

# LILACS

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Montreal Botanical Garden Lilac Collection

## ***QUARTERLY JOURNAL***

of the International Lilac Society

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*IN THIS  
ISSUE:*

**Convention Program**

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**THE INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY**

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*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.

**Published April, 1990**

# Nineteenth Annual Meeting

*International Lilac Society*

**May 24, 25, 26 -- 1990**

## PROGRAM

### **THURSDAY, MAY 24:**

- 5:00-11:00 p.m. .... Registration  
Hospitality Hall, Ramada Inn  
5500 Sherbrooke est, Montreal — Tel.: 514-256-9011
- 7:00 p.m. .... Board of Directors Meeting

### **FRIDAY, MAY 25:**

- 7:15 a.m. .... Regional Vice-Presidents Meeting — Breakfast
- 8:45 a.m. .... Departure for Montreal Botanical Gardens  
By Car or Public Bus
- 9:00 a.m. .... Montreal Botanical Garden's Auditorium  
A Word of Welcome by the President of I.L.S.  
Welcome from the Director of M.B.G.
- 9:20 a.m. .... Guest Speaker Tony Huber (from W.H. Perron Research)  
Selection and Hybridizing of Ornamental Plants
- 9:50 .... Dr. Craig R. Hibben  
Progress Report on Lilac Disease Research
- 10:15 a.m. .... Tour of Lilac Collection
- 12:00 Noon .... Luncheon on the Lilac Collection Site
- 1:00 p.m. .... Annual Meeting at the Auditorium
- 2:00 p.m. .... Tour of Arboretum and Rhododendron Collection
- 3:00 p.m. .... Tour of the Japanese Garden and Japanese Pavillion
- 4:00 p.m. .... Tour of the Insectarium

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## PROGRAM *continued*

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### FRIDAY continued

- 5:00 p.m. .... Tour of the Greenhouses  
6:00 p.m. .... Departure for the Hotel by Car or Public Bus  
6:30 p.m. .... Cocktail Hour — Cash Bar  
7:30 p.m. .... President's Dinner at Bill Wong Restaurant  
5666 Sherbrooke est — Tel.: 514-256-1694  
9:00 p.m. .... Guest Speakers: Mr. Trevor Cole — Agriculture Canada  
Dr. Gamini Randini  
Mr. Pierre Bourque, Director of M.B.G.  
10:00 p.m. .... Hospitality Hall Open

### SATURDAY, MAY 26:

- 7:00 a.m. .... Board of Directors Meeting  
8:30 a.m. .... Coaches Departure for Mount-Royal Cemetery and Park  
11:00 a.m. .... Macdonald College  
12:30 a.m. .... Luncheon at Macdonald College  
1:30 p.m. .... Coaches Return to the Botanical Gardens  
2:15 p.m. .... Annual I.L.S. Lilac Auction  
5:00 p.m. .... Coaches Return to the Hotel  
6:00 p.m. .... Cocktail Hour  
7:00 p.m. .... Awards Dinner — Awards Presentations  
10:00 p.m. .... Hospital Hall

### SUNDAY, MAY 27 (*Optional*):

- 10:00 a.m. .... Olympic Installation Tour  
12:00 Noon .... End of Tour

## Renewing a Lilac Collection At the Montreal Botanical Garden

By Raymond Cochez, Arboretum Horticulturist

**T**HE "Jardin botanique de Montreal," an institution founded by Brother Marie-Victorin in 1931 covers an area of 185 acres. Henry Teuscher, its first curator, who drew the original garden plans and directed the landscape works was also involved in the first steps of our lilac collection.

Most of our early acquisitions in the late thirties came from the Le-moine et Fils Nursery in France and from the Old Farm Nursery, Boskoop in Holland. Since those years, many other acquisitions were made from various parts of the world. In 1956 we received 20 varieties from Strawberry Hill, Rhinebeck, N.Y. Another important source was, and still is, the Royal Botanical Gardens of Hamilton from which we obtained over 40 varieties of lilacs in 1977 alone.

Our actual lilac collection covers an area of about 80,000 square feet and contains approximately 19 species and 96 cultivars of all kinds for a total of over 150 individual shrubs on display. In order to show a representative lilac collection to the Montreal public, we are now renewing our plant material and increasing the number of lilacs in our possession. Thanks to the 1990 I.L.S. Convention, an important drive will be given to the realization of this project.

We want to establish our collection in such a way that the public will be able to observe the lilac species and cultivars in a proper order. Information concerning geographical and botanical origins, authors, introducers and breeders will be indicated. This will ensure that a visit to the lilac collection not only will be a rendezvous with beauty and fragrance, but in addition the visitor will learn something about this beautiful flowering bush.

With this goal in mind, we started a propagation program in 1988. We have already made a lot of cuttings from our own collection, and many more were made from the lilacs of the Dominion Arboretum at Ottawa. We are very grateful to Trevor Cole who gave us carte blanche in letting us gather as many cuttings as we needed for our propagation program. Another important source of new introductions is the Katie Osborne Lilac Collection at the Royal Botanical Gardens of Hamilton. Charles D. Holetich was most generous by sending us a great deal of rooted cuttings. All these acquisitions will certainly help us a great deal in realizing our project.

