

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.

Articles printed in this publication are the views and opinions of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the *International Lilac Society*.

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MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION

	<u>1980 (\$ US)</u>
Single annual	7.50
Family	10.00
Sustaining	15.00
Institutional/Commercial	20.00
Life	150.00

*Mail membership dues to I.L.S. Secretary.

ANNE PAYNE ROBINSON

Anne MacGregor Payne was born in Nashville, Tenn. in May 1891, the second daughter in a family of five children. Reminiscences of her childhood were mostly happy things: schemes with her father, making lemonade for a picnic in a 40 Qt. milk-can, where the best persimmons grew, skating on ice so thin it rippled. At school she excelled so easily that for the rest of her life she was convinced that she could learn anything. At age 80 she learned about water pollution, sewage treatment plants etc. with the same self confidence and excitement that she learned algebra at 12. A high school teacher opened the doors of science to her and from then on she considered herself principally a scientific person which eventually led to horticulture.

In 1906 the family moved to Rochester, N.Y., her mother's family home, where she trained as a domestic science teacher. At 18 she was on her own teaching in South Carolina. In 1917 after several years of teaching both in college and high schools, and a year as food editor of a daily newspaper she married a Presbyterian clergyman from Philadelphia, Stewart M. Robinson. The next 20 years she devoted to raising five children and being the minister's wife.

After W.W. II most of her children were grown and she had time to devote to her own pursuits and this time it was gardening. She also had space when her husband inherited his mother's home with 4-acres in Delhi, N.Y.. She joined Garden Clubs, took courses in flower judging and landscape design. She read as much as she dug and as she became knowledgeable there was more to do and more she felt must be done.

At her husband's death in 1965 she was very involved in horticultural projects, but it did not totally absorb her life. She spent the winter of 1966 in Seoul, Korea

with her son and his family. Another winter she spent 6-weeks in the Yucatan helping a missionary friend. In 1975 she moved to a retirement community in N.J. where she kept active until last year when her sight began to fail. She passed away February 1, 1980 leaving 4 children, 18 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren and many friends.

her daughter - Anne

* * *

THE AWARD PRESENTED

At the 1974 Convention of the INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY in Hamilton, Ontario, Ann was presented with The Society's Award for Outstanding Personal Work or Special Service - in this instance the award was made in appreciation "For outstanding work in promoting the Lilac in Private and Public Plantings in Delhi, N.Y., and for outstanding service to the Society as a member of the Board of Directors." Ann served on the Board during the formative years of our the 'fledgling Society', offering her sage and timely advice along with a generous mix of profound wisdom. For those who knew her, the Award was accepted with the utmost humility - we sincerely trust that her final reward was granted as her Spirit has now departed to the Eternal Peace.

Editor

ANNE ROBINSON MEMORIAL FUND

Walter W. Oakes, ILS Secretary, Box 315, Rumford, Maine, 04276 is the custodian of the Anne Robinson Memorial Fund. Contributions to the memorial are welcomed. The fund will go toward publishing the Upton's "Lilac Scrapbook".

THE LILAC GARDEN REVISITED

(Area V)

by Stan Beikmann

The Fernwood lilac garden was named after Mrs. Emma Watson whose own beautifully landscaped estate gardens were located down Range Line Rd. and along the river near Berrien Springs. Her grounds included a collection of the finest French lilacs to be had in the 1930 - 40's. Nearly forty years ago she began giving starts of suckers of her varieties to her gardening friend, Kay Boydston. (See history in Fernwood Notes No. 3 and No. 72.) Through the 1940's over ninety plants were moved here, into a rectangular garden with two rows each on the long sides. A backdrop planting of Red Pine served nicely the first two decades. For many years this garden was a perfumed delight for all who visited it in the spring.

By 1972, however, it became apparent that the garden would need to be revamped. The two rows of pines were very tall and were shading out the lilacs. This, coupled with age, caused the lilacs to grow leggy, tall and unsightly. Each winter a few would succumb, uprooted by heavy snow loads.

