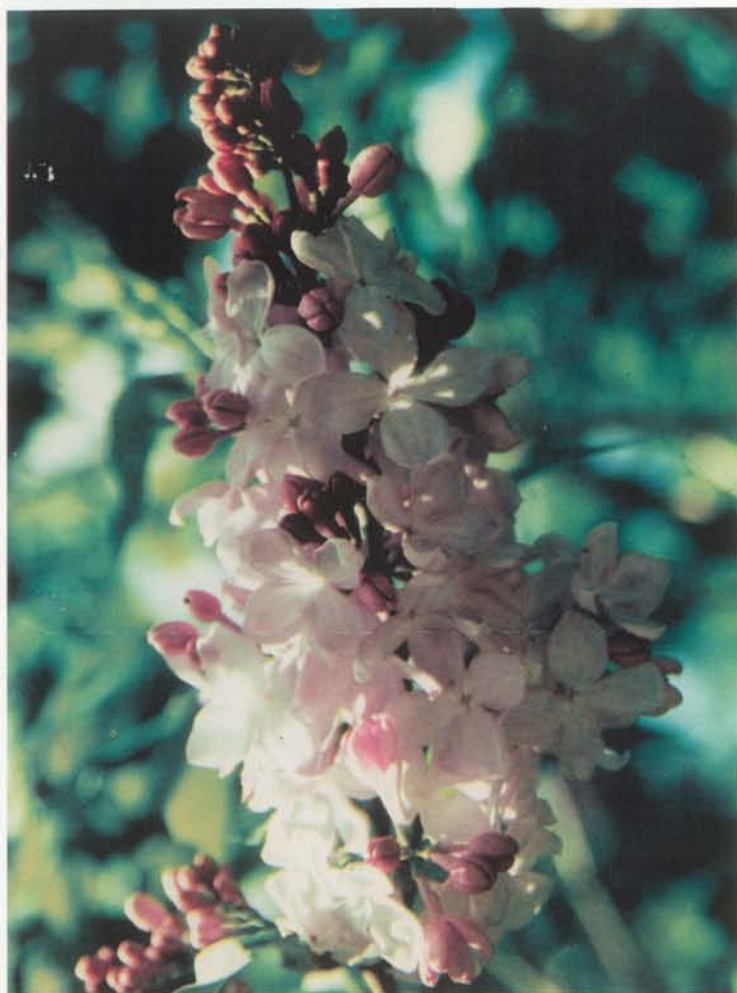


# Lilacs

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 2  
SPRING 2002



## **QUARTERLY JOURNAL**

of the International Lilac Society

IN  
THIS  
ISSUE:

### Lilacs and Lilac People

VOLUME 31, NO. 2

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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.

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LILACS 2002

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## Cover Story

### **Front Cover**

*Syringa vulgaris* 'Silver King'.

Introduced by Lemke (Wisconsin in 1941). Be sure to see Colin's comments in his European Newsletter. For those members who have kept their back issues, we featured 'Silver King' on the cover of Vol 24 No. 1, 1995. It also is pinkish and does not "show the slightest interest in being blue."

*Photo credit - Colin Chaman*

### **Back Cover**

*Syringa vulgaris* 'Monge' (Lemoine 1913)

'Monge' makes Father Fiala's list of the best Lemoine introductions where it is described as single red-purple. The picture here was taken in Montreal in the year 2000.

*Photo credit - Owen Rogers*

## Next Issue Deadline

Next issue deadline is June 8, 2002. it will contain reports from the annual convention held at Descanso Gardens. If you have material for that issue, please get it to the editor as quickly as possible so that the report on the convention will be as complete as possible.

## Quarterly Reminder

1. Have you paid your dues? Our excellent assistant Treasurer is sitting there just waiting for your contribution.
2. Get ready for your pruning. From a horticultural point of view, the best time to prune lilacs is just as the flowers fade and before the new growth gets very long.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is a new book available on lilacs. ILS member, Jennifer Bennett of Syderham, Ontario, Canada, has written *Lilacs for the Garden*. It is illustrated with numerous excellent color photographs also taken by Ms. Bennett. This informative text gives practical knowledge on planning, planting and pruning the lilac. The volume also contains a thumbnail sketch of many popular cultivars as well as a source list and a Lilac collections listing. *Lilacs for the Garden* is published by Firefly Books Limited, check it out.

For those of us in the northeast and north central US, the thought of this year's Lilac Convention is a relatively peaceful one. Being in early April, we do not need to be concerned with interrupting our own Lilac bloom, which will be 5 or 6 weeks later. The timing and location of this year's Convention even allows us the opportunity to extend our California visit.

For Marcia and I, once we do return home it will be busy with spring chores, lilac bloom and evaluation and final preparations for our son Richard's wedding on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Editor's Notes

We have received two notes on the death of Carolyn Chapin. The first is from Suzanne Braselton, a former typesetter at SEECO Services; and the second is woven into Colin Chapman's European newsletter.

"It is with much sadness that I am writing to you to let you know that Carolyn Chapin passed away on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

I know she enjoyed working with you on the *Lilac Journal* at SEECO Services and later at Erie Park Press. She was quite a woman and will be missed by many.

