



# Lilac Newsletter

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INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY

*INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY* is a non-profit corporation comprised of individuals who share a particular interest, appreciation and fondness for lilacs. Through exchange of knowledge, experience and facts gained by members it is helping to promote, educate and broaden public understanding and awareness.

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IT HAPPENS IN DAVENPORT (Iowa)

"Hey, Look us Over! A Lilac Land In Davenport" so the headline read in the TEMPO section of the QUAD-CITY TIMES in the Monday edition of May 21, 1979. The story goes on to state that "The infant lilac garden at Duck Creek Park in Davenport may be the start of something big -- or at least long-lasting. The lilac bush Abigail Adams planted beside her front door in Braintree, Mass. is blooming still." It seems that Mrs. Wilson Stampe of Davenport came up with the idea in the fall of 1977 and got a lot of encouragement from the local Director of Parks and Recreation, the spark caught the attention of the Davenport Horticultural Society and that group of enthusiasts is vigorously fanning the flame.

The actual area devoted to the project at present is rather small, but there is available room for future expansion. The concept is to display only the best of the Hybrids along with a limited number of the more popular species along with possible underplantings of suitable groundcovers materials complimented by spring bulbs and perhaps a backdrop of a select few flowering trees. There already exists within the designated area a fine little grove of Beech trees. About sixty-six of the anticipated two hundred lilacs are already established, so, It Is Happening in Davenport.

In late May yours truly had the pleasure of spending several hours with Mr. & Mrs. Stampe while they were visiting The Morton Arboretum (and LILACIA PARK in nearby Lombard, IL.) talking shop -- there is an abundance of enthusiasm behind this effort and one fine day in the not too distant future there will indeed be a beautiful lilac display in Davenport, Iowa. Both the Stampes and other vitally interested in this project have visited the Ewing Collection in Des Moines, and also consulted with our own "Bill" Heard concerning the most choice of the many selections. These people are eager to learn and anxious to see their project develop into an oasis of beauty for the populace of the Quad-Cities, so, some six, eight or ten years down the road should you be in the Davenport area in early May, be sure to stop by Duck Creek Park and see the nagelboomtjes where beauty and fragrant ecstasy will waft across the garden

path in the early morning sun.

Editor

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A TRAVELLER REPORTS - - -

Last May 23 was set aside by yours truly to journey on up to Horicon, Wisc. in an attempt to investigate the Edward J. Gardner story (an in depth report will be forthcoming at a later date). I zigged and zagged on up to Franksville (Wisc.) to pick up one "Herb" Trautman (member) who, as the end product of a lifetime in the Nursery business has lots of lilac knowledge "tucked" away under a cover of gray, then on up to Hales Corners where we picked up Wm. "Bill" Radler, Assn't Garden Director of the ALFRED L. BOERNER BOTANICAL GARDENS, then whipped on up to the point of interest.

While I'm still some distance from collecting all the information that I one day hope to put together, we were successful in contacting persons who were most helpful in our initial effort. We talked, asked questions and came away with a few answers besides and number of ledgers, field notebooks, etc. pertaining to the work of the Edward J. Gardner Nursery. At this point I have examined this material which reveals little of interest in that it pertains primarily to the commercial growing schedules etc., shedding little or no light on the whereabouts (or background) of the Gardner introductions. We did observe a very fine specimen (prob. the original) of the selection 'Edward J. Gardner', but at this moment the other four (?) introductions are somewhat at loose ends, however, I feel quite confident that these will fall into place as we continue to search.

While in Horicon we did spend some time in the old nursery (which is still pretty much in tact) and here we found a row of perhaps 40 or 50 relatively small plants of 'E.J.G.', but here again we did not uncover any of the other introductions

(the very cold overcast day prevented our cursory look at only perhaps 30-40% of the area). A future examination (prob. 1980) of these nursery rows may reveal our answers.

