Lilacs

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of the International Lilac Society

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Tribute to Owen Rogers

Syringa × *presoniae* 'Audrey', above, at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm.
. *Photo credit: George Vorauer*

Syringa vulgaris 'Frank Klager' that Hulda Klager named after her husband.
Photo credit: Ruth Peabody

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COVER PHOTO: *Syringa vulgaris* 'Avalanche', featured in *Lilacs*, Spring 2005. *Photo credit: Colin Chapman*

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President's Message

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that I welcome the new editor, Victoria Woodruff, into our international society. I will leave Tory to introduce herself to you, but I will point out that we are indeed fortunate to have someone come forward to help us who has editorial and presentational experience acquired in the computer book publishing world as well as a bit of horticultural experience at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University.

The arrival of a new editor does imply the departure of the former one. Dr. Owen M. Rogers, of the Plant Biology Department of the University of New Hampshire, has decided that the time has come to put aside his quill pen, close his ledgers, and put up his feet.

Owen has been a member since the earliest days and no one has made a greater contribution to this Society and its affairs. In 1976, working from—and expanding—John C. Wister's 1941 survey *Lilacs in America*, he compiled and published, at the University, the "Tentative International Register of Cultivar Names in the genus *Syringa* L." This seminal document was taken up by Freek Vrugtman and today it stands as one of the most comprehensive inventories of any plant genus. It is a resource that makes research and writing so much simpler for us all.

Owen has been an influential member of the Board of Directors almost from the start. In 1978, he became President of this Society, a position he distinguished until 1984. In 1994, he became our editor, which is one of the most searching jobs we have because it demands exactitude and precision in presentation plus the ability to negotiate with the printer and the postal service to get the best rates. It also requires a practitioner who has subtle diplomatic arts plus the wicked wizardry sufficient to cajole reluctant authors to contribute to the journal yet again. I can testify to that wizardry because I have, from him, an enormous pile of letters containing all the flattering carrots and all the cajoling sticks that he found necessary to break my continuous lassitude and get me to write yet again.

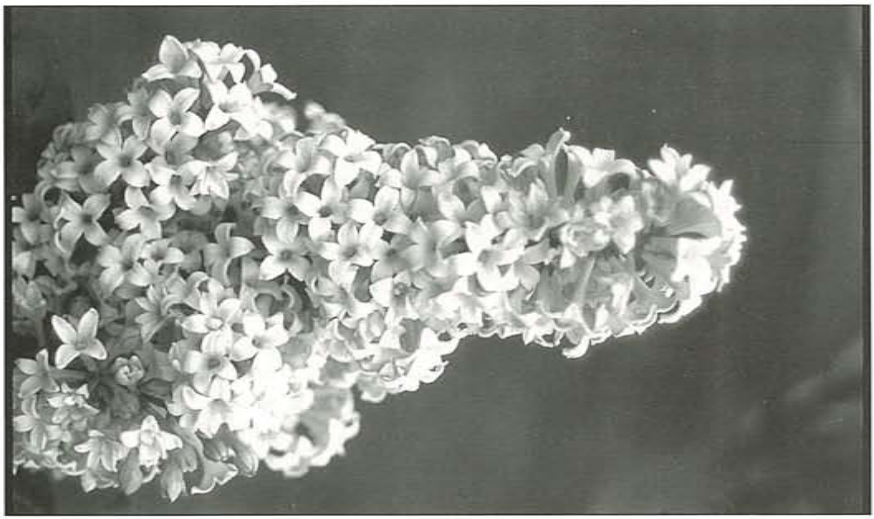
Personally, I will remember Owen most for his glorious creations 'Agnes Smith' and 'Anna Amhoff'. In my Lilac Cavalcade, I have a small cluster of lilacs in my Owen Rogers bed. The above two, plus 'Jesse Hepler', share the bed with a fourth one. At the 1993 University of New Hampshire Convention Owen, our host, gave each of we delegates a tiny plant. It was a seedling of the one decorating the Convention hospitality room and that had a magnificent all-pervading fragrance. Called simply, *Syringa* × *josiflexa* 'Seedling 86/1', we were each given a seedling of it in the hope that one of them might turn out to have a double flower.

I had mine with me on a very pleasant boat trip down Portsmouth Sound and out to the Isle of Shoals. I was looking at my plant and regretting that I would have to leave it behind, when it was seized from my hand by a giant seagull. But get this; that seagull then winged its way across the ocean and, by a miraculous coincidence, dropped the seedling just as it crossed Norman's Farm airspace so that it was waiting for me—a wildlife naturalized plant—when I returned home. (Oh Dear! Why has my nose just grown ten centimetres longer?).

That plant is the fourth one in my Owen Rogers bed. I call it, for the benefit of my records, *Syringa* × *josiflexa* 'Seedling of UNH Seedling 86/1'. We must have been given individual numbers for these seedlings but mine, regrettably, was lost during its extraordinary journey here. It is now eight feet high with upright spikes of white flowers, tinted pale pink. It shows many florets with five and more lobes and, for the last two years, it has indeed shown some double ones. It also carries the wonderful fragrance of its momma. Are there any more of these seedlings surviving out there? Did any of them throw a full double flowerhead? Please describe them and let us know.

Enjoy your retirement Owen, but please do not deprive us of access to your wisdom and experience. We give you our thanks for your considerable contribution to our welfare and progress. As The Great Man once said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant…"

Colin Chapman
lilacprez@hotmail.com
Wyverstone
Suffolk
August 30, 2005



Syringa × *josiflexa* 'Seedling of UNH Seedling 86/1'.
Photo credit: Colin Chapman

Pie in the Sky: Robert Gilbert's Lilac Extravaganza

Every May, our household eagerly watches the mailbox for the arrival of a manila envelope that reveals the date for Rob Gilbert's annual lilac display. Let me back up a step. Many of you know Robert Gilbert as the Lilac Society's previous Assistant Treasurer ("Please send your Lilac Society dues to the Assistant Treasurer." I have never figured that out). However, many of you may not know Rob Gilbert as the creator of a little known lilac gem. South of Edmeston, New York, two and a half hours from their Hyde Park home, Robert and Sabra Gilbert have created Pie in the Sky at the top of a mountain with few if any other habitants around. For several years, Rob and Sab have invited local Lilac Society members, as well as anyone else who sees their flyer, to Pie in the Sky for the lilac show.

My wife, Anne Nafziger, and I have been attending the show for many years. Without fail, the flyer welcomes you. "Come see the lilacs, bring a picnic basket, listen to the bobwhites...bathroom available." This remote locale is not easy to find, but handmade signs reading *Lilacs* dot the country corners. Upon our arrival, Sab always asks "Were the signs still up?"

The trip to Pie in the Sky generally falls on the week before Memorial Day. Once we successfully negotiate the countryside, Sab and Rob greet us from their lawn chairs. After signing the guest book and some chat, the tour begins. You already know you are in a special place when you smell the powerful fragrance of the lilacs. In a pie-shaped field, neatly groomed and fenced with a 12-foot fence (the previous 8-foot fence didn't keep the deer out) grow 175 lilacs. Most are numbered with metal tags, however the lilacs tend to outgrow these tags rapidly like a teenager outgrows shoes. Rob and Sab have a locator map to help find the lilacs that have lost their tags. In a modest year, only some of the shrubs are in bloom during the lilac weekend. In other years, the display is spectacular: white, blue, purple, yellow, single blossom, double blossom, 'Miss Kim', Russian varieties, presidential varieties, and the list goes on.