Carolyn always used to keep me up to date on the *Lilac Journal* after I left SEECO. The "*Journal*" was one of my favorite projects to work on. I know I sure learned a lot about lilacs!! I used to think that they were all the same but the three colors: white, purple and dark purple!!

Well, I thought you would want to know about Carolyn, so I decided to write. Hope you are doing well and things are still going strong for the *Lilac Journal*.

Sincerely,  
Suzanne Brazelton  
3673 S. Main Street  
Marion, NY 14505

In the list of Lilac Festivals the one for New Hampshire should be May 19<sup>th</sup>, not the 27<sup>th</sup>. It is somewhat embarrassing to have to report corrections from my home state, but we try to be as precise as possible. If you see any other corrections or additions to the list of Lilac Festivals, please send them to me as you notice them.

Bruce Peart has e-mailed the immediate world, but for those without an e-mail address, I include a copy here:

Freek Vrugtman has informed me that there will be a new and current "up-to-date" edition of the 'International Register of Cultivar Names in the Genus *Syringa* L (Oleaceae) available April 1, 2002. I will have copies printed before this date to bring to the ILS conference in California

April 3 - 6.

Here is an opportunity for advance orders. The cost is \$35.00 Canadian. We (RBG) have the ability to withdraw this payment from your credit card (Visa or

Mastercard). If you were to confirm a purchase to me through e-mail prior to the California Conference (March 28, 2002) I will bring a copy to the conference for you. This way you avoid the shipping costs of \$20.00 CDN (to North America). International shipping will vary.

For those of you who are going to the ILS conference in California I am planning to have extra copies at the Conference for others to purchase as well. The cost here will be \$25.00 US to avoid the currency exchanging. Please get your name on the list so I will have an idea of the number of copies that I will require to bring with me, preferably pre-paid. Should I need to bring 50 copies, due to requests, then I will; but if I only bring 20 copies the ILS members who have advanced orders will get theirs first.

For some of you on the e-mail list above who may not be at the ILS conference in California, the purchase cost for the new register will be \$55.00 CDN. This includes shipping. Those ordered will be through your credit card.

Something to think about. Pass on this announcement to members that I have not listed here so they, too, can have an opportunity to save on the shipping.

Thanks you all for your cooperation in this matter. Leave room in your luggage for this register!!!

## EUROPEAN NEWSLETTER

"But at my back I alwaies hear  
Time's wingéd Charriot hurrying near."

**S**o wrote Andrew Marvell, poet and seventeenth century citizen of the city in which I was born. Those words, which remind us that we are mortals making our own finite pilgrimages through life, come to me powerfully when I reflect on three members of our special lilac community who have moved on to the next stage of their journey.

First was Orville Steward – sage, scholar, wit and raconteur – who was the convenor of the inaugural meeting of this Society and thus could be regarded, in Shakespeare's words, as its "Onlie Begetter". On two separate occasions in the past when I began to mutiny at problems on board ship, Orville gently took the helm and reefed in the sails and gave me wise counsel. And so, I am still here.

In 1991, Bill Utey talked a greenhorn member, who was attending his first convention in Lombard Illinois, into abandoning an internal flight to Rochester and joining him in what turned out to be an hilarious road movie from Chicago to Clyde NY. In doing this I not only made my priceless sole visits to Falconskeape and Grape Hill Gardens but I wrote up the whole madcap escapade in my first serious contribution to this Journal that summer. Bill subsequently visited here and it is because of his generosity that we have the Fr Fiala cultivars that we do. Whenever they bloom I remember him. Whenever I hear a Cole Porter song I remember him.

Third was Mrs. Carolyn Mae Chapin, not a member but for years the typesetter and joint printer of this *Journal*. In response to a lovely compliment she once made about the pleasure she found in setting up my articles, I promised that should we ever meet she should expect a kiss on the back of the hand from a vassal on bended knee. The rest, as they say, is history. With great style and wonderful comic timing she bushwhacked me at Rochester and hilariously called my bluff. Since that day, most of the ILS correspondence I have received has begun "Dear Sir Colin". When the lilac 'Carolyn Mae' next blooms in my garden I will kneel before it and kiss again the memory of a much loved hand. To Ellen, Wanda and Roger I temper my condolences by saying that because of them we are all changed, and we are wiser and better than we were before. There are others sadly lost to us also but these three touched me in very particular ways.

One day I will write a book on all the ways it is possible to get an e-mail wrong. Since I found a way to pirate some e-mail time on public, municipal facilities I have failed more times than I have succeeded. My initial test transmission to him last October led Bruce Peart to remark that the occasion was so miraculous it caused



the waters of Lake Ontario to part. The implication that I was permanently stuck with goose quill and ink pot technology rankled but not as much as being greeted henceforth at breakfast here with "Good Morning Moses". However, I can claim that an element of success has been achieved.

First, I would like to welcome as a member Tatiana Poliakova of Moscow. To have instant contact in Moscow with someone who has an interest in lilacs and also speaks perfect English is the answer to this little Executive Vice President's prayers. Secondly, in response to a query in the website guestbook about lilac poetry, I exchanged e-mails with a lively person who is restoring a Victorian garden with many old lilacs in it. This gave me a new insight into the massive cultural associations that surround the lilac so when, at some future date, I bore you by developing such thoughts in this column then you must blame Leslie Ferrier who, I hope, will become a member. There is a third contact of tremendous importance, but the correspondence, which also involves Bruce Peart, is not complete and permission to quote has not yet been asked, so watch this space!