The selection 'Edward J. Gardner' is indeed a beautiful Db1. pink and in the opinion of this observer should be considered in greater depth - this could be one of those gems that arrived in the 'Lilac World' when the interest lights were too dim to reflect the fine color quality of this individual. While we may or may not be successful in locating the original specimens of the other Gardner introductions, I am extremely hopeful that we can somehow locate sufficient authentic material to adequately and properly judge these selections in an attempt to establish their true worth. ILS owes this consideration to a man that worked with such extreme dedication and sincerity to improve the already recognized beauty of the genus Syringa. It is indeed sad that the efforts of this man should be abruptly halted at a time when his lilac hybridizing work was just beginning to produce such satisfying results.

Editor

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BITS OF WIT! !

Doing easily what others find difficult is talent.

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Nobody is best at everything

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Success is never final, and failure never fatal.

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The narrower the mind, the broader the generalizations it comes up with.

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LILACS - EVERYBODY'S FAVORITES - By: L.R. Sjulín, Iowa

\*(reprint)

Many folks think of the lilac as being an all-American shrub because it is grown in every state.

There are many reasons why it is so popular. First, it is easy to grow, it is not at all fussy as to type of soil and it thrives in either full sun or partial shade. After it has become established, it requires but little care and will grow and bloom for generations.

Another reason is its great versatility that makes a magnificent individual specimen plant, goes well in a shrub border and is excellent in a tall flowering screen. Of course, the most noticeable reason why a lilac is so popular is its lovely fragrant flower. A few plants in full bloom in early flower perfume an entire neighborhood; or just a few flowers brought indoors will add a sweetness to the entire home.

Lilacs may be planted successfully either in early spring or in the fall. When you plant them, be sure to give them plenty of room as they will make a rather large shrub six to eight feet tall and nearly six feet across. If you plant them too close together, they will tend to be tall and rangy and will not develop into a neat compact shrub. Most varieties begin blooming the second or third year after planting and within a few years produce a gorgeous shrub covered with lovely flowers in early spring.

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\*The following dissertation was first published in the FLOWER & GARDEN Magazine (Mid-America Publishing Co.) - Sept. 1957, and is herein reprinted with the express permission of the Editor of that publication. The only changes herein made is the updating of certain Nomenclature corrections in accordance with the Int'l Code concerning such.

Editor

There are many hundreds of varieties of lilacs, all of them beautiful, and some which we feel are better than others. A few of the varieties considered to be outstanding are named here. These varieties are in commercial production, and are available for purchase from your nursery.

Colors of lilac flowers range from pure white to deep violet, with shades of pink, lilac, lavender, blue and red. All of the colors are rich and pleasing; yet they blend together beautifully. This means that you can mix varieties in shrub plantings without worrying about color conflict. Two or three of the finest varieties in each color class are listed below.

#### WHITE KINDS

In white lilacs, there are two superlative single type flowers, 'Vestale' and 'Mont Blanc'. Both are wonderful with their pure white flowers and large full trusses. In the double type, 'Miss Ellen Willmott' and 'Edith Cavell' are highly recommended.

#### THE PINK CLASS

Many varieties of lilacs are classed as pink, but very few have a true pink color. 'Coral' and 'Romeo' are two new kinds from Canada that seem to be much better than 'Lucie Baltet' which is no doubt the most popular and best known of all of the older pink varieties. 'Coral' and 'Romeo' both have true pink flowers with no trace of lilac or magenta. They do, however, make a larger bush than the regular lilacs, so give them two or three extra feet of room so they will develop into large fine specimens. They are new and very scarce.

#### BLUE FLOWERED KINDS

Blue flowered shrubs are not very plentiful, but there are many outstanding lilacs in this color range. 'President Lincoln' is probably the clearest, purest blue of all the singles. But a new variety, 'Mme. Charles Souchet', which blooms very young and profusely may prove to be the finest of all blue lilacs. The bush is so covered with flowers that one can hardly

see the foliage. We rate it as one of the greatest lilacs, and when enough plants are available we feel sure that it will become the most popular blue variety. If you want the double form there are two good blues, 'Olivier de Serres' and 'Ami Schott'. The former is considered by many authorities to be the best of the double blue varieties. 'President Grevy' is one of the older and still popular varieties but either of the above kinds is considered to be much improved both in color and in the number of flowers produced.

