

Lilacs

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of the International Lilac Society

IN
THIS
ISSUE:

Convention Information
Election Ballot

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Single or Family / Annual	\$ 20.00
Sustaining	30.00
Institution/Commercial	35.00
Life	160.00

* Mail membership dues to Asst. Treasurer Robert Gilbert

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.

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Owen M. Rogers, Editor, 38 College Road, Durham, NH 03824-3544

LILACS 1999

PUBLISHED APRIL 1999

Covers

Front Cover

The Prentis House at the Shelburne Museum. Used by permission. Photo credit Mark Sasahara. We used a winter shot of the Prentis House on the cover of the winter issue. Here it is with the lilacs in bloom. Just imagine what it will look like when you are standing beside it at the convention in May.

"Courtesy of Shelburne Museum, Shelburne VT"

(Note: this line should also have appeared in the credit for the cover picture of the winter issue since it was used with their kind permission).

Back Cover

Syringa × *henryi* 'Julia'. Photo credit Kjell Wickman, printed with permission. See story in this issue.

Syringa × *hyacinthiflora* 'Esther Staley'. See article inside. Photo credit Colin Chapman.

International Lilac Society Annual Conference

Burlington, Vermont
May 20, 21 & 22, 1999

Tentative Itinerary, as of 2/99

Thursday, May 20

Registration (Susse Chalet)	2:00 - 7:00 PM
Board Meeting	2:00 - until completion of business
Hospitality Room open	6:00 - 10:00 PM

Friday, May 21

Complimentary continental breakfast (for Susse Chalet guests)

Travel to Shelburne Farms	8:00 - 8:30 AM
Tour of Shelburne Farms	8:30 - 9:30 AM
Program of Speakers, Coach Barn, Shelburne Farms	9:30 - 11:30 AM
- Landscape Problems and Solutions	
- Monitoring Insect Pests of Lilacs	
- Mycorrhizae in the Landscape	
- Community Lilac Plantings	

Picnic Lunch, Coach Barn	11:30 - 12:30 PM
Annual Meeting, Coach Barn	12:30 - 1:30 PM
Travel to University of Vermont, Horticultural Research Farm	1:30 - 1:45 PM
Tours of Hort. Farm Lilac and other shrub Collections	1:45 - 3:15 PM
Travel to Hotel (Susse Chalet)	3:15 - 3:45 PM
Travel to Radisson Hotel for President's Dinner	5:00 - 5:30 PM
Social Hour at Seasons-by-the-Lake	5:30 - 6:00 PM
Dinner at Seasons-by-the-Lake	6:00 - 7:30 PM
Entertainment in Hotel Function Room	7:30 - 8:30 PM
Travel to Hotel (Susse Chalet)	8:30 - 9:00 PM
Hospitality Room open	9:00 - 11:00 PM

Saturday, May 22

Complimentary continental breakfast (for Susse Chalet guests)

Board Meeting	7:30 - 8:30 AM
Travel to Shelburne Museum	9:00 - 9:30 AM
Welcome at Shelburne Museum Round Barn	9:30 - 10:00 AM
Free Time on the Museum Grounds	10:00 - 2:00 PM
-Free admission to over 30 buildings and the side-wheeler "Ticonderoga"	
-Lilac tours	
-ILS lilac workshops	
Pruning	
Planting and Care	
Catered picnic lunch at the ILS tent (Museum grounds)	Noon

Lilac auction, in or near ILS Tent	2:00 - 4:00 PM
Travel to Hotel (Susse Chalet)	4:00 - 4:30 PM
Travel to Quarry Hill Club	5:30 - 6:00 PM
Awards Banquet at Quarry Hill Club	
-Social Hour	6:00 - 7:00 PM
-Dinner	7:00 - 8:00 PM
-Awards	8:00 - 9:00 PM
Travel to Hotel (Susse Chalet)	9:00 - 9:30 PM
Hospitality Room open	9:30 - 11:00 PM

Sunday, May 23

Complimentary continental breakfast (for Susse Chalet guests)

WANTED: LILACS FOR THE AUCTION - 1999

Looking forward to the I.L.S. Auction seems to excite us each year. I.L.S. needs your help to make the lilac auction a success. As has been the tradition through the years, we have appreciated the donations of lilac plants (as well as other interesting plants) and other lilac related items to sell at the auction at each convention. Please consider the plants you have and which ones you could contribute to the auction. All varieties are welcome and certainly uncommon varieties and species are especially desirable. All proceeds from the auction go toward the financing of I.L.S. projects and activities.

Please write me or contact me as soon as you can with any information about your possible donations. Should you not be able to bring the items to the convention yourself, please consider sending the plants or items to me at the address below. Please contact me prior to shipping in the Spring so that the plants can be provided with the best care upon arrival. Plants may be sent in bare root or otherwise. I will pot them and keep them growing, as well as transport them to the convention. Careful labeling of each plant or group of same plant is essential to having accurately auctioned plants. Using waterproof ink on the labels, or embossed or inscribed labels are greatly appreciated and prevent mix-ups. I will provide a proper label if needed.

I plan to have the proper government official at the auction to provide the plant buyer with the necessary certificates to allow the plants into Canada. Buyers returning to other countries with plants will need to find out the procedures for returning with plants.

Please contact me at any time with your plans or needs about the auction. We all hope to have a successful auction and convention. Thank you for any support you may be able to provide for our auction.