Finally, Bruce visited here in January and brought over a parcel of scions which will complete the restoration of our losses from last year. My gratitude compels me to become poetic one more time:

"Oh my dear, where would we be  
Without the support of RBG?"

Oh well, I suppose I had better talk about a lilac.

*Syringa vulgaris* 'Silver King'. Dr. August Henry Lemke, Wausau Wisconsin, 1941. SIII.

I have a problem with this lilac. Certainly the illustration in Fr Fiala's book does have a pale blue cast but mine has never shown the slightest interest in being blue. My plant was propagated from a scion of the specimen in RBG Hamilton. It flowers here very early and has several times been shriveled by our treacherous late air frosts, but for the last two years it has produced full, unblemished flowers.

Lemke was an extraordinary character who was born in Germany in 1868 but was taken by his parents to Wausau WI. three years later. He qualified as a teacher and followed that profession for fourteen years before turning to dentistry. This was a brave thing to do. In 1880 one dentist in the town objected so strongly to another dentist putting up his shingle in Main Street that he walked into his office and shot him dead. Lemke was a noted amateur grower of peonies but we know him for his two surviving lilacs 'No. 71' and 'Silver King'. He passed away at the age of seventy-seven in 1946.

Several years ago Walter Oakes, whose command of the English language I highly respect, told me that when looking into a floret of 'Silver King' one could "almost" see flecks of gold. I did not understand what he meant until these last two years when I could see for myself. 'Silver King' has pinky-amethyst buds which open to large, beautifully rounded lobes which are white with a suffusion of pink but they do indeed seem to have a mysterious golden aura. It glows from within the floret in a tantalizing way which made me appreciate Walter's exquisitely

chosen word "almost". I suppose it is an effect of translucency due to sunlight shining through the flower, but it is so magical that if ever a flower should be needed to symbolize Camelot than there is no need to look further than Dr. Lemke's 'Silver King'.

More can be read about the fascinating life of this man in freek Vrugtman's article in **Lilacs** May 1983.

Colin Chapman  
Norman's Farm  
March 2002

## Book Review

*Lilacs: The Genus Syringa*. Father John L. Fiala. 266 pp. Plus 395 color photographs, 82 black and white photographs, 22 line drawings. Paperback edition, ISBN 0-88192-530-6. Facsimile printing \$34.95.

The appearance of the first edition of Father Fiala's book entitled "*Lilacs, the Genus Syringa*" in 1988 was received with great excitement in the lilac community. There had never before been such a comprehensive book on lilacs. It reflected Father Fiala's lifelong love for the lilac and his technical expertise in genetics and the production of new lilac cultivars. The book included chapters on lilac history, lilac hybridizers exploration, extensive lists of lilacs by color, lilac culture, propagation, pests, problems and several background appendices. The whole book was abundantly illustrated with nearly 400 excellent color plates, over 80 black and white photographs together with a number of line drawings. The only real problem is that it has been out of print for years. Work has been started on a revision that will include all the changes reported since the original publication, but this has proven to be a big undertaking and since no date has been established for publication of the revised edition, Timber Press has agreed to put out a facsimile, soft bound edition. A facsimile edition by definition contains all of the misprints, typographical errors and mistakes found in the original. This is true with Father Fiala's book. For example, The unnecessary transliteration of *S. pekinensis* to *beijinensis*, the misspelling of 'von Slivers' correctly given as the 'von Sivers' elsewhere; E. H. Wilson was born at Chipping Campden not chipping Campers and mildew is not discussed on page 151 as listed in the index.

However, the demand for the book has continued to increase - we saw one copy of the original book sold at an International Lilac Society auction for \$200.00. In the face of such demand, Timber Press agreed to publish the facsimile edition with the original text and all the color pictures, as well as all the small errors (and some that are not so small). I fully believe Father Fiala would have make all the corrections in time, but unfortunately he died two years after the original 1988 release. However, the book is still a comprehensive consideration of the genus Syringa and I predict, will also, as with the first printing, sell out quickly. Father Fiala's book is still the best and in some ways the only- substantial reference

book on lilacs available. Lilac enthusiasts will be well advised to snap up a copy quickly. At a price of \$34.95 the supply will not last for long.

## ***Abstracts from ISHS Acta Horticulturae***

ISHS *Acta Horticulturae* 404:63-67 [1995]

International Symposium on Cultivar Improvement of Horticultural Crops. Part 3: Flowers BREEDING OF NEW CULTIVARS IN THE GENUS SYRINGA (OLEACEAE)

Authors: Zang Shu-ying, Fan Ying-han, Li Rong-hui

### **Abstract:**

For over 400 years more than 1,000 cultivars of *Syringa* have been successfully bred in Europe and the United States by means of artificial hybridization from the natural varieties of European *Syringa*. In China, there are about 27 native species of *Syringa*, however, only a few species have been exploited and utilized for new cultivars with ornamental value and high adaptability. Thus, the purpose of this study is to employ the source of Chinese *Syringa* to breed new ornamental cultivars with special resistance to some severe environments.