At this point, we would be pleased to hear some suggestions from the I.L.S. members in order to establish the plan for our renewed and enlarged lilac collection. We take the liberty in asking this because the knowledge of

the I.L.S. members regarding the lilac is most exceptional and will be greatly appreciated. We are sure the I.L.S. members and M.B.G.'s cooperation will result in a long lasting bond between our organizations.

To make this cooperation possible, we are publishing a list of lilacs already in our possession. Indicate by checking a cultivar or species you consider important in order to establish a fine lilac collection. Unfortunately, we have to limit ourselves to a total of about 170 different cultivars and species due to space and maintenance considerations. By cooperating in this project, you will help us in sorting out the most valuable varieties. Any suggestions from members about other varieties we should consider having will be more than welcome. We thank you all very much in advance for your kind cooperation, and we hope we have the pleasure of meeting you all at the coming ILS convention.

### List of Lilacs Already at Montreal Botanical Gardens

<i>Syringa x chinensis</i>	<i>Syringa x Prestoniae cultivars</i>
f. Bicolor	Adrianne
Metensis	Coral
Saugeana	Donald Wyman
<i>Syringa x diversifolia</i>	Docras
<i>Syringa x Henryi alba</i>	Elinor
<i>Syringa x hyacinthiflora cultivars</i>	Ethel Webster
Churchill	Freedom
Clarkes giant	Helen
Annabel	Hecla
Assessippi	Hiawatha
Claude Bernard	Isabella
Daphne pink	Jaga
Doctor Chadwick	James Macfarlane
Evangeline	Jessica
Excel	Katherina
Ester Staley	Minuet
Jewel	<i>Syringa x Prestoniae cultivars:</i>
Maiden's blush	Nerissa
Mount Baker	Redwine
Laurentian	Silvia
Patricia	Portia
Pocahontas	Patience
Sister Justena	Valeria
Turgot	<i>Syringa Reflexa</i>
<i>Syringa x Josiflexa</i>	Pallens
Lynette	<i>Syringa Reticulata</i>
Royalty	var. Mandshurica
<i>Syringa Komarowii</i>	Ivory silk
<i>Syringa Laciniata</i>	<i>Syringa Sweginzowii</i>
<i>Syringa Meyeri</i>	Albida
<i>Syringa Microphylla</i>	Densiflor
<i>Syringa x Nanceiana</i>	<i>Syringa Tomentella</i>
<i>Syringa Oblata</i>	<i>Syringa Tigerstedtii</i>
var. Dilatata	<i>Syringa Uralensis</i>
<i>Syringa Patula</i>	<i>Syringa Villosa</i>
Miss Kim	Aurea
<i>Syringa Pekensis</i>	Rosea
<i>Syringa x Persica</i>	



*Syringa Vulgaris* (see below)

*Syringa Wolfii*

var. *Hirsuta*

*Syringa Yunnanensis*

*Syringa* (*S. Yunnanensis* x *S. Tomentella*)

*Syringa* (*S. Villosa* x *S. Sweginzowii*)

Hedin

Hunting tower

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color I (White)**

Flora

Edith Cavell

Krasavitsa Moskv

Marie Finon

Miss Ellen Willmott

Mme Lemoine

Mont Blanc

Primrose

Slater's Elegance

Vestale

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color II (Violet)**

Agincourt beauty

Albert F. Holden

Cavour

De Miribel

Kosmos

Mieczta

Marechal Lannes

President Lincoln

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color III (BLuish)**

Ami Schott

Bleuatre

Duc de Massa

Firmament

Nadezhda

Olivier de Serres

President Grevy

Woodland blue

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color IV (Lilac)**

Dr. Maillot

Hugo Koster

Joneheer G.P. Van Tets

Komsomolka

Leon Gambetta

Leon Simon

Marlyensis

Michael Buchner

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color V (Pinkish)**

Amethyst

Boussingault

Belle de Nancy

Charm

Capitaine Perrault

Comte Horace de Choiseul

General Sherman

General Pershing

Katherine Havemeyer

Le Printemps

Lucie Baltet

Macrostachya

Mme Antoine Buchner

Montaigne

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color VI (Magenta)**

Condorcet

Capitaine Baltet

Colbert

Congo

Dappled dawn

Edmond About

Georges Bellair

Marechal de Bassompierre

Marechal Foch

Mme Francisque Morel

Mme Kreuter

Mrs. Edward Harding

Perle of Teltow

Paul Thirion

President Poincare

Reaumur

Ruhm von Horstenstein

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color VII (Purple)**

Adelaide Dunbar

Andenken an Ludwig Spaeth

Anna Elizabeth Jacquet

C.B. Van Ness

Charles Joly

Colonel William R. Plum

Etna

Frank Paterson

Hallelujah

Hugo de Vries

Hulda

Monge

Prodige

President Roosevelt

Sensation

***Syringa Vulgaris* Cultivars Color Unknown**

Mme Emil DuPont

# List of Lilacs Available for the 1990 Auction and Plant Sale

## Montreal 1990 ILS Convention

### Source: Plants From Tissue Culture

<i>Syringa x Hyacinthiflora</i> 'Annabel'	'Katherine Havemeyr'
<i>Syringa vulgaris</i> cultivars:	'Monge'
'Andenken an Ludwig Spaeth'	'Mme Lemoine'
'Adelaide Dunbar'	'Olivier de Serres'
'Agincourt beauty'	'President Grevy'
'Congo'	'President Grevy'
'Charm'	'Paul Thirion'
'Charles Joly'	'Primrose'
'Hulda'	'Sensation'