The list of visitors that have accompanied us to the show is almost as varied as the lilacs within it. It includes relatives and friends from as far away as Singapore. When they cannot join us the following year, they still ask, "Did you go to see the lilacs this year?" Each year during our visit, others arrive, both friends and family. There is room for everyone. No one feels short changed of their fill of lilacs when they leave.

One recent year, we didn't receive the usual annual invitation. At that same time, I noticed that Rob Gilbert was no longer the Assistant Treasurer of the Society (to whom you sent your dues!). Anne and I were concerned. Was

something wrong? Thankfully, the next year rolled around and the invitation reappeared. Rob is a bit older now and he doesn't move as fast as he used to. Others help to groom, trim, and prune the lilacs for the show. Sab gives the tours and she is an old pro now. Rob still supervises and always reminds us, "Come up here anytime you like. You are always welcome, even if we are not here."

Should you care to visit, Rob and Sab Gilbert annually share the results of their hard work at the top of a mountain in the Catskills. I know that Rob would enjoy hearing from Lilac Society friends. Their email is *sabgilbert@msn.com.*

Joe Bertino
Fly Creek, New York

My Favorite Lilacs, Part I

Selecting a favorite lilac could be a very easy or very difficult topic to write about, depending on your viewpoint. With over 2,000 cultivars to choose from, how could I not have a favorite? With so many colors, forms, and fragrances among the best in the flower kingdom, how could I not determine a favorite? It is precisely the myriad of choices that causes the difficulty. I have no trouble finding lilacs to like, but how do I narrow it down? Frequently, my latest favorite is the last one that I've looked at or stuck my nose into.

The obvious answer is: I can't or I refuse to pick one all-time favorite lilac. I will, however, be able to provide roughly 25 of my current favorites. Some remain constantly on my list, and a few newcomers are added to my list each year.

Several of my favorites I prefer because of their early blooming: *Syringa* × *hyacinthiflora* 'Hyacinthiflora Plena' and *Syringa* × *hyacinthiflora* 'Fénelon'. I know once these two plants are blooming, the main part of the collection will follow in a week or ten days. 'Evangeline', another *hyacinthiflora* variety, has one of the strongest and ethereal fragrances at Highland Botanical Park. A very large, old specimen, located on the hillside close to Highland Avenue, fills the park with its fragrance in early May throughout the morning hours before the massive crowds of people arrive.

Another group of my favorites come from the famous 'Rochester' strain, the hybridizations of my mentor, Richard Fenicchia. *Syringa vulgaris* 'Rochester', first noticed by Fenicchia, was actually collected from seed and sown by Alvan R. Grant. No lilac collection would be complete without this gem, with an inflorescence Father John Fiala likened to a candelabra. If you look closely, here and there, you will find florets with 6, 8, 12, even up to 20 petals on a single flower the size of a quarter.

Other great notables in this series include 'Frederick Law Olmsted', which has a huge abundance of white flower clusters that completely cover the shrub. 'Dwight D. Eisenhower' has gigantic inflorescences up to 18 inches in length, and are a beautiful, sky-blue color with sometimes a hint of pink. They also display the radial doubling that is characteristic of 'Rochester'. Richard Fenicchia named 'Margaret Fenicchia' for his wife, and it is a brilliant, magenta lilac that is consistently loaded with blooms.

For sheer size of florets, 'Glory' and 'Agincourt Beauty' are two of the most spectacular. I can still remember stepping off the tram in Montreal at the 2000 ILS Convention, and being awed and astounded at the size of the flowers of 'Agincourt Beauty'. 'Glory', which we have at Highland Botanical Park, is weighed down so much by the bulk of the florets that the flowering stem bends over from the strain.

I must admit that one of my preferences is pure, brilliant, white color in lilacs. 'Sacrament', which I saw at Montreal, and 'Sculptured Ivory', both Father Fiala hybrids, are two magnificent choices. Perhaps their striking, white color can be accredited to their 'Rochester' heritage.

Two other must-have whites are the old-timer 'Monique Lemoine', and 'Krasavitsa Moskvy'. 'Monique Lemoine' is a development of the Lemoines, and is a full, double white. 'Krasavitsa Moskvy' is a unique hybrid developed by Russian hybridizer Kolesnikov. The display begins with flesh-colored buds that open to pure white with some lavender/pink overtones.

Purple is the favorite lilac color of many lilac lovers. *Syringa* × *hyacinthiflora* 'Pocahontas', an early flowering Skinner hybrid, is one of my favorite purples. In fact, I dedicated a 'Pocahontas' at Highland Botanical Park as a memorial to my beloved Australian Shepherd, Chui, who died a few years ago. Also, in light of the location of our convention next year at the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens, I would be remiss in omitting a Klager hybrid. 'Ostrander' is a stunning example of a purple lilac, with its fully rounded, double petals that flash the silvery, white coloration underneath.

'Firmament' and 'Pat Pesata' are two of my favorite blue representatives, along with the already mentioned 'Dwight D. Eisenhower'. 'Firmament' is a sky-blue, large-flowered hybrid of the Lemoines. 'Pat Pesata' is a Fiala hybrid with 'Rochester' in its parentage, along with 'True Blue'. It shows some of the radial doubling often characteristic of a 'Rochester' hybrid. As with many other blues that I've observed, it also shows hints of pink within its color palette.

I truly had trouble narrowing down my favorites in the pink classification. 'Turgot' and 'Maiden's Blush' are two *hyacinthiflora* types that I really enjoy. 'Turgot' is a vigorous shrub developed by Lemoine that can reach up to 15 feet high and is always replete with blooms. 'Maiden's Blush' is a Skinner hybrid

that never fails to provide a show. Two years ago at Highland, a lawn mower ran over an unsuspecting 'Maiden's Blush', which only served as a drastic method of rejuvenation. Last year, it was in full bloom once again! 'General Sherman' is one of the best varieties developed at Highland Park by John Dunbar, with its wonderful display of single, delicate, pink flowers, which gradually fade to white. 'Edward J. Gardner' is a large-flowered, double pink. It has long petals that are spaced somewhat far apart and are slightly twisted, giving a pinwheel effect.

As a landscaping lilac, a grouping of *Syringa* × *chinensis* 'Saugeana' never fails to provide an outstanding display of flowers. It has smaller, more attractive foliage than the *vulgaris* hybrids and provides an abundance of pinkish-purple blooms. Its very pleasing fragrance fills the air in the mornings and evenings. As an added bonus, it needs little deadheading because the old seedheads are inconspicuous, with pruning being confined to removal of extra vigorous branches.

A variety of the littleleaf lilac, *Syringa pubescens* subsp. *microphylla* var. *microphylla* 'Superba', is a glorious lilac due to its attractive, small, rounded leaves and petite, pinkish flowers that are displayed at the ends of the branches. Occasionally, it reblooms in late summer, as it did this year at my house.

Three of my favorite late hybrids are 'Agnes Smith', 'Fountain', and 'Miss Canada'. Dr. Owen Rogers developed *Syringa* × *josiflexa* 'Agnes Smith'. It is a vigorous grower with numerous clusters of flesh-colored buds that open to a pure white. *Syringa* × *swegiflexa* 'Fountain' is very showy with its pendulous clusters of drooping, pink flowers. Isabel Preston, who specialized in late hybrids, developed this hybrid, and it is among her showiest. 'Miss Canada' is an interspecific hybrid with brilliant, reddish-pink flower buds that open to a vibrant, pink color.