[FOOTNOTE: I've slightly edited/corrected the above abstract. fv]

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ISHS *Acta Horticulturae* 496:401-408 [1999]

*International Symposium on Urban Tree Health*

STRESS TOLERANT PLANTS FOR URBAN LANDSCAPE - THE NEBRASKA-HUNGARY COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

Authors: P.E. Read, G. Schmidt

### **Abstract:**

The continental middle parts of the United States and Hungary have many similarities in their climate and soils, so the stress-tolerant cultivars of the two regions are extremely important to each other. Until recently Hungary has been receiving these cultivars with 10-30 years of delay (via Great Britain - Holland - Germany - Austria) and Hungarian-bred urban trees did not reach America at all. The cooperation for mutual introduction and testing between the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Horticulture and Food Industry started in 1988, and from 1994 on was supported by the US-Hungarian S and T Fund (JFNo.385).

In Nebraska, about 80 Hungarian genotypes (including, *Populus alba* × *grandidentata* 'Favorit' *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Lôvér', C.I. 'Globus', *Ligustrum obtusifolium* 'Fall Purple', *Populus alba* × *grandidentata* 'Favorit', *Salix matsudana* 'Golden Spiral', *Tilia tomentosa* 'John Wagner') have been successfully propagated

from which amount about 25 have reached that size or number so that they can be subject of mass propagation. Nursery and field tests are underway. In Hungary, about 70 American cultivars (including a total of 50 of *Acer*, *Crataegus*, *Fraxinus*, *Platanus occidentalis*, *Pyrus calleryana*, *Rhus*, *Syringa*, *Taxus*, *Thuja*, and *Viburnum* cultivars and 20 wild genotypes) have been introduced and tested for technical properties and about 20 of them for performance in urban parks or streets.

The paper gives a full list of plants, some preliminary results on their propagation, nursery tests and urban trials and also some practical conclusions of the Project, based on the differences in the conditions between the two cooperating regions and also in the views regarding botany, plant application and plant breeding.

[FOOTNOTE:

Dr. Gábor Schmidt is a professor in the Dept. of Floriculture & Dendrology, Univ. of Horticulture & Food Industry, Budapest, Hungary; he is the originator of *Syringa josikaea* 'Emerald', and an ILS member. Slightly edited. Freek Vrugtman]

ISHS *Acta Horticulturæ* 530:455-462 [2000]

International Symposium on Methods and Markers for Quality Assurance in Micropropagation IDENTIFICATION OF CULTIVARS AND HYBRIDS IN *SYRINGA* AND *CUCURBITA* BY DNA FINGERPRINTING

Authors: M. Pfosser, H. Yemelyanova, W. Leonhardt

Abstract:

We have tested the applicability of AFLP analysis in varietal identification in *Syringa* and parentage identification after hybrid breeding in *Curcubita* in a practical micropropagation situation. Both in *Syringa* as well as in *Curcubita*, AFLP fingerprints were highly reproducible and produced similar band patterns irrespective of the starting material being either tissue culture-derived or greenhouse material. A single primer combination yielded enough polymorphic bands to unequivocally discriminate among 13 closely related lilac cultivars. Following hybrid production after wide crosses between *Cucurbita pepo* × *C. maxima* lines AFLP fingerprints clearly identified the parental genomes in regenerating hybrid plants and could be used to discriminate between true hybrids and gynogenic haploids or spontaneous diploids.

# INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY

## LILAC GROWERS LIST

The following nurseries sell lilacs wholesale or as a liner stock.

### ***Bailey Nurseries, Inc***

1325 Bailey Road  
St. Paul, MN 55119-6199  
Phone: (800) 829-6199  
Fax: (800) 829-8894

Email: [plants@baileynursery.com](mailto:plants@baileynursery.com)

Lilacs sold by established credit or through sales volume rebate.

### ***Cloverdale Propagators***

#### **R.T Schilpzand**

2253 South Cloverdale Road  
Woodland, WA 98674  
(206) 225-9581

A nursery specializing in lilac taxa. Tissue cultured and sold in 2 inch pots and shipped when 6" to 12" tall.

### ***International Garden Products***

#### **Briggs Nursery, Inc.**

4407 Henderson Boulevard  
Olympia, WA 98501  
Phone: (800) 999-9972

Website: [www.internationalgarden.com](http://www.internationalgarden.com)

Extensive selection of lilac cultivars with new additions annually. Tissue cultured and available in various sizes. Lilacs can be grown by contact

### ***Knight Hollow Nursery***

#### **Deborah McCown**

333 Atom Road  
Middleton, WI 53562  
(608) 831-5570

Contract grower using tissue culture propagation. Minimum order usually 1000 plants.

### ***Lilac Creek Nurseries***

10311 Mile Block Road  
North Collins, NY 14111  
Phone: (716) 337-2260  
Fax: (716) 337-2252

Email: [lilacreekinc@aol.com](mailto:lilacreekinc@aol.com)

Choose from a selection of available lilac stock or have lilacs grown by contract. Formerly known as Congdon & Weller Wholesale Nursery, Inc.

***Rabbit Run Nursery***

224 North Avenue  
Rochester, MA 02770-1823  
(508) 763-2009

Nursery located northeast of New Bedford, MA offering a broad selection of lilacs produced on their own roots mostly in 3 gallon sized containers. Local delivery available. Contact Tom Nelson for available taxa.