### Source: Rooted Cuttings from the Royal Botanical Gardens of Hamilton

<i>Syringa x Chinensis</i> 'bicolor'	<i>Syringa Patula</i>
<i>Syringa x Hyacinthiflora</i> cultivars:	<i>Syringa x Prestoniae</i>
'Annabel'	'Elinor'
'Claude Bernard'	'Nike'
'Dr. Chadwick'	<i>Syringa Villosa</i> 'Aurea'
'Excel'	<i>Syringa Vulgaris</i> cultivars
'Ester Staley'	'Anna Elizabeth Jacquet'
'Jewel'	'Boussingault'
'Maiden's Blush'	'Comte Horace de Choiseul'
'Mount Baker'	'Hallelujah'
'Pocahontas'	'Macrostachya'
'Sister Justena'	'Michael Buchner'
'Turgot'	'Paul Thirion'
'Royalty'	'Primrose'
<i>Syringa Meyeri</i>	'Sensation'

### Source: Cuttings from the Dominion Arboretum of Ottawa

<i>Syringa x Chinensis</i>	'Isabella'
'Metensis'	'James Macfarlane'
<i>Syringa x Hyacinthiflora</i> cultivars:	'Jessica'
'Dr. Chadwick'	'Minuet'
'Pocahontas'	'Nerissa'
<i>Syringa x Josiflex</i> 'Lynette'	'Portia'
'Royalty'	'Patience'
<i>Syringa Patula</i> 'Miss Kim'	'Sylvia'
<i>Syringa x Prestoniae</i> cultivars:	<i>Syringa Reflexa</i> 'Pallens'
'Adrianne'	<i>Syringa Sweginzowii</i>
'Donald Wyman'	'Densiflora'
'Ethel M. Webster'	'Hunting Tower'
'Freedom'	<i>Syringa Tigerstedtii</i>
'Helen'	<i>Syringa Vulgaris</i> 'Dappled Dawn'
'Hecla'	'President Roosevelt'
'Hiawatha'	<i>Syringa Wolfii</i> var <i>Hirsuta</i>



*Source: Cuttings from Montreal Botanical Garden*

*Syringa x Chinensis* 'Saugeana'

*Syringa Microphylla*

*Syringa Vulgaris* cultivars:

'Andenken an Ludwig Spaeth'

'Blueatre'

'Cavour'

'C.B. Van Nes'

'Capitaine Perrault'

'Dr. Maillot'

'Jonkheer G.P. Van Tets'

'Katherine Havemeyer'

'Krasavitsa Moskv'

'Kosmos'

'Lucie Baltet'

'Le Printemps'

'Mieczta'

'Monge'

'Mme Kreuter'

'Prodige'

'President Lincoln'

'Ruhm von Norstenstein'



**A walk among the lilacs.**

## **Grower's Tips:**

### **TOWARDS THE 25-YEAR LABEL**

**By M.J. Harvey, Halifax, Nova Scotia**

*Reprinted from Rhododendron Society of Canada Bulletin 15(2): 23-28. Fall 1986.*

**I** DON'T KNOW if I'm the only person who plants, say, fifteen rhododendrons, and then six years later has difficulty remembering which is which, but I'll bet there is at least a couple of people in the same boat. If you are one of these people then this article is for you. Here then is the story of my personal identification crisis.

For instance at the moment I am puzzling whether the 'smirfort' at the front of the house is 'Fundy' and the one at the back is 'Bellefontaine', or whether they are the reverse. The lovely red plastic tags which came with them apparently blew away with the autumn leaves or melted with the spring snow. As a result of this incipient crisis I have been observing what other people have done towards solving the label problem and also I have been experimenting with various materials which happen to be lying around.

The problem falls into three distinct categories: 1. The nature of the label material, 2. the method of marking the name, 3. the placement of the label. These will be treated in that order.

**MATERIALS.** The materials available fall into three general classes: wood, plastic and metal. Wooden labels, generally softwood, were formerly used extensively but are declining in availability as plastics take up the cheap end of the market. The usual thin, white-painted, wooden labels never had much strength or rot resistance and were generally reliable for one season only, possibly surviving into a third year. Wood is definitely out as a long-lasting label material. Even stouter stakes have a limited life although rot-proofed stakes are sometimes useful for attaching more flimsy plastic or metal labels to.

*Plastics* occupy a large part of the market in the popular and readily available category. Rolled plastic sheet cut into strips of various shapes is the common system but some labels, particularly those with stalks for sticking into the ground, are moulded. Before rolling the plastic base is usually mixed with a filler to give bite to the surface and, I suspect, keep the price down. I am not aware of any manufacturer who adds UV-absorbing substance to the compound to retard light-induced embrittlement although

some may. The pigment which is added for attractiveness often has some protective effect.

Generally speaking, all the commonly available plastic labels suffer from embrittlement; the only difference is the rate at which it takes place. The lower quality ones are losing flexibility after a year of exposure, the better ones still hang on for up to 5 years. In the end they all snap and blow away. When old the least blow will break them.