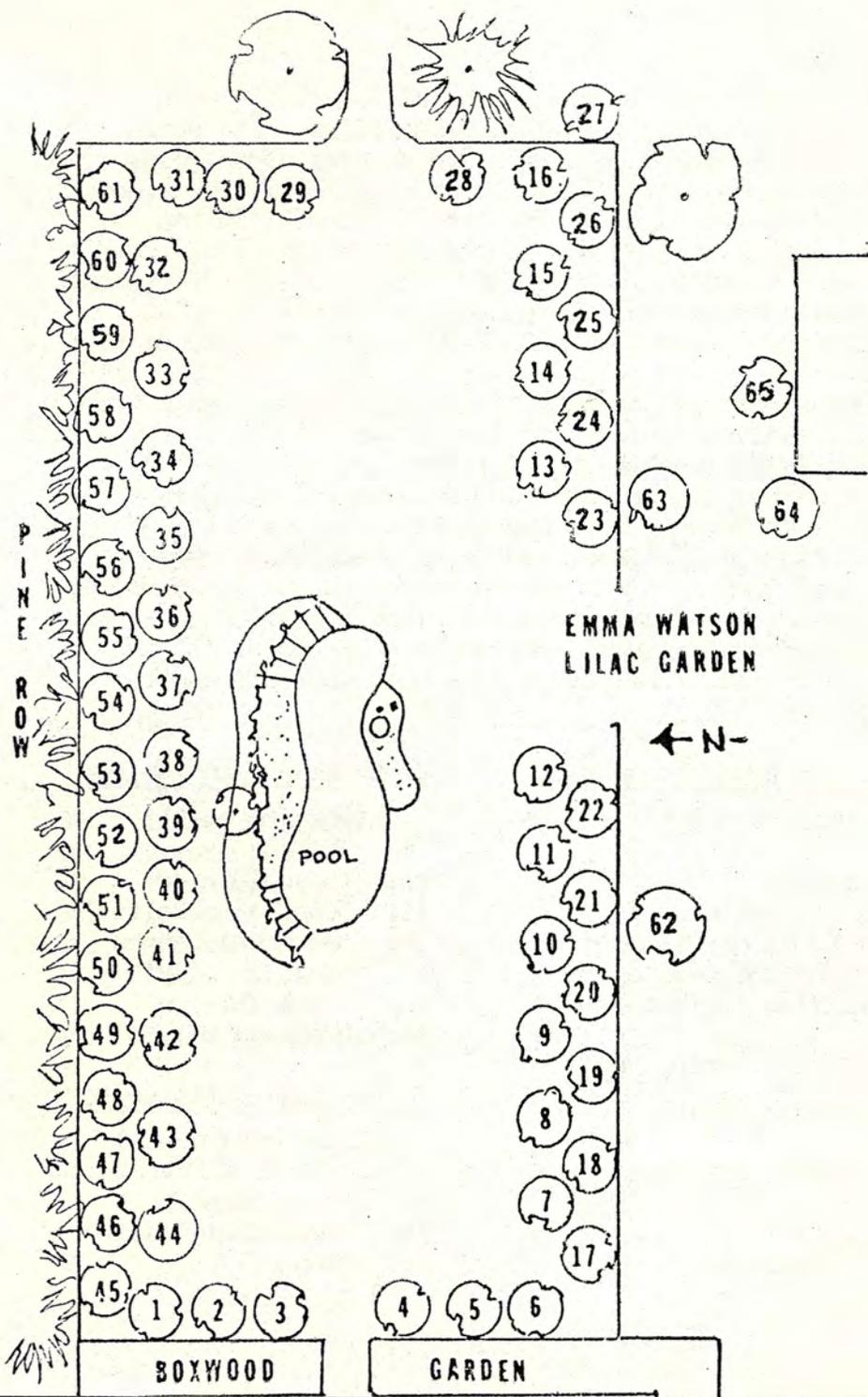
A long range plan was decided upon to restore the garden's attractiveness. Wishing to retain the original collection (now impossible to find many of them in nursery catalogues) both cuttings and suckers were first taken and grown in our nursery for a few years. Inevitably, the south row of pines and volunteer trees among them had to be removed to admit the sunlight required if the garden was to be retained in the same location. In the fall of 1975 that pine row supplied a good quantity of greens for our Christmas Greens class. The nearly two dozen stumps remaining were another problem. Finally, Gene Clemens, who runs a tree service

and has befriended Fernwood on several occasions, offered to grind them out below the soil line. This he did gratis. The following spring we were ready to implement our plan. The following course of action was decided upon - a pruning program, replacement, and relocation of some of the old plants.