**Spring Meadow Nursery, Inc.**

12601 - 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Grand Haven, MI 49417-9621  
(800) 633-8859

Selection of early, middle and late flowering lilacs. Tissue cultured and shipped in 2 1/4" or 4" pots.

***Syringa Plus***

**P.O. Box 363**

West Boxford, MA 01885-0363  
Phone: (978) 352-3301 or 465-7269  
Fax: (978) 352-3313

Email: [SyringaEvR@aol.com](mailto:SyringaEvR@aol.com)

Wholesale nursery selling small to larger sized containers, B & B and bare root stock. Available in spring. All plants on own roots and shipped direct.

**INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY**

**RETAIL LILAC SOURCE LIST**

**ArborVillage**

P.O. Box 227 Holt, MO 64048  
Phone: (816) 264-3911  
FAX: (816) 264-3760

Good selection of Fiala lilacs along with a broad selection of other species, hyacinth and common lilacs on their own roots. Container sizes range from one quart to two gallon. Shipped via UPS.

**Collins Lilac Hill Nursery**

2366 Turk Hill Road  
Victor, NY 14564  
(716) 251-1830

[icollins@frontiernet.net](mailto:icollins@frontiernet.net)

Mail orders shipped via UPS in spring and fall on Mondays and Tuesdays. Growing over 200 lilac taxa on their own roots. Available in sizes up to five gallon container.

**Fox Hill Nursery**  
374 Lunt Road  
Freeport, ME 04032  
Phone: (207) 729-1511  
FAX (207) 729-6108  
Email: [info@lilacs.com](mailto:info@lilacs.com)  
Web site: [www.lilacs.com](http://www.lilacs.com)

Lilacs are produced on their own roots and are shipped bare root. Container and B & B. Many uncommon selections are available.

**Heard Gardens Ltd.**  
5355 Merle Hay Road  
Johnston, IA 50131  
(515) 276-4533  
Web site: [www.heardgarden.com](http://www.heardgarden.com)

Lilacs are produced on their own roots and are available through mail order service from the Smith and Hawkins nursery catalog. Contact either the nursery, their web site or see the current Smith and Hawkins catalog for their current lilac selection.

***Kilcoyne Lilac Farm***  
3511 West Soledad Canyon Road  
Acton, CA, 93510-1975  
(661) 269-1975

Local source for potted lilacs and cut lilac flowers during bloom season from April to Mothers Day. Contact Dennis or Elizabeth Kilcoyne.

***Kings Tree Farm & Nursery***  
44 Belvedere Road  
Boxford, MA 01921  
(978) 352-6359

Local nursery in the Boston area selling only direct through their outlet. Approximately 40 lilac taxa available in various container sizes and balled and burlapped. All plants produced on their own roots.

***Lake Street Garden Center***  
37 Lake Street  
Salem, NH 03079  
(603) 893-5858

Contact Tim Wolf for rare and unusual common lilac cultivars including Russian hybrids. Over 60 lilac taxa available. Local nursery serving the Boston, Concord, Nashua area. All stock on its own roots in container and B&B.

**Rabbit Run Nursery**

**224 North Avenue**

Rochester, MA 02770-1823

(508) 763-2009

Tom Nelson produces a broad selection of lilacs on their own roots. Local delivery available for the northeastern New Bedford area. Plants available mostly in 3 gallon sized containers.

**Select Plus International Nursery**

1510 Pine

Mascouche, QC

J7L 2M4 Canada

Phone/Fax: (514) 477-3797

Email: [lilacs@axess.com](mailto:lilacs@axess.com)

Web site: <http://www.spi.8m.com>

Lilacs are produced on their own roots or are micropropagated and are shipped bare root. Working to introduce 800 lilac taxa.

**Syringa Plus**

P.O. Box 363

West Boxford, MA 01885-0363

Phone: (978) 352-3301 or (978) 465-7269

Fax: (978) 352-3313

Email: [SyringaEvR@aol.com](mailto:SyringaEvR@aol.com)

Wholesale nursery with retail trade of superior taxa on their own roots shipped bare root or in two and five gallon pots. Larger B&B plants available. Visitors welcome by appointment. Growing list available.

**The Lilac Farm**

P.O. Box 272-C

Cambridge Springs, PA 16403

(800) 542-4158, or (814) 398-2728

email: [lilactime@aol.com](mailto:lilactime@aol.com)

Web site: <http://www.angelfire.com/biz2/lilactime>

Lilacs are produced from rooted cuttings and are shipped via UPS in a moistened wrap. A broad selection of lilac taxa is available.

**Wedge Nursery**

R.R.2, Box 114

Albert Lea, MN 56007

(507) 373-5225

Local nursery selling direct only. Located south of Minneapolis-St. Paul near Iowa border accessible from I-90 and I-35. Approximately 140 lilac taxa available in various sizes. All lilacs produced on their own roots.



# Cherry Hill Nurseries

## 1832-2000

by John Thurlow

The origin of Cherry Hill Nurseries located in West Newbury, Massachusetts, goes back to 1832 when my great-great-grandfather, George Thurlow offered to sell some surplus budded apple trees to his neighbors. This he continued to do for many years until by the 1850's his son, Thomas Chase Thurlow joined him. As well as continuing with the various orchard fruits and vines, ornamental plants were added.