Ship or contact:

Peter Ely
57 Squantuck Road
Seymour, Ct. 06483-2149 USA
Tel: 203-888-2628

Horsford Gardens & Nursery
attn: Charles Plonski
2111 North Greenbush Rd.
Charlotte, VT 05445
Tel: 802-425-2811

1999 CONVENTION TRAVEL INFORMATION

by Peter Ely

BY AIR:

The BURLINGTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT is located on Airport Drive in South Burlington, Vermont, two miles east of Burlington. Burlington is 95 miles south of Montreal; 150 miles north of Albany, New York; 225 miles northwest of Boston; and 300 miles north of New York City. Several airlines provide direct services and international connections to and from major cities worldwide, including US AIR, UNITED, CONTINENTAL, DELTA, and AMERICAN.

Air travelers should locate the Hotel Shuttle Phone in the luggage pick-up area to contact the SUSSE CHALET for free travel to your hotel between 7AM and 7PM. For other times, call the hotel for their instructions (802-879-8999). The Susse Chalet is at 590 St. George Road, Williston (a five mile ride).

BY AUTO

I-89 is the most direct route from the north or south to the Burlington/Shelburne area. Take EXIT 12 (Rt. 2A) off of I-89. The Susse Chalet is just a short distance north of the exit - don't miss it! - at 590 St. George Road, Williston.

From Rt. 7 (in Burlington/South Burlington), locate I-189 (to I-89 South) and proceed only a few miles on what becomes I-89 South. Exit at EXIT 12 (Rte 2A). Proceed north on Rt2A a very short distance and watch for Susse Chalet Inn on the left. You are now there!

VERMONT TOURIST INFORMATION:

All information on the Vermont/Lake Champlain/Burlington/Shelburne areas can be obtained from the chamber of Commerce at 802-863-3489/FAX 802-863-1538 or their Website at <http://www.vermont.org> or from the Vermont Department of Travel and Tourism, 802-434-8100 or their Website www.blumap.com. Enjoy Vermont!

IF YOU ARE PLANNING EXTRA TIME TO SEE VERMONT, you will find it endowed with magnificent scenic panoramas, rich in history and filled with many attractions and recreation opportunities. Nearby are Horsford Gardens & Nursery (oldest in Vermont), Lake Champlain (second largest fresh water lake in USA after Great Lakes) activities, the National Museum of the Morgan Horse, Vermont Teddy Bear Factory, shopping centers, antique shops, hiking and mountain adventures, museums and lilacs. Information can be obtained from the travel centers above.

1999 CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Shelburne, Vermont

by Peter Ely

The setting for the 1999 I.L.S. Convention is in the scenic and historical Champlain Valley in the vicinity of Burlington, Vermont, which overlooks Lake Champlain and New York's Adirondack Mountains. The city is home to the University of Vermont and the National Gardening Association.

Our hotel is in suburban Williston, about eight miles east of downtown Burlington. The President's Dinner will be held downtown in a restaurant overlooking the lake and mountains. The Awards Banquet will be held at a former country club near the University of Vermont campus.

To the south of the city are South Burlington and Shelburne where we will visit three spectacular places of horticultural interest. All are within a few miles of one another and two share a close historical connection.

The University of Vermont Horticultural Research Center

The U.V.M. Hort Farm at South Burlington, Vermont contains over 110 lilac specimens planted since 1952. About 90 are identified and labeled, representing over 60 varieties. Many common ones, as well as 'Furst Liechtenstein', 'Hermann Eilers', 'Ambroise Verschaffelt', 'Jean Bart', 'Dr. Lindley', 'Dr. Masters', 'Jean Mace', and more. In addition, the Center contains significant ornamental shrub and fruit tree collections, many of which should be in bloom for our visit. Our host will be David Heleba, President, Friends of the Hort Farm at U.V.M.

Shelburne Farms

Once Vermont's largest and grandest private estate, Shelburne Farms is now a non-profit environmental center. The property of over 3000 acres was assembled during the late 1800's as the country home of Dr. William Seward Webb and his wife, Lila Vanderbilt Webb. Planned under the guidance of eminent landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmstead, the property contains four enormous barns, as well as a rambling Queen Anne-style mansion on a bluff overlooking Lake Champlain. The house is used as an elegant country inn; its formal gardens have been restored; a significant collection of lilacs adorns the slope approaching the house from the main drive. A short distance beyond the house is the imposing coach barn, site of our morning program and lunch. Our host at Shelburne Farms will be Marshall Webb, Buildings and Grounds Manager.

Shelburne Museum

Dr. and Mrs. Webb's son, J. Watson Webb, Sr., married Electra Havemeyer, daughter of "Sugar King" H.O. Hevemeyer and Louisine Elder. The senior Havemeyers were among the first Americans to acquire French Impressionist paintings. Their collecting legacy is preserved in the "Havemeyer Collection" at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Their daughter, Electra Havemeyer Webb, turned her collecting interest in the direction of Americana and American Folk Art. The younger Webbs were based in Westbury, Long Island and New York City, but also maintained a home on the estate in Shelburne. In the 1940's, they began acquiring property in nearby Shelburne Village to house their growing col-

lections. Historic buildings and structures, including a locomotive and a steamboat were moved to the site from all over New England. The property was opened to the public as the Shelburne Museum.

The museum's grounds were planned with help from landscaper designer Umberto Innocenti. Lilacs were a favorite of Electra Webb (1888-1960), who may have been inspired in part by her relative, noted lilac hybridizer Theodore A. Havemeyer (1868-1936), of Brookville and Cedar Hill Nursery, Long Island. He named one of his cultivars in her honor, single magenta 'Mrs Watson Webb'. Electra Webb brought 250 lilac plants from her Long Island home to the Museum grounds, providing the beginning of the collection we see today. About 75 lilacs were planted in the Lilac Arboretum next to the Webb Memorial Building about 1968. In any event, the Shelburne Museum grounds today contain about 400 lilacs, representing about 90 varieties. I.L.S. members have been helpful in recent years with the daunting task of identifying and labeling portions of this huge collection.