I once got some quality plastic labels from England which were deliberately made from high grade material. These lasted up to 10 years but even so they eventually went brittle and snapped. The British have a sophisticated and demanding gardening public and it is, or was, possible to market a higher grade product. In Canada such a high proportion of the public is shopping for the lowest price that there is little commercial pull for a quality line. I suspect the same generally applies in the USA. This is a pity because there are several high grade plastic formulations which have the properties we need. I am told by a friend that he has had some tags made by the National Band and Tag Company in Kentucky which lasted many years with very little deterioration. This shows that plastics with long life do exist. It is up to some company to market labels with long life and be aggressive about it.

The requirement for long-life labels is felt most acutely in those public institutions such as display gardens, botanic gardens and arboretums. In other words those places which have a mandate to inform visitors of the names of the plants on view. Many of these have used labels of black 'Formica' or other multi-layered fiberglass laminate such as are commonly used for table and counter tops. Cutting through the upper black layer exposes the white layer below. This very tough material is one of the best plastic composites commonly available. Unfortunately the cutting is done with an expensive and slow mechanism employing a router controlled by a pantograph and as such is impractical for use by individuals. Among many such institutions the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, near London, England has used labels made by this method for many years. The more venerable of these labels have lost their shine due to weathering of the surface of the laminate. They also appear to lose some of their toughness and become more brittle such that a blow will crack them. Even so it does appear that this material will pass the 25-year test.

*Embossed adhesive plastic tape*, as marketed for example by Dymo Corporation as 'Dymotape' has been used frequently by amateurs. The hand machine to do the embossing is simple and cheap. The tape materials themselves are fairly good quality although still subject to UV degradation over the long term. I have seen one published report of a long-term study in labelling tropical rain-forest plants in the lower levels of the forest in which

this tape was the only material of several to survive exposure over a considerable number of years. However this was a low light level habitat and quite different from the average garden. One problem with adhesive tapes is the adhesive. There has to be compatibility between the adhesive and the base on which the label is stuck. Often the adhesion is lost and the label drops off. On the whole these labels are not sufficiently robust for long-term outdoor use.

*Metals* provide the remaining category of materials. Several have the lasting quality required to survive 25 years.

Common interest centers around aluminum, especially the heavily anodised form where the surface has been oxidised to give it both bite (to take pen or pencil) and weather resistance. Another friend has shown me some such tie-on tags made by Hartley's in the UK still on the rhododendrons at Boulderwood near Halifax after some 30 years. Mind you the names on the labels cannot be read after that time but the material itself has lasted wonderfully. The Hartley Company no longer makes these but identical labels are distributed by Hall's Nursery.

There are of course a large number of other metals and alloys in existence but not normally considered for use in gardens. Examples are zinc, copper, bronze, brass, stainless steel and monel metal. Some of these have the capability of resisting weathering for thousands of years.



**MARKING.** After finding some good material the next problem is to make a mark on it which will last at least 25 years. The marking material has to be matched to the base material.

Felt and fibre pens are the easiest to write with; they are available in many degrees of point from very fine to thick and in washable to waterproof, of which we require waterproof. My experience here is very mixed. One brand, 'Markette' by Eberhard Faber in black faded only slightly in five years' outside exposure. A different brand also in black faded to a pale pink within six months. On the whole I think the nature of the organic dyes used and the fact that they are in a thin layer mitigates against any marker pen lasting 25 years.

Black wax pencil comes off in an inherently thicker layer and can incorporate insoluble and light-resistant pigments. One brand I have found lasts and adheres well to most surfaces, including many of the water repellent (non-polar) forms of plastic. Despite my initial enthusiasm for wax pencils I have to cast doubt on their ability to last outside for 25 years without washing off.

India ink is the oldest marking ink (invented in China of course) and still very good since it is primarily carbon with a binder. Since carbon is a very unreactive element at ambient temperatures there is no problem of

fading. Shiny surfaces repel the water-based ink but any surface with a bite to take the ink will bond to it and produce a long-lasting mark. Unfortunately rain and snow slowly erode the ink away and leave the surface bare although this takes many years. I have seen labels which were written in india ink where the ink has vanished but the name is still visible since the label surface around the ink had been etched away, resulting in a ghost image which was still readable. But 25 years? I think not.

Somewhat surprisingly a near winner in the 25 year race is the old lead pencil. The 'lead' is of course graphite mixed with clay which makes a very stable mark. A fairly soft, 'B' grade pencil is easy to use, easy to read and lasts for many years. The substance of the mark is a powder and as such is capable of being slowly eroded by the action of rain, snow and wind. This accounts for the slow fading which occurs. Twenty-five years is probably too long to expect, but graphite on rough aluminum is good for ten.

Well, that just about eliminates all the inks, paints and pencils from contention. We are left with only intaglio techniques, that is any method of cutting, scratching, stamping or engraving the surface of a material.

This leads us back to aluminum. One company markets a thin label of shiny aluminum which can be indented with a name using any sharp point. No great force is needed to make a mark since the material is little more than thick foil. The indentation is permanent but only moderately easy to read. Whether these thin labels will last 25 years I have some doubts because of the rather insubstantial nature of the metal, but the basic idea is good.

