For those of you interested in more detail, copies of this issue of the Journal can be obtained from American Society for Horticultural Science, Mt. Vernon, Va. 22121.

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## BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW DEPARTMENT

You've grown or read about dahlia-flowered or cactus-flowered zinnias, rose-form tuberous-rooted begonias and other flower forms of other flowers but did you ever hear of a lilac-flowered any other plant? There is one.

From Plants for a Small Garden in a Mild Climate, the story of a garden in Cornwall, England, appearing in an issue of the Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society, comes the following quotation, "I grow a lot of hydrangeas between my rhododendrons and azaleas for summer and autumn colour-----". The most unusual one I grow is called 'Ayesha', the lilac-flowered hydrangea, and no one seems to know its origin. The heads are large and composed of thick, cup-shaped florets resembling a large-flowered lilac, and they even have a faint but distinct perfume of lilac. The texture of the heads surprises everyone who handles them, as they feel so solid, they dry well and look so different from the others". (The flowers are pictured on the color pages of the issue.)

Hilliers' Manual of Trees and Shrubs, published by that greatest of British nurseries, gives the following description, "Ayesha" ('Silver Slipper') A most distinct and unusual hydrangea



of puzzling origin. It is usually placed in the Hortensia group of *Hydrangea macrophylla* but its appearance is very different from the usual 'mop-headed' hydrangea. The leaves are bold and glossy green above. The rather flattened dense heads are composed of thick petalled, cup-shaped florets resembling those of a large lilac. They possess a faint but distinct fragrance and in colour are greyish-lilac or pink.

Apparently this plant is unknown in the U.S.A. Has any member seen it or grown it?

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HELP WANTED

As a new ILS member, I would like any sources of species lilac seed or small plants. I.R. Hunter, Rt. 3, Dowagiac, MI 49047

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How tall do lilacs grow? Where is the oldest lilac plant? Do you have documentation for plants over 100 years old? Would you be willing to share this information to help us develop a fact sheet? We would like to know the location of the biggest, the oldest, the tallest, the most historic and the most anything else you think is important. If you will send information to me at the address below, I'll try to keep a running account for you here in The Pipeline. Dr. Owen M. Rogers, Plant Science Dept., University of New Hampshire, Durham NH 03824

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