



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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LILACS IN RANDOLPH, VERMONT

The White River Valley Herald of Randolph, Vermont ran a front page story on May 28th inviting the public to see Hamesbest Arboretum, a memorial to Philip Hodgdon.

After Mr. Hodgdon's retirement from Vermont Technical College he turned full time to his nursery project which had previously been just an avocation. He developed his garden with the help of his wife, Gertrude, into a collection of hardy plants and shrubs that would endure the cold winters of Vermont. According to Mrs. Hodgdon Philip tested for hardiness and kept only the successes. He wanted to show plants that could be used for the beautification of homes and yards where he lived.

Mrs. Hodgdon, therefore, has made a special effort to keep all of the cuttings her husband had rooted before his death in 1978. She wants all of Philip's friends and neighbors to visit Hamesbest and see the fruits of her husband's dedication.

Her invitation goes particularly to lilac lovers who can sniff and enjoy more than 90 varieties of lilacs in addition to rhododendrons, azaleas, viburnums and other plants that had been raised for the nursery.

Mrs. Hodgdon was pleased to have I.L.S. President Dr. Owen Rogers visit Hamesbest in May 1982. Both Mrs. Hodgdon and her husband joined the I.L.S. and attended all the yearly meetings where they traded, bought and sold many lilacs.

Hamesbest means "home is best" and Philip Hodgdon built his nursery around that concept. Mrs. Hodgdon sold the excess nursery stock and changed the name of the nursery from Randolph Centre Hamesbest Nursery to Hamesbest Arboretum.

Editor

LILAC REGISTRATIONS 1980*

FREEK VRUGTMAN**

All correspondence concerned with additional information, plant or propagating material of newly registered cultivars should be directed to the various originators, describers or introducers, specified in the descriptions below, not to the Royal Botanical Gardens. Previous registration lists of *Syringa* appeared in the AABGA *Bulletin* 13(4):105-110 and 14(3):95.

NEW REGISTRATIONS

Syringa vulgaris 'Vesper'

Selected, described and registered by Mr. Robert A. Fleming, research scientist, Horticultural Research Institute of Ontario (HRIO), Vineland Station, Ontario, Canada L0R 2E0. The new cultivar will be introduced by the HRIO, probably in 1981 and registered with the Canadian Ornamental Plant Foundation (COPE).

Seedling, 22 years old and of unknown parentage, flowered first and was selected in 1960. The blooming date at Vineland, Ontario, (43°09'N, 79°24'W) has been consistently 5 to 7 days later than other *S. vulgaris* cultivars. The flower trusses are medium to large. The florets are single, 1.5 to 2.5 cm in diameter, purple violet (80A of the *R.H.S. Colour Chart*: 1960), the color holds exceptionally well. The plant is a moderate grower.

Syringa meyeri 'Palibin'

Green, Peter S. 1979. *Syringa meyeri* cv. 'Palibin'. *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* 182(3):117-120 & Tab.778 (with description and color illustration). Reprinted in *Lilacs* 8(1):35-39 (1980) (black & white illustration). 'Palibin' appears to have been grown and traded at least under the following names:

S. microphylla minor (dwarf littleleaf lilac), offered 1965 by Skinner's Nursery Ltd., Roblin, Manitoba, Canada.

S. meyeri (Meyer lilac), offered 1968 and onward by Skinner's Nursery Ltd.

S. palibiniana sensu hort. non Nakai (dwarf Korean lilac), offered in Wayside Gardens' "Season of 1958 and 1959" catalogue and subsequently.

S. velutina sensu hort. non Komarov, offered 1971 and onward by Sheridan Nurseries, Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada (dwarf lilac); and offered 1973 and subsequently by Burpee Seed Co., Warminster, Pennsylvania (dwarf Korean lilac).

S. 'Ingwersen's Dwarf' (form of *S. velutina*), in: Supplementary Registration List of Cultivar Names in *Syringa* L. - Registered 1963. *Arnoldia* 23(4):81.

Nurserymen and others growing lilacs under any of the above names are

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urged to verify identity and name of their plants: nevertheless, confusion over this cultivar will persist for some time to come. A paper by James S. Pringle, "Notes on Confusing and Recurrently Misapplied Names in *Syringa*," (*Lilacs* 7(1):50-70; 9 figs., 2 tabs.; March 1979)* provides descriptive information and illustrations useful for identifying 'Palibin'. Reprints available on request from the Registrar.

'Palibin' has been named for Ivan Vladimirovitch Palibin, 1872-1928, a Russian botanist.

CORRIGENDA

Syringa julianae 'George Eastman', Fenicchia 1977

This lilac was discovered in 1971 by Richard A. Fenicchia, 712 Bay Road, Rochester, New York 14580, and not by Robert B. Clark as originally submitted for registration in 1978. See also: *AABGA Bulletin* 13(4):109.

