



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

Single annual	\$ 7.50
Family	10.00
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Institutional/Commercial	20.00
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WARM WEATHER TOLERANT LILACS:
THEIR ORIGIN AND HYBRIDIZING POSSIBILITIES

by Walter E. Lammerts

In the fall of 1942 when at the University of California, Los Angeles, I made a trip up to Northern California, and among other organizations visited the W.B. Clarke Nurseries in San Jose, California. Mr. Clarke showed me various lilac varieties and selections from open pollinated seed that he had grown. He gave me seed of several species, named varieties and selections which he had made. As soon as I returned I planted seed of the following varieties: 'Lamartine', 'Buffon', 'Vestale', 'Kate Sessions', 'Claude Bernard', and an early leafing selection, C112, which he had not yet named.

In June of 1945 I left the University of California, Los Angeles and went to work for Manchester Boddy, then publisher of the Los Angeles Daily News, at his lovely Rancho Del Descanso in La Canada, California. By the spring of 1950 the lilac seedlings at U.C.L.A. were in fine bloom and I went back several times and selected 42108/20 as the best lavender one, had it budded on privet, patented it, and introduced it as 'Lavender Lady'. It was patented in 1954 and sold by Descanso Distributors for several years. The patent of course expired in 1972 and several nurseries have sold it since then. Now it is available at the Monrovia Nursery of Monrovia, California. I obtained this variety by growing plants from Clarke's C112 which was population 42108. There were 23 plants in this population, four of which

had lovely large flower clusters, but 42108/20 combined the best flower type with early leafing and good plant habit.

When at Descanso Gardens from 1945 until 1953, I grew 23 populations obtained by intercrossing the best selections found in the 1942 populations. Seeds of these were planted January 3, 4, and 5th, 1951 and the seedling were transplanted June 19, 20 and 21st, 1951. When Manchester Boddy sold Descanso Gardens to Los Angeles County in 1953, I went to Livermore to concentrate on rose breeding. At the time of the sale Robert M. Boddy, president of Descanso Distributors, had the lilac plants moved to Chimo, California where his nursery was located. On March 26, 1956 I drove down to Southern California and made a quick survey of the lilacs with Robert M. Boddy on March 27, 1956. There were a total of 615 plants in these populations so it took several days to classify the ones which were in flower. Robert Boddy and his plant propagator finished classifying them for me. Some idea of the variation which was shown, due no doubt to these populations tracing back to hybrids made by Mr. Clarke by crossing Syringa oblata X S. vulgaris is given in Table 1. We selected about a dozen seedlings as being unusually lovely in flower colour, size, form, and also early leafing. When Descanso Distributors was sold, Boddy took these to his ranch at Fort Bragg, California. In 1974 he made an agreement with the Hine's Nursery of Santa Ana, California, selling them the entire collection subject to a royalty payment to me for each plant sold of any variety patented by them and introduced. In 1975 they introduced and patented 'Old Lace', a light pink (technically purple to red purple), 'Heather Haze', another even lighter pink, 'Big Blue', a very large flowered violet blue, and 'Sweet Charity', a vivid purple red in color. All of these leaf out and

flower normally without the usual winter chilling required by most lilac varieties. All of these varieties undoubtedly inherited their ability to leaf out and flower normally in warm weather climates from Clarke's early leafing seedling C112.

In 1959 while at Livermore I began a modest program of lilac breeding crossing various selections made by Robert M. Boddy, and sent to me for observation. One of these, a very early leafing white seedling, was crossed with 42107/65, a large flowered, broad petaled white seedling of 'Lamartine'. Among the seedling was a very large clustered white one with unusually large individual florets. It was quite early leafing in Livermore. This was patented by me in 1967 and introduced by Dennison Morey of General Bionomics in Santa Rosa, California. Unfortunately this company is no longer in business and I do not know where this fine white lilac may be obtained. Gophers finally succeeded in killing my only plant. I am at present growing a population of lilacs resulting from intercrossing an unintroduced pink selection from one of the 1951 populations with a very large clustered lavender one. Among these are three selections which the Leonard Coates Nurseries of Watsonville hope to introduce as soon as they are able to propagate them on their own roots. One of these is an unusually fragrant large clustered pink variety and the other two are lavender ones considerably darker in color than 'Lavender Lady' and also very fragrant.

My interest in lilacs was reawakened when Dr. Joel Margaretten came up here to visit me in July of 1977. At that time he stressed the need of getting warm weather tolerant dwarf lilacs. Knowing the ease with which dwarfs are obtained in rose breeding it seemed to me that the easiest way to get them would be to intercross the best selections I had been growing here and

select for dwarf habit among the resulting seedlings. I had not been very observant as to the seed set in the population of seedlings which I had growing here. So unfortunately in 1978 the few crosses which I made simply did not result in any seed. In 1980 I had a bit more luck but still obtained very few seedlings and none of these appear to be dwarfs.