As you can see, with so much variety in color, flower form, inflorescence, petal shape, and the all important fragrance, one would be foolish to choose a single favorite over all other lilacs. As I draw to a close, I've found that I have had a progression of titles for this article, from "My Favorite Lilac," to "My Favorite Lilacs," and ultimately, its final version, "My Favorite Lilacs, Part I." Stay tuned in the future for another installment of "My Favorite Lilacs," which may never have an ending, because I will never tire of finding a new or different lilac to admire.

Kent Millham
Highland Botanical Park
Rochester, New York
August 2005

Mackinac Island Report

This year, I lectured at the Mackinac Island Lilac Festival in June. What a wonderful treat for someone from New England. Previously, I had only heard of Mackinac Island from other ILS members. I had no real idea what the island was like. After learning that I would be splitting the lectures with Brad Bittorf, I started to do some research on the Internet. As it turns out, no amount of advance investigation could really prepare me for the actual experience. Mackinac is like stepping back in time 100 years; no cars, only bikes, horses, and lilacs everywhere. My wife, Jan, and our eight-year-old daughter, Shelli, accompanied me on the trip (two days, one-way across Canada). When it was time to leave Mackinac Island my wife and daughter were searching for a way to stay longer.

Unfortunately, at the last minute Brad couldn't attend, so I was all alone on the lecture circuit. We stepped off the ferry at 3 p.m. and I gave the first "walk and talk" at 4 p.m. I am afraid those folks were a little short changed as I didn't know one end of the island from the other. But I learned, and quickly. We had the most wonderful host in Mary McGuire, who is the executive director of the Tourist Bureau on the island. She made everything work and made my family feel most welcome.

I gave 13 lectures, all but 3 sold out; total paid attendance was 449. The last two talks on Friday afternoon and Saturday had as many as 50 people standing in the street to listen. We had only one rain cancellation and all those people came back the next day. Mackinac was in perfect bloom for the festival. The park trees were near perfect and at the height of bloom and fragrance.

While I was not lecturing, my daughter and I performed an inventory of the recent lilac plantings on the island. Unfortunately, as a whole, they are in very poor condition. A nefarious weed whacker (or lawn mower) had mangled more than a few. Others were suffering from being planted much too close together. Still more were suffocating, planted in deep lawn and cedar mulch. Of the 150 trees that we surveyed, we felt that only a handful were healthy, with probably 80 percent in poor condition. Obviously, there needs to be some local direction on the care of the trees; nobody on the island has stepped forward as a leader to care for the new plantings. I have the entire survey on an Excel spread sheet and will make it available to anyone that would like it.

We thank the ILS for the opportunity to attend the festival; we had a blast and hope to be able to do it again sometime.

Jeff Young lives in Saint Albans, Vermont and is on the board of the ILS. He is Curator of the Lilac Collection at the University of Vermont Horticultural Farm and is a Vermont Master Gardener.

The Lilac Renaissance Is a Reality

The summer issue of our journal arrived yesterday. I perused through it quickly and saw the picture of the convention attendees on the back page. We all look mighty happy, and we were. Beautiful lilacs and wonderful fellowship made for a great convention in Boston. Our spirit is soaring at new heights because there is good news. Yes, there is a Lilac Renaissance taking place.
I know so. Too many people are talking about lilacs. While visiting nurseries not only locally in Richmond, Virginia, but in the Washington D.C. area this spring, I was pleasantly surprised to find the lilac section crowded. The buyers are young people landscaping new homes. They remember their grandmothers or their parent's gardens where lilacs perfumed the air in the spring. Of course, I always go and talk to them and tell them about our society. They are surprised to know about the ILS and are even more surprised that we have a web site.

Lilacs are becoming a shrub of choice again for the modern gardener. Once established, it is low maintenance and gives years and years of pleasure. Lilacs are moving into the suburbs. It may be surprising but if someone buys one lilac, she or he will want another and another. Certainly, not every gardener is a collector, nor does each have the room for more then one lilac specimen. All the same, one lilac will lead to another. We need to create a "I want that lilac" feeling. Each year at the national convention, the attendees should vote on the best three, four, or five lilacs. The winners' names should be published in our journal, posted on our web site, sent to garden magazines, and disseminated to the nurseries. The Lowe's or the Home Depots, these cheap plant outlets, should know which lilacs are outstanding each year. Can you imagine, lilacs selected by the ILS... I would want to buy a lilac selected by the ILS and so would other gardeners. It will not only help the public to decide what lilacs to purchase, but it will help support our lilacs nurseries and lilac hybridizers. An additional bonus will be publicity for the ILS. Think about what King Henri IV of France (1553–1610) said, "A chicken in every pot on Sunday." We need to say, "A lilac in every garden the world over." Let's make this our goal.

The Lilac Renaissance has begun. Now we need to nurture it by sending the right signal to the gardeners around the world.

Nicole Jordan
Board Member
August 2005

John Wister's *Lilacs for America*

In her Regional Report for the Northwest Region, *Lilacs*, 34(3), Summer 2005: p. 74–76, MarvaLee Peterschick writes that she had acquired a copy of the 1953 edition of *Lilacs for America*, and she is wondering how many copies of this publication exist among ILS members. Thanks for the Wake-Up call, MarvaLee; as old lilac-hands, we sometimes forget that younger members may not be familiar with the older literature! John Wister (1887–1982) made important contributions to our knowledge of the history of the garden lilac. The publication referred to is actually the last one in a series of four.

Wister, John Caspar (Chairman, Committee on Horticultural Varieties of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboretums). *Lilacs for America*. Report of the 1941 Survey. Swarthmore: Arthur Hoyt Scott Horticultural Foundation, April 1942, 64 pages.

—, (Chairman, Committee on Horticultural Varieties of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboretums). *Lilacs for America*. Report of the 1941 survey, revised and corrected. Swarthmore: Arthur Hoyt Scott Horticultural Foundation. July 1943: 64 pages.

—. *News Letter*. Additions to Lilac Survey. American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboretums, 1951, No. 7, p. 39.

—, (Chairman, Lilac Survey Committee of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboretums). *Lilacs for America*. Report of the 1953 Survey. Swarthmore: Arthur Hoyt Scott Horticultural Foundation, 1953, 48 pages.

Anyone wishing to know more about John Wister's writing may consult the following article:

Vrugtman, Freek, & Gertrude Smith Wister. "John C. Wister's Writings on Lilacs, A Tentative Bibliography." *Lilacs*, 24(2), Spring 1995: p. 46–50.

We deliberately inserted the word *tentative* in the title because we were not sure that we have caught all his titles; however, no addenda have been reported.

Freek Vrugtman
Carlisle, Ontario, Canada
September 2005

Lilac Alert

Jeffries Nurseries, Ltd., of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, Canada, issued the following bulletin in Growing Matters of March, 2004 (Volume 7, Issue 1). The web site post reads "Lilac Alert: 'Charisma', a dwarf lilac cultivar has tested positive for phytoplasmas (virus-like) and therefore Jeffries Nurseries will no longer be selling this cultivar. The problem is that phytoplasmas are spread to other lilac cultivars through propagation and by leafhoppers. It is assumed this phytoplasmas causes lilac witches broom. Eliminating the phytoplasmas by heat treatment would likely stop the dwarfing effect. It has been reported that 'Shantelle', another dwarf cultivar also has phytoplasmas." (Rick Durand, Research)

http://www.jeffriesnurseries.com/March%202004.pdf

For earlier reports on *Syringa* (*Villosae* Group) 'Charisma' and 'Shantelle' see *Lilacs*, 33(4): p. 114–115, Fall 2004 and *Lilacs* 34(1): p. 17, Winter 2005.