Shelburne Museum's Annual Lilac Festival will coincide with the I.L.S. Convention this May. Mark your calendars, and send in your registration if you have not already. The beauty of the lilacs in bloom throughout the grounds can be breathtaking, and a convention not to be missed. Our host at Shelburne Museum will be Reed Cherington, Head Groundskeeper.

SAIDA OBITUARY

by Frank Moro

The lilac world has lost a devoted member on January 8th 1999. Mr. Shinsaku Saida of Sapporo, Japan passed away after having brain surgery. He was a great lover of lilacs and we had the chance to exchange faxes many times over the last few years. What really struck me most about Mr. Saida was the willingness to offer lilacs to people free in Japan. He supplied many wonderful photos for our cd-rom on lilacs and I am very honored to have had him submit material and be a part of our lives forever. He has touched the lives of many everywhere and there is an old proverb that says "His spirit will be alive for as long as all the hearts he touched are alive."

THE MILLENNIUM YEAR

by Frank Moro

As I write this article I can remember the 1st of January this year as we toasted to a good year and we all looked at each other wondering where we will all be in one year.

It's scary to think that here we are already in early March and there are only 9 months to go. For most of us this will be a most significant moment in our lives. It will be a sign of putting out an old flame and lighting a new one. What will we do to pass on something to our future generations?

Lilacs are a part of our heritage and a sign of love. We should promote the planting of a lilac with our children and grandchildren in the spring of 2000. I look upon our own family and think back to when we planted our lilac collection

at home and took pictures of the children helping us. When they now pass the lilacs when we stroll through the garden they do not refer to the lilacs as a 'Krasavitsa Moskvyy' or 'Maiden's Blush' but as the lilac that I planted with Mommy and Daddy. They each have their own plant and wow do they run full speed in the spring with an arm full of **their lilacs**. The names to them are insignificant but they will always have that fond memory with them for the rest of their lives. The lilacs will long live after we are gone and with some care they may tell their children of the day they planted their lilac.

We have planted on every birth of our children a plant that they will hopefully have a chance to see and enjoy when they are older.

Once again in 1999 we will be planting yet one more lilac for our family. Sara is expecting our 5th child sometime in August 1999.

Every member of our society should have a mission for spring 2000, it is to plant with a child a lilac that will become a part of their heritage. We have much work to do to promote lilacs for the future and we should all do our part. Recently Karen Wheeler of California, a society member, e-mailed me with an interesting message:

"What would make lilacs gain popularity to be better understood by the gardeners? I don't think they are hard to grow. Most people will buy a rose with no thought, and can find them even at the grocery store, but have to really hunt for a lilac. Why? With the turn of the century, nostalgia increasing, all we need is some publicity like the roses get!"

We must encourage the planting of lilacs in the next year. I have some ideas that I will release for the next quarterly.

On another note we are approaching our goal of 700 cultivars thanks to some very great people in the society. Once we have completed the task of grafting we will make available to the members a list of what is in production.

For the 2000 convention in Montreal there will be unique lilacs not even found on the continent as yet. As Colin Chapman often says there are too many unique lilacs going at give-away prices.

For our convention there will be only one lilac of each cultivar with a photo, when possible, of it and there will be a minimum bidding price on each lilac.

The regulars will be low and the rare will have an interesting price. It is a sad situation to see wonderful lilacs go for next to nothing. One ace in the hole for us is that we will have the most exotic auctioneer available: Colin Chapman. Colin has a way of describing lilacs that make even my mouth water on the most common of lilacs. Let's not forget that the money raised is for the society.

I wish everyone an excellent convention as I will not be attending it because I will be in Rochester at the Lilac Festival with our booth and setting up shop for our production area in Rochester at that time.

I.L.S. DISTRIBUTION

by Frank Moro

The lilacs chosen for this distribution are: 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Pink Parasol'. Both are Father Fiala lilacs and should make wonderful additions to every garden.

Vulgaris 'Yankee Doodle' 1985 S-7 This is definitely the darkest lilac of Father Fiala and is a semi-dwarf. The trusses are compact and the florets are a dark purple. Plants will be available in 1 gallon pot size.

US members: \$15.00

Canadian members: \$22.00 plus taxes

Julianae 'Pink Parasol' 1983 S-5 This lilac is a gorgeous semi-dwarf with exquisite pale pink florets that are recurved. It is a good grower and an excellent bloomer. It was derived from a seedling of 'George Eastman'. It is available in a 1 gallon pot as a grafted plant and is in very limited quantities. This lilac has never made the market and is rare. It is not available in any major public lilac collections.

US members: \$25.00

Canadian members: \$37.00

These prices include shipping and export papers if needed. Orders are sent priority mail (US), Expresspost in Canada. 3% of net sales will be donated to the I.L.S. at the annual convention in Shelburne Vermont on all distribution lilacs sold.

Send all orders to: Select Plus Int. Nursery
 1510 Pine
 Mascouche J7L 2M4
 Quebec Canada

BERDEEN OPEN HOUSE

There will be an open house at Ken Berdeen's Lilac collection Saturday, May 29, from 10 am until 3 pm. 1685 Alewife Road in Kennebunk, ME. Ken's daughter Cynthia, granddaughter Lynette Sirois, and other friends will be there.