Once lilacs become twelve to fifteen foot small trees, all the foliage and flowers are, of course, at the very top. To bring the foliage and flowers back to eye level requires judicious pruning over a few years. Lilacs are best pruned right after flowering. Of the five or more trunks arising from each clump perhaps two of three of them were cut back to about three feet above the ground the first year. Where young shoots were springing up from the base, the old wood was cut clean to the ground. However, if the lilac is a grafted variety, the shoots of suckers will likely be coming up from the rootstock, usually common lilac or privet which will overgrow the desirable graft. In this case, cutting to the ground is not recommended but sucker removal is. In subsequent years the balance of old branches were brought down while those of previous years were sending up vigorous new shoots. Although this process is not very attractive for the few years it takes to revitalize the shrub, it does assure a more likely survival rate in the treatment. Flowering is greatly increased and the shrub becomes again more dense near the base.

If one is fond of cutting lilac flowers each year, it is an ideal way of natural annual pruning, especially if long stems are taken with the flower heads. When pruning, always cut the stem a quarter inch above a new bud on the stem to assure new growth at that point. With these simple guidelines one can keep lilacs in bound.

The sketch shown on the following page offers a view of the renovated garden and its varieties. The inside north row of lilacs remained as they were, but have been slowly pruned over two or more years to revitalize them and bring down the height. The outside north row against



the pines were dug, pruned and moved forward. This enabled us to retain all of those varieties. The south two rows were in sad condition and several had already been lost due to the shade. These were mostly replaced by the plant starts taken from the originals, in the nursery. Both rows were replanted in the vinca ground-cover area where the south pine row had been. All lilacs were positioned in an alternating pattern in two rows in order to allow more sunlight and better viewing of the flowers.

Other changes included extending the rail fence from the perennial garden east to the garage area as a new backdrop for the south row of lilacs. Likewise the boxwood garden at the west end was extended the full width of the lilac garden and is slowly being restored again. A large Japanese tree lilac which once dominated one end of the old lilac garden was saved and moved to the edge of the perennial garden and along the lilac garden split rail fence. New cedar signs point out the entrance to the lilac garden from both the road and the main garden.

West End - Along Box Garden

(north to south)

1. 'Crampel'
2. 'President Grevy'
3. 'Miss Ellen Willmott'
4. 'Katherine Havemeyer'
5. 'William Robinson'

South Side - Inside Row

(west to east)

6. 'General Pershing'*
7. #30A
8. 'Monge'
9. 'Marylensis'

South Side - Inside Row

(west to east)

10. 'Pascal'
11. 'Capitaine Baltet'
13. 'Marechal Lannes'
14. 'Charles Joly'
15. 'Paul Thirion'
16. 'Maurice Barres'

South Side - Outside Row

(Along rail fence)

17. 'Jean Mace'
18. 'President Fallieres'
19. 'Congo'

20. 'Lucy Baltet'
21. 'Glory'*
22. 'Firmament'*
23. 'Marie Legraye'
24. 'Andenken an Ludwig Spath'
25. 'Dr. Maillot'
26. 'Andenken an Ludwig Spath'
27. 'Paul Thirion'

East End - Near Beech

(south to north)

28. 'Montaigne'
29. 'Primrose'*
30. 'Esther Staley'*
31. 'Lucie Baltet'*

North Side - Inside Row

(east to west)

32. 'Mme. Antoine Bucher'
33. 'Victor Lemoine'
34. 'Buffon'
35. 'Belle de Nancy'*
36. 'Duc de Massa'
37. 'President Poincare'
38. 'De Miribel'
39. 'Volcan'
40. 'Jules Simon'
41. 'Edith Cavell'*
42. 'President Loubet'
43. 'Violetta'
44. 'Edouard Andre'

North Side - Outside Row

(west to east)

45. #14

46. 'Bleuatre'
47. 'Edmund Boissier'
48. 'Jan van Tol'
49. 'Marylensis'
50. 'Marceau'
51. 'President Lincoln'
52. #30A
53. 'Capitaine Baltet'
54. 'Leon Gambetta'
55. #30A
56. 'Emile Gentil'
57. 'Monge'
58. 'Jules Ferry'
59. 'Mme. Lemoine'
60. 'Pascal'
61. 'Mirabeau'