Tips for Beginners

Fall is mildew season, and it is the most common fungus disease of lilacs. It covers the leaves with whitish, felt-like patches of fungus, although it is usually not visible until late in the growing season. It is a superficial disease that does not grow beyond the leaf surface layer. It does not occur in large amounts until late in the season, and consequently it does not affect the development of the next spring's buds nor the food storage necessary for good growth and bloom the next year. Many varieties will survive a mildew problem very well with no treatment at all.

There are cultural techniques that will reduce the amount of mildew. It grows best in shady, damp situations. Placing lilacs in full sun locations where there is good air circulation will impede the growth of the fungus. Less mildew will appear in dry years than in seasons with a long, damp fall. Also, some lilac varieties prove more resistant to mildew than others. The late blooming species seem less susceptible to mildew especially in cooler climate locations. Practically all varieties will be affected if they are grown south of Washington, D.C.

Chemicals containing potassium bicarbonate such as Kaligreen and MilStop are good organic remedies but treatment must be started at the very first sign of the disease and repeated at regular intervals throughout the entire season. This represents a considerable effort so it is recommended only for plants that will be observed up close or for very important plants.

Additional materials and dosage rate recommendations can be obtained from the county extension staff or knowledgeable people in large garden centers in your area.

This tip has been adapted from a "Tips for Beginners" column that first appeared in *Lilacs*, 25(2), Spring 1996.

Question for Members

Several gardens, including Rochester, New York, and Scampston, Yorkshire, United Kingdom have reported late-blooming lilacs this season. Are there any late blooms or second blooms in your garden? Write and tell us about it!

Brad Bittorf
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Vail, Arizona 85641

Thank You

Regretfully, I was not at the ILS Convention to personally receive my Distinguished Recognition Award. As a poor substitute for doing it in person, I'd like to thank the ILS in writing. I've enjoyed all my activities connected with the ILS. My cited "energy and enthusiasm" pales in comparison to that of my colleagues in each of the various endeavors for which I received this award. Freek is great to work with on the Lilac Inventory Database and has certainly been an enthusiastic collector of data. I am in awe of the energy that Evie brings to everything she does, including the ILS booth at the Maine Flower Show. Without Eric to help work the booth when the rest of us were laying down on the job, it never would have happened. As for the articles I write for *Lilacs*, occasionally I just have a few things I want to say. I'm grateful to the ILS for thinking they might be worth hearing.

Alison Brown
345 West Gray Road
Gray, Maine 04039

Next Deadline

The deadline for the winter issue of *Lilacs* is December 8, 2005. Early submissions will be greeted with a smile.

Important Notice: Change in ILS Handling of Credit Cards for Dues

All members who pay their dues by credit card must be aware of the following. Due to the increase in the monthly fees charged by the Credit Card Service, the ILS can now only accept credit cards (MasterCard and Visa) in the months of December and January. Please adjust your payment schedule to fit these dates. Remember, regular mail can be slow. Bill Tschumi must receive the credit card information before the end of the month in January. If he receives it after the end of the month, he can not process it. Please direct any queries to Mr. Tshumi.

ILS Executive Vice President Notes, Fall 2005

Greetings from southern Arizona! Our lilacs have just survived their most challenging season, the pre-rainy season, summer. We tied our record of the most consecutive days with temperatures above 100 degrees Farenheit (38—that's both the Celsius equivalent and the number of days above that temperature!). Now, however, our "monsoon" season has begun, bringing (spotty and sometimes torrential) rains throughout half the days from mid-July to mid-September. With luck there will be blossoms in late March.

I wanted to share with you a few recent events that are underway in the world of lilacs.

Mackinac Island

The ILS has had a continuing presence at the Mackinac Island Lilac Festival. The people of Mackinac Island have a wonderful history of lilacs, and through association with ILS members like Bill Horman, Don Wedge, and Peter Ely, they also discovered the modern world of lilacs. Many ILS members, including those mentioned as well as Tim Leeper, David Gressley, Margaret Walton, and Bruce Peart worked to add and maintain lilacs to the Mackinac collection. The ILS has also presented Lilac Training seminars at Mackinac through ILS volunteers including Bruce Peart, Jeff Young, and yours truly. (I understand both Bruce and Jeff commanded a rock star presence as they intoned the history and science of lilacs to adoring throngs along the streets of Mackinac Island. Maybe it's just that they are tall?) Read more about that and an important plan to renew the lilacs of Mackinac Island on page 103.

Journal

Our journal is undergoing changes as we transition to our new editor, Tory Woodruff. Over time there will be some gradual changes to *Lilacs* as we try to add value for all the different constituencies of readers of our journal. We have identified a small advisory team who will assist the editor with history, ideas, and diverse points of view. Be patient during these changes. Ultimately our goal is to provide you with information you can use. How do you help? Let Tory or me know what information you'd like to see!

Web Site

As you are probably aware, we are transitioning to a new Internet web site. The Board of Directors allocated funding to begin this project at our last meeting, and several member of the Board are helping shape the new web site's format and goals. Many of you have impressed upon me that a vibrant organization needs a vibrant and useful web site. We recognize we are at a disadvantage without a working web site. We hope to have a prototype of the new web site available no later than the next annual meeting but we have high hopes for something much earlier than that. A first draft of the site is now live. You can have a look for yourself at *www.InternationalLilacSociety.org*. I'm certain there will be a lot of feedback from you all, and we welcome that—just keep any pejorative terms to a minimum!

2006 Annual Meeting

The 2006 ILS Conference will occur earlier than usual during April 20–22 in southwest Washington State. It will be centered around the Hulda Klager Lilac Farm. See information beginning on page 115 of this publication about that event—start planning now!

On a personal note, I was delighted to have the opportunity to view *Syringa reticulata* subsp. *reticulata* 'Ivory Silk' in bloom at both Manito Park and the Finch Arboretum during an early July trip to Spokane, Washington. For a desert guy, it's great to see blooming lilacs of any sort. Smelling them is far better than looking at photos!

Send your information. I welcome a chance to learn about what you are doing in the world of lilacs.

Best wishes to you all.

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Atlantic Region Report

Those of you who know us probably realize the only thing we love more than lilacs is *promoting* them. Highland Park, of course, is an awesome display, but it is short-lived. Kent Millham, Bob Hoepfl, and Gail Meyers, as well as others, do a great job during peak season, but we need emphasis year-round.

To that end, when we sell Christmas trees in our greenhouse in November and December, the atmosphere inside is more lilacs than evergreens. When the magical month of May is gone, we continue to promote Highland Lilac perfume, so all are reminded of lilacs all year long. We allow Chris Kogut, professional photographer/lilac enthusiast, to photograph lilacs freely, as her work in this region hails lilacs throughout the year in most garden centers. We aggressively seek coverage any time of year it is available.

This has been the driest summer so far that I can remember. Our extension agent proclaimed lilacs to be indicators of severe drought when they wilt. Perhaps he noticed us watering for weeks!