For more information or directions please contact

Evie King, Syringa Plus - P.O. Box 363 West Boxford, MA 01885.

Phone (978) 352-3301 or Fax (978) 352-3313.

If any I.L.S. members would like to see Ken's collection and cannot make this date, please give us a call.

Hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,
Evie & Roger

1999 LILAC FESTIVAL
at the Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion
Sunday, May 23, 1999 12 pm - 5 pm

The Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion in Portsmouth, NH is the 18th century former residence of Royal Governor Benning Wentworth. While living there between 1750-1767 he imported several lilacs (*Syringa vulgaris*) which surrounded the Mansion and continue to thrive today. These lilacs are believed to be some of the oldest in North America and have been designated as the NH state flower. This year we will celebrate their bloom with a Lilac Festival featuring special guests Professor Owen Rogers from UNH, and Roger Coggeshall and Evie King of Syringa Plus. Roger and Evie are in the process of propagating new lilacs from the Wentworth plants and will have the first new plants available for sale at the Festival. Additional NH plants, including late blooming lilacs will also be for sale. Free tours of the mansion will be given from 12pm - 1 pm and 4 pm - 5 pm. At 2:00 pm Roger Coggeshall and Evie King will give a presentation about propagation and will be available for questions about the care and pruning of lilacs. For more information about ordering Wentworth lilacs call (603) 436-6607.

LUMLEY LILACS
Open To The Public

Albert Lumley was a member of I.L.S. for many years and amassed a large collection of lilacs. His son has rejuvenated the lilac planting and opens it to the public.

The planting is open during lilac bloom, usually May 15th to June 15th, 8:30 am to dusk. No dogs, please. For further information contact

James Lumley
24 Harkness Rd.
Amherst, MA 01002
Tel: (413) 253-5082

LILACS AT HAMESBEST GARDENS

Travel East, Travel West
After All, Hame's Best

The farm where Phil Hodgdon grew up was called Hamesbest after this saying quoted by a Scottish hired hand. When Phil retired from teaching at a Technical College in the center of the Green Mountains he started a nursery and landscaping business, Hamesbest Nursery. Since he was fond of lilacs and used them frequently in his landscaping, he and Gertrude joined the International Lilac Society when it was founded in the early 70s. On Phil's death in 1978 Gertrude sold most of the nursery stock to a fellow nurseryman, but kept one of each variety of lilac. As space was cleared these 65 varieties were planted as a memorial to Phil, and the public was first invited to visit the garden in 1981. Gertrude continued to add new lilacs from the I.L.S. auctions and was joined in her efforts by daughters Jean Kerle and Ruth Buchanan. Today the gardens

include over 120 varieties and species of lilacs, and many other unusual shrubs and trees. These range from a specimen row of late lilacs and viburnums planted by Phil in the 60s, (how many of you realize that in the right conditions 'Miss Kim' at 15' is only slightly shorter than Preston Hybrids?), to recent acquisitions sheltered in a cold frame. Most of the lilacs are planted in island beds with perennials and a few self seeding annuals.

Hamesbest Gardens is located in Randolph Center, Vermont just a one hour drive from Shelburne, about a mile from Exit 4 on I-89. We would welcome any I.L.S. members before or after the Convention in May, with more bloom likely to be after the Convention. Lilacs in the collection are listed below. Not all the names are registered.

S. vulgaris

'A. M. Brand'
'Adelaide Dunbar'
'Agincourt Beauty'
'Albert F. Holden'
'Ami Shott'
'Arch McKean'
'Avalanche'
5 Berdeen hybrids
'Bleuatre'
'Bright Centennial'
'Capitaine Baltet'
'Charles Joy'
'Chris'
'Congo'
'Cynthia'
'Dappled Dawn'
'Edmond Bossier'
'Edward J. Gardner'
'Firmament'
'General Sherman'
'Glory'
'Hosanna'
'Kapitan Teliga'
'Katherine Havemeyer'
'Kosmos'
'Krasavitsa Moskvya'
'Lake Bled'
'Leon Gambetta'
'Leone Gardner'
'Le Printemps'
'Letha E. House'
'Lucie Baltet'
'Ludwig Spaeth'
'Lynette Sirois'
'Macrostachya'
'Marechal Foch'
'Marechal Lannes'

'Marie Finon'
'Marie Francis'
'Miss Ellen Willmott'
'Mme F. Morel'
'Mme Lemoine'
'Monge'
'Moonglow'
'Mrs. W. E. Marshall'
'Night'
'Oakes Double White'
'Oliver de Serres'
'Paul Thirion'
'Pink Lace'
'President Grevy'
'President Lincoln'
'President Poincare'
'Primrose'
'Priscilla'
'Reamur'
'Rene Jary Desloges'
'Rochester'
'Sarah Sands'
'Silver King'
'Slater's Elegance'
'Tankist'
'Vestale'
'Victor Lemoine'
'Walter's Pink'
'Wedgwood Blue'
'Wheatley Pink'
'White Swan'
'Wonderblue'
'Znamya Lenina'

S. × hyacinthiflora

'Alice Eastwood'
'Asessippi'
'Blanche Sweet'
'Buffon'
'Dr. Chadwick'
'Esther Staley'
'Evangeline'
'Maiden's Blush'
'Mt. Baker'
'Pink Cloud'
'Pocahontas'
'Swarthmore'
'Vesper Song'

S. × prestoniae

'Coral'
'Donald Wyman'
'Elinore'
'Ethel Webster'
'Fountain'
'Isabella'
'Mary C. Bingham'
'Minuet'
'Miss Canada'
'N. H. Dark Green'-seedling
'Nocturne'
'Portia'
'Romeo'