Syringa × *prestoniae* 'Agata', Bugala

Originally named and registered 'Diana' Bugala non Preston.

See also:

Bugala, Wladyslaw. 1970. Nowe odmiany lilaka ottawskiego (*Syringa* × *Prestoniae* [sic] McKelvey) otrzymane w Arboretum Kornickim. *Arboretum Kornickie* 15:61-69. (A summary in translation appeared in the *Newsletter*, International Lilac Society, 2(1):15-16, Spring 1973 issue.) (as 'Diana')

Wister, John C. & Joseph Oppe. 1971. 1970 Lilac Registrations. *Arnoldia* 31(3):121-126. (as 'Diana')

The cultivar name 'Diana' was used in 1928 for another *S.* × *prestoniae* selection. In a letter to the Registrar dated April 4, 1978, Bugala proposes the cultivar name 'Agata'.

Syringa vulgaris 'Dappled Dawn', Hauck 1966

Wister, John C. & Joseph Oppe. 1971. 1970 Lilac Registrations. *Arnoldia* 31(3):121-126. (name only, no description)

United States Patent Office, Plant Patent 2614, patented March 22, 1966; column 2, line 54: "... panicles of bright purple-mauve florets."

Tentative International Register of Cultivar Names in the Genus *Syringa* (Rogers 1976), p.15: "S VI" (= single, magenta)

The florets of authenticated 'Dappled Dawn' lilac plants growing in the Royal Botanical Gardens' collection are pale blue (personal communication from C. Holetich). This observation has been confirmed by F. L. Payne, Director of Parks, Cincinnati, Ohio, where 'Dappled Dawn' originated: "The flowers are definitely not magenta in color, but are pale blue as you described them. I have not seen any of the Dapple [sic] Dawn plants vary from this color." (in litt. to C. Holetich, 1980). 'Dappled Dawn' should be listed as single and pale blue or "S III".

Note from Registrar: Earlier lists of LILAC REGISTRATIONS have appeared in *LILACS* 6(1):14-17; 7(1):35-37; and 9:26-27.

Reprinted with permission from the *AABGA Bulletin* 15(3), July 1981.

WHERE THE COUNTRY'S FINEST LILACS GREW IN 1933

John C. Wister

*Reprint

The wet, cool spring of 1933 was ideal for many flowers and for none more so than lilacs, which were superb in nearly all sections along the Atlantic seaboard. The flowers usually begin to open early in May in Philadelphia, while in New York it is the middle of the month and at Rochester and the Arnold Arboretum it is more likely to be the end of the month before they are at their height.

The two last-named collections are undoubtedly the largest in the country. I believe the Arnold Arboretum collection is the older of the two. Before Professor Sargent's death many of the plants were in poor condition. They did not produce flowers of large size, and one of his last orders was to give the plants a most severe pruning. The superintendent receiving these orders understood that the plants were to be cut down entirely and this was done. There has been some question as to whether such drastic treatment had really been contemplated by Professor Sargent. Many flower lovers thought that the collection had been ruined but the plants came up wonderfully and in two or three years formed fine bushes which once more gave splendid flowers and have attracted great numbers of visitors.

This older collection is along the drive going from the Forest Hills entrance, while the

*Reprinted from Horticulture, Nov. 15, 1933.

newer varieties are on both sides of the grass walk a little further up the hill. The two collections side by side illustrate the great steps that have been made in the breeding of lilacs, for a study of those on the upper path will convince most persons that the larger part of the older varieties have been surpassed and are really no longer needed in a collection.

The Rochester collection, started by John Dunbar under the inspiration of Professor Sargent has an additional interest in having a large number of seedlings raised by Mr. Dunbar. Some of them are named but they are, I believe, mostly not in commerce and I personally hope that most of them will not get into commerce for they are not enough different from the finer French kinds to warrant their introduction. Of all the Dunbar lilacs, 'President Lincoln' is my favorite; it has long been the bluest lilac in commerce. The plants at Rochester have been given more room than at the arboretum. Moreover, the soil there is naturally heavier and the growth of the plants has been better.

I have visited both these collections many times and always enjoyed seeing them, but of all the collections of lilacs I have seen either in this country or abroad none can equal that in the garden nursery of Mr. T.A. Havemeyer at Brookville, Long Island. Mr. Havemeyer is president of the Horticultural Society of New York and is an authority on many plants; but the lilac has always been his favorite and he grows it to great magnificence. It has always seemed to me that the colors of his flowers are brighter than those grown farther inland. Perhaps the moist air from the Sound has much to do with that, for his soil is far from being rich and must require much feeding. His plants are grown in nursery rows and are rather difficult

to study because they are often too close together or are difficult to approach through cultivated ground, but all of them are making superb growth and give flowers finer than any I have seen elsewhere.