The earliest printed list I have seen is 1863 which offered only fruit trees and vines. The list in 1869 included the earliest mention of lilacs with several choices: Common White, Josikaea and Persian lilacs, along with the cultivar 'Charles X', all at 25 to 35 cents each, no size indicated. These early price lists carried many of our native and flowering ornamental trees and shrubs. Favorite needle evergreen trees at this time were the Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*) and the Siberian Arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis* var. *wareana*). Many examples of Norway Spruce still exist on the former nursery land that are 120 to 140 years of age.

During the 1870's and 1880's the price lists offered lilacs but with no breakdown as to species or varieties. By 1891, 'Marie Legraye' is offered. As other cultivars appear, I expect they had been imported from Europe. A note in 1893 speaks about having imported rhododendrons for over thirty years. All kinds of ornamental plants were added during the late decades of the nineteenth century. A lot of hybrid work at Cherry Hill went into herbaceous peonies which during the early twentieth century became a major part of the business. Many named peony introductions were made from Cherry Hill starting in 1915.

Now as we continue into the twentieth century, many *Syringa vulgaris* cultivars appear. 'Professor Sargent', 'Mme. Lemoine', 'Mme. Casimir Perier', 'Ludwig Spaeth', 'President Grevy', 'Frau Bertha Dammann', 'Mme. Florent Stepman', 'Belle de Nancy', 'Emile Lemoine' and 'La Tour d' Auvergne' for examples. Many of which are still commonly grown today.

In 1909, with the death of Thomas Chase Thurlow, the family incorporated the company as T.C. Thurlow's Sons, Inc. I believe, by this time, the nursery was growing only ornamental trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants and bulbs. Also by this time Cherry Hill crews were planting stock grown at the nursery to the many estates along the Atlantic coast, between Boston and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Transportation to these job sites was by horse drawn vehicles, or by the new motor trucks which were then appearing. Old photographs show some large shade trees and evergreen trees being moved, some with eight to ten foot diameter root balls. These larger trees were dug in the winter months, so that the outside of the ball

would freeze and stay intact while handling. This was accomplished by the use of block and tackle with planking and rolls. Many large plants were moved this way until the mid forties, when heavier mechanical equipment became available for lifting.

As these early decades passed, many new cultivars were added, some which are 'President Vigor', 'Michel Buchner', 'Congo', 'Hugo Kostner', 'Jan van Tol', 'Volcan', 'Duc de Massa', 'Paul Harriot', 'Paul Thirion', 'President Loubet', and 'Reaumur'. One name I found interesting was called 'Pyramidal'.

With the depression years of the late twenties, and some changes in the ownership of the nursery, a new corporate name was acquired. David Stranger had come to work for the Thurlow brothers during the early teens and worked his way up in the business. The new name in 1930 was "Thurlow's and Stranger, Inc." Everything still continued under the Cherry Hill name. The depression years and those that followed, including the war years of World War Two, were tough years for a nursery business. Many fields were let go and their ornamental plants grew wild. This is how I remember many of the fields when I was a child. Following the war, when labor again became available, winter work was undertaken to burning these overgrown plantings. Within a year a bulldozer was added to dig out the stumps – great entertainment for a young person.

To return to the lilacs, the new plantings were suckers dug from the older plantings to fill the saleable orders. I'm sure at times, lilac liners were probably bought from outside sources, but only occasionally did I see any grafted plants with their privet suckers. In the mid-forties, 'Macrostachya', and 'Lilarosa' are added for the first time. These are old time cultivars from before 1890. Meanwhile in 1947 'Charles X' appears for the last time, having been offered at Cherry Hill for 75 years.

Due to the death of Walter Stranger in 1956, control came back into the Thurlow family with my father, Harold Thurlow. In 1958, Roger Coggeshall, known for his plant propagation work at the Arnold Arboretum, in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, came to be employed at Cherry Hill.

Roger set up the propagation part of the nursery. Rooting lilacs by cuttings was one of the main things he set about to accomplish. With an increase in propagation, came an increase of field liners. This was the beginning of a shift from retail sales to a wholesale type of operation. 1960 brought a new heading to our lilac listing: "Own Roots," the results of Roger's work in the greenhouse. Our 1961 catalog shows that we now listed lilacs as a balled and burlapped (B&B) plant, instead of the old method, digging our shrubs all bare root. This was necessary for the garden center trade we were after. New names for us during the fifties and early sixties, were 'Edith Cavell', 'Mrs. W. E. Marshall', 'Princess Clementine', 'Ellen Willmott', and 'Monge'. With the death of my father, Harold, in 1963, the burden of

management fell on Roger. Two years earlier, we had hired Andrew Heatlie, recently arrived from Scotland, to work with Roger. Andrew continued the propagation work.

Trips to the University of New Hampshire and their lilac collection, yielded some late flowering types of lilacs, to include the hybrids: 'Isabella', 'James Macfarlane', 'Nellie Bean', 'Maybelle Farnum', and 'Carol'. Also the wonderful *Syringa patula* 'Miss Kim'. In 1964, 'Turgot' was added. This was the first *S. hyacinthiflora* hybrid offered; up to this point, all had been *S. vulgaris* cultivars, excepting those from UNH. Later years *S. hyacinthiflora* hybrids, 'Gertrude Leslie' and 'Maiden's Blush' were grown.