#### LILAC SHADES

Lilacs come in many shades of lilac, lavender and magenta. Some of the greatest lilacs are in these color classes. Listed are just a few that are considered the best. One of the outstanding double flowering lilac colored varieties is 'Victor Lemoine'. Mr. Lemoine, who created so many great lilacs, named this fine variety after himself. Another top-notch double of this color is 'President Fallieres'. It is a little more orchid in color than 'Victor Lemoine', and is equally free blooming. Other outstanding double varieties are 'Katherine Havemeyer' and 'Mme. Antoine Buchner'. The latter is lavender pink in color and thrives and blooms beautifully wherever it is planted.

Mr. Clyde Heard of Des Moines, Iowa, one of the best lilac authorities in the Midwest, considers 'Charm' and 'Glory' as two of the best new single varieties. 'Charm' is an enchanting pink-lavender while 'Glory' runs to the magenta shading. As soon as enough plants are available, both of these varieties will become very popular.

Any selection of the best lilacs should certainly include 'Capitaine Baltet'. It is such a prolific bloomer that the huge panicles completely cover the plant. It blooms very young. Even a two year old plant will give several flowers. The large single flowers are a lovely rose-lavender. Another rose pink variety, with perhaps the largest individual flowers is 'Marechal Foch'. In bud form, few varieties can equal it and it is also a beautiful sight when the flowers are completely open. It is usually found in every list of fine varieties. 'Paul Thirion' is a double rosy-lilac which is a little deeper

in color than the above varieties and is also very highly rated. The flowers are very full and double and the trusses are quite neat and compact in form.

#### PURPLES

When you speak to people about purple lilacs, most of them think of the common purple lilac, Syringa vulgaris. This is the kind that you see planted throughout the United States in almost every farmyard and in city plantings. It has been of great service to all of those who enjoy flowering shrubs. But for those who are not familiar with the new French Hybrid Lilacs we should point out that it is well worth while to dig up the old common purple lilacs and replace them with the fine new varieties. 'Andenken an Ludwig Spath' is perhaps the most popular of all lilacs and by far the most widely planted of the purples. Another purple which is gaining rapidly in popularity is 'Monge'. It does not grow quite as tall as 'Andenken an Ludwig Spath' but seems to be more floriferous. Even a small bush two or three feet tall will be completely covered with attractive ruby-red flowers. It is a more compact grower than 'Andenken an Ludwig Spath', making it very desirable for planting with the modern ranch style homes. There is a new purple variety, 'Mrs. W.E. Marshall', which is very desirable. In fact, it is rated as one of the finest lilacs to have been originated in America. Another new American hybrid, reddish purple in color, is named 'A.M. Brand' in memory of Mr. Brand, who was one of America's pioneer lilac enthusiasts. Mr. Brand is also world famous for his peonies.

#### DARKEST VIOLET

In the darkest color of all lilacs, 'De Miribel' is extraordinarily showy. The trusses are very large and the color is a gorgeous deep violet. Everyone who sees this fine variety wants it.

#### NEW CANADIAN LILACS

Most of the above varieties we have mentioned are of the French hybrid type with a few American hybrids mixed in. There

is also a new race of lilacs from Canada that blooms earlier and makes considerably larger shrubs. They should be planted eight to ten feet apart. Two of the best of these Canadian varieties are 'Assessippi', a lilac color, and 'Pocahontas', a light purple. Both varieties have excellent foliage, making the plants very attractive even when not in full bloom. They are both prolific bloomers with large, well-formed panicles. For those of you who want something different in a lilac, the Canadian hybrids are a good choice. Remember that they must have a little more room than regular lilacs as they do make a larger shrub and need extra space to be at their best.

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DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

DO YOU HAVE A SUGGESTION?

DO YOU HAVE A SHORT STORY ABOUT LILACS YOU WISH  
TO SHARE WITH OTHERS?

DON'T DOUBT! YOU CAN DO IT!

DIRECT THE PUBLICATION CONTRIBUTIONS TO I.L.S.  
EDITOR.