So then in 1981 I decided to really give this approach a real trial. Accordingly I made 459 pollinations of selection #1 with selection #2, and self pollinated 362 flowers. Also I crossed 194 flowers of selection #1 with 'Dr. Chadwick', using pollen of one of the three plants so kindly sent to me by Dr. Donald R. Egolf about the middle of February, 1981. Since 'Miss Kim' was also in flower at that time, the first week of April, I crossed two selections with it using a total of 560 flowers.

Also reciprocally used 'Dr. Chadwick' as the female parent pollinating 100 flowers with pollen of #1 lavender selection, and 25 flowers with the first plant in the row of warm weather tolerant selections or P₁.

Now at first all of the crosses of selection #1 X #2, the self pollinated ones, and those of #1 X 'Dr. Chadwick' started to have enlarged pistils and by the end of May were about half the size of fully mature capsules. Then the supporting stems of the various clusters of developing pistils started to turn brown and by the first of June all except those crossed with 'Miss Kim' had dried up! This of course was a terrific disappointment after such a good start. Those of 'Miss Kim' continued to look good until in July when they also dried up with the exception of two capsules from one of the selections which matured, each having one seed. As predicted by

Dr. James S. Pringle these did not germinate, though one of them appeared to have a good embryo.

Fortunately I was more successful with the reciprocal cross, and was able to harvest 88 seeds from 'Dr. Chadwick' X #1 selection and five seeds from the cross P₁.

I did not attempt any crosses of my selections this spring as it rained so much during the flowering season that any program of cross pollination would have been a waste of time. However, I did start germinating the seed obtained from 'Dr. Chadwick' and am glad to be able to report that I have one plant from 30 seeds of the cross with selection #1 and four plants from the cross with P₁. The five seeds resulting from the cross with P₁ germinated on towel paper very easily, but I lost one seedling when they were transplanted to soil. Contrarywise, the seeds from the cross with selection #1 did not germinate on towel paper. In order to get any response I had to excise the embryos from the seed coats, and only about ten were at all normal in size. Of these only one turned green when placed between towel paper in a plastic tray kept in a warm cubicle of my greenhouse in January.

On June 30th I placed 25 seeds between moist towel paper and kept them on a window sill in my kitchen where they get the warmth of the afternoon sun. Though the seeds swelled up, they did not germinate. Accordingly I excised all the embryos and the results are shown in Table II.

Of the fairly normal sized embryos 7 have turned green and with good luck should result in viable plants.

The remaining 32 seeds were placed between the towel paper July 9th and the results of excising them are also shown in Table II.

From the difficulty in germinating seeds of

the 'Dr. Chadwick' crosses, especially the high percentage of dried up and minute to very small embryos which did not turn green, it would seem the 'Dr. Chadwick' is genetically quite distinct from my *S. x hyacinthiflora* hybrids.

From the open pollinated seed of several of my warm weather tolerant seedlings planted in 1979 I have 25 seedling surviving of which four are definately dwarfs.

In 1977 I ordered two plants each of 'Ferna Alexander' and 'Miss Kim', and the tree lilac from the Alexander Nurseries. This year for the curiosity of it I crossed 'Ferna Alexander' with 'Miss Kim' and to my surprise every pistil which I pollinated rapidly grew into a seed pod! There are about 75 seed capsules developing. Whether they will ripen into mature embryos remains to be seen. I note that 'Ferna Alexander' is listed as a *Prestoniae* hybrid which would make it a cross of *S. reflexa* X *S. villosa*, according to Pringle.¹ Since 'Miss Kim' is a *S. patula* selection this would mean that we have here an interseries cross successful at least as regards producing normal looking seed capsules. This is something which so far has not been possible according to excellent evidence presented by Pringle. So it will be most interesting to see if ripe seeds actually develop and if so whether they germinate.

The field of lilac hybridizing has many fascinating facets and regret that I am not able to give more time to investigating them.

1. Pringle, James S. A review of attempted and reported interseries and intergeneric hybridization in *Syringa*. (Oleaceae) Bailey, September 1981.

COMMENTS CONCERNING GRAFTED LILACS

As a result of the April Newsletter article on grafted lilacs, Don Wedge of Albert Lea, Minnesota writes:

"It is not how a lilac plant is propagated that is the crux of the matter, the important concern should be that it be on its own root. Preferably only on its own root.

We at Wedge Nursery propagate by three different methods: soft wood cuttings, root cuttings, and bench grafting on green ash. When our customers receive them they are all on their own roots.

We graft over 100,000 lilacs a year in February and March by joining a dormant scion of a desired variety by whip graft to a piece of root from a green ash seedling. Those ash piece roots act as a nurse root to support the scion until it starts putting out its own roots. When this happens it starts rejecting the ash root so that by the time the plant is dug it is on its own roots. Less than one-half of one percent show any signs of any ash remaining.

Of course the practice of grafting a lilac scion on a lilac root should be condemned because any suckering up from the root stock would not be noticed, whereas any suckers coming from ash or privet are easily recognized."