Earlier in this article, I had written about the peony for which Cherry Hill was well known for 75 years. 1970 saw the last year offering peony roots for sale. We were moving towards growing a general line of woody plant material for the wholesale trade, lilacs being an important part of the total nursery stock grown. Many years during the eighties and nineties, the fall and future spring orders of lilacs eliminated any left for spring sales.

A final change in our corporate name was made in 1966 to Cherry Hill Nurseries, Inc., reflecting little connection left with the Stranger family. This change was a logical choice as the nursery had always done business as Cherry Hill Nurseries.

'Cheyenne', with origins from *Syringa oblata dilatata* was grown, starting in the early eighties. This one required a wider spacing in the nursery row, due to its bushy growth. By now, we had not only learned that the *hyacinthiflora* cultivars bloomed a week earlier than the *S. vulgaris* cultivars, but bloomed about a year earlier in life. This in turn helped the saleability of the smaller lilacs in a garden center.

At the end of 1987 Roger left the nursery, leaving my wife, Ellen, and I to run the nursery and we continued the lilac propagation, along with other shrubs.

1997 saw the last catalog printed, as we knew by this time that the nursery would go out of business within the next few years. The only group of plants at this time that we continued to propagate were the lilacs. We also tried taking the rooted cuttings, potting them in one gallon containers for a year before lining them out. In the past, we had lined out the rooted cuttings directly in the field for two years before transplanting. We were saving a growing year by using the containers.

By the summer 2000, it was decided to close out the business before the end of the year. In November, an auction was held to sell all the personal property of the nursery. This included all nursery stock in the fields as well, which by now only consisted of lilacs and arborvitae. Several thousand one year lilacs in containers included.

Many years ago the nursery sold to Roger Coggeshall a home and land during his term of employment with Cherry Hill. This is now the home of Syringa Plus, the propagation and growing area for the nursery of Roger Coggeshall and Evelyn King.

I had looked beyond the termination of Cherry Hill with the idea to continue growing lilacs by myself. In the spring of 2001, Syringa Plus provided me with 700 lilac liners that I planted on my own property. Along with a good dosage of cattle manure and ample moisture, these turned out to be one of the best plantings I have been involved with. The *Syringa vulgaris* cultivars I planted are: 'Avalanche', 'Mme. Lemoine', 'Monge', 'Primrose', 'Sarah Sands', and 'Wonderblue'. *S. hyacinthiflora* cultivars included 'Blanche Sweet', 'Excel' and 'Maiden's Blush'. Also *Syringa microphylla* 'Superba', an interesting lilac that blooms both in the fall and spring. In May I added four more lilacs purchased at the ILS auction in Rochester. One of which was the cultivar 'Rochester', which I will treasure as a reminder of 2001 ILS convention.

It is hard to predict the future but with a little luck and good health I can, in a year or two, write a sequel to the article telling more about myself and my experiences growing lilacs.

## Editor's Note:

When the International Lilac Society met in Burlington Vermont, a number of the "history buffs" asked for more information on Theodore Havemeyer. Father Fiala includes information on Havemeyer in his book and recently I came across an old reference in one of the unpublished scrap books of Edward Upton. For those of you interested, it is reprinted here.

### MR. HAVEMEYER'S LILACS"

*Excerpts from an article by Leonard Barron in Country Life, May, 1934*

Though the Lilac in the garden has a long history trailing back to the very beginning of things, so far as matters of the garden are concerned, yet there are mighty differences between the Lilac of history and the modern type varieties of today.

Though the old-time Lilac is yet something to think about when planting the country estate, yet the new ones transcend in tremendous diversity of color, in the form and type and size of individual flowers and of the massive trusses as a whole. Particularly is this true of the doubles.

The new Lilacs are spoken of as French Hybrid Lilacs which is properly descriptive since the beginnings came from France and even today dominate. Mr. Theodore A. Havemeyer of Glen Head, New York, has been closely identified with the modern Lilacs and indeed, his Long Island gardens have been an active distributing point.

Early in his horticultural affections, Mr. Havemeyer made periodic trips to Europe, visiting the nurseries and establishments of the famous breeders in Great Britain and on the Continent. Naturally, his steps turned to Lemoine of Nancy, France, the man who, of all plant breeders of our time, has contributed most of really sterling quality and practical value in material for both out-door garden and the greenhouse.

Mr. Havemeyer quickly appreciated the great worth of the work being done by Lemoine and became a steady visitor there. On one of his visits he was fortunate enough to see some of the actual breeding work in actual operation. Victor Lemoine's eyesight wasn't exactly the best..... Madame Lemoine, his wife, had better eyesight than her husband and at his direction performed the actual transfer of the pollens of the selected parents, thus doing the mechanical work of hybridizing and crossing, based on Lemoine's intuition almost of where latent good might lie.

Some of the work of Lilac breeding had been done during the time of the Franco-Prussian War, when the guns of the enemy were booming about the city of Paris.

The incidents of the association focused the visitor's attention very definitely on the Lilacs and he watched keenly the further development and flowering of the crosses, of which he had thus seen the beginnings . At that time there being no quarantine barriers, it was an easy matter for the collecting experimentalist to bring over into this country any plant from any source, and Mr. Havemeyer at once established cordial relationships with the continental breeders, so his gardens became early trial grounds for many of the new developments.....