Ted Collins, a.k.a. Doc Lilac
Atlantic Region Director

The Lilac Inventory Database Needs Your Help

For more than six years, Alison Brown, an ILS member from Gray, Maine, has worked on the Lilac Inventory Database (LID). The LID is a cumulative record of lilacs in cultivation that the Registrar has compiled from historic and current sources. It is not a database for publication; it is a tool set up and maintained for use by the International Lilac Registrar and other researchers; it is a tool that can answer the question "During which period was cultivar 'Abc Zyx' known to be grown and where?" The longer the project continues, the better the database will be; the better the database is, the more accurate the answers to questions will be. The Registrar does not intend to publish the LID for the simple reason that some owners of lilac collections do not want their list published; we want to protect the privacy of these lilac owners. Actually if we published the LID today, it would be well over 300 pages. Moreover, the names appearing in the LID are not always the correct names. The Registrar will, however, respond to questions when asked where a given lilac can be found. Last winter, Alison indicated that she would like to pass her duties on to another volunteer. On the following page, Alison details the work she has contributed over the last six years.

Compiling the LID

Maintaining the LID for the Lilac Registrar is a good way to contribute substantially to the International Lilac Society if you are not a professional horticulturalist. For someone who is more comfortable with a word processor than lilac propagating techniques, this is a nice opportunity and a rare one.

When I first joined the ILS, it was readily apparent how lilac breeders, propagators, and those who maintain lilac collections contribute. Although an avid gardener and capable of propagating a few easy plants, I didn't feel able to contribute much on the horticultural side. When Freek Vrughtman, the Lilac Registrar, asked for volunteers to help him establish a database of lilacs in cultivation, I thought that might be a better skill match, so I volunteered. A number of other people also volunteered, but I guess I turned out to be the one with the most technical background, so the task fell to me. It took me a while to understand what Freek wanted—the idea that names have a life of their own apart from the plants to which they are applied, was a new concept for me. Once Freek got me over that hurdle—not without some difficulty—we started to work on the structure of the database itself. After a number of wild technical adventures, we finally had it underway and since then it's simply been a case of Freek finding lists of lilacs and my entering them into the existing database.

Initially, it was difficult to have more than one person working on the database. This dilemma was mostly due to problems with coordination and technical problems with people having different software and hardware. These issues have now mostly been resolved, and it would be lovely to have others participate, especially as I have gotten committed to other projects. It would also be nice to have someone else take over the database because I've gotten somewhat remiss about entering the data in a timely fashion. Freek is ever patient, but I think it may be time to pass the baton to someone else.

So what exactly is this database that is so helpful to the Registrar? The LID is essentially a long list of lilacs that are, or were at some time, in cultivation. It is complied from lilac lists supplied by nurseries, botanical gardens, and private individuals with lilac collections to the Registrar. Most of these lists are turned over willingly, but at times I believe Freek may have to twist and arm or two. We enter the name of each lilac and a few additional items of data just as they appear in the supplied list.

It's not a real database as a computer scientist may use that term. It is simply a very long list contained in Microsoft Excel spreadsheet format. People associate spreadsheets with numbers and accounting, but it's also a very useful way to keep lists because of the program's sorting function. It would be too tedious to create new entries by locating the right place alphabetically before entering the lilac name. With Excel, we enter new lilac names at the end of the spreadsheet/database and then sort the whole database at the end.

Maintaining the LID requires no special skills beyond the ability to use a word processor. The spreadsheet is already set up, so the new manager doesn't have to do anything other than type the new lilac names and a few additional pieces of data into the columns of the spreadsheet. You need to have Excel installed on your computer. Should no volunteers own the software, it is possible the ILS would be willing to supply it. Internet access is required. It doesn't matter if you use a Mac or a PC. I have a Mac and Freek has a PC, but we send the LID back and forth without any problems.

Prospective volunteers should contact Freek Vrugtman, the International Lilac Registrar, at *lilacreg@rbg.ca*. I will work with the new database manager until they feel comfortable taking over completely.

S.O.S.: ILS Seeks Volunteers

A. The Nominations Committee has the responsibility of preparing a slate of Officers for the Society who are willing to serve and then presenting this slate to the Board of Directors for election.

The Officers include: President, Executive Vice President, Regional Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary of the Corporation or Membership Secretary, Recording Secretary, Editor.

Each of the above Officers is be elected by the Board for a one year term. The Board may re-elect for additional terms. Therefore, you only commit to volunteer for one year and are not required to serve longer. This gives more members the chance to serve and do their small, but important, part to further the work and purpose of the ILS.

According to the By-Laws, during their term, the President and the Officers run the general management of the ILS Corporation and carry out the orders and resolutions of the Board of Directors.

B. The Nominations Committee also has the responsibility of nominating members who are willing to serve on the Board of Directors. This committee also must prepare a ballot that is sent to all members of the Corporation (membership) so they may vote for up to five persons from a list of seven or eight nominees. Each year, the membership elects five Directors for a three-year term on a rotating basis, making fifteen Directors in total, one third (or five) of whom are elected each year.

The Board of Directors determines the purpose and direction of the Society, makes the important decisions and elects the Officers to carry out the decisions in the ongoing work of the ILS Corporation.

C. The Nominations Committee also assists the Officers and Committee Chairmen to locate members willing to help on the numerous Standing Committees. There is a need for many members to help on these committees.

I am asking all ILS members to consider sharing their time and talent to help us achieve our goals. We lighten the load by distributing the responsibilities around to many people rather than relying on just a few. We need new ideas, new people, and different ways to accomplish things. Please consider serving for one year or more in any of the previously stated positions. We appreciate your help.

Please feel free to contact me as soon as possible, or at any time in the future, if you desire more information, to volunteer your help, or to submit someone's name to help (please ask them first). There are always vacant positions or a Chairman who is asking for help or relief. Who knows, you many want to contribute a new idea or suggest a program to work on either on your own or with others.

Thank you. I hope to hear from you soon.

Peter Ely
Nominations Committee Chairman
SEly634929@aol.com
(203) 888-2628
57 Squantuck Road
Seymour, Connecticut 06483

Editor's Notes

Greetings and salutations. I tip my hat to Owen for many years of impressive work on *Lilacs*. While I am new to the ILS, it is clear he has lent his heart to every publication. I can only hope to be able to carry the torch in as able a manner. While talking about myself is my least favorite past time, I suppose everyone might be wondering who in the world this new editor is. Fair's fair. I come to you after ten years in the computer book publishing world, a year and a smidge on the Arnold Arboretum's grounds crew (where, among other duties, I weeded, mulched, deadheaded, and mowed the famous lilac hill), and now as the new mom of sweet Olivia (yet her cranky alter ego goes by the name Smedley).

With a changing of the guard, a new approach is inevitable. As the journal transitions to a new editor, there will indeed be some adjustments. I hope to hear from all the members if things alter for the worse. And I hope they change for the better. Feel free to contact me in this case too.

I *strongly* encourage all submissions to arrive in electronic format. Translating handwritten notes adds to the workload and promises mistakes.

You might wonder what happens after you submit an article. Once received, I will edit each article for grammar, language, and a consistent publication style. If the edits are beyond small style and grammatical corrections, I will ask the author to review their article for approval. I will also lay out the journal before it is submitted to the printer. In the past, the printer has performed the type setting. Handling the lay out in advance should reduce errors and give the journal a bit more flexibility. As a consequence of a new lay out approach, there will be changes in appearance and content presentation. You may already notice a difference in the interior design. It is possible the cover design will change in the future as well. I welcome suggestions. We are able to use color inside the front and back covers. It seems flowers are always better presented in color. To accommodate a few color pictures, I have moved the copyright page and Standing Committees page within the journal.