KEEP THOSE LETTERS COMING

I am using this opportunity to acknowledge the letter and news material that I've received from members in the past few weeks.

My work has been neglected since I fell and broke my right wrist several weeks ago. I am still typing with one hand; unpared vegetables are common fare on our table. Weeds took advantage in the garden and mid summer vegetables over-filled our harvest baskets.

Hopefully things will soon be back to routine.

Keep the mail coming - after a long walk to the mailbox I like to find letters from ILS members.

Editor.

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ELECTION REPORT

Election of members to the Board of Directors is one of the important privileges of ILS membership. At present the Board is composed of 24 members, 8 of whom are elected each year. This year the Nominations Committee headed by Max Peterson collected nominations from the entire membership and mailed ballots to everyone for the election. The results were announced at the 1982 Convention held in Ottawa, Canada. The members elected or re-elected to a three year term were:

Mr. Robert Clark	Fr. John Fiala
Mr. William Heard	Mr. Charles Holetich
Mr. Walter Oakes	Mr. Max Peterson
Dr. Owen Rogers	Mr. William Utley

They join these incumbents on the board:

Serving until 1984

Mr. John H. Alexander III	Mr. Thomas N. Chieppo
Dr. Donald Egolf	Mrs. Elsie Kara
Mr. George Kidd	Mr. Maurice Lockwood
Mr. Roger Luce	Mrs. Sarah N. Schenker

Serving until 1983

Mr. John Carvill	Mrs. Marie Chaykowski
Mr. Walter Eickhorst	Mrs. Nancy Emerson
Mrs. Pauline Fiala	Dr. Joel Margaretten
Mr. Winfried Martin	Mr. Freek Vrugtman

On Saturday, May 29, 1982 the Board elected the following officers to serve the Society in 1982-1983.

President - Dr. Owen M. Rogers
Executive vice president - Mr. William Utley
Corporation Secretary - Mr. Walter Oakes
Recording Secretary - Mrs. Sarah N. Schenker
Treasurer - Mrs. Marie Chaykowski
Editor of the Newsletter - Mrs. Mary Smith

Regional Vice Presidents:

New England - Mr. Thomas Chieppo
South - Dr. Donald Egolf
Mid-West - Mrs. Elsie Kara
Eastern Canada - Mr. George Kidd
Western Canada - vacant
Mid Atlantic - Mr. John Carvill
West - Mr. Max Peterson
Pacific Coast - Dr. Joel Margaretten
Northwest - vacant

These officers were elected to serve the whole Society, so if you have any suggestions, criticisms or brilliant ideas, please get in touch with one or all of them.

MORE NEWS FROM OTTAWA CONVENTION



Delegates touring Governor General's Residence



Art Buckley receiving award



Hanssen and Sally Schenker receiving award



Trevor and Brenda Cole receiving award

I.L.S. 1982 CONFERENCE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

From I.L.S.	597.75
Conference Fees	3,336.11
Interest	167.04
May '81 - Aug. '82	
Hospitality	239.70
Ritchies Feed & Seed	50.00
Sheridan Nurseries	100.00
Agriculture Canada	311.00

\$4,801.60

EXPENDITURES

Chimo Inn	2,619.25
City Hall	300.00
Buses	213.00
Hospitality	276.15
Refund (Mrs. Slater)	130.00
Printing	9.63
Postage	49.47
Auction	57.40
Books	7.25
Photographs	66.93
Service Charge	2.25
Gratuities, etc.	50.00

\$3,781.33

CASH IN BANK

\$1,020.27

Cheque received and deposited on Eastern Canada
Region bank account Sept. 17/82 - \$1024.32

HOSPITALITY SUITE RECIPES FROM THE 1982 ILS CONVENTION

BELLS CHEESE COOKIES

¼ cup soft butter	¼ tsp salt
2 grains cayenne pepper	1 cup grated old cheese
½ cup crushed rice crispies	½ cup all-purpose flour

mix together, shape into balls and flatten slightly with a fork. Bake on cookie sheet for 8-10 mins. at 375°.

CLAM DIP

8 oz cream cheese	1 tbsp chopped pimento
2 tbsp gin	¼ cup chopped celery
2 tbsp sour cream	½ tsp horseradish
7 oz drained minced clams	1 tsp grated onion
1 tsp fresh dill (or ¼ tsp dried)	paprika to garnish
¼ tsp salt	

Soften cheese and beat with gin and sour cream until well mixed. Add other ingredients and blend well. Turn into bowl and garnish.

SCANDINAVIAN SPECIAL

This makes a lot but it keeps well in the fridge

2 cans sardines	salt
½ tsp paprika	½ lb cream cheese
1 tbsp lemon juice	¼ cup chopped parsley
onion juice	

Mash sardines very fine and season with ¼ tsp salt and paprika. Blend together the cream cheese, lemon juice chopped parsley and onion juice. Season to taste. Mix sardines and cheese together, whipping well until light and well blended.