S. × josiflexa

'Agnes Smith'
'Guinivere'
'James Macfarlane'
'Jesse Hepler'
'Maybelle Farnum'

S. × josiflexa seedling

'Nellie Bean'
'Royalty'

S. × chinensis 'Red Rothmagensis'

S. × henryi 'White Summers'

S. meyeri 'Palabin'

S. microphylla 'Superba'

S. × nanceiana 'Rutilant'

S. oblata 'Cheyenne'

S. patula 'Miss Kim'

S. villosa × *sweginzowii* 'Hedin'

Species & hybrids

S. chinensis

S. laciniata × *pinnatifolia*

S. microphylla

S. pekinensis

S. × persica

S. reticulata

S. swegiflexa

S. tigerstedtii

S. wolfii

SPOKANE LILAC SOCIETY

by MarvaLee Peterschick, Spokane Lilac Society President
& International Lilac Society Regional Vice President

How time flies when one is working with lilacs. Our Spokane Lilac Society is now over ten years old. It seems only yesterday, November 1988 when we first formed the society with 20 members. What has happened in the past ten years? LOTS!!

We've earned money at lilac plant sales, mainly to make donations to the local park systems, and increase the lilac collections. One of our goals was to have lilacs in every park within the city limits of Spokane, the lilac city. With the help and dedication of Spokane Park & Recreation employees, this goal is reaching reality. The lilac collections at Manito Park continue to grow and expand, with new varieties added each year. The same is true for John Finch Arboretum. Sally Sullivan, the caretaker of the arboretum works closely with the society, not only is she an honorary member, she listens to advice from lilac society members on the



photo credit: MarvaLee Peterschick
 MarvaLee Peterschick, Lany Littman, Geri Odell

selection of new varieties for the arboretum. Spokane Lilac Society members help groom the lilacs in the arboretum after bloom time each June.

We hosted the International Lilac Society convention in 1993. Most members found it to be a rewarding experience.

We continue to work toward the goal of having a lilac named "SPOKANE." That reality may be very close at hand with Past President Reva Ballreich of International Lilac Society supplying seedlings this spring for club members to observe and critique growth and bloom habits.

When you arrive at the Spokane International airport, you can observe a lilac planting outside the restaurant windows. This planting was done by our members. It is very appropriate for visitors to see lilacs growing in the lilac city. Right now, our society is working with other associations like the Spokane Lilac Festival Association and

the Spokane City Council including Mayor, who just happens to be a member of our society, to get the highway signs changed which say "ENTERING SPOKANE." We want them to say "ENTERING SPOKANE, THE FRIENDLY LILAC CITY," and have an emblem of a lilac on the sign also.

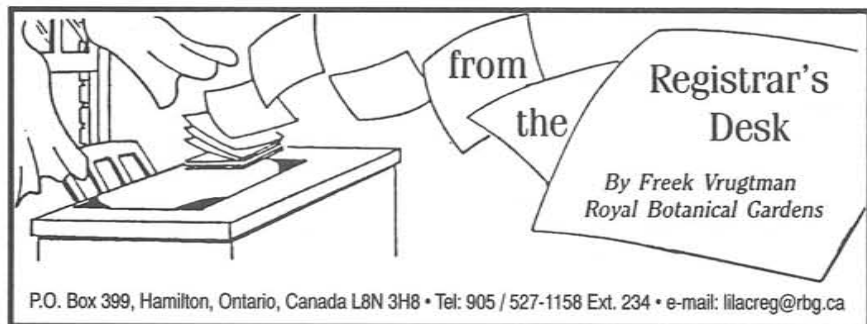
Another lilac project which has high visibility is a highway location which we have adopted along Interstate 90 and the on ramp of highway 195 just west of the city. This location has 56 lilacs planted (white 'Mme Lemoine') and we pick up litter in it twice a year or when needed. The landscaping also includes native plant material.

Other outstanding lilac plantings in the Inland Northwest include the University of Idaho arboretum at Moscow, Idaho. This arboretum and botanical garden was just established in 1980. For more information about the U of I arboretum, contact Richard Naskali, Arboretum Director/Associate Professor, 205 Continuing Education Bldg., University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83844-3226, telephone 208-885-6250 or e-mail naskali@uidaho.edu. From about May 20th to June 1st, you can observe beautiful blooms of lilacs along with spring blooming trees.

Spokane Lilac Society will be starting to dig the lilac shoots from the local collections soon. About 300 new lilacs will be potted and ready for our sale on May 1 & 2 at Manito Park in Spokane. It gets better every year, with the society realizing proceeds of around \$1000. Just think how many more lilacs will be growing in and around the Northwest.

As a regional vice president for International Lilac Society, I send out a letter to every member who lives in the Northwest telling them about the lilacs available at our sale. Last year, we had one I.L.S. member travel 300 miles to attend our sale.

If any member of I.L.S. want further information about the activities of Spokane Lilac Society, they may contact me at this address: MarvaLee Peterschick, 37307 Old SR195, Rosalia, WA 99170 - telephone 509-523-4063 or e-mail at davidpeterschick@hotmail.com.



Syringa 'Julia' (*Syringa* × *henryi* 'Julia')

In Finland we have a very cold and hard winter climate. Winter temperatures of -25 to -35 degrees Celsius (-13 to -31 Fahrenheit) are not unusual in Finland. In eastern part of Finland we will usually have a lot of snow but in the middle and the western part of Finland near the Gulf of Bothnia there are often cold temperatures with little snow, or just a few centimeters of snow. This means that the soil often freezes to a depth of 70 to 150 centimeters and stress conditions for all kinds of plants are not good. Although frost sometimes will damage plants, it is the wind from March through April which is the worst thing for our plants.