The collection is large and must include nearly all varieties in commerce but it concentrates on the finer kinds raised by Lemoine in the last 20 or 25 years. Mr. Havemeyer once told me that the good lilacs that had been raised by persons other than Lemoine could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Mr. Havemeyer has raised seedlings for many years but has always been very modest about them and usually has preferred not to name them or put them into commerce. The first one, and perhaps the only one in commerce so far, was named for Mrs. W.E. Marshall. It is not a large flower and Mr. Havemeyer has often modestly said that it was really not good enough but its deep red purple color makes it unique and I believe it is needed in any good collection of lilacs.

Five or more years ago Mr. Havemeyer showed me with pride a seedling the individual flower of which was as large as the 20-dollar gold piece which he triumphantly pulled out of his pocket to prove the point. This variety has since been named 'Night' and the name is fitting, for it is indeed one of the darkest purples, with a fine tall spike.

Another purple flower, perhaps not quite as dark, has since been named for Mr. Havemeyer's sister-in-law, Sarah Sands. I have seen this one several years and it gives the promise of being a most valuable new kind. This year I was most impressed, however, with a new single blue seedling named 'True Blue'. It is a good name for a fine lilac which will, I believe surpass 'President Lincoln', as both the spike and flower are of better form and texture. I

hope that this variety may be put into commerce by him, for I feel that it will bring him much fame. A third, deep single purple, has been named 'Zulu' and it also shows great promise for the future.

Many of the fine Lemoine varieties were to be seen in quantity this year. Among them were 'Mont Blanc' and 'Vestale' in single whites, and 'Miss Willmott' and 'Edith Cavell' in double whites. In double blue, 'Olivier de Serres' was one of the most distinct. In violet-blue, 'de Miribel' and 'Cavour' have always seemed to me deserving of an especially prominent place. In the lilac shades we have the double 'Henri Martin' and 'Rene Jarry-Desloges', 'Thunberg, and 'Victor Lemoine', a quartet hard to beat. As a double pink, 'President Falliers' stands out year after year, while in the single purples 'Marceau', 'Reamur', 'Monge', 'Congo' and 'Volcan' are all first class.

This is quite an array of fine modern varieties but if we had to have some of the still newer things I should like to mention 'Boule d'Azure', 'Capitaine Baltet', 'Marengo', and 'Massena' as plants which are sure to become very popular in the next 10 or 15 years; they have not been in commerce long enough yet to have been widely distributed or to be seen by many people. The new 'Etna' is a single purple. 'Montesquieu' looks like a good purple companion to 'Necker'.

All these are Lemoine varieties, but with them we should never neglect to plant 'Mme. F. Morel' and 'Jan Van Tol' and the old variety 'Macrostachya', which dates back long before Lemoine's time. These must have been three of the varieties Mr. Havemeyer referred to when he spoke of the non-Lemoine kinds which could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The controversy about grafting lilacs on privet still rages and I notice that Mrs. Harding in her new book has devoted some space to it. I have been interested to see year after year how calmly Mr. Havemeyer takes this controversy and how he continues to grow his lilacs on privet with perfect success. One sees row after row of magnificent plants from one-year up to immense specimens of 20 or more years old, testifying to the fact that under his methods the sin of grafting on privet cannot be quite as great as some persons say. He may have an occasional case of what the learned experts term "graft blight" but I have had this same malady pointed out to me in other places on plants that never were grafted and were grown from cuttings in the beginning.

I notice that Andrews, Brand, Horsford and one or two other nurserymen are growing lilacs from cuttings and I am glad that they are doing it, but I do not see how they can make a commercial success of this practice, for it is a slow proposition and they must compete with other nurserymen who are growing them more quickly on privet and who doubtless will cut the price so low that a profit cannot be made on the cutting-grown material.

Our President has given great publicity to the necessity of raising prices and I hope that the time is coming when the American gardener will be willing to pay higher prices for good nursery material and not allow the nurseryman who grows material on a small scale and in a slow way to be smothered out by mass production of the large concern which grows plants more quickly in a way which sometimes may not be quite as desirable.

It seems strange that more public parks have not established great lilac collections like those in the Arnold Arboretum or in

Rochester. They need not have two, three, or four hundred varieties, but they should have at least 50 and perhaps 75 kinds to show the great development of this flower. A start is being made in a number of places at the present time. The New York Botanical Garden has such a collection of plants, a gift from Mr. Havemeyer some years ago. The new arboretum at Swarthmore College near Philadelphia already has between 50 and 100 varieties, the gift of Mrs. Arthur Scott. I trust the time is not far distant when every city in the cooler parts of the country will have such collections properly named.

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CORRECTION: In the July 1982 issue on page 9 under title "Plants sold at I.L.S. Auction", Agriculture Canada was credited by error as the supplier of *Syringa vulgaris* 'Slater's Elegance'. Please note that the plants were donated by Sheridan Nurseries Ltd.. The error was unintentional and we are sorry for the omission.