

# Lilac Newsletter

Vol. XII, No. 7, July, 1986

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 .....	\$ 10.00
Family .....	12.50
Sustaining .....	20.00
Institutional/Commercial .....	25.00
Life .....	150.00

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

## Were You At The 1986 Convention?

The 15th annual convention at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton is now history (I wonder how many can say they have attended all 15?) Charles and Theo Holetich were the consummate hosts. Everything went smoothly and, whenever a convention seems effortless, you know that somebody did a great deal of work behind the scenes. The hotel accommodations were very nice although Charles kept the convention so busy that your editor could only manage two dips in the heated pool and even had to go to one committee meeting in swimming trunks to accomplish that record.

The first day (from 8 am to 8 pm) was spent at the Royal Botanical Garden and included breakfast, a speaker's program lunch, a lilac tour, the President's dinner and the annual meeting. It was a great day with what seemed like one delight after another and, considering that the day was hot, that dip in the pool was absolutely necessary.

The second day included travel to Guelph, breakfast and lunch in the lilac dell, the auction and the awards banquet back at the hotel. Add to this list of activities the hospitality room and the sharing of slides taken in this country and Europe (the Holetich's tour) and the sum was a very full and exciting convention.

For the second year, the lilacs for sale were split into plants sold from tables and the auction for the most desirable. I didn't think we could ever top last year's tremendous sale but we did! There will be a full report from the auction committee so I'll leave the details for them.

Andrew Pierce from the Denver Botanical Garden and people from Highland Park in Rochester were at the convention so the planning for the 1987 convention in Colorado and the 1988 Rochester Convention (that coincides with their 100th anniversary) is well underway. Everyone should plan to attend these conventions. They will be great experiences and absolutely nothing can substitute for the camaraderie that occurs when a collection of lilac enthusiasts get together.

Members Elected  
to the  
Board Of Directors

In its formal report to the convention, the Election Committee announced the election of the following people to a three year term (1986-1989) on the Board of Directors of the International Lilac Society.

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Mr. John Carvill   | Mrs. Pauline Fiala  |
| Mrs. Mary P. Cohen | Mr. Winfried Martin |
| Mrs. Nancy Emerson | Mr. Andrew Pierce   |
| Fr. John Fiala     | Mr. Wilson Stampe   |

They join with these people to form the Society's governing body.

1984-87 Term

1985-88 Term

- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Mr. John Alexander III | Mr. Dan Cohen        |
| Mr. Robert Clark       | Mr. William Heard    |
| Mrs. Elsie Kara        | Mr. Charles Holetich |
| Mr. Daniel Ryniec      | Mr. Neal Holland     |
| Mrs. Sarah Schenker    | Mr. William Horman   |
| Mrs. Mary Smith        | Mr. Walter Oakes     |
| Mr. William Utley      | Dr. Owen Rogers      |
| Mr. Donald Wedge       | Mr. Roger Vick       |

Election Of Officers

The following officers for the Society were elected at the last Board meeting in Hamilton. They will serve until the convention in 1987.

- |                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| President . . . . .          | Mr. Charles Holetich |
| Executive Vice President . . | Mr. William Utley    |
| Secretary to the Society . . | Mr. Walter Oakes     |
| Recording Secretary. . . . . | Mrs. Pat Cohen       |
| Treasurer . . . . .          | Mr. Walter Eickhorst |
| Editor Pro Tem . . . . .     | Dr. Owen Rogers      |

These are your officers and they need your help. A single idea from each member would become a flood of good work in our joint goal of promoting the lilac. Let them hear from you.

## LILAC AUCTION



Latham, New York  
June 30, 1986

We had 385 Lilac Bushes for sale in Hamilton. The bushes that went for the highest bid were 4 of Krasavitsa Moskvyy at \$58 each in Canadian Funds. Our most generous donors to this successful auction were:

Royal Botanical Gardens  
Agriculture of Canada  
William H. Horman of Sunny Fields

Special thanks go to Walter Eickhorst for doing the auctioneering with the able assistance of Max Peterson and Dan Cohen. Our most able fund collectors were Elsie Kara and Pauline Fiala.

Most of the bushes were sold on the tables marked \$5, \$7.50 and \$10 each in Canadian Funds. For ease in exchange the American Dollar was worth \$1.25 at the auction. For the auction we had approximately 25 lots for sale.