Mr. Havemeyer possesses very strongly one of the most typical characteristics of the true horticulturist. That is, he has always been keen to share his good things with those of his friends and gardening acquaintances who were really appreciative and understood what they meant. And thus, as years rolled on, there went out from the Havemeyer gardens shrubs and other flowers into the gardens of others. He felt deeply that he could render a really constructive aid to the betterment of country living by making it possible for others than himself to also share the fruits of progress.

As time went on and the demands grew so insistently special arrangements had to be made for propagating on a large scale and ultimately a propagating nursery was established.

Naturally, Mr. Havemeyer has definite personal likes and favorites among the plants, a liking based on behavior and artistic perception. Among the Lilacs I think he likes particularly the doubles, and his enthusiasm for the larger size in the newer varieties is a delight to see. He carried around a \$20 gold piece and took keen joy in demonstrating that the individual flower of one variety at least would actually cover the coin.

It was natural that Mr. Havemeyer, having been intrigued so greatly by the work of Monsieur and Madame Lemoine, should try his own hand at hybridization and, it is good to note, he was met with no little success. Twenty-five years of enthusiasm behind his championing of the then modern Hybrid Lilac can Mr. Havemeyer look back to; and with what satisfaction!.....

[In 1928 Mr. Havemeyer gave a list of ten single and ten double preferred varieties, as follows:]

### **Single Lilacs**

'Lamartine' - rose-mauve, early

'Macrostachya' - delicate pink turning to white

'Mme. F. Morel' - mauve-rose

'Marceau' - purple violet

'Maurice Barres' - azure-lilac

'Monge' - dark purple-red

'Reaumur' – dark carmine bluish lilac, very free, early  
'Ronsard' - bluish lilac, very free, early  
'Turenne' – purple-violet  
'Vestale' – white, a superb variety in every way

### Double Lilacs

'Duc de Massa' – clear violet  
'Edith Cavell' – white, buds pale sulphur  
'Jules Simon' – lilac-mauve  
'Leon Gambetta' – rosy lilac  
'Miss Ellen Willmott' – white, late  
'Paul Thirion' – claret-rose  
'President Viger' – bluish lilac  
'Thunberg' – deep mauve  
'Victor Lemoine' – mauve-lilac, late  
'Mme. Antoine Buchner' – carmine-rose

### Editor's note

Eric Welzel has "always been interested in the history behind the naming of a lilac cultivar." He also goes on to say that he "would love to do a new cultivar for each upcoming issue. Let me know what you think."

Please let Eric "know what you think" and send a copy to the editor.

## What's in a Name?

*Syringa vulgaris* 'Edith Cavell' was introduced by Lemoine in 1916. Here is some history behind the name of this beautiful double white lilac.

Edith Louise Cavell was born in Swardeston England in 1865. She was known to correct people who had trouble pronouncing her name that it was "Cav-ell sounds like travel not like hell" she would state.

Edith traveled to Brussels Belgium and worked as governess for the Francois family. She loved caring for their children and enjoyed painting. She also became fluent in French. She first became interested in nursing after helping to restore her father's health in 1895. Edith received her nurses training at London Hospital and by 1907 she became a training nurse.

It is said that she was weeding her mother's garden in Norfolk England when the Germans invaded Belgium. Edith quickly returned to Brussels to care for the

wounded. She was always impressing on others that their first duty was to care for the wounded regardless of one's nationality. When Brussels fell to the Germans all 60 English nurses tending the wounded at the Royal Palace were ordered sent home. Edith and her chief assistant refused and stayed on to help.

Edith continued nursing as a protected member of the Red Cross helping all wounded soldiers. She also aided soldiers lost behind enemy lines trying to escape to safety. She was caught and during her interrogation told the truth about her underground activities. When the Germans asked Edith if she had helped two men escape she replied yes two hundred.

There was quick trial and she and others were found guilty and sentenced to death. Two eight man firing squads fired at her from six paces. The story goes that they all fired "wide" of Nurse Cavell. Edith fainted and a German officer came up and executed her with his pistol. A German private who had thrown down his rifle and refused to fire was executed as well and thrown in a grave next to her.

When the war was finally over Edith's body was returned to Norfolk England for a proper burial.

Edith had always wanted people to see her as simply "a nurse who tried to do her duty". I can't help but think of her and what she did whenever I see the lilac 'Edith Cavell' in bloom. So the next time you're smelling the beautiful scent of that pure double white lilac try and remember the nurse behind the name.



## Tips for Beginners

**Q:** Can I prune my lilacs in the early spring?

**A:** Sure, but remember, if you do prune in the early spring, you will cut off some flower buds since they develop right at the tips of stem growth produced last year. Still, there are those who deliberately choose to prune before the leaves are out so that they can see what they are doing. If the downside of cutting off some flower buds doesn't bother you – go for it.

For those who want to enjoy every single flower cluster, a compromise would be to wait until just after the blooms begin to fade and before the new growth has developed very far. Then cut out a few old stems nearly to ground level, or back to the main trunk if the cultivar does not sucker. If this procedure is repeated over several years, the result will be a rejuvenated bush with the best stem growth and the best flower display.

International Lilac Society

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