Email is the best way to reach me. It is fine to call by phone, but I can't promise Smedley won't be crying in the background. I look forward to working with all of you. I welcome new ideas, questions, and feedback.

Tory Woodruff
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Errata: Volume 34, Number 3

Please note the following corrections to the previous issue.

Inside cover page: The web site listed, *http://lilacs.freeservers.com* is not related to the ILS. The new web site is *www.InternationalLilacSociety.org*. A preliminary version of the site is now up and running.

Page 84: "The Syringa Tribute to Walter Oakes" should read "The Syringa Tribute to Ken Berdeen."

Page 85: Kent Millham is the author of "The Self-Guided Walking Tour of Highland Park—2005."

Page 87: #20 should read *Syringa vulgaris* 'Renoncule' (not 'Renocule').

In past issues, contact information for Reva Ballreich, ILS President emeritis and current board member, has been misprinted in the journal. Reva can be reached at her correct address and phone number:

Reva Ballreich
P.O. Box 1804
Idyllwild, CA 92549-1804
Phone: (951) 659-4070

A Glimpse at the 2006 Convention

The 36th Annual International Lilac Society Convention will convene in Woodland, Washington, with pre-registration beginning on Wednesday evening, April 19. The host of the 2006 ILS Convention, the Hulda Klager Lilac Society, has shifted into high gear preparing for the event.

On Thursday, early bird arrivals will have the opportunity to tour the Lewis River Valley area. The first stop will be the Lelooska Cultural Center, which hosts history and artifacts of early Northwest Native Americans. A visit to the historic Cedar Creek Grist Mill, one of only 23 of its kind in the continental United States, will conclude the tour. On April 21, conference attendees will spend a grand Lilac Day at the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens. Known as Woodland's Lilac Lady, Hulda Klager was a leading horticulturist and lilac hybridizer in the mid-20th century. A Victorian garden greets visitors in front of the historic house. Three and one-half acres of lilacs grow behind the house, which has been restored by the Hulda Klager Lilac Society and made into a museum honoring the Lilac Lady. Lunch will include presentations about the national historic site and Woodland's Lilac Lady. The ILS Auction will also be held at the lilac gardens in the afternoon.

The fertile Northwest houses many nationally known nurseries and gardens. The morning of April 22 promises a tour of the Holland America Bulb Farm, internationally known for colorful tulip, hyacinth, and iris varieties. ILS convention attendees have the unique opportunity to see the lilac gardens and tulip farm in full bloom during Woodland's Annual Lilac and Tulip Festival, which coincides with the ILS convention. Peterson Farms, the supplier of lilac starts for the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens, will host a lunch for the conference attendees followed by a tour of the farms.

A very special optional tour is scheduled for Sunday, April 23. Woodland is within an hour's drive to a view of one of the nation's most spectacular natural wonders: the Mount Saint Helen's Volcano. Many will remember the dramatic 1980 eruption when the mountain literally blew its top off. Nature's work is not yet complete as seismic and volcanic activity resumed early in 2005 and the mountain steams and quakes consistently.

The 2006 ILS Convention offers first timers to the West Coast an opportunity to visit the Pacific Ocean located only one and a half hours by automobile from Woodland. Want to learn more about the Hulda Klager Lilac Society and other Woodland area attractions? Visit the Hulda Klager Lilac Society's web site at *www.lilacgardens.com* or a popular Woodland area web site, *www.lewisriver.com*, for information on the many interesting and unique attractions the Woodland area offers visitors.

Joyce Carlson, President
Hulda Klager Lilac Society

Additional Information for ILS Convention Attendees

Welcome to Woodland, Washington! The 2006 ILS Convention coincides with Woodland's annual Lilac Days and Tulip Festival. The fragrant lilac gardens and acres of colorful tulips are bound to be a special event for this year's convention attendees.

Local Native American history will come alive at the Lelooska Cultural Center, while the Cedar Creek Grist Mill offers another step back in time to the milling of grain done by a waterwheel.

Lilac enthusiasts will spend a day at the historic Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens, where the well-known hybridizer dedicated her life to developing lilac varieties. Tours of the Holland America Bulb Farm and Peterson Farms are a natural event for convention attendees. The joint Lilac/Tulip Festival has become a tradition in Woodland. Peterson Farms is a supplier of lilac starts for the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens. Woodland is roughly an hour from the Mount Saint Helen's National Monument, this year's optional event. It is going to be a great convention!

Do you have questions about the convention agenda?
Email *gardener@lilacgardens.com*, Attention: Joyce Carlson, President, or telephone Joyce at (360) 225-7514.

Here's more information to help you plan your trip.

Motels

The Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites serves as the 2006 Convention motel. The Lewis River Inn is within walking distance to the Best Western. Both motels offer king and queen size beds, in-room refrigerators, and microwaves. Each provides guests with a continental breakfast. The Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites also offers a swimming pool and sauna.

Location

Woodland, Washington is located in southwest Washington State. The east fork of the Lewis River meanders through the city and is one of the State's most popular recreation spots. Woodland's unique location and the proximity to Portland, Oregon, offer convention attendees a host of extra activities. Check out the following web sites for more information on local points of interest, recreation, and events:

Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens: *www.lilacgardens.com*

Lelooska Cultural Foundation: *www.lelooska.org*

City of Woodland: *www.ci.woodland.wa.us*

Holland America Bulb Farms: *www.royaldutchflowergardens.com*

Tsugawa Nursery and Greenhouses: *www.tsugawanursery.com*

Cowlitz County Visitor Service: *www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/tourism*

Long Beach Peninsula, Pacific Ocean: *www.funbeach.com*

Lewis River Area: *www.lewisriver.com*

Saint Helen's: *www.mountsthelens-awesome.com*. This site has an excellent map detailing a route from the Portland Airport to Woodland, at I-5, Exit 21.

The Portland, Oregon, metropolitan area hosts the Hoyt Arboretum, the Leach Botanical Gardens, the Portland Rose Test Gardens, the Japanese Gardens, and the Chinese Gardens. The Arboretum's Rose Gardens and the Japanese Gardens are all in close proximity for an extended day tour.

Driving

From the Portland International Airport: Follow signs for I-205 North. Within minutes of leaving the airport you will be on a bridge crossing the Columbia River, heading north. I-205 will merge with I-5. Follow signs for I-5 North. Woodland is roughly 30 minutes from the Portland Airport at Exit 21.

From the south: Follow signs for I-205 North or I-5 North to Exit 21. If you are staying at the Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites, make a left turn at the exit stop, preparing to make an immediate right onto Atlantic Avenue (faces the Oak Tree Restaurant). The Best Western sign faces the road on the right. The motel is set back on the property. Guests staying at the Lewis River Inn will make a right turn at the exit stop, stay in the right lane; the motel is about one block from the traffic intersection on the right.

From the north: Follow signs for I-5 South to Exit 22. Drive south on Pacific Avenue. Stay in the left lane, preparing to make a left turn under the overpass. Continue to the Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites, pull immediately in the left hand lane, turn left at the first traffic light, and go north on Atlantic Avenue. The Best Western sign faces the road on the right. The motel is set back on the property. To drive to the Lewis River Inn, proceed straight through the intersection, preparing to turn right into the Lewis River Inn parking lot, roughly one block from the traffic intersection on the right.