Outside Garden

(In garage area)

62. Syringa reticulata*
63. 'Daphne'*
64. Syringa palibiniana
65. Syringa microphylla

* not given by Watson

LILACS AT CEDAR HILL NURSERY

John Hergenreder*

**reprint

Cedar Hill Nursery came into existence at the turn of the present century. The late Theodore A. Havemeyer, a born horticulturist, became acquainted with Victor Lemoine of Nancy, France, years earlier and from this acquaintance stemmed his first efforts at hybridization of lilacs at Brookville. Mr. Havemeyer's efforts were very successful and in these short years he was able to perfect such worthwhile varieties as 'Sarah Sands' (a single, incurved deep purple), 'Glory' (a single reddish purple, the florets of which exceed the size of a fifty-cent piece), 'White Swan' (a clear, large flowered single white), 'Prof. E.H. Wilson' (a pure double white), 'Mrs. W.E. Marshall', 'Lady Lindsay', 'Moonlight', 'True Blue', to name only a few. Unfortunately his successes were cut short by illness and during the four remaining years of his life he was unable to do any more work at his chosen field. Had Providence been more considerate the lilac lists of today would contain many more outstanding varieties as at the time of his death there were several hundred seedlings under trial. Most of these, still unnamed,

* Mr. John Hergenreder is superintendent of Cedar Hill Nursery, Brookville, Long Island, New York.

** The following dissertation is one of several papers concerning lilacs which appeared as a Lilac Symposium in the Arboretum Bulletin, University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.. This particular expression appeared in Vol. XI, No. 2 (Spring 1951) and is herein reprinted with the express permission of the Editor of that publication. The only changes being herein made are those involving the updating of certain Nomenclature in accordance with the Int'l Code concerning such. Editor.

are part of a memorial planting of six acres which includes all varieties which he acquired, propagated and hybridized. Our catalogue still lists 160 varieties. We now propagate only those varieties of which our stock becomes depleted.

There are divergent opinions as to the best methods of propagation. Some authorities insist that growing from cuttings is the only way to propagate. Others still prefer grafting on California privet with careful deep planting to get them on their own roots in two years. We have used both methods and have found that each has its own merits. Propagation by cuttings in early June requires bottom heat in spite of overhead temperatures. The greatest argument in favor of grafting is that it can be done in the winter months when outside work is least pressing. The saddle graft is usually best if the scions are of pencil thickness since the callusing at both ends will more readily produce rootlets than any other form of grafting. Some varieties of lilacs root easily by either cutting or grafting while others resist either method. This no doubt is inherent to their composition of parentage. It has been observed that these varieties which are good growers propagate reasonably well, while cuttings from slow, sparsely growing plants are more difficult to root even under the most ideal conditions.

All flowering trees and shrubs are beautiful and have their place in a well-planned landscape, but the lilac is the outstanding shrub as it gives a full month of beauty from the time buds show color until the last petals have fallen. Our season lasts from eight to ten weeks beginning with the early hybrids ('Turgot', 'Lamartine', 'Catinat', 'Claude Bernard') and followed by the hybrids commonly called the French lilacs, the late hybrids and finally the species ending in late June or early July with pekinensis and reticulata. A late frost sometimes does considerable damage to the early blooms but fortunately this is the exception rather than the rule.

Lilacs will thrive in a wide range of soil conditions

but will not grow in wet, undrained locations. They are moderate in their demands. A lime-sulphur or scale-oil spray in early spring against the oyster shell scale is about all they require. The control of the borer is more difficult than would appear in advertisements of control remedies, and periodical inspections and application of a preparation designed to combat these pests are necessary. A liberal dressing of fresh barn manure in the fall after the ground is frozen or bone meal and an organic mulch will also pay dividends. If possible, faded blossoms should be removed as soon as possible to prevent seed formation at the expense of next year's flowers. Lilacs tend to grow upwards rather than spread out and soon become unsightly unless corrected by cutting the uppermost flower thyrsus when in full bloom to a lower lateral branch. This will develop next year's blooms, will keep the plant in proper or desired shape, will serve the pruning need of the bush and will reward the owner for doing it at the proper time.