That leaves us with the thicker aluminum labels. Scratching the name on the surface is probably the best method. I have a tungsten carbide scribe which will make a sufficiently deep scratch for a lasting mark. The effort in writing is quite high and while making a straight line is easy, getting a good rounded letter is difficult. Here then is my answer to the requirement for a 25-year label: engraved or scratched aluminum.

Thicker aluminum labels are not easily obtainable since few stores stock them and they are fairly expensive. I have, however, found a low-cost source of high-grade aluminum coated with a high-grade lacquer guaranteed to resist mild acids and with a long life. These labels can be found literally lying along roadsides (unfortunately). I refer to extruded aluminum beer and soft-drink cans. Just get a pair of tin snips or even stout kitchen scissors and cut each can into strips. Scratch the name in the clear lacquer on the inside face of the can and you have your 25-year label for free. I should emphasize that this scrap is quality material; various health regulations and the requirements of competition ensure that only the top grade materials are used. This is in contrast to horticulture where we literally have no standards.



**PLACEMENT.** The remaining problem is where to place the label. The use of string or iron wire results in the label dropping off in a few years. Better attachment materials are monofilament fishing line or copper wire. Some labels come with a narrow stalk which can be wrapped round the stem and attached to the body of the label.

Never attach the label round the main stem. Stems grow faster than you think and before you know it the bark is being cut into and in the extreme the whole stem may be strangled and die. Much better is to hang the label from a relatively minor side branch. This may also be strangled or die naturally but that is of less consequence.

Another placement is to have a pointed label or a special holder with a spike to stick into the ground. This is often the best means of placing a label for readability. A problem here is that people and especially children pull up labels either the better to read them or "because they are there" and then either do not put them back or, worse, stick them somewhere else. What was it W.C. Fields once said — "Someone who hates dogs and small boys cannot be wholly bad"? You have to face the fact that there is a high probability that one day in a 25-year period someone or something is going to destroy that label.

In my opinion there is only one place to put a label. You bury it on the north side of the specimen. How then do you read it? You don't. It is just there for insurance. Make two labels for each plant, bury one and hang the other from a branch. Any above-ground label should be regarded as liable to vanish any day but that does not matter if you have another label hidden in reserve. So the perfect labelling system has two labels: an above-ground disposable one and a buried permanent one.

As a postscript I might add my futuristic ideal label. It would be a microchip embedded in teflon or some longer lasting plastic, buried in the ground. It could be interrogated by pointing some minute antenna at the specimen and the readout would be a choice of voice, videoscreen or hard copy paper. There would be a choice of information on the label such as scientific name, varietal or common name, date when planted, parentage if a hybrid, name of hybridiser, geographical distribution if a species, normal flowering date, hardiness, awards or prizes, etc. Unfortunately it is easier to get to the moon. Well, maybe there is an electronic engineer reading this who could put such a system together. After all, gardening is about dreaming.





**Main Entrance — Montreal Botanical Garden**



## A Visit With Father John Fiala, Bon-Jardinier of Falconskeape

By Polly Hill, Vineyard Haven, MA and Hockessin, DE

**I**T IS LATE MAY 1989 and lilac time. I have just left the gardens of Falconskeape at Medina, Ohio. Here is a garden, not a nursery, as I see it first in full flower comprising the past, present, and future of lilacs. I go from bed to bed, more than sixty ovals and circles and curves, but not only lilacs, I begin to notice. Crab apples are also in full bloom, their colors blending with the deep purples, lavenders, pinks and whites of the lilacs.

There are peonies interplanted. It appears that Father Fiala has been breeding these, too. There are two large lakes in the gardens. Willows line their borders. There are more than ninety different taxa of *Salix*. The most enchanting to me was the Chinese silver willow towering 60 feet or more, evoking Chinese paintings. Many are rare species or forms chosen for their special interest. Father Fiala was once asked to write a willow book. I would like to have such a book to browse in. His erudition and love of the finest plants is felt everywhere.

A *Parrotia persica* with a smooth oval form he shows me, near a group of treasures. *Fagus sylvatica rosea-marginata*, beautiful in its May freshness, is there, also an oak from California that produced shiny five to six inch acorns.

But the main thrust of his attention and devotion seems to be for the lilacs. The collection includes the best of the Russians, newly introduced, the best of the Lemoines, on which the Russians drew for improvements, and purples, lavenders, pinks and whites from all the splendid breeders in this country. I notice many hybrids that have incorporated genes of the landmark 'Rochester' from Fenicchia. Its lower stature and tendency to produce extra petals, beyond the normal four, appear in many of Fiala's progeny since 'Rochester' became available.

New colors, especially blue, nearer to the true Wedgwood blue, can be seen in a number of Father Fiala's introductions. Some are named, some not yet. They are for the near future. In the far future are seedlings, two and three years from evaluation, but already perfuming the May air in all the colors of lilacs, including bi-colors.

'Wedgwood Blue'

'Bluebird'

'Blue Delft'

'Sea Storm'

'Sonnet'

'Wonder Blue'

'Tiffany Blue'

'Flow Blue'

'Blue Danube'

'Atheline Wilbur'

To me, these blues are the prizes of his collections and introductions. Some of my favorite pinks in his collection are:

Prelude, (hyacinthiflora)

Alice Chieppo

Clyde Lucy from Grape Hill Gardens

Whites, gleaming through the colors, lighting them further and lifting the eye and spirit, include 'Aloise', his first named tetraploid introduction of many years ago is still outstanding. Father Fiala named it for his mother. Also 'Sacrament', and 'Gertrude Clark', are both splendid whites.