Airport

The nearest airport is the Portland International Airport, located about 30 minutes from Woodland. Car rental is available at the airport and can be scheduled when you book airline reservations. Shuttle service is available from the Portland Airport to Woodland. Details of shuttle and taxi service will be in the winter edition of *Lilacs*.

ILS Auction

The ILS Annual Auction and Plant Sale will be held at the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens on Friday, April 21, 2006, beginning at 3 p.m. The event gives members and the public the opportunity to buy rare lilacs to bring home.

Donations for the auction should be sent to: ILS Auction, Roberta Peterson, 2530 Dike Road, Woodland, WA 98674, (360) 225-9388

Special Needs

If you require a special diet, please email your name and the type of food required to *gardener@lilacgardens.com*, Attention: Barb Chester. Barb will forward your request to the banquet manager at the Oak Tree Restaurant.

Clothing

April in the Pacific Northwest can be mild or wet. Conference attendees should prepare for both. Include a rain jacket and heavy sweater along with lighter clothing for mild days. Those attending the Lelooska Cultural Foundation activity will definitely want to bring warm outerwear. The history presentation takes place in a replica of a Native American plank house with a wood fire as the only heat source.

The old Klager home, built in 1889 by Hulda's father.
Photo credit: Ruth Peabody

2006 International Lilac Society Convention Schedule

Wednesday, April 19, 2006

5 p.m. to 9 p.m.: Registration at the Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites.

Thursday, April 20, 2006

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Registration at the Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites.

8 a.m.: Buses board for trip to Lelooska Cultural Foundation, Cedar Creek Grist Mill, lunch at the home of Margaret Colf Hepola, Hulda Klager Lilac Garden Board Member. Tour originates at the Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites.

2 p.m.: Buses return to the Woodland motels.

5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.: Directors Meeting at the Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites conference room.

7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.: Welcome Reception at the Oak Tree Restaurant.

Friday, April 21, 2006

8 a.m.: Buses board for trip to Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens, lunch, and Annual Meeting at the Oak Tree Restaurant, speakers, and ILS Auction and Plant Sale.

5 p.m.: Buses return to the Woodland motels.

7 p.m.: President's Dinner followed by speaker at the Oak Tree Restaurant.

Saturday, April 22, 2006

7:30 a.m.: Directors Meeting at the Best Western Woodland Inn and Suites.

9 a.m.: Buses board for trip to Holland America Bulb Farm.

11:30 a.m.: Buses board for trip to Peterson Farms, lunch, tour, Speakers Panel.

5 p.m.: Buses return to the Woodland motels.

7 p.m.: Awards Banquet at the Oak Tree Restaurant.

Sunday, April 23, 2006

Optional tour with additional fee, see registration form.

10 a.m.: Buses board for trip to Mount Saint Helens National Monument.

2 p.m.: Buses return to the Woodland motels.

Revolution? Takeover? Welcome to Our Family?

In the article that follows, Benjamin Goldman-Huertas describes a potential upheaval in the way we think about and arrange the lilac family tree. While the information he presents is still preliminary in some respects, it suggests a new order in the genus *Syringa* L.

It is intriguing to think that privets may be lilacs. It is reassuring to know that tree lilacs are just as entitled to be called lilacs as some of their lilac cousins. (We have all probably struggled to convince doubters of this assertion in the past!)

The research work of Goldman-Huertas will complement the study of lilac scent and evolution being done by Dr. Nina Theis that we published in our prior issue. As both authors suggest, there is more investigation to be done to discover the evolutionary history of lilacs, and perhaps how humans have affected them.

Ten years ago, DNA and chemical signature research was nearly unreachable for the ILS. Scientific advantages have allowed this ILS-sponsored research to take advantage of these means. Don't be alarmed at the use of terms such as DNA; RNA; genome; or G, C, A, and T. These are the tools of the trade. We plan to present a short tutorial about DNA research at our next convention. Welcome to the forefront of plant science—and maybe even welcome privets to our family!

Brad Bittorf
ILS Executive Vice President

An Update on the Lilac Family Tree

With their dense panicles of fragrant flowers, lilacs are an instantly recognizable group of plants. Lilacs grow wild in a diverse range of territories from the Balkans in Europe, to the Himalayas, and as far east as Japan and Korea. Today, the range of the lilac is much more extensive thanks to the centuries of effort of gardeners, who have planted lilac shrubs and trees across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Lilacs belong to the genus *Syringa*, which includes anywhere from 22 to 28 species, the majority of which are cultivated as ornamentals (Kim et al 1998). Today, it is still unknown how exactly all lilac species are related to each other and to other plant species. This information is vital to reconstructing the evolutionary history of the lilacs; a project that will help us understand how the ancestral lilacs responded to events from Ice Ages to the start of its human cultivation, and gave rise to the lilac species we know today.

Taxonomists split the lilac genus *Syringa* into two smaller groups called subgenera. These include the subgenus *Ligustrina*, known as the tree lilacs, and the subgenus *Syringa*, which holds the majority of lilac species, including the common lilac, *Syringa vulgaris*. Taxonomists further divide the subgenus *Syringa* into four sections: *Pubescentes*, *Villosae*, *Pinnatifoliae*, and another section also called *Syringa*. Shared characteristics between species determine these groupings. For example, all the species in the section *Syringa* have smooth hairless leaves, while the species in subgenus *Ligustrina* all have long protruding stamens (Li et al 2002) and grow to tree height instead of shrub height, sometimes up to 40 feet (Fiala, 2002: 84). Implicit in these classifications is the assumption that the species have inherited the common trait that binds them into a group from an ancestor common to all the species in the group. This assumption, however, is not always correct.

Many traits can evolve separately. For example, a mosquito and a bird both have wings, but they are not at all closely related, and their wings evolved separately, not in a common ancestor. Another problem is when two closely related species do not share any obvious morphological traits. This is seen especially in parasites that tend to evolve from more complex to simple body plans, literally shedding morphological traits during their evolutionary history that might help identify a close relative. Because of these shortfalls, evolutionary biologists and taxonomists have increasingly come to depend on the wealth of information stored in the molecules, especially DNA, of organisms. The power of molecular traits to resolve the relationships among species is the sheer number of possible traits that a scientist can sample. A typical genome can be billions of base pairs long, allowing researchers to compare thousands of traits, for example whether or not a species has an A or a T in a certain position in a certain gene shared by multiple species.

Using these methods, I have been constructing a lilac family tree based on DNA sequences. The results affirm some of the taxonomy of the lilac genus. First, analyses of sequence data support the grouping of species into the individual series within subgenus *Syringa*. Species classified within a series are most closely related to other species within that series. Likewise, species of tree lilacs of subgenus *Ligustrina* are more closely related to themselves than to any other lilac species. The work of hybridizers also is supportive of these conclusions. While many viable hybrids have been made crossing species belonging to the same series, only one cross from species of two different series has been successful: *Syringa diversofolia*, created by crossing *Syringa vulgaris* with *Syringa pinnatifolia* (Kim et al. 1998). These observations support the finding that individual species belonging to a series within the lilacs are closely related while species from different series are not.