Our winter conditions have forced us in Finland to do a lot of research. Although the Government's Agricultural Research Center is the leading research center in Finland, there are a lot of private firms which conduct observations and do creative research.

Syringa 'Julia' is a result of such a private initiative. 'Julia' was found in a hedge planting of Hungarian lilac, which had been planted sometime from the late 1950s to the early 1960s. After about a span of ten years, while the hedge was untrimmed, Jörgen Wickman suddenly found a very large pinkish-red flowering lilac. He made some cuttings in summer and the plants were planted out for observation. In the early 1970s home garden customers wanted something else than the "normal" Hungarian lilac propagated from seeds of hybridized Hungarian lilacs in city park and landscape plantings. The fact was that a wide range of hybrids were planted in one and the same hedge. Because this "new" Julia-lilac was propagated from cuttings of one single mother plant it was a good and uniform offering for hedges. After a few years it was the most planted hedge lilac in the region. In that time almost everyone was pruning their hedges, so it was still not known that 'Julia' was a very nice flowering shrub.

Because Jörgen Wickman didn't grow lilacs for the wholesale market, it was little known in other parts of Finland and Scandinavia. After the retirement of Mr. Wickman in 1983, under Kjell Wickman's leadership, the nursery began to grow 'Julia' as a small flowering tree and also as a flowering landscape plant. The wholesale introduction of this cultivar began a few years ago in the Autumn of 1993. Today it is a well known cultivar for dwarf trees and a specimen shrub for home gardens. 'Julia' lilac has found its way into the Scandinavian market.

'Julia' lilac has a single glossy pinkish-red floret, thyrses are full, 30 cm long

and 15 - 20 cm wide, flowering a few days later than the "usual" Hungarian lilac. In Finland the 'Julia' lilac flowers in June. Older plants appear to be more floriferous than the younger plants. 'Julia' lilac is a very winter hardy, vigorous and floriferous shrub, 2 to 3½ m tall, foliage is glossy green. This cultivar is also fast growing and is tolerant to a wide range of soil conditions. No notable pest or disease problems have been observed. 'Julia' is an open pollinated seedling of *Syringa josikaea*, probably a hybrid of the villosa group (*Syringa josikaea* × *villosa*?) These hybrids are named *Syringa* × *henryi* (Woody Flora of Finland, Dendrological Society, 1989). *Syringa* 'Julia' in a planting with *Syringa* 'Holger', a white josikaea hybrid from Holger Tolppola in the south of Finland, makes a very nice looking contrasting landscape.

Keskas research (winterhardy plants for landscaping by Finnish Government's Agricultural Research Center) has also found other hybrids in this group. We will probably see more of these cultivars in the future.

Kjell Wickman, owner of WICKMAN'S PLANTSKOLA, Wickman's Nursery in Finland, e-mail: wiplant@tawi.fi, FAX: +358 6 22 43 733, Telephone: +358 6 22 41 433.

Literature used for this article:

Woody Flora of Finland, Finnish Dendrological Society, 1989.

Kekas-tutkimus. Kestäviä koristekasveja viherrakentämisen tarpeisiin, Sitra serie B No89, 1989.

Price lists and brochures from Wickmans Planskola.

NCCPG National Collection Of Syringa

by Colin Chapman

During the course of most of the conversations I have with visitors to the collection, there comes a moment when the lilac in the gardens of parents or grandparents is remembered. No other plant I know can so precisely prompt in one generation memories of their antecedents in another. It is partly the colour of the lilac, partly its form, partly its eternal presence but mainly its fragrance which activates this response. There is no doubt that one of the lilac's most precious and enduring characteristics is the capacity for arousing a feeling of nostalgia: the remembrance of things past.

This response is charming but it does not do justice to the lilac because it implies that it only has value to contemporary gardens as an echo of the past. As members of this Society, we are aware that the lilac has developed far beyond such simple assumption and we ought to be dedicated to bringing to the notice of the general public the great range of beauty of the Lemoine and pre-Lemoine lilacs together with the developments of the plant - and knowledge about the plant - in Eastern Europe, North America and China.

The lilac collection at Norman's Farm arose out of a happy notion, that of constructing a 200 yard lilac walk alongside a stream which flowed in the winter but was dry in the summer. In 1985 we set about trying to find the 35 different lilacs we would require for our walk but soon realized that in many instances we were buying up the last surviving specimens in cultivation in the United Kingdom. The search for lilacs became a search for information and that led us to Fr. Fiala's book, the International Lilac Society, vast quantities of correspondence and much travel. We soon appreciated the absolute importance of the

provenances of the plants we sought and that, in turn, led to an understanding of the essential place of accurate accession records. Thus our aesthetic venture gradually became a scientific one as our lilac walk of 35 cultivars grew up and turned into a British National Collection of 500 species, primary hybrids and cultivars.

About 250 taxa are planted outside and the rest are held, to date, in containers because many are simply too precious to plant out until back-up plants have been propagated and are growing strongly. The site is conveniently oriented from east to west so we have been able to lay out the lilacs geographically with Norman's Farm (so called because it was farmed by William Norman from 1795 to 1830) at the centre of the Earth. Thus on our far eastern boundary are the lilacs of China and from them there is a progression through Eastern and Western Europe and across North America out to the lilacs of California in the far west. This geographical arrangement has had a consequence which affects anyone who reads this column. In order to try to meet the obligation mentioned earlier - to bring awareness to the public at large - I have been attempting to describe lilacs using language from the heart rather than from my head. So far, most of those descriptions have been of Russian lilacs. This does not reveal a bias in my own preferences but is a consequence of that geographical layout.