*Syringa julianae* is a species Father Fiala is working with and has a special affection for, I would judge. His 'Pink Parasol' is an early example of his work. He refers to it as a "corner plant" since it arches widely over a four to five foot frame. The species has dainty leaves and late thin-tubed flowers. They are fragrant and suffused with purple tones, even after the petals have dropped due to the colored peduncles.

This brief review is just a start. Father Fiala's collections glow in my memory, as does his patience and kindness in guiding me through his garden of delights.

## **'Aloise': Great Landscape Value**

*To the Editor:*

GRAND CHAMPION of all the fine lilacs which I viewed while attending the I.L.S. convention at Medina, Ohio, last May, one lilac in my estimation stood out above all others. If I had been appointed official judge, I would have awarded it the Grand Champion blue ribbon.

Its florets were small and single. The panicles were only average in size and the color was not unique or flashy. It stood in all its stately beauty on the right side of the ramp leading to the barn door at Falconskeape. It was a full rounded eight-foot shrub whose dark green foliage completely hid the branches and its many white trusses were spaced evenly over the entire shrub from top to bottom.

Its name was 'Aloise', one of Fr. Fiala's earliest introductions which he dedicated to his mother. In *Lilacs, the Genus Syringa*, Fr. Fiala describes it: "single white, Fiala 1964, smaller florets but extremely heavy bloomer annually, fine." (p.91)

Being a landscape nurseryman I may look at lilac varieties in a different light from most lilac fanciers. I view the plant as a whole and how it would enhance a home owner's garden. A lilac should not be selected on such attributes as very double florets, huge trusses or exotic-colored blooms alone. Look for its landscape value as well.

/s/ Don Wedge  
Albert Lea, MN



**Part of the  
McLaughlin  
Garden**

## **MEET OUR MEMBER**

***BERNARD  
McLAUGHLIN***

**E**VERYONE'S favorite uncle identifies Bernard McLaughlin of South Paris, Maine. About fifty years ago he began to plant the hayfield beside his home and barn into a garden of wildflowers and ornamental plants, including one hundred lilacs. Last year between May and October more than 1,700 visitors dropped in to see his garden at 101 Main Street and the gate is ajar.

Besides a shady walk planted to ferns and native woodland wild flowers, Bernard's garden contains an array of peonies, iris, daylilies, plantain lilies and many other well-grown herbaceous perennials. These are displayed along broad grass walks and backed up by well-pruned lilacs.

He enumerates seventeen cultivars which he grows to perfection and considers superior:

- Vestale, Lemoine 1910, single white
- DeMiribel, Lemoine 1903, single pink to violet
- President Grevy, Lemoine 1886, double blue
- Decaisne, Lemoine 1910, single blue
- Firmament, Lemoine 1932, single blue
- Dwight D. Eisenhower, Fenicchia 1968, single blue
- Leon Gambetta, Lemoine 1907, double lilac
- Lucie Baltet, Baltet 1888, single coral pink
- Mme. Antoine Buchner, Lemoine 1909, double pink
- Katherine Havemeyer, Lemoine 1922, double pink
- Charm, Havemeyer 1954, single pink
- Romance, Havemeyer-Eaton 1954, single pink
- Maiden's Blush, Skinner 1966, single pink
- Paul Thirion, Lemoine 1915, double reddish
- Capitaine Baltet, Lemoine 1919, single reddish
- Esther Staley, Clarke 1948, single reddish, early hybrid
- Anderken an Ludwig Spaeth, Spaeth 1883, single purple

## BULLETIN BOARD

**T** By Don Selinger, Plant Materials Committee

**THE FIRST OF** the "Plants of the Month" in the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association's *Monthly News* was 'Miss Canada' which was introduced in 1967 by the Morden Research Station of Morden, Manitoba. It resulted from a cross between *Syr. Josiflexa* 'Redwine' and *Syr. prestoniae* 'Hiawatha'. The deep pink buds of 'Miss Canada' open to attractive clear pink flowers and are the truest to pink of any lilac and a decided improvement over the older variety 'James Macfarlane'. 'Miss Canada' forms a non-suckering shrub up to 10 feet and produces its flowers in mid-June well after the French Hybrids have flowered.

'Minuet' is another release of the Morden Research Station that was introduced through the Canadian Ornamental Plant Foundation in 1972. It resulted from a similar cross of *Syr. Josiflexa* 'Redwine' and *Syr. prestoniae* 'Donald Wyman'. 'Minuet' forms a very compact, upright plant up to 6 feet in height and is covered in mid to late June with light purple flowers. It is very attractive whether in or out of flower. It begins flowering at an early age.

'Mount Baker' (*Syr. x hyacinthiflora* 'Mount Baker') was developed by the late Dr. Frank Skinner of Dropmore, Manitoba, and introduced in 1961. In spring a few days prior to the French Hybrids it is literally covered with clusters of single white flowers. The foliage is quite similar to the French Hybrids. It forms a plant up to 10 to 12 feet in height and with a spread up to 15 feet at maturity. Makes quite a show when in flower and would be my choice for a white lilac.