Our president Charles gave me instructions not to sell before 3:00 P.M. but I just couldn't resist temptation and I started to sell sooner as we had lots of plants to dispose of with people wandering around with money in their hands.

We ended up with \$1,098.45 in American Funds and \$2,030.55 in Canadian funds.

Sincerely,

John C. Carvill  
Chairman - Auctions

Editor's Note - This is the introduction to a much longer article by Griffin and Maunder under the title "The National Lilac Collection" in the Plantsman Vol 7 (2) Sept. 1985 pgs 90-113.

## THE NATIONAL LILAC COLLECTION

Mike Griffin and Michael Maunder

The Borough of Brighton Parks and Recreation Department has, since the start of the 1960s, maintained a large collection of *Syringa taxa* and this was designated in 1982, by the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens (NCCPG), the National Lilac Collection.

The collection is held mainly within Withdean Park, a public open space of some 15 hectares on the main London Road (A.23). This gently sloping piece of land was previously used for allotments during World War 2; later with its future in the balance following the Council's rejection of uses as a school, a park with football pitches, or an area of travelling exhibitions, circuses etc., interest suggested a horticultural usage. To this effect, the then Director of Parks and Gardens, the late Mr. Ray Evison, O.B.E., V.M.H., planned the new park to hold a series of comprehensive plant collections, that would prosper, or at least tolerate growing on the thin alkaline soil. These collections included *Berberis*, *Cotoneaster*, *Viburnum*, *Hebe* and *Rosa*, with smaller collections of *Sorbus*, *Quercus* and *Fagus*. These were all secondary to the main collection and interest of Mr. Evison, the lilac collection.

The plans were drawn and great efforts made to assemble propagating material from a vast array of sources. Material came not only from this country, but also from abroad with the Arnold Arboretum, Morton Arboretum, Highland Park, Rochester and Swarthmore all contributing. Initially some 300 taxa were brought together, with planting starting in 1960.

Now some 20 years after planting the park is no longer the original bare field. The collection now consists of predominantly mature plants and numbers over 270 taxa. The curatorial tasks are now to verify the status of existing plants, replace senescent stock and keep the collection up to date with the new cultivars of merit. So far some 40% of the plants in the collection have been verified. The process of verification and identification will be slow, the paucity of descriptions for post 1928 cultivars and the concentration of the flowering period creating a time of frantic and often frustrating activity.

Lilacs can be more than just a pretty sight. Mrs. Kathryn Dietz of Ithaca, New York made them the point for change on the Cornell campus. After reading her poem I was tempted to rush out to New York to help get the lilacs back. If there are other fellow Cornellians among our readers, you may want to contact Mrs. Dietz at 211 Columbia Street, Ithaca, New York 14850.

By the old bell tower  
Once grew many a flower;  
In profusion they grew,  
With their lavender hue  
And fragrance fair:  
The lilacs grew there.

Every year  
they would reappear  
sometime in the Spring;  
The bells would ring  
and the lilacs would flower  
By the old bell tower.

And then one day  
They went away;  
All the flowers and greenery  
Gave way to machinery  
and a construction crew  
To build something new.

After a while  
construction was through,  
and landscaping, too,  
To enhance the view

Mud and dirt  
returned to green,  
but the landscapers left  
One Big Gap in the scene:

Cornell now boasts  
Of a new Reading Room,  
But I'm still waiting  
For the lilacs to bloom.

The spot where they stood  
Is sadly bare:  
Nothing but grass, now,  
and shadows there.

Oh, Bring back the lilacs!  
Let them flourish and flower!  
Where they belong,  
By the old bell tower.



## Washington's Diary



Editor's Note: The following excerpts from George Washington's Diary are from Book Two of the Upton Scrapbooks of Lilac Information to be reprinted and available this summer. The wording and spelling are exact.

## FEBRUARY 1785

Tuesday, 22d. Removed two pretty large and full grown Lilacs to the No. Garden gate, one on each side, taking up as much dirt with the roots as cd. be well obtained.

Wednesday, 23d. Planted trees on the South Shrubbery similar to those of yesterday in the South Shrubbery, except the Lilacs, for which I thought the ground to wet.

## MARCH 1785

Thursday, 3d. Planted the remainder of the locusts, Sassafras, small berried thorn and yellow Willow in the shrubberies; as also the red buds, a honey locust and service tree by the South Garden House, likewise took up the clump of Lilacs that stood at the corner of the South Grass plat and transplanted them to the clusters in the Shrubberies and standards at the South Garden gate.

## APRIL 1785

Saturday, 16th. A great Hoar frost and Ice at least the 1/8 of an inch thick.....The leaves of the Apple tree were coming out, those of the Weeping Willow and Lilac had been out many days, and were the first to show themselves.

## FEBRUARY 1786

Friday, 10th. This day was remarkably fine and promotive of vegetation. The buds of the lylack were much swelled and seemed ready to unfold.



## Tentative Check List Still Available

Owen M. Rogers

We still have copies of the Tentative Check List of Cultivar names in the Genus *Syringa* available for use by members of the Society. A lot has happened since it was published in 1976 but, until we can get procedures in hand to print updates, the tentative list is the best available source. Copies are available for \$1.00 from either Charles Holetich (in Canada) or me (in the USA) at the addresses listed on the inside of the front cover.



### RHS COLOUR CHART

Good News! The Royal Horticultural Society has decided to republish their color charts. The design of the new edition is basically unchanged from the previous 1966 edition but some refinements have been made to make it easier to use. The colour chart comprises 4 fans in sturdy packaging. Each fan has approximately 50 sheets with 4 different colour shades. Though intended primarily for use by professionals in the ornamental plant industry, they are also very useful for anyone involved in any capacity with colours who will find the wide range of colours indispensable in colour matching. (About \$36.00)

Orders should be sent with remittance to RHS Enterprises Ltd., Dept. 'P', RHS Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB England. Telephone (Guildford) (0483) 224163.

VOLUMES III AND IV OF THE UPTON SCRAPBOOK AVAILABLE

At long last - the second book of the Upton Scrapbooks of Lilac Information is available! This book contains Volumes III and IV of the original scrapbooks. They cover the period from the early 20's to the mid 40's. It was an exciting time for horticulture and the lilac. Artificial rooting hormones were developed and became popular during that time and Susan McKelvey published her lilac monograph. Add to those facts the letters from all the contemporary names in lilac culture plus Mr. Upton's perceptive comments and it is clear that publication of this book will significantly add to the lilac knowledge of anyone possessing it.

The price will be \$18.50 to members (\$22.50 to non-members). Owners of Book One will note that the price has not gone up with Book Two. This is because we are working with a new publishing firm and a new printer. In fact, the quality of reproduction is actually better than in the first Book. We still have copies of Book One and they can be ordered at the \$18.50 (to members) price.

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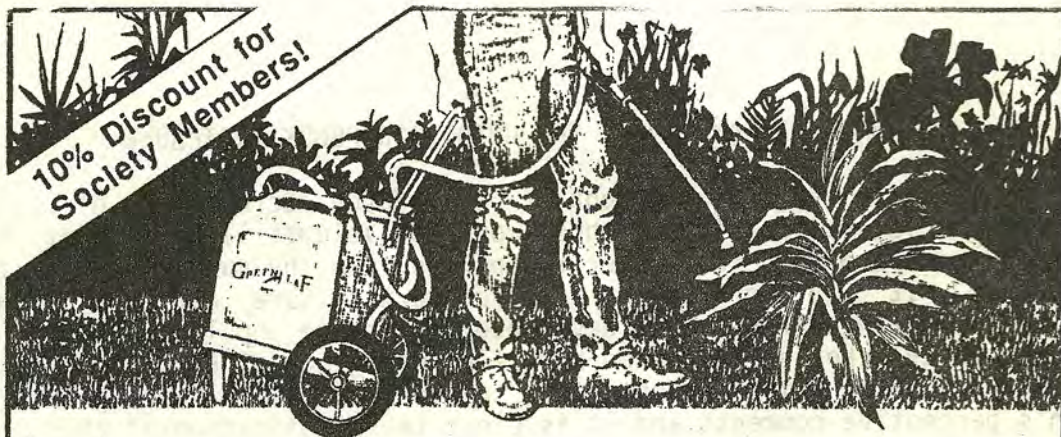
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