It so happens that because we live in a sparsely populated rural area, we have a small, private sanitation system on site. A few years ago we had a new filtered soakaway laid and that had to follow the border of the area of the garden we call "Russia". Now it is a fact that the lilacs of ours which have grown and matured fastest have been those self-same Russian ones. I cannot say if this is due to the inherent superiority of Russian lilac breeding or to the sheer quality of the filtered residues of the Chapman diet which are feeding those plants. Whatever it is, I tend to describe the Russian lilacs because, so far, they are bigger than the others. In the fullness of time, I will set the record straight and I will make a small start now.

Before I do, there are some small items of news, most of which I must place on "hold". Valeria von Jenisch and Carlo Pagani have brought me great joy (and eased my work-load) by making eternal vows to the Society and becoming Life Members. No sooner had I made my complaint in the last edition about being ignored when I received a delightful letter from Karen Sylvester in Australia about her visits to the botanical gardens in Moscow and Kiev. I was then delighted to hear that I.L.S. members Rodger and Grace Inglis will be visiting us at the end of March and that will enable me to return a little of the hospitality which Grace and Rodger lavished on me at their lovely country home on each of my four visits to RBG Hamilton. If that were not enough, I have just received two enormous parcels of plants and propagating material from Ole Heide, mostly derived from the very important consignments sent to him by Vasily Gorb and Adolph Vaigla. I am planting and propagating at this time so I will report on them in detail when I have seen them safely through into leaf. Of the two hottest plants on my East European "wish" list, the one that I previously mentioned in *Lilacs* (vol. 27 No. 3) I have not received because Ole has only one small plant of it - but the other one has arrived safely. 'Pamyat o Kolesnikove' is now in intensive care and I am pacing the floor once more like an expectant father.

Syringa xhyacinthiflora 'Esther Staley'. W.B. Clarke, California, 1949.

I adore this lilac. I mean I really, truly, adore this lilac. She is planted in a very sheltered spot which is open but surrounded on three sides by tall hedges and on the sunny side by a well grown lilac. This causes her to 'take the sky' (1) in

order to flower well. Each year, she sends up her four foot stems which burst like skyrockets into anything from two to twelve flower heads. These extended stems are a pruning nightmare, but I cut back a third of them each year, leaving the rest untouched, and nothing has gone wrong so far.

The buds are a bright red-pink and they open to large, single florets with beautifully rounded lobes which are a paler pink within and which fade progressively almost to off-white. This gives to the inflorescence at the half-bud stage a characteristic reddish/pinkish/whitish look. She flowers over a very long period with four weeks being the norm and in her best year here she opened her last new flower head six weeks after producing her first. Her fragrance is imperious and can set the heart racing from ten yards away. She is every inch her mother's girl, being bred from majestic 'Mme F. Morel', but when I think of her vivacity, her boldness and her capacity to lift my spirit I often feel that she must have quite a lot of great Mae West in her as well.

Syringa vulgaris 'Lebedushka'. Smol'skii and Bibikova, Minsk, Belarus, 1964.

Creamy buds open to give densely filled, upright spikes of large, graceful, single, white flowers. My shrub is small, so I might have to revise my opinion later, but it has an impressive ratio of flowers to shrub surface area so far. Each floret has broad, rounded lobes and as the floret ages the end halves of these lobes reflex backwards strongly. At this stage it is interesting to remove a floret and try floating it upside down in a saucer of water. One can then imagine the floret looking like a Grand Dame of a white swan drifting down a river on a sunny day with her neck arched and her wings and tail half raised, which is essentially the image that the Belarussian name brings to mind. It is the perfect companion to a garden seat, a good book and an ice cream on a hot spring day.

(1) From "Summertime" by George and Ira Gershwin.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Bob Clark shares this letter he received from Eileen Merchant

Dear Mr. Clark:

Hopefully, our names will be added to your next year's list of visitors to Birchwood. Your work with plants is very inspiring, and I would also like to personally describe the progress of the lilac plants you provided us. At first, the lilacs were placed on the south end of our property. As the yard was developed, I looked for a location which is visible from the house. We planted the lilacs first in 1989 and by this spring there was so much growth that I decided it was moving time. I followed directions for placement from Fr. Fiala's book: sticks in the

ground for each plant and viewed the arrangement from all angles. The plants have bloomed for years, but next spring should bring a satisfying picture.

'Leon Gambetta' has really proliferated as has 'Marie Finon'. The Japanese lilac tree which was very tiny when I planted it, is now over six feet tall and I am trying to shape it. It bloomed this spring for the first time—beautiful white cascades. 'Maiden's Blush' is exquisite and has a wonderful fragrance as do the others. I lost 'General Sherman' and 'Ruhm van Horstenstein'. They were located where snow from the cul-de-sac was piled. Since we were just moved in in spring, I was unaware of the amount of snow that would be moved to the garden area. However, outside of losing two plants, the whole project has been extremely enjoyable. Thank you for the great start!

Eileen Merchant
Durham, Connecticut

Tips For Beginners

"We enjoy mulching our lilacs but were wondering— is there a 'better' mulching material or is it just personal preference?"

Is one better than another? Tree bark, pine needles, cocoa bean shells, leaves, grass cuttings, others?

I have heard that the decay of mulch also removes nitrogen from the soil, is it necessary to add this nitrogen back with extra fertilizer or something else?