However, my sequence data shows that there are some problems with the traditional classification of lilacs and related genera. To begin with, there is no support for the subgenus *Syringa* because some of the species classified within

this subgenus are more closely related to the subgenus *Ligustrina*. For example, the tree lilacs are more closely related to the series *Pubescentes* and *Villosae* lilacs in subgenus *Syringa* than either is to the lilacs of series *Syringa* and *Pinnatifoliae*, also classified in subgenus *Syringa*, which form the most ancient lineages of lilacs. The most surprising finding is that a closely related genus, *Ligustrum*, commonly known as privets, is actually a group of lilacs. A set of morphological traits supports these findings. Early fruit development of lilac and *Ligustrum* is remarkably similar even though the fruit of privets remains fleshy while lilac fruit splits open late in development. Also, the structure of lilac and privet wood is similar and both have their flowers in similar distinctive clusters called panicles (Li et al, 2002).

More work still remains to clearly understand the relationships of all the species within *Syringa*. Researchers must sample all species of both the privets and the lilacs for sequence data and look for more novel traits will help to resolve the relationships between lilac species. With the completion of the lilac family tree, scientists can begin to answer other evolutionary questions. For example: why lilacs inhabit such a disjointed range of territory, how have humans impacted the evolution of these plants, and how the lilac scent has evolved over time.

Ben Goldman-Huertas

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Proposed Introduction Dates for Some *Villosae* Group Lilac Cultivars Originated in Canada

At Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm, a planting of *Villosae* group lilac cultivars is underway. This collection will feature Isabella Preston's originations while also including the work of other breeders. International Lilac Society's Bruce Peart and Freek Vrugtman have provided invaluable assistance with this project, which will take several years to complete. We are, in fact, still searching for cultivars in cultivation that we lack.

In the process of collecting data, we uncovered information on origination dates and propose the following changes for some *Villosae* group lilac cultivars in the "International Register and Checklist of Cultivar Names in the Genus *Syringa* L. (Oleaceae)," Freek Vrugtman, March, 2004:

Adriana' 1928[8], 'Alice' 1928[8], 'Ariel' 1942[10], [11], 'Audrey' 1928[8], 'Beacon' 1937[3], Beatrice' 1928[8], 'Bellicent' 1937[1], [3], [6], 'Caliban' 1938[4], 'Cassandra' 1928[8], [9], Celia' 1928[6], [8], 'Charmian' 1928[8], 'Cleopatra' 1937[4], 'Constance' 1928[8], Coral' 1936[3], 'Cressida' 1928[8], 'Dawn' 1937[3], 'Diana' 1928[8], 'Dorcas' 1930[9], Elaine' 1948[6], 'Enid' 1938[4], [5], 'Ethel M. Webster' 1948[6], 'Fountain' 1948[6], Freedom' 1936[3], 'Guinevere' 1925[1], 'Hedin' 1935[7], 'Helena' 1928[8], 'Hermia' 1928[8], 'Hermione' 1937[4], 'Hunting Tower' 1942[10], [11], 'Irving' 1953[11], 'Isabella' 1927[8], [10], [11], 'Jessica 1928[6], [7], [8], 'Juliet' 1928[7], [8], 'Katharina' 1928[8], [9], 'Lavinia' 1928[8], 'Lucetta' 1928[8], 'Lychorida' 1937[4], 'Lynette' 1938[4], [6], 'Miranda' 1928[7], [8], Nerissa' 1928[7], [8], 'Nocturne' 1936[3], 'Oberon' 1937[2], [5], [6], 'Octavia' 1928[7], [8], Olivia' 1928[7], [8], 'Ophelia' 1928[8], 'Ottawa' pre-1953[11], 'Patience' 1928[8], 'Phebe' 1928[4], [8], 'Portia' 1928[8], 'Puck' 1942[10], [11], 'Redwine' 1936[3], 'Regan' 1928[7], [8], Romeo' 1938[2], [6], 'Royalty' 1936[3], 'Silvia' 1928, 'Swanee' 1936[3], 'Timandra' 1928[8], 'Titania' 1928[7], [8], 'Ursula' 1928[7], [8], 'Valeria' 1928[8], [9].

References provided on the following page.

Joan Speirs, Lilac Team Coordinator
and member of the ILS
Friends of the Central Experimental
Farm, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada with guidance from Freek Vrugtman

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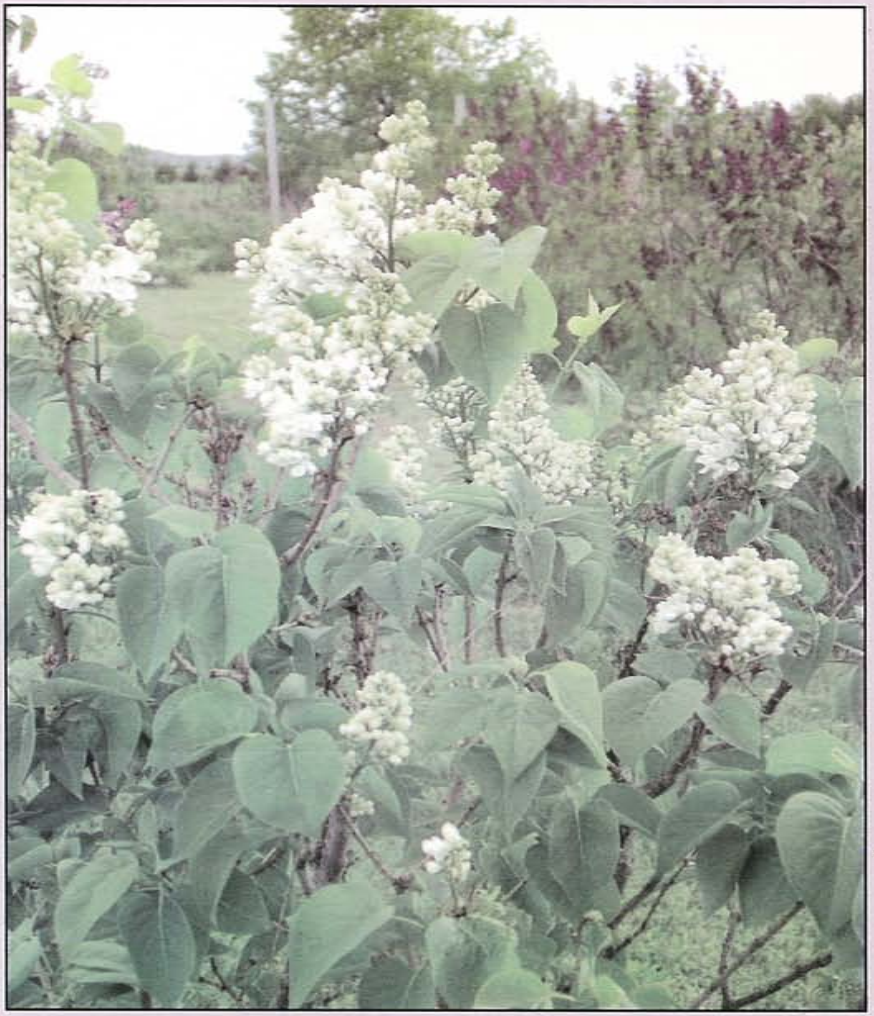
Syringa vulgaris 'Congo', above, in the foreground was taken at the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens. The Ginkgo tree in the background is the second largest in Washington State. *Photo credit: anonymous*

Syringa vulgaris 'Pink Elizabeth' was also taken at the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens and shows some of the lilacs behind the farmhouse where Hulda had her original lilac beds.



Syringa vulgaris 'Primrose' at Rob Gilbert's Pie in the Sky.
Photo credit: Joe Bertino