Probably the most spectacular individual bloom of any lilac belongs to 'Sensation'. It is a sport of the French Hybrid variety 'Hugo de Vries' in The Netherlands and introduced in 1938. It is just now beginning to be readily available in the United States. The individual flowers are a deep purple and are distinctively edged with white. It is a must for any lilac enthusiast because there is nothing else like it.

### QUESTION

*Which of the five senses is most closely associated with memory?*

Answer: Smell (Think Lilacs!)

## Ohio Nurseryman Jumps on Bandwagon ... A Century Late!

**T**HREE of Lemoine's French hybrid lilacs are offered through a four-color folder at apparently nominal prices, but almost all these cultivars were introduced one hundred years ago!

I.L.S. was founded almost twenty years ago to promote lilacs and to bring to public notice the latest information on lilacs and their culture.

'Belle de Nancy', 'Mme. Casimir Perier' and one other Lemoine introduction of early 20th Century origin plus the yellow-flowered 'Primrose' of Maarse offered as a bonus are advertised. Some offer! Some bonus!

At the 1988 annual meeting at Rochester an Ad Hoc Committee attempted to propose the adoption of a list of recommended lilac cultivars in the face of opposition by two members who objected strongly that recommending lilac cultivars is beyond the purview of "educating the public," a major objective of I.L.S.

The good thing about this 1990 advertisement is that one nurseryman is taking advantage of the plant-buying public to feature lilacs in his offering. The "bad" thing is that modern and superior cultivars are not being offered . . . yet. One way to become familiar with these novelties of superior quality is to attend the Society's annual meetings which are scheduled on or about peak bloom.

### A Report:

#### **Propagation and Distribution Committee**

*Bill Utley, Chairman*

Good news from the Propagation and Distribution Committee. From the beginning, I.L.S. has tried to make new and rare lilacs available to the members. Until now success has eluded us because of the lack of facilities.

Congdon and Weller, wholesale nursery specializing in true-to-name lilacs, came forward with the offer of "What can we do for the International Lilac Society?" Congdon and Weller have in-house laboratories for tissue culture to insure an adequate number of plants, space to grow them to a size that will give a maximum chance of survival and a shipping department to handle 1 and 2 gallon containers.

The Committee plans to offer several special plants each year. The year's offering will be announced each spring by convention time and shipped early fall after summer draughts. Only quality 2 or 3 year plants will be available. All orders will be handled by the Propagation and Distribution Committee.

## ASK DR. LILAC...

### Visitors' Accomodations

**A**SSUMING that your lilac collection is worthy of attracting the public or only lilac fanciers, your invitation should anticipate peak bloom dates. Some parks and arboretums in the northeast arbitrarily set the third weekend of May as lilactime which for "normal" seasons would be the expected date for *Syringa vulgaris* cultivars to be at or approaching full bloom for most varieties. However each spring in northern latitudes is unique, even capricious. One method of determining the probable date is to watch when a certain telltale harbinger plant blooms. Keeping blooming records over the years will help you decide which indicator plant is best advertising.

Local or regional newspapers and radio are useful for announcing garden events. Even roadside posters attract attention and guide potential visitors to your lilacs. Garden clubs and horticultural magazines are good media for inviting the plant-loving public. An illustrated article telling of your lilac collections' features makes a tempting regional press release. A folder, business envelope size, placed in racks where people gather or pass by or made available at exhibitions, flower shows or fairs costs a modest sum and keeps your collection in the public's mind. A sketch map showing important landmarks and intersections, especially if your place is out-of-the-way, is helpful and would supplement written directions from well-known or populous centers.

### Parking Facilities

Visitor parking should have easy access and accomodate several vehicles. It should also be located close to the lilac collection. Use railroad ties to outline the available space. Unless you stage an auction, a going-out-of-business sale, or other crowd-gathering event, initially you need not devote an expansive area for parking. A paved surface is recommended: pea gravel, blacktop or concrete. Liability insurance should be taken out and portable johns rented for the occasion. A shelter for guest registration and informational folders helps to welcome visitors.

### The Lilac Collection

The customary way of displaying lilacs is as specimens along a circuitous walk. Provide ample space for development of individual plants (twenty foot on centers) and for passage of visitors between plants. Mowing should be considered such that the lilacs should form sinuous rows and abrupt changes of direction avoided. Finally, each lilac plant should be conspicuously labeled.

## ASK DR. LILAC...

### Pruning Lilacs

*Q. Why should lilacs be pruned?*

- A. It is done first to restore the lilac (or other woody plant) to improve flowering (and consequent fruit production). Secondly it is done to restrain shoots, to eliminate ungainly growths, or to remove broken and dead branches. In topiary work, including hedging, it obliges growth to conform to certain patterns. But primarily the function of pruning is to restore the balance of carbohydrate/nitrogen relationship in order to improve flower (fruit) quality.

As seedlings, woody plants pass through a nitrogen phase characterized by rapid, lush growth; there is shoot elongation but no (or little and puny) flower production. Carbohydrate ascendancy features good flowering, both qualitatively and quantitatively. As the plant ages, however, flower production diminishes both in quantity and progressively in quality. Competition for light and water also leads to decreased flowering. Therefore it becomes necessary to take corrective measures, one of which is pruning.

*Q. When should lilacs be pruned?*

- A. Many experienced gardeners are of the opinion that the best time to prune common lilacs or 'French hybrids' is while the plants are dormant, that is, in wintertime when there are no leaves. It is then easier to see what needs to be done and to do it expeditiously, when pruning is completed before spring growth starts.

*Q. Why do some authorities and garden writers tell us to prune after flowering?*

- A. Probably because you would thereby enjoy the flowers for another season. But the job at that time is harder because of the fully expanded leaves, and also it disrupts the orderly appearance of the garden.

*Q. How is bloom restored in an old lilac, 10 years old or more?*

- A. Some gardeners claim it can be restored to perfection by eliminating 20 to 33% of older canes, while allowing the strongest, most promising canes to develop.

Suckers should be kept under constant restraint — too many should not be allowed to develop any one year. In this way the common lilac's



height will be kept within 8 to 10 feet, such that its bloom may be seen to advantage.

*Q. Should spent blooms be removed?*

A. Actually the removal of spent blooms is a trimming process and is done for appearance or to prohibit seed formation. It applies only to single flowering varieties. Lilacs growing under optimum conditions with full sun, adequate moisture, fertile "good garden" soil should produce large, well-formed clusters of blooms year after year.

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## ARCHIVES: Why and What?

The first archives were probably those of the Greek government. The word derives from the Greek word "*archeion*" which means "government house." This was the building which housed the documents pertaining to the government. Eventually the word came to mean, not the building, but the documents themselves.

Every organization has archives which should be: in order, in an accessible place, stored in a safe condition protected from pests, dust, extreme heat or cold, dampness and acidity (of paper) which are all enemies of archives.

Every member of I.L.S. is an archivist with his or her collection of letters, diaries, press clippings, photographs, drawings or field notes. Therein is a rich source of material which should be preserved.

Of special importance are the personal papers and records of elected officers and committees; also, minutes of the meetings of the Society and of the Board of Directors, correspondence and publications.

At present I.L.S. archives are scattered in several locations. It is projected they be organized in one location for convenient access for information and research, and for proper care.

We request contributions to help make our archives a wealth of materials. As we collect and organize, keep in mind "Archives are written memory."

*Archives Committee:*

*Lois Utley, Founding Member, Chair*

*Mabel Harkness, New York State Licensed Librarian,  
Life Member*

*Orville Steward, Founding Member and Past President*

## LETTERS . . .

### Gardens in Estonia

*To Jack Alexander, The Arnold Arboretum:*

Today I talked to a mutual friend, Peter del Tredici (Arnold Arboretum botanist) and in answer to my question on the *Syringa* (sic) Society he told me to contact you. The background to my question is in fact the dramatic changes in Europe this year. Through fellow members in the International Clematis Society, I got an invitation to visit the Estonian Horticulture Society.

On October 25-27 I travelled 250 miles in northern and central Estonia visiting private gardens. In the last few years the Estonians have had an opportunity to mark out their independence and one way is gardening. In spite of lacking resources they have managed to start up almost from scratch to an active interest for horticulture which is not always found in the West! My hosts, the editors for their horticultural magazine, *Aiandus Mesindus*, told me there are by now 25,000 subscribers and 2,700 waiting for subscriptions! But they cannot get enough paper for another 2,700 copies, a situation hard to imagine over here.

Gardening in Estonia is based on what is left from the time before World War II and what they have found in old parks in the USSR and other eastern European countries, but my hosts told me about their efforts to present their readers the horticulture in the West of today and how anxious the gardeners are to fill up the gap of knowledge by information from the West. They urgently need garden literature and journals and all kinds of material but they cannot get foreign currency for this kind of "luxury." To make this short: I promised them to help with any kind of literature and other materials.

Lilacs are, of course, very popular in Estonia but I am no expert on this genus so I can not tell you much about this. The Estonians told me about your Society and I found out that they would like to get in touch with you. Because of lack of foreign currency they cannot join your Society, but I would suggest you consider a proposal from me to give free right to translate articles in your magazine into Estonian. In that way the information from you will be well known in Estonia. A support like that should prove to them your solidarity. This support would not cost you much but

mean encouragement to the Estonian people of total 900,000 individuals.

The names and address are:

Mr. and Mrs. Mati and Maira Laane,  
Sompa tee 33, 200019 TALLINN, Estonia, USSR

Please keep in mind that any kind of garden literature and magazines that you may be able to support with will be much appreciated and will make impact to their development of gardening and re-establishment of old traditions.

For myself I would like to ask you for information of your Society which I do not know much about. My main interest is Magnolia and climbing plants but *Syringa* has been cultivated in Scandinavia since the 17th century and by several regarded domestic. It might be something of interest to join your Society.

*Yours sincerely*

*/s/ Lennarth Jonsson*

*Lindenasvagen 8*

*S-371 45 KARLSKRONA*

*Sweden*



**Expo Olympic  
Tower  
overlooks  
(L to R)  
Pat Cohen,  
Orville Steward  
and Bob Clark  
on their recent  
visit to Montreal  
Botanical  
Garden.**

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# INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY

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**A section  
of the  
McLaughlin  
garden.**



**BERNARD  
McLAUGHLIN**

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