The first problem is to define what is mulch. Everyone knows what a mulch is but what would you say if a penthouse resident asked "What do you mean when you say mulch?" Remember, your definition has to include stone mulch and plastic materials as well as the organic materials and can't include material that block entry of water, e.g. black plastic. After you've thought about it, you can look at one working definition included at the end of this answer.

Mulch is nature's way of recycling plant parts and their included mineral elements. Look in the forest or even in your shrub border and see the layer of leaves most of which will be gone by the end of next summer.

Now-a-days we have fancy new fertilizers to supply mineral elements and complicated systems to deliver water but we still use mulch for a variety of reasons. They include the supply of small amounts of nutrients. A mulch layer helps to conserve water, and breakdown products that add organic matter to the soil which improves soil structure. A layer prevents weed seed from germinating and from which those that do start can be pulled easily. Last, but by no means least, -mulches improve the looks of the plant or plantings.

Any material that does all the jobs listed above can be used. Nature uses leaves and they are free! Bark mulch is all the rage at the moment. Do not use peat moss. It tends to form a layer that sheds water rather than let it pass through. Peat moss on the surface can peel off and blow away in strong winds; worked into the soil it is still an excellent source of organic matter. Grass clippings should be allowed to dry before use or put on in very thin layers so they also don't form a water repellent layer.

Keep a check on soil pH if acid residue materials such as pine needles or oak leaves are used. In most cases the decision becomes one of cost, what is available, and what others are using. We tend to copy other people and if you use what they are using, you will be seen as contributing to the general good looks of the neighborhood. (That last statement is tongue-in-cheek but it does remind us that some decisions are based on cosmetics.)

Put on a layer two to four inches deep. Less will not stop weeds, more will encourage growth of roots into the mulch where they can quickly dry out. Mulches must be reapplied as they decay but don't just add a new layer every year. Keep the total layer in the two to four inch depth. With some plants (not lilacs), mulch in contact with the trunk will keep those tissues from hardening off as winter approaches and lead to winter injury. I know gardeners that routinely pull the mulch away from trunks "just in case." That's not a bad motto.

If the mulch is new such as wood chips, fresh bark, or sawdust you may want to add a little extra nitrogen fertilizer. What happens is that bacteria and other microorganisms start breaking down the organic mulch and they are better scavengers of nitrogen in the mulch than plant roots. Over time, the microorganisms die and release their proteins (containing the nitrogen) back into the soil. So, after a while an equilibrium is formed and the total amount of nitrogen available to the plant is actually increased. If you question whether your mulch is fresh or old, look at your plant's growth. It will tell you if more nitrogen is needed.

A Mulch is...

(as opposed to sheets of something like a plastic)

A non-living, unit sized protective material (usually organic) placed around plants to prevent the evaporation of water, freezing of roots and the growth of weeds.

Research Abstracts

Editor's Note: these abstracts are reports of published research. They are included here as a sampling of research being done around the world.

VRUGTMAN, F. **Lilac cultivar name registration 1997.** *HortScience* (1998) **33** (4) 588 [En] Royal Botanical Gardens, Box 399, Hamilton, Ont. L8N 3H8, Canada.

Six lilac cultivars were registered in 1997 in Beijing, China. These are *Syringa oblata* Lindley (Changtongbai), *S. vulgaris* Chungce, *Syringa Sijilan*, *S. vulgaris* Blue Diamond (R164-168), *S. vulgaris* Margaret Fenicchia and *S. vulgaris* Richard A. Fenicchia (R-83). Brief descriptions of these cultivars are provided.

Plant Breeding Abstracts 1998 Vol 68 No. 11 pg. 1735

KIM KIJOONG; JANSEN, R.K. **A chloroplast DNA phylogeny of lilacs (*Syringa*, Oleaceae): plastome groups show a strong correlation with crossing groups.** *American Journal of Botany* (1998) **85** (9) 1338-1351 [En, 56 ref.] Department of Biology, Yeungnam University, Keongsan, Keongbuk 712-749, Korea Republic.

Phylogenetic relationships and genomic compatibility were compared for 60 accessions of *Syringa* using chloroplast DNA (ctDNA) and nuclear ribosomal DNA (rDNA) markers. A total of 669 ctDNA variants, 653 of which were potentially phylogenetically informative, was detected using 22 restriction enzymes. Phylogenetic analysis revealed four strongly supported plastome groups that correspond to four genetically incompatible crossing groups. Relationships of the four plastome groups (I(II(III,IV))) correlated well with the infrageneric classification except for ser. *Syringa* and *Pinnatifoliae*. Group I, which includes subg. *Ligustrina*, forms a basal lineage within *Syringa*. Group II includes ser. *Syringa* and *Pinnatifoliae* and the two series have high compatibility and low sequence divergence. Group III consists of three well-defined species groups of ser. *Pubescentes*. Group IV comprises all members of ser. *Villosae* and has the lowest interspecific ctDNA sequence divergences. Comparison of ctDNA sequence divergence with crossability data indicates that hybrids have not been successfully generated between species with divergence greater than 0.7%. Hybrid barriers are strong among the four major plastome groups, which have sequence divergence estimates ranging from 1.096 to 1.962%. In contrast, fully fertile hybrids occur between species pairs with sequence divergence below 0.4%. Three regions of the plastome have length variants of greater than 100 bp, and these indels identify 12 different plastome types that correlate with phylogenetic trees produced from ctDNA restriction site data. Biparentally inherited nuclear rDNA and maternally inherited ctDNA length variants enable the identification of specific parentage of several lilac hybrids.

Plant Breeding Abstracts 1999 Vol 69 No. 1 